



Leviticus

A Verse-By-Verse Study

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LEVITICUS 1:1-4 (THE BURNT OFFERING, PART I)

When someone decides to read the Bible, for whatever reason, they will normally start at Genesis and work quickly through that and the first half of Exodus. Then, about chapter 25 of Exodus, the reading slows down. Eventually, it is treated as a chore rather than a pleasure. For many, this is the standard pattern.

By the time they get to Leviticus, the book is closed, placed on a shelf, and never referred to again, except in times of great distress or personal need. In distress, the psalms are referred to. Maybe even the beatitudes are checked out.

For times of personal need, it is common to open the Bible arbitrarily with eyes closed, and then to point to any given portion with the right (yes, it must be the right) index finger. And then,,, in hopes of something miraculous directing their way to riches and glory, or the repair of a failed marriage, or whatever, they open their eyes and feast on that one verse.

If it is a verse or passage which gives them hope, the book is closed with satisfied delight. “Yay! I will have the years that the locust ate away at my possessions restored to me!” If the verse isn’t a satisfying one, the process is repeated until something better is obtained. And then all is right with the world once again. The book is closed and peace is restored. It is certain that nobody wants that one passage to be 2 Chronicles 21:12-15. That’s for sure.

This is the effect that the book of Leviticus has on many people. It is viewed as strange, hard to comprehend, brutal or outdated, and completely irrelevant to the world we live in today. It is, to them, as painful as having their blindly placed finger wind up on those words of 2 Chronicles. Words which, by the way, are our text verse of the day.

Text Verse: *“Thus says the Lord God of your father David:*

Because you have not walked in the ways of Jehoshaphat your father, or in the ways of Asa king of Judah, ¹³ but have walked in the way of the kings of Israel, and have made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to play the harlot like the harlotry of the house of Ahab, and also have killed your brothers, those of your father’s household, who were better than yourself, ¹⁴ behold, the Lord will strike your people with a serious affliction—your children, your wives, and all your possessions; ¹⁵ and you will

become very sick with a disease of your intestines, until your intestines come out by reason of the sickness, day by day.” 2 Chronicles 21:12-15.

Reading the book of Leviticus seems as painful to many as the fate of Jehoram, king of Judah. Be honest, how many of you have ever read the entire book of Leviticus? And of you who have, do you delight in it each time you come to it? Do you say, “Oh boy! This is the cat’s meow and the bees knees?” Or do you read it to get through it and onto the next book?

While in Bible college, there was very little Bible involved. We had a few courses, but most of it was religious stuff, not Bible stuff. But there were a few mandatory Bible courses. One of them was “Old Testament Survey.” It was a survey of the entire Old Testament in a one week module. If one expected great theological discoveries from the Old Testament, this was not going to happen.

However, the professor asked that during the course each student would pick one Old Testament book, and do a full summary on it. We were to outline it, explain its authorship and dating, give its historical context, provide a summary of the book, and include the messianic expectations which could be derived from it. Further, we were to include an application of that particular book to our lives.

As the choice of book was up to each of us, it was obvious that a very large and complicated book, like Ruth or Jonah would be chosen. For the truly daring, the one-chapter book of Obadiah might be the courageous choice. As this is what was normally expected, my professor nearly had a heart attack when I told him I wanted to do Leviticus.

Surely, of all of the books of the Old Testament, this one had the least to offer, especially concerning messianic expectations and contemporary applications! But he was more than excited to approve my choice and await my submission. I chose Leviticus, because it is the heart of the Law of Moses, and one cannot understand the greater work of Christ properly without understanding that work in relation to the law.

Further, messianic expectations in Leviticus literally permeate the book. Like the detailed and marvelously pictorial hints of Christ in the construction of the sanctuary, each portion of Leviticus follows along that path as well. For those of you who survive through this book, you will have a much fuller understanding of the work of Christ, and how Leviticus points to our desperate need for Him.

I will not lie that there are portions which will seem tedious and repetitive to you. However, we will get through them, and you will ultimately say, “I will never look at this marvelous book the same again.” LEVITICUS! It is a marvel and a treasure of God’s wisdom and glory – revealed in Jesus Christ our Lord. Yes, it is a glorious part of His superior word. And so let’s turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. An Introduction

The book of Leviticus is the third book of the Law of Moses and of the Holy Bible. Its Hebrew name is derived from the first word of the book, *va’yikra*, which literally means “and called.” In Hebrew, the word consists of the letters *vav*, *yod*, *qoph*, *resh*, and *aleph* which numerically equal 317. This is numerically the same as the Hebrew word *yabashah*, or dry ground. We can think of Leviticus as the dry ground and firm footing of the Law of Moses. It is where the waters of chaos are separated and something substantial is brought out for the people of Israel to conduct their daily lives.

Beginning the book with the word “And” signifies that this is a continuation of what has already been presented. The book of Exodus closed out, but it did not really end. The thought process is simply continued with the opening of the book of Leviticus.

In the Masoretic text of the Hebrew, in the last letter of the word *va’yikra*, the letter *aleph* is written smaller than the rest of the letters. This is known as a miniscule, and it is a rare occurrence in the Old Testament. Majuscule and miniscule letters show up in seemingly arbitrary places and without any explanation. For this reason, they can only be guessed at concerning what they mean.

The scholar Rosenmüller notes that ancient variations of the manuscripts leave off the *aleph* at the end, and so it would say, “And the Lord appeared to Moses” instead of “And the Lord called out to Moses.” The smaller *aleph* might then be inserted to indicate that it is one or the other, but nobody is sure.

The English name, which is used by almost all modern translations, comes from the Greek translation of the Old Testament known as the Septuagint. They call it *Levitikon*, which means “relating to the Levites.”

Leviticus is the shortest book in the Pentateuch, being comprised of only 27 chapters, and yet it is certainly the most overlooked of these five masterpieces. A careful study of the book will lead the reader directly to Jesus Christ again and again – and again. As far

as the book's authorship and dating, the author is undoubtedly Moses. Despite modern higher criticism, there is no evidence to support anything other than Mosaic authorship. Internally, the book states, "And the Lord called out to Moses," "The Lord spoke to Moses," or "The Lord said to Moses," etc., many times.

Although this is in the narrative format and therefore such statements could have been made by another author, there is no reason to disbelieve Jewish or Christian tradition which speak of Moses as the author. More to the point though, the New Testament in general, and our Lord Jesus Christ in particular, ascribes Leviticus to Moses as evidenced in passages such as Mark 1 –

"Then Jesus, moved with compassion, stretched out *His* hand and touched him, and said to him, 'I am willing; be cleansed.' ⁴² As soon as He had spoken, immediately the leprosy left him, and he was cleansed.⁴³ And He strictly warned him and sent him away at once, ⁴⁴ and said to him, 'See that you say nothing to anyone; but go your way, show yourself to the priest, and offer for your cleansing those things which Moses commanded, as a testimony to them.'" Mark 1:41-44

In those words, Jesus cites a requirement specifically mentioned in Leviticus 14. Such New Testament references confirm, without any doubt at all, that Moses is the author of the book.

There is dispute as to when this, along with the other 4 books of the law, was written; however, the conservative and traditional dating can be figured based on when Solomon's Temple was built. By tracing back from that day as stated in 1 Kings 6:1, which indicates 480 years from the Exodus, we can assert with relative confidence that it was penned approximately 1445 BC.

There was a 45-day journey to reach Mount Sinai, where the Israelites worked to construct the Tabernacle. In Exodus 40:2 it stated, "On the first day of the first month you shall set up the tabernacle of the tent of meeting." This would have been the beginning of the second year and 345 days after the Exodus and 300 days since their arrival at Sinai. It would also make it the year 2515 AM. Later, the Israelites departed Sinai as indicated in Numbers 10:11 –

"Now it came to pass on the twentieth *day* of the second month, in the second year, that the cloud was taken up from above the tabernacle of the Testimony."

As Leviticus was certainly recorded by Moses during this 50-day period, we can be confident of this time-frame and dating. Whereas the book of Genesis spanned well over 2000 years of human history, Exodus spanned less than 100, and now Leviticus spans less than two full months. Although mere speculation, it very well may even be that the entire book was compiled during the eight days of the ordination of Aaron and his sons.

The importance of the information then is seen in the condensed time-frame. Special attention was directed to the details of this book, ensuring that the precise instructions at a particular moment in redemptive history were carefully compiled for us.

As far as a historical and redemptive context, the book was given to describe the proper method of approaching God; proper sacrifices when doing so; the priestly requirements which were intricately bound to the religious worship; and other areas of holy living. These were needed because of 1) The fallen condition of man; 2) The growth of the population of the chosen race to a point where organized worship became essential; and 3) The pagan conditions to which Israel had been exposed during their sojourn in Egypt, thus necessitating a complete break from the incorrect worship conditions which had surely been infused into the Hebrew society.

Further, many of the regulations looked forward to the time when the Israelites would arrive in the Promised Land. As an example, instruction on the handling of mildew in permanent housing was issued. Due to the lack of modern fungicides, which we take for granted, God instructed the people in this area. However, these were issued before such housing was available, while still in the wilderness. Therefore, they anticipated the conquest and settling of Canaan. In a sense then, God was informing them that, "The battle is already won; the land is yours."

The book deals with a multitude of matters which are all intricately connected to the coming Messiah, Jesus Christ. Although He fulfilled every stated requirement and Christological pre-figuring of Leviticus, thus redeeming us from the curse of the Law (see Galatians 3:10-13), we are reminded that we are to live holy lives before God.

We can look back on the great prophetic fulfillments of Leviticus and have absolute surety that Jesus Christ was and is the Messiah, and therefore is God come in human flesh. Reading and understanding Leviticus also reminds us of the sincerity of God's promises and curses.

By following them, as laid out in Chapter 26, and then observing the consequences of them as fulfilled in the Jewish people, our faith is actually strengthened that all other

promises in Scripture are also accurate and dependable. This book provides us with fundamental proofs of the surety of God's Old Testament and its fulfillment in Jesus Christ as indicated in the New Testament.

Concerning the sacrifices which are many, and which seem brutal to the world in which we live today, the entire sacrificial system was necessary until the time that the true Lamb of God, Jesus Christ, would come and fulfill each and every one of them. What the world sees as brutal concerning mere animal sacrifices is really a foreshadowing of the most brutal of all sacrifices. One which every person on earth contributed to in their sins of the flesh.

The book itself is categorical rather than chronological. Being compiled in this way, it is a book of spiritual statutes for the people of Israel as the Lord's congregation. The scholar Keil states that –

“...as the nation of Israel was separated from God, the Holy One, by the sin and unholiness of its nature, the only way in which God could render access to His gracious presence possible, was by institutions and legal regulations, which served on the one hand to sharpen the consciousness of sin in the hearts of the people, and thereby to awaken the desire for mercy and for reconciliation with the holy God, and on the other hand furnished them with the means of expiating their sins and sanctifying their walk before God according to the standard of His holy commandments.”

In accomplishing this, several severe object lessons, involving the death of members of the congregation, will be included for the people to read and remember.

As with many books of the Bible, there are countless sections and patterns which run through Leviticus, but as an overall theme, there are two major sections to the book. The first runs from chapter 1 to chapter 16. These are essentially laws for sacrifice and for purification. These will be highlighted by the laws for the Day of Atonement in Chapter 16. It is a chapter which so precisely pictures the coming Christ, that the only thing more exciting than reaching that chapter would be the rapture itself.

The second major section will go from chapter 17 to chapter 27. These mostly look to the process of sanctification in the lives of the people. These will be highlighted in the instructions for the sabbatical years and the year of jubilee. The two series then remarkably correspond to one another.

The first book of Moses looked to the work of God the Father through Christ in creation, and in directing that creation in the initial process of redemption. The second book of Moses then looked to the work of God the Son in Christ in the actual redemptive process, mirroring His own work countless times. This, the third book of Moses, will highlight then the work of the Holy Spirit applying the purification and sanctification of Christ to the people of God.

In all three books though, it is Christ, the anticipated Son of God who is on prominent display. Nothing is more obvious, and in a thousand different ways it will become evident. When the book of Leviticus is over, the Person and work of Jesus Christ will have been highlighted so many times that you will never look at this book in the same way again.

If we were to sum up the book of Leviticus with one single thought which carries us from Exodus and then into the continued life of Israel, it would be that “The Lord sanctified Israel by His presence, and so the people needed to sanctify themselves in His presence.”

II. The Burnt Offering

¹ Now the Lord called to Moses, and spoke to him from the tabernacle of meeting, saying,

All translations essentially say the same thing here. And the Lord called to Moses... However, it is not how the Hebrew literally reads. Rather, it says, *va'yiqra el moshe vaydaber Yehovah elav* – “And called unto Moses and spoke Yehovah unto him.” To understand why this change is so important, we have to go back to the end of Exodus. In the last paragraph, it said –

“Then the cloud covered the tabernacle of meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. ³⁵ And Moses was not able to enter the tabernacle of meeting, because the cloud rested above it, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.” Exodus 40:34, 35

The beginning of Leviticus is being tied directly to this thought. As I said before, despite this being a new book, it is still only a continuation of the narrative which closed Exodus. Understanding that, we see that there is a time when the glory of the Lord retreated into the Most Holy place, and Moses was then able to enter there in order to speak with the Lord at the ark itself.

This marks one of three most important points in the Lord's dealings where Moses was specifically called by Him. He was called to his commission in Exodus 3:4 at the burning bush. He was then called twice in Exodus 19 from the top of Sinai prior to the giving of the Ten Commandments. And, he is now called at the beginning of the instructions for the divine worship.

The first looked in anticipation to the coming of Christ. The second looked in anticipation to the work of Christ. And the third looks at the completion of the work of Christ and its application to the lives of His people. In this, the work of the Trinity is implicitly seen. Each member performs His part in the realization of the whole. Finally, as was the case with Exodus, the words should read "tent of meeting," not "tabernacle of meeting."

² **"Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them:**

The instructions given to Moses here are to be relayed directly to the people of Israel, and not merely to the priests who will receive the offerings which will be laid out next. This then is a corporate instruction intended for all of the covenant people. This is similar to the call to the people to bring offerings for the construction of the sanctuary which was in Exodus 25:2. The call went out to the entire congregation for free-will offerings to be made. Something similar now occurs at the beginning of Leviticus, not for the construction, but for the use of, the sanctuary.

^{2 (con't)} **'When any one of you brings an offering to the Lord,**

There are many types of offerings which will be allowed – both in type and in purpose, and of which will be precisely named. Nothing else was to be offered except what the Lord specifically authorizes. Each will be detailed in a precise order as the book continues.

The Hebrew reads, "When a man brings an offering." However, the masculine speaks of both male and female, just as it traditionally has in English. This is confirmed, for example, in the Nazirite vow of Numbers 6 where both men and women could make such a vow. After the fulfillment of it, the offering was then presented by either the man or the woman.

Further, the "when" of this verse implies "if." Any person in the congregation could bring a voluntary offering. Though they are mandatory in the sense that they had to be brought in order to come near to the Lord, they are voluntary in that they accompanied the desire of the person to, in fact, come near to the Lord.

The word for “offering” here is *qorban*. It is used for the first two of 82 times in the Old Testament, and almost all of them are in Leviticus and Numbers. It is mentioned one time in Nehemiah and twice in Ezekiel, and that is it. It comes from the verb *qarav* which means “to come near,” or “approach.”

The idea is that in order to approach near to the Lord, there must be an offering presented at that time. No person could draw near to a king or a royal without presenting an offering. How much more the Lord who was Israel’s true King.

Understanding this, we can already see a picture of the coming Christ. We cannot draw near to God without an offering, and yet, we as believers are told that we can, in fact, draw near to God. This is through the work of Christ, which is our offering. This is spoken of by Jeremiah in the 30th chapter of his book –

“Their nobles shall be from among them,
And their governor shall come from their midst;
Then I will cause him to draw near,
And he shall approach Me;
For who *is* this who pledged his heart to approach Me?’ says the Lord.
²² ‘You shall be My people,
And I will be your God.’” Jeremiah 30:21, 22

Jeremiah states that One would come who would be allowed to draw near to the Lord God. In the next chapter, it is revealed how this will be accomplished, which is through a New Covenant. When Jesus came, He established that New Covenant in His blood as is recorded in all three synoptic gospels, and which is confirmed by Paul in his writings, such as in 1 Corinthians 11 when speaking of the Lord’s Supper. This is followed up and explained in detail in the book of Hebrews.

The instructions, going directly to the people instead of the priests, shows that the priest had no say in the offering, but rather he was to follow through with his part in the process, inspecting the offering for type, perfection, and conducting the associated work in transmitting the offering to the Lord.

In Christ, we make our offering to God which has been deemed as proper and perfect, and thus He is our *qorban*. He is our offering by which we draw near to God. This is a voluntary offering in the sense that we must choose to use it, and yet it is mandatory in that if we choose to draw near to God, it must be through Him and Him alone. This is

explicitly stated by the author of Hebrews which explains the New Covenant in Christ's blood –

“For on the one hand there is an annulling of the former commandment because of its weakness and unprofitableness, ¹⁹ for the law made nothing perfect; on the other hand, *there is the* bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God.” Hebrews 7:18, 19

As long as we continue to think about how each detail points to Christ, the book of Leviticus will flow properly, it will be interesting, and it will reaffirm our own Christian walk which is far superior to these rites and rituals which are only foreshadowings of His great work.

² (con't) **you shall bring your offering of the livestock—of the herd and of the flock.**

The first type of acceptable offerings are those of quadrupeds, or *behemah*. These are set off in contradistinction to the birds which will be mentioned starting in verse 14. The word *behemah*, or livestock, is then further defined by the terms *ha'baqar* and *ha'tson*, or the herd and the flock. The herd speaks of cattle, and the flock speaks of sheep or goats.

The difference is found in the meaning of the words of each. The *baqar*, or cattle, indicates to seek or inquire. When one plows, they open up the ground, seeking out where to sow. The *tson*, or flock, comes from an unused root which speaks of migrating, just as flocks are known to do. Of the quadrupeds, only these were considered acceptable as offerings to the Lord.

³ **‘If his offering is a burnt sacrifice of the herd,**

The first type of offering is now specified, the *olah*, or “burnt sacrifice.” The word means “to ascend,” and so the idea of the offering ascending in smoke is what is conveyed. The first time it was mentioned in the Bible was in Genesis 8:20 after the Flood of Noah. There it said –

“Then Noah built an altar to the Lord, and took of every clean animal and of every clean bird, and offered burnt offerings on the altar. ²¹ And the Lord smelled a soothing aroma. Then the Lord said in His heart, ‘I will never again curse the ground for man's sake, although the imagination of man's heart *is* evil from his youth; nor will I again destroy every living thing as I have done.

²² “While the earth remains,
Seedtime and harvest,
Cold and heat,
Winter and summer,
And day and night
Shall not cease.” Genesis 8:20-22

The last time this is mentioned in the Bible is actually in the New Testament. There in the Greek it is known as *holokautoma*. As you can hear, the word finds its origin in the Hebrew *olah*. However, if you listen carefully, you can also here where our word holocaust comes from. Thus, one can see the where the concept of our modern term is derived.

But its meaning is applied differently based on the user. For those who burnt the Jews, it was as if it was a sacrifice to God which would supposedly please Him because they had done away with His enemies. For the Jews, it was as if a sacrifice to God had been made of their lives in order to please Him. Either way, no such word should rightly be connected to what occurred at the hands of the Nazis – from either viewpoint. There is but one truly acceptable offering which this burnt offering pictures. That is detailed in the final use of the burnt offering in Hebrews 10 –

Therefore, when He came into the world, He said:

“Sacrifice and offering You did not desire,
But a body You have prepared for Me.

⁶In **burnt offerings** and *sacrifices* for sin
You had no pleasure.

⁷Then I said, ‘Behold, I have come—
In the volume of the book it is written of Me—
To do Your will, O God.’”

⁸Previously saying, “Sacrifice and offering, burnt offerings, and *offerings* for sin You did not desire, nor had pleasure *in them*” (which are offered according to the law), ⁹then He said, “Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God.” He takes away the first that He may establish the second. ¹⁰By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all*.” Hebrews 10:5-10

This *olah* was completely burned on the altar. With the exception of the skin, no part of it was eaten, or kept, by either the offeror or the priest. The skin was given to the priest, and which he could use according to his wishes apparently. This is seen in Leviticus 7 –

“And the priest who offers anyone’s burnt offering, that priest shall have for himself the skin of the burnt offering which he has offered.” Leviticus 7:8

3 (con’t) let him offer a male

Unlike the sin offerings and the peace offerings, the burnt offering was always to be a male. This was specified to more accurately picture Christ in this type of offering.

There is one exceptional deviation from this which is found in 1 Samuel 6. When the Ark of the Covenant which had been captured by the Philistines was returned to the Israelites, those to whom it came took the cows that had pulled the cart on which it was carried and offered them as a burnt offering –

“Now *the people of Beth Shemesh were* reaping their wheat harvest in the valley; and they lifted their eyes and saw the ark, and rejoiced to see *it*. ¹⁴ Then the cart came into the field of Joshua of Beth Shemesh, and stood there; a large stone *was* there. So they split the wood of the cart and offered the cows as a burnt offering to the Lord.” 1 Samuel 6:13, 14

This was an exception based on the circumstance, but not an acceptable custom according to the letter of the law.

3 (con’t) without blemish;

The word is *tamim*. It indicates that which is perfect, without spot or blemish. To make an offering with a blemished animal would be an insult. It would be like drinking half a coke and then when a friend asks for a coke, you give him the half you hadn’t finished and then go an open up of cool, fizzy, fresh one for yourself. This is exactly what the deceivers of Israel were known for doing –

“But cursed *be* the deceiver
Who has in his flock a male,
And takes a vow,
But sacrifices to the Lord what is blemished—
For I *am* a great King,”
Says the Lord of hosts,
“And My name *is to be* feared among the nations.” Malachi 1:14

This burnt offering, which was to draw a person near to God, was typical of Christ in this way as well –

“...knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, *like* silver or gold, from your aimless conduct *received* by tradition from your fathers, ¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.”

-1 Peter 1:18, 19

³ (con't) **he shall offer it of his own free will**

The words here are not well translated. It should not say, “of his own free will.” Rather, it should say, “that it may be accepted.” The word is *ratson*, and it can be translated either way, but many other passages in Exodus and Leviticus explain the meaning which is to be used.

Despite this, and although it is not a sin offering, it certainly implies that there is a fracture between God and man which necessitated coming to the Lord with a gift in order to be accepted. But unlike the sin-offering, it is not intended to specifically take away sins so much as it is to obtain God’s favor. In other words, it looks to the universal sinfulness of man, whereas the sin-offering will look at the specific sins of man. In giving over this offering, it was picturing the surrendering of the life of the offeror wholly and completely to God, body and soul.

³ (con't) **at the door of the tabernacle of meeting before the Lord.**

These words needs to be considered properly. First, there was probably somebody outside of the sanctuary itself who inspected all animals, even before they were brought in. However, the offering itself, once accepted, would then be offered, as it says, “at the door of the tent of meeting.

If you were awake during the giving of the details of the sanctuary, and in the details which described its construction, you might remember that I noted that the door and the altar are actually intricately connected. For example, in Exodus 40:6, it said –

“Then you shall set the altar of the burnt offering before the door of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting.”

At that time, I noted that the altar was said to be “before the door of the tent of meeting” despite it having the laver between it and the actual tent. This placement of

the altar of burnt offering answered to the placement of the altar of incense and the ark. Just as those were connected, so were the brazen altar and the door.

We then learned that this pictured the work of Christ where He said that He is the good Shepherd. The altar was where the animals were offered, picturing Christ our offering. With that offering, He becomes our Door by which we again have access to the Father. Therefore, presenting the offering at the door of the tent of meeting actually indicates it being offered at the altar which then allows symbolic access through the door. The connection between the two is inseparable.

In this offering, there is nothing secret or hidden. It is done openly and publically. This is how Christ died. It was in a way that all could see and witness. Any and all who passed by would know that an offering had been made as they watched the smoke ascend into heaven. So it was with Christ whose death became known to all. Luke 24:18 shows us that it was fully known throughout Jerusalem. In an ironic twist, the One whose life had been given was questioned if He knew anything about it –

“Then the one whose name was Cleopas answered and said to Him, ‘Are You the only stranger in Jerusalem, and have You not known the things which happened there in these days?’” Luke 24:18

⁴ Then he shall put his hand on the head of the burnt offering,

The meaning of placing of the hands on the head of the animal is debated hotly, but the next clause explains why it is done. There is no need to go further, except to explain what the words in the clause signify. There is a perfect animal, one without reason – implying innocence, and it has been brought as a whole burnt offering to the Lord. The people who bring it, do so for a reason. One does not mow a patch of sand, and one does not water plastic plants. The burnt offering is intended to appease the Lord. If the Lord needs to be appeased, it indicates that there is an offender who seeks that appeasement.

The person who places his hands on the animal then is acknowledging that this is HIS sacrifice. He is the offender, and it is his offering. He is asking that the offended will accept it in his place. The implication is that if it were not accepted, then his life is lost already, and would remain lost.

Further, it is implied that this sacrifice would be sufficient to accomplish the mission. However, as these sacrifices were made often, it could only mean that they merely

pictured a more perfect offering which lay ahead of them. Thus it was an anticipatory offering until a final, perfect offering could be made.

^{4 (fin)} **and it will be accepted on his behalf to make atonement for him.**

The same word, *ratsah*, is used again here which was incorrectly translated as free-will offering in verse 3. The clause says, *v'nirtsah lo l'kapher alav* – "...and will be accepted to him to make atonement for him. The act of placing the hands on the head of the animal is what makes the transfer acceptable, and it is what then makes *kaphar*, or atonement, for the individual.

This word, *kaphar*, comes from a root which means to cover. When Noah covered the ark with bitumen, the word was used. Thus, it figuratively means to cover over or expiate sin. In providing atonement, the Lord is granting mercy, and thus reconciliation is realized.

Although we are in the middle of a paragraph, this must be where we stop today, and so we will have to continue on with the rest of the chapter next week. The important thing to see so far is that the book of Leviticus begins with the need for an offering to satisfy God, and to restore us to a place of peace with Him.

We have already seen at the end of the book of Exodus that the Lord sanctified Israel by His presence. And yet, even with that understanding, the people of Israel were being told now that their sanctification was positional in His relation to them, but not complete in their relation to Him.

This is all the more evident by the fact that there are priests who were consecrated to minister to the Lord on their behalf. And it was even more evident because the priest had to be consecrated, and they needed to also participate in their own sacrifices before they could sacrifice for the people.

The more one looks into the law, into its requirements, and into what those requirements tell us, the more understanding there is that the law was and is wholly incapable of perfecting anyone. Only a perfect Person under the law could then transfer His perfection to the law-breakers.

And this is what Christ Jesus has done. We could simply cut and paste this thought to the end of every sermon we go through in the book of Leviticus. The law cannot perfect, but Christ can because He was (and is) perfect. It is not that the law is imperfect, but that

those who are bound by it, with but one exception, are – in fact – imperfect. And so the law, and the book of Leviticus in particular shows us this.

The book begins with the notion of imperfection in man, and perfection in God. Who will bring the two together, and who will provide the needed imputation of righteousness? Thank God that the answer is found in the Lord Jesus Christ.

This is why the doctrines of men – of Judaizers and of works-based Catholics and of works-based protestants – these doctrines are so poisonous. They rob people of the grace of God which is found in Jesus Christ alone. When someone tells you they don't eat pork, tell them, "That's great." But when someone tells you that you shouldn't eat pork, "Call him heretic Herman" and have nothing more to do with him.

Jesus Christ embodies every single detail of this law which stands opposed to us. It never made a single person perfect. And so why on earth, God's beautiful green earth, would you want to voluntarily place yourself back under this system designed specifically for one Man's success and all others' failure? Why?

We're only four verses into Leviticus and already we see what the rabid, wicked, and heretical people of the world refuse to see. We need Jesus. Thank God for Jesus who embodies this law which stood opposed to us. Thank God for Jesus who stands in its place and offers us grace. Thank God for Jesus, for us the shining smile upon God's face.

Closing Verse: *"This only I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? ³ Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh? ⁴ Have you suffered so many things in vain—if indeed it was in vain?" Galatians 3:2-4*

Next Week: Leviticus 1:5-17 *We started the chapter, and to its completion we will follow through...* (The Burnt Offering, Part II) (2nd Leviticus Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if you have a lifetime of sin heaped up behind you, He can wash it away and purify you completely and wholly. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Burnt Offering

Now the Lord called to Moses

Yes, He was relaying
And spoke to him
From the tabernacle of meeting, saying

“Speak to the children of Israel
And say to them; let these words ring
‘When any one of you brings an offering to the Lord
You shall your offering bring

Of the livestock—
Of the herd and of the flock

If his offering is a burnt sacrifice of the herd
Let him offer a male without blemish; according to this word
He shall offer it of his own free will
At the door of the tabernacle of meeting before the Lord

Then he shall put his hand on the head
Of the burnt offering, this gesture he shall make
And it will be accepted
On his behalf for him to make atonement, for goodness sake

Lord God, how exciting it is to start Leviticus the book
And to ponder on the treasure hidden there
As we continue, help our eyes to carefully look
For Jesus in each word; surely He is revealed there

And be pleased as we continue to live in accord with Your word
Holding fast to the grace which is found in Christ Jesus
All glory we give to You, through Jesus our Lord
How can we hold back when so much He has done for us!

Hallelujah and Amen...

LEVITICUS 1:5-17

(THE BURNT OFFERING, PART II)

Unlike the books of Genesis and Exodus, the book of Leviticus started out without any story or historical narrative. It simply and immediately begins with the details of the burnt offering. And, the entire first chapter is filled up with the details of it. From this chapter, we will go on to more detailed offerings.

It is therefore, something that is, shall we say, very on the mind of God. We're being shown, clearly and unambiguously, that the God who resides in the Most Holy Place has specific and absolute requirements for the people to follow.

The details are minute and there is no room for any variation in them. Considering this, one would think that by following them, there would be a sense of completion after going through with them. "Honey, let's go down to the sanctuary and make our offering. Once we do that, we can go right through the door of the tent, past the Holy Place, and talk to God at the Ark."

But of course this isn't the case. Even the High Priest couldn't go in there except when He was directed to, and when He did, it would be as he followed very specific details. The offerings didn't really allow the people to draw any nearer to God, except in their hearts. And that itself was only temporary at best...

Text Verse: *"For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect."* Hebrews 10:1

The author of Hebrews goes on to explain what he means in this verse, but if someone in Israel simply sat down and thought it through, they would probably be able to figure it out. For us though, we have such a Sacrifice. It is one that can and does perfect us.

And how wonderful that is! We don't have to keep going back year after year to make the same offering again and again. Instead, it is a one-time-for-all-time offering. And it is an all-encompassing one as well. Every type of sacrifice and offering is fulfilled in it.

Thank God for Jesus who has, in fact, given us both the right and the ability to enter the Most Holy Place. We may not be there now, in reality, but if we have come to God through Him, we are there positionally. As adopted sons of God, we can petition Him as

if we are standing right in front of the ark, gazing at the glory which dwells between the cherubim.

Let us remember this as we face life's difficulties and struggles. In Christ, we have access to the very throne of God. We don't need to drop off our offering and go back home. Because of Jesus, we are, even now, in the Sanctuary and able to revel in what these things only pictured. This is a truth which is revealed in His superior word. And so let's turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. A Sacrifice from the Herd (verses 5-9)

The sacrifice from the herd began in verse 3, but we had to cut that short. And so today we will pick up in the middle of this thought with the words of verse 5...

⁵ He shall kill the bull

The verse literally says that he shall kill a "son of the oxen." A male only is to be used for the burnt offering. The word for "kill" here is *shakhat*. It means specifically "to slaughter." It was first used when Abraham took the knife in his hand to slay Isaac. It was used in the slaughtering of the goat by the sons of Israel with the intent of dipping Joseph's coat of many colors in the blood from it. It is also the word used in the slaying of the Passover lamb. It can speak of the slaughtering of one's enemies, and it is even used figuratively in Jeremiah 9:8 concerning speaking deceit –

"Their tongue is an arrow **shot out**;
It speaks deceit;
One speaks peaceably to his neighbor with his mouth,
But in his heart he lies in wait." Jeremiah 9:8

Although it is found in these various ways throughout the Old Testament, it is used mostly in Leviticus concerning sacrifices and offerings, more than thirty-five times.

The slaying process, here and elsewhere, is to cut the throat while another person would hold a bowl under the cut in order to collect the blood of the animal. While we cringe at the thought of this, a few things need to be considered. First, all things are destined to die. No being, person, or animal, is exempt.

For animals in nature, they generally do not die well. For those under the hand of man, it depends on the one controlling the animal as to how its end will come, but the Bible promotes the care of animals, and never their abuse. But, it demands that they are to die at times, and it is for specific purposes according to the will of the One who created them. No wrongdoing can be found here.

These sacrifices were conducted until the time when Christ would come and fulfill what they only pictured. They were a necessary step in understanding what lie ahead.

Secondly, we all eat.

And finally, in the death of the animals here, we are to remember the death of the Lord. What the animal endured was quick, rather painless, and without abuse. What the Lord endured covered an entire day, it was fraught with abuse and pain, and it was done for our salvation.

As we continue through the many offerings, we need to keep these things in mind. Our modern sensibilities are far too geared toward Fifi or Fido to remember that, though we love our pets, there is a whole world of animals that all belong to the Lord. What He directs, or what He determines for each, is according to His will.

^{5 (con't)} **before the Lord;**

This male bull was to be slain “before” or in the face of the Lord there at the prescribed place. The place is always the same, but the terminology will continuously change. Sometimes it will say “on the north side of the altar.” Or it may say, “at the door of the tent of meeting,” “before the tent of meeting,” etc. Or it may combine two of the terms from time to time.

Though not recorded in Leviticus, the psalms tell us that the sacrifice was first bound to the altar. Thus it is, in type and picture, the binding of Christ to the true and final Altar – the cross of Calvary –

“God *is* the Lord,
And He has given us light;
Bind the sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar.” Psalm 118:27

^{5 (con't)} **and the priests, Aaron’s sons,**

The term as is rendered here is faulty. Instead of saying, “the priests, Aaron’s sons,” it should say, “the sons of Aaron, the priests.” It is an exclusive term, limiting the priesthood to the sons of Aaron.” Otherwise, it could be inferred that other priests from other lines existed, but were not selected from Aaron’s sons.

The same term is used seven times, five in Leviticus, once in Numbers, and once in Joshua 21:19. It is always consistent in the Hebrew in order to show that the sons of Aaron alone are designated as priests suitable to perform functions under the Law of Moses and before the Lord.

^{5 (con’t)} **shall bring the blood and sprinkle the blood all around on the altar**

Again, the translation does not give the correct sense of what is done with the blood. It is not sprinkled, but splashed or scattered. The word is *zaraq*. The word for “sprinkle” is *nazah*, and it will not be seen in Leviticus until verse 4:6. I will remind you of this from time to time so that you have the correct sense of what is happening. If your translation says “sprinkle” instead of “splash,” “scatter,” “throw,” “dash,” or the like, make a note of it.

The blood of the animal was taken and literally cast upon the sides of it. One does not sprinkle from a bowl. Instead, they cast it forth. There is specificity here which demands attention. The purpose of this blood being splashed on the altar “expresses one’s complete, voluntary surrender, and readiness to die while yet living” (Lange). The offeror’s blood is what should be poured out; a substitute, however, is taken in his place.

This was, at least in type and picture, the most important part of the rite. Leviticus 17:11 will tell us that the life is in the blood. Therefore, the life is transferred by the hands of the offeror on the substitute to the hands of the priest as he receives it in the bowl where it is then cast out unto God.

In type, it points to Christ who poured out His blood for us, and yet as High Priest, He then offered it to God. The same word for “offer” in verse 3 is now translated as “bring” here. The offering simply transfers from offeror to priest. This was all accomplished through His work on the cross. He is the ultimate *olah*, or burnt offering to the Lord, and He is the Priest who brings that offering to God.

As this is what Christ did for us, when we are in Christ, then that same yielding on our part is reckoned as acceptable to God. However, even our very best services and offerings to God, are still not acceptable without the covering of Christ’s blood. Only as

seen through what He has done can the things we do be considered in that same acceptable light.

As a note, Alfred Edersheim says that there was, “A red line all round the middle of the altar marked that **above** it the blood of sacrifices intended to be eaten, **below** it that of sacrifices wholly consumed, was to be sprinkled” (Pulpit). This is not in the Bible, but Edersheim’s commentary is considered an invaluable tool for understanding what occurred in the tabernacle and temple rites.

⁵ (con’t) **that is by the door of the tabernacle of meeting.**

The words “is by” are inserted. It says, “that door tent (of) meeting.” Again, the altar is directly connected to the entrance of the tent of meeting. Despite the laver standing between the two, it is the altar which grants access to move further toward God. It represents the sacrifice of Christ on our behalf, who is the Door as we are told in John 10:9. Each detail points to Christ.

⁶ **And he shall skin the burnt offering**

The actions performed on the sacrifice would be accomplished by the priests, not by the offeror. However, the priests could also designate Levites to assist in the work. This is seen, for example, in 2 Chronicles 29:34 –

“But the priests were too few, so that they could not skin all the burnt offerings; therefore their brethren the Levites helped them until the work was ended and until the other priests had sanctified themselves, for the Levites were more diligent in sanctifying themselves than the priests.”

The skinning of the animal was done for a couple reasons. The first was practical, the second was typical. First, the skin had value for clothing and for use in scrolls for writing, among other things. The skins belonged to the priest who officiated at the sacrifice.

However, in type, we see that in slaying the animal, the life departs, but in the skinning, the old appearance of life is removed. This is then typical of the transformation which Christ went through. At the same time, the transfer of the skin to the priest was an act of transferring Christ’s righteousness.

Just as God covered Adam and Eve with skins to cover their nakedness, the transfer of the skin gives the same idea. It is emblematic of the temporary covering which is

imparted until we are finally glorified and bear Christ's true image. At that time we too shall appear as He is. Paul speaks of this transformation in 1 Corinthians 15 –

“The first man *was* of the earth, *made* of dust; the second Man *is* the Lord from heaven. ⁴⁸ As *was* the *man* of dust, so also *are* those *who are made* of dust; and as *is* the heavenly *Man*, so also *are* those *who are* heavenly. ⁴⁹ And as we have borne the image of the *man* of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly *Man*.” 1 Corinthians 15:47-49

6 (con't) **and cut it into its pieces.**

After the animal is skinned, it would then be divided according to its parts. The word is *nathakh*, a rare word which means “to divide by joints.” An animal will not fully burn if it is not divided in this way. But by doing this, it could be piled onto the altar and fully burnt.

The dividing of the animal is, in type, looking to the many aspects and offices of Christ which are recorded in the gospels. After His work was accomplished, and upon His death, all of these together became a whole burnt offering to God. Each was consumed upon the altar as a satisfaction of the law which He had fulfilled.

⁷ The sons of Aaron the priest shall put fire on the altar, and lay the wood in order on the fire.

The special mentioning of the priests concerning the fire and wood is because no other person could touch the altar as it was considered most holy. If they did, they became devoted to God. That was recorded in Exodus 30:29.

Understanding that, care still needs to be taken here to understand the context, and so we need to go forward to the first lighting of the fire on this altar. It is found in Leviticus 9:23, 24 –

“Then the glory of the Lord appeared to all the people, ²⁴ and fire came out from before the Lord and consumed the burnt offering and the fat on the altar. When all the people saw *it*, they shouted and fell on their faces.”

That initial fire was never to go out, as is seen in Leviticus 6:13 –

“A fire shall always be burning on the altar; it shall never go out.”

That initial fire was lit by the Lord. From that time on, it was never to go out, even when the altar was transferred from place to place there is no stated provision that it would be extinguished. The fire is the Lord's doing, and so to "put fire on the altar" signifies feeding the fire with wood. When an offering was made, the wood would then be arranged for such an offering.

This is a picture of the consequences of sin. It is emblematic of the eternal fire of the Lake of Fire where all sin will finally be consumed. Either one's sin is consumed by Christ and thus forever removed from the offender, or their sin will be consumed when they are cast into that final place of God's judgment. There are no other options. The pictures are given to show us the consequences of our choices.

⁸Then the priests, Aaron's sons, shall lay the parts, the head, and the fat in order on the wood that *is* on the fire upon the altar;

Again, only the sons of Aaron, who were the priests of Israel, were allowed to touch or work with the altar. They would take the animal and lay its parts out in a particular order which is believed to have resembled as closely as possible the order in which they were when the animal was alive.

The head and the fat are explicitly named because they, together with the pieces, complete the whole animal with the exception of its blood and hide. Again, it looks to Christ's death. He died wholly upon the cross rather than some other type of execution, such as being drawn and quartered, beheaded, or the like.

His entire body was an offering to God as a whole burnt offering. The blood and the hide excepted, because the life is in the blood, and because He was so marred that He was otherwise unrecognizable, as is recorded by Isaiah.

The word for fat here is *peder*. This is the first of only three times it is seen, all are in Leviticus. It comes from a primitive root meaning to be greasy. Thus, it is the suet or fat. This would increase the flame, and thus the picture of judgment we are to see. Even this was offered, wholly and completely to God.

⁹but he shall wash its entrails and its legs with water.

These parts are specifically said to be washed for two reasons. The first is because of the word translated as burn in this verse, and the second is because of what that then

pictures. The innards of the animal were washed as a picture of the inward purity of Christ. There was no defilement in Him at all.

The *kerá*, or leg, specifically signifies from the knee to the ankle. This is the part of the body which would pick up worldly defilement. This is seen in the washing of the feet throughout the Bible as symbolic of washing away worldly defilement. This is why Jesus said in John 13:10, “He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet.”

Abraham understood this and brought water to wash the Lord’s feet when He arrived at his tent in Genesis 19:2. For this reason, the legs along with the entrails were washed. The animal pictures the purity of Christ, offered up to God as a perfect offering.

⁹ (con’t) **And the priest shall burn all on the altar as a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire, a sweet aroma to the Lord.**

The word “burn” here is not the regular word which means “to consume.” Instead, it is *qatar*, or “to make sacrificial smoke.” It is the word used to describe the burning of incense. This offering, picturing Christ in all ways, is an *olah isheh reakh nikhoakh l’Yehovah* – “a burnt sacrifice by fire, a savor sweet to Yehovah.” Paul explains this for us in Ephesians 5 –

“Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. ² And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.” Ephesians 5:1, 2

*A burnt offering, a bull is presented at the altar
It has value and it could be used for other things
But in presenting this bull, I shall not falter
For in giving it to the Lord, my heart rejoices and sings*

*For to Him it is a sweet smelling aroma, pleasant and nice
And my heart delights in offering such as this
It is a perfect bull, and thus an acceptable sacrifice
It is as if sending to heaven an aromatic kiss*

*Bless the Lord who has accepted my offering
Bless the Lord who has received me because of it
He has accepted from my hand this proffering
To Him through the bull my soul I do submit*

II. A Sacrifice from the Flock (verses 10-13)

¹⁰ ‘If his offering *is* of the flocks—of the sheep or of the goats—as a burnt sacrifice, he shall bring a male without blemish.

The bull was the more expensive animal, and so it would normally be the richer person who offered one. Now an allowance for the less-wealthy is provided. The offering could be of either the sheep or the goats, but it was still to be a male without blemish. The sheep would have been the preferred animal, but the goat was also considered acceptable. And both, like the bull also, are seen as types of Christ elsewhere in Scripture.

The bull looks to Christ’s strength and enduring labors. The sheep looks to His innocence, harmlessness, and quiet patience. The goat looks to His human nature where he was seen in the likeness of sinful flesh, though He was Himself without sin. However, our sin penalty was imputed to Him.

Because the directions would be the same for these animals as were given for the bull, they are not repeated. Only those requirements which further define the instructions are given, such as in the next verse...

¹¹ He shall kill it on the north side of the altar before the Lord;

The north side is now specified as the place of slaughter. There is a reason for this. In verse 16, the ashes and refuse were to the east of the altar. Also, the laver was to the west, and the ascent to the altar was said by Josephus to be on the south. If Josephus is correct, the north was then the most conducive to be used for this purpose.

The north being set aside in this manner is probably more importantly a picture of where Christ would later die. In Psalm 48, we read this –

“Beautiful in elevation,
The joy of the whole earth,
Is Mount Zion on the sides of the north,” Psalm 48:2

On the “sides of the north,” meaning Jerusalem the city, is the place where the cross of Christ was. Thus the slaying of the animal on the north side of the altar was an anticipatory look at the crucifixion of Christ, dying on the north sides of Zion.

And further, the word for “north” is *tsaphon*, which means hidden or dark, and it even gives the sense of gloomy. It comes from *tsaphan*, which gives the idea of hiding, and even treasure or treasuring up something.

The death of the animal, symbolic of the work of Christ was the dark side of His ministry, and yet, it is in death that He was treasured and protected, having fulfilled the law. Now for those in Christ, we are hidden in Him and likewise treasured until the day of redemption. This is alluded to several times in Scripture, such as in Psalm 27 –

For in the time of trouble
He shall hide me in His pavilion; (*tsaphan*)
In the secret place of His tabernacle
He shall hide me;
He shall set me high upon a rock. Psalm 27:5

Paul also says in Colossians 3:3 that we have died, and our life is hidden with Christ in God. Every detail points us to Jesus.

¹¹ (con't) **and the priests, Aaron’s sons, shall sprinkle its blood all around on the altar.**

As before, the blood was splashed, thrown, dashed, or cast, but it was not sprinkled. Please put a note of correction in your KJV.

¹² **And he shall cut it into its pieces, with its head and its fat; and the priest shall lay them in order on the wood that *is* on the fire upon the altar;**

In what is known as a zeugma, one verb here is used for the action involving more than one noun. The action of cutting is referring to both the pieces, and to the head and the fat. This is not uncommon in Hebrew, nor is it in English. If I say that John lost his wallet and his temper, I am using a zeugma. This is what is occurring here in verse 12. It is the same action as that of which occurred with the bull in the earlier verse though.

¹³ **but he shall wash the entrails and the legs with water. Then the priest shall bring *it* all and burn *it* on the altar; *it is* a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire, a sweet aroma to the Lord.**

The same procedures for the sheep or the goat were to be followed as for that of a bull. The requirements do not change based on status or wealth. All must be perfect, all must die in the same manner, all must be purified in the same way, and all were to be

considered as a sweet smelling savor to the Lord. Each animal pictures Christ in a different way, but in the end, each pictures the same perfect Christ.

*A lamb precious and pure is given
For to my God, I desire to provide my very best
He has brought me to the place of abundant livin'
And to please Him is my heart-filled quest*

*How good and pleasant it is to offer the lamb
I pray that He is pleased with the condition of my heart
I love my Lord God, the great I AM
And so to Him this precious lamb I do impart*

*May the Lord accept this offering in my place
And look with favor upon me as I go my way
May the Lord turn to me His glorious shining face
And may He bless my steps each and every day*

III. A Sacrifice of Birds (verses 14-17)

¹⁴ ‘And if the burnt sacrifice of his offering to the Lord is of birds, then he shall bring his offering of turtledoves or young pigeons.

In contrast to the four-legged animals, an offering of birds could be made. In this, only two were allowed. The first is the *tor*, or turtledove. The second is the *yonah*, or dove, also termed a pigeon. And so, in all, five types of animals are allowed.

Five being the number of grace, it is fitting that this many have been allowed. The grace of God in Jesus Christ is realized in the five allowable burnt offerings. And interestingly, they correspond to the five that were requested of Abraham in Genesis 15 –

“So He said to him, Bring Me a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old female goat, a three-year-old ram, a turtledove, and a young pigeon.” Genesis 15:9

Allowing these birds is an exceptional act of care for the poor among the people. This provision sets the Law of Moses apart from the others in this regard. The turtledoves are said to appear in large numbers in early April and are easily captured before migrating again. The pigeons, or doves, are common in the land and have several broods each

year, making them easy to capture when young and abundant enough to do so. They are also easy to keep and maintain.

As you can see, there is no restriction on age for the turtledoves because they were always in the prime during their short time of migration in the land. However, pigeons were only considered in the prime when young. If a man would reject an older pigeon as a meal, it would be wrong to offer it to the Lord.

These birds picture Christ in their simplicity, purity, and humility. But further, the affection of the dove for their mate makes them a splendid picture of Christ who is so affectionate for His people that He came to dwell among them and give Himself for them.

15 The priest shall bring it to the altar,

There is no laying of the hands on the bird, probably because the bird was transferred by hand to the priest. Thus there is still the symbolic transfer of guilt seen in the act.

15 (con't) wring off its head,

The word “wring” here is translated from a word, *malaq*, which is only found here and in Leviticus 5:8. It is not really known what is being said. It could mean either wring its neck, but not take off its head, or it could mean to completely sever the head. Scholars argue; no one is sure. It seems that what is done with it later would necessitate wringing the head completely off, but verse 5:8 complicates that notion. Either way, the bird dies at the altar, just as the other animals do.

15 (con't) and burn it on the altar;

The order here does follow the Hebrew. It says that it is to be burned after its neck is wrung, but before the blood is said to be drained out. The order then is reversed from what must actually occur. Despite this, the same word is used here as for the four-legged animals. It is an offering of a sweet smell, rather than merely a burning up of the sacrifice. And thus, even the small bird pictures Christ who was offered up to God in this manner.

15 (con't) its blood shall be drained out at the side of the altar.

The word for “drained” is *matzah*, which means to suck out. And so by implication it means to drain or even to squeeze out. As there was not enough blood to be gathered in a basin, and due to the small size of the bird, the blood was simply pressed out of it and onto the altar’s side.

Once again, the life is in the blood, and so it forms a picture of Christ whose blood was shed for sinful man, even the poorest of our species. None are exempt from His grace.

16 And he shall remove its crop with its feathers and cast it beside the altar on the east side, into the place for ashes.

A couple new words in the Bible. The first is the crop, or *murah*. It is only found here, and it signifies the alimentary canal. It comes from *ra’ah* which means “something conspicuous,” and thus it is the part of the bird which is prominently displayed.

The second is the *notsah*, or “plumage.” It is seen just four times. Here, in Job, and twice in Ezekiel. Like the animals which were skinned, the birds had their feathers removed, signifying the complete change in appearance. Just as Christ was marred beyond recognition, so were both the animals and the birds.

The third word is *deshen*, or ashes. However, it comes from the verb *dashen*, which means “to grow fat,” and thus it is the ashes of fat, and not ashes in general.

In all, the bird had its crop and its feathers removed, and then those were cast to the east side of the altar. This was the place furthest removed from the Holy of Holies, and it thus signifies that the place where uncleanness is, it being the place furthest from where the Lord dwells.

17 Then he shall split it at its wings, but shall not divide it completely;

What this is saying, is that he is to grab the wings of the bird and pull them so that the bird is split, exposing its insides, but the bird is not to be pulled completely apart. This then answers to the placement of the larger animals on the altar in a set manner. The animal would be too big to burn otherwise, but it was to still be in an order which showed that it was one animal.

The bird, being smaller, did not need to be divided up. It remained whole, which again makes the same picture of Christ as the animals did before. Christ’s body remained intact, but the inward parts were exposed, revealing only sincerity and truth. This is

what David referred to concerning the condition of one who pleases God when he said, “Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts” (Psalm 51:6).

17 (con’t) and the priest shall burn it on the altar, on the wood that *is* on the fire.

Once again, we are reminded that this is a sweet smelling burning, not merely something burnt up with the use of the word *qatar*, or a fragrance like incense. The fire is the Lord’s, the wood is the cross, and the sacrifice is pure, undefiled, and acceptable. And so...

17 (fin) *It is* a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire, a sweet aroma to the Lord.

The same words are used again as were seen in verses 9 and 13. The repetition indicates that the offering of the poorest person is just as acceptable to the Lord as that of the richest man with the most splendid ox. The sacrifice comes solely down to the heart and intent of the offeror.

This is evident in the rite which is conducted, and in what is considered acceptable concerning the offerings. The one who offers was acknowledging that they were spiritually dying in the offering, but that a substitute was requested to be reckoned in his place. Thus, they were in essence uniting to the Lord through this vicarious act. In turn, they were then expected to conduct their lives in the manner which the offering was accepted.

To not do so would nullify the purpose of the offering. This is seen in the words of Isaiah, words which are repeated numerous times in the Old Testament, and which are then repeated in the New as well –

“To what purpose *is* the multitude of your sacrifices to Me?’

Says the Lord.

‘I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams

And the fat of fed cattle.

I do not delight in the blood of bulls,

Or of lambs or goats.” Isaiah 1:11

The Lord wearied of their offerings because their offerings were wearisome. There was no heart in them. The people treated their status as one which was deserved. One who deserves favor does not need grace, nor do they need a substitute to make them acceptable before God.

But the very fact that the various offerings were made, was intended to show them that they needed more than what they inherently possessed. We will see more types of offerings as we continue on through the book, but for the burnt offering let us consider it one more time.

The various aspects of the offering are that it was brought volitionally by the offeror. It was offered in a vicarious manner, meaning that the placing of the hands on the animal was intended to relay that the animal was taking the place of the offeror. The animal was slaughtered and its blood, evidence of the ending of its life, was poured out. And then the offering was wholly burnt up on the altar.

From these acts, the people should have grasped that there was a disconnect between them and God. The very fact that an offering is made shows this. If someone was inherently acceptable to Him, then any offering of this type would be pointless.

Further, the fact that such offerings needed to be repeated, as did the other types of offerings we will see, shows us that they could never truly cause to happen what they were intended to cause to happen. If they did, then one such offering would be made, and it would never need to be made again. But such was not the case.

This was therefore true on both an individual level and on a national level. Neither was made perfect by the mandates of the law which showed them that perfection was necessary, and that they were, in fact, imperfect.

Understanding this, there is the truth which could have been deduced by anyone who thought it through to a logical conclusion. If nobody *was* perfect, as is indicated by the *need* for sacrifices, and if nobody *was made* perfect as is indicated by the *need for continued* sacrifices, then only a perfect Person could fulfill what these sacrifices were intended to mean.

Why a person? Because the animals didn't work. Why a perfect Person? Because anyone who needed to offer a sacrifice other than himself was obviously imperfect, and all had to offer sacrifices other than themselves. Logically, there had to be an end to these things for perfection to come.

When Jeremiah promised a New Covenant, it meant that the Old Covenant must at some point be fulfilled. And thus, it meant that a perfect Person was anticipated who would fulfill it. This Man then, would be the fulfillment of each and every one of these

sacrifices and offerings. If such is not the case, then He didn't fulfill the law, but fulfill it He did.

This is why we look for Jesus in each precept and on every page. In so doing, we seek and then we find the One who came and did what God promised would occur. Now, the Burnt Offering is behind us. Next will come the Grain Offering, then the Peace, then the Sin, and then the Trespass Offerings. And from there we will go on to more offering details.

If we can just remember to keep looking for Christ, these things will go quickly, they will educate perfectly, and they will satisfy completely. Otherwise, the list of offerings is long, tedious, and seemingly irrelevant to our Christian walk. But understanding them will open up our life in Christ in a much deeper way.

Closing Verse: *"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. ² And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." Romans 12:1, 2*

Next Week: *Leviticus 2:1-16 Here comes a completely different type of proffering... (The Grain Offering) (3rd Leviticus Sermon)*

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if you have a lifetime of sin heaped up behind you, He can wash it away and purify you completely and wholly. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Burnt Offering

He shall kill the bull before the Lord
And the priests, Aaron's sons, next to do
Shall bring the blood and sprinkle the blood
All around on the altar, as I am instructing you

That is by the door of the tabernacle of meeting
This task they shall be completing

And he shall skin the burnt offering

And cut it into its pieces
So shall they handle this proffering

The sons of Aaron the priest
Shall put fire on the altar
And lay the wood in order on the fire
In this they shall not falter

Then the priests, Aaron's sons
Shall lay the parts, the head, and the fat also
In order on the wood
That is on the fire upon the altar; there it shall go

But he shall wash its entrails and its legs with water
And the priest shall burn all on the altar as a burnt sacrifice
An offering made by fire
A sweet aroma to the Lord, pleasing and nice

If his offering is of the flocks—
Of the sheep or of the goats—as a burnt sacrifice
He shall bring a male without blemish
Only this will suffice
He shall kill it on the north side
Of the altar before the Lord
And the priests, Aaron's sons, shall sprinkle its blood
All around on the altar, according to this word

And he shall cut it into its pieces
With its head and its fat
And the priest shall lay them in order on the wood
That is on the fire upon the altar; where the fire is at

But he shall wash the entrails and the legs with water
Then the priest shall bring it all and burn it on the altar

It is a burnt sacrifice,
An offering made by fire, a sweet aroma to the Lord
An offering both pleasing and nice

And if the burnt sacrifice of his offering
To the Lord is of birds
Then he shall bring his offering of turtledoves or young pigeons
According to these words

The priest shall it to the altar bring
Wring off its head, and burn it on the altar
Its blood shall be drained out at the altar's side
In these duties he shall not falter

And he shall remove its crop with its feathers
And cast it beside the altar on the east side
Into the place for ashes
To these instructions he shall abide

Then he shall split it at its wings
But shall not divide it completely
And the priest shall burn it on the altar
On the wood that is on the fire it shall burn sweetly
It is a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire
A sweet aroma to the Lord, such as I do require

Lord God, in ourselves we are not acceptable to You
But You have made a way for it to come about
Through the offering of Your Son who is faithful and true
We can approach You without fear or doubt

Thank You for this great thing You have done
And we shall thank You even unto eternal days
Marvelous! Wonderful! Stupendous! is Jesus Christ Your Son
And so to You, through Him we shall offer eternal praise

Hallelujah and Amen...

LEVITICUS 2:1-16 (THE GRAIN OFFERING)

Today we will go through 16 verses of a chapter which is often the downfall of many readers of the Bible. They quickly get through Genesis and the first half of Exodus. When they get to the repetition in Exodus, they start to simply read for the sake of reading, but without the joy of what the verses actually picture.

For us, those verses were literally filled with pictures of Christ. For the struggling reader of the final chapters of Exodus, they certainly come to Leviticus with great anticipation that a new book will bring many tasty delights, just like they saw earlier. The first chapter is read and mentally ignored, and by the time they finish the second chapter, they will turn the page and skim over what Chapter 3 might offer.

In seeing that it is basically the same as Chapters 1 & 2, they quietly close the book and put it on the shelf. "I'll come back to this soon. I just need a break." Many never return to this marvelous treasure again. Some walk away from it for years and years, but then they hear someone speak on the glory of what is concealed in it and they come back on fire once again.

This chapter, like the last, and like those to come, may seem irrelevant, outdated, and tedious to read on the surface, but when you're looking for Christ, nothing is irrelevant, outdated, or tedious. We just need to look for Him. Out of 16 verses, I suppose we will draw out 50 to 100 pictures of Him.

Text Verse: *"You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me. ⁴⁰ But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life." John 5:39, 40*

Jesus wasn't talking about the New Testament when He said this. It didn't exist. Rather, He was speaking to the people of Israel about their Scriptures. We call them the Old Testament. And when He said that they testify of Him, He meant that they did so wholly and completely.

This is the beauty of studying these seemingly repetitive and tedious passages. They are filled with the glory of the Lord. When the New Testament writers explain what He did, they use the same symbolism that they grew up with while hearing their writings. They came to the marvelous understanding that all of these things were about Him.

The grain offerings today follow logically after the burnt offerings of Chapter 1. The burnt offering is as a life given up wholly to the Lord. The grain offerings will look to our works in the Lord which are acceptable because of His works. Each step takes us through a picture of our own redemption and life in Christ.

Let us never grow weary of this pursuit of Christ from the Old Testament. In the end, our understanding of the New will be deepened and enriched by what we see with each new revelation of that which was hidden. Yes, it's all to be found in His superior word. And so let's turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. The Simple Grain Offering (verses 1-3)

¹ 'When anyone offers a grain offering to the Lord,

The next offering to be laid out in Leviticus takes the entire chapter to explain. It is the grain offering. The word in Hebrew is *minkhah*, and it indicates that which is bestowed, or a donation. It is generally a gift made from an inferior to a superior. John Lange notes that –

“It signifies not so much *resignation as giving, or a return*, in the sense of childlike thankfulness, resignation of the support of life, of the enjoyment of life. Its motive is not through a divine demand as the performance of a duty or a debt, but through an instinctive desire of communion with Jehovah.”

However, despite this possibly being the case, that this is an offering of thankfulness and instinctive desire, it is still outlined and specified here in Leviticus. There are several sound reasons for this. The first is that when such an offering is to be made, it needs to be presented in a manner which is acceptable to the Lord.

The next is that each offering must prefigure Christ. As no offering apart from Christ is truly acceptable to God, then this is a logical, and even necessary, deduction. And thirdly, Lange may be a bit over-zealous in stating that it is an instinctive desire. If it is, it is one easily quenched in man. How many of us would offer an offering to God if we were not somehow taught or instructed to do so? Very few indeed! As Adam Clarke clarifies –

“It is such an offering as what is called natural religion might be reasonably expected to suggest: but alas! so far lost is man, that even thankfulness to God for the fruits of the

earth must be taught by a Divine revelation; for in the heart of man even the seeds of gratitude are not found, till sown there by the hand of Divine grace.” Adam Clarke

Clark is correct in this, but there is even more. Even if the offering is mandated, and the offeror comes forward as mandated to make an offering, and he does it in accord with the specifications, it does not mean that the offering will be acceptable to the Lord. This is seen throughout the Old Testament, such as in Amos 5 –

“I hate, I despise your feast days,
And I do not savor your sacred assemblies.
²² Though you offer Me burnt offerings and your grain offerings,
I will not accept *them*,
Nor will I regard your fattened peace offerings.
²³ Take away from Me the noise of your songs,
For I will not hear the melody of your stringed instruments.
²⁴ But let justice run down like water,
And righteousness like a mighty stream.” Amos 5:22

An offering not made in faith and with a right heart before God is loathsome to Him. This is proven from the very first time this type of offering was seen. It was in Genesis 4 when Cain and Abel brought their *minkhah*, or offerings, to the Lord. Abel’s offering, according to Hebrews 11, was of faith. Cain’s was not and it was not considered acceptable to the Lord.

The next time the *minkhah* was seen was in the offering that Jacob used to pacify his brother Esau after his many years in exile in Padam Aram. It is also the type of offering that Joseph’s brothers made to him when they came before him as the ruler in Egypt.

Because of the use of it in this passage, it generally became common to associate the *minkhah* with a bloodless offering only. Here in verse 1, the offering is said to apply to “anyone.” The word is *nephesh*, which means “soul.” In the burnt offering of the previous chapter, an *adam*, or man, was to bring the offering.

¹ (con’t) **his offering shall be of fine flour.**

Here the word *soleth*, or “fine,” is used. It was first seen in Genesis 18:6 when the Lord and two angels appeared to Abraham at his tent. He offered to make them a meal while they waited. When they agreed, it said this –

“So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah and said, “Quickly, make ready three measures **of fine** meal; knead *it* and make cakes.” Genesis 18:6

It is from an unused root meaning to strip; flour, as chipped off; and thus fine. It is generally considered, even when not specifically stated, that wheat was the flour used in such an offering. It would be the best of things offered to the greatest of Beings, meaning the Creator. In this, it is a picture of Christ, the first and finest grain of wheat, as He alluded to Himself in John 12:24 –

“Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain.”

It is a fitting emblem of Christ who is the Bread of life, and the One who thus provides everlasting life to those who partake of Him. Thus the offering is an acknowledgment of this to God.

It should be noted that the grain which is offered came from God, but it has been modified by man in the grinding process. Thus a type of work is involved in the picture. It is a confession that the works we do are to be performed in Christ, and are due only to Him. This is seen in the next words...

^{1 (con't)} **And he shall pour oil on it,**

The word for “pour” is *yatsaq*. It means to cast, as in casting bronze in a mold. From this, the idea of pouring is seen. One pours molten metal into a cast. Here the oil is poured onto the flour. It is a picture of the anointing of the Holy Spirit, as it is throughout the Bible. The term “Messiah” signifies the Anointed One, as does “Christ” in Greek. It thus gives us the idea of divine grace.

^{1 (con't)} **and put frankincense on it.**

After the oil, frankincense is added. It is an expensive and fragrant resin which exudes from a shrub and is collected for incense, perfume, and the like. In Hebrew, it is *levonah*. This comes from the word *lavan*, meaning “brick” and so it gives the idea of “white,” perhaps because of its smoke.

The concept of a brick in the Bible is one of human work. At the tower of Babel, the people made *lavan*, or bricks in order to work their way to heaven. In Egypt, the people were forced to make brick without straw and were unable to perform their duties. In

both instances, pictures were being made of man's futile attempt at pleasing God through works. Their brick-making was tainted and unacceptable.

Here, the *levonah* pictures the acceptable works of Christ which are offered to God. Therefore, we see Christ's satisfaction through His work, and His acceptable intercession for us because of it. In other words, without Christ, the works of preparing the fine flour of the meal offering would be unacceptable to God. Only with Christ in the picture are the works acceptable.

As this will be burnt on the altar, it indeed pictures His intercession for us. There is no such thing as going to God without a mediator. In Israel, the high priest was that mediator, but he only prefigured the true Mediator, Christ, who is seen in this offering. Once the frankincense is added, it was then brought to the priests...

² He shall bring it to Aaron's sons, the priests, one of whom shall take from it his handful of fine flour and oil with all the frankincense.

Once the offering is brought to the priests, the attending priest was to take a handful of the flour and oil, but all of the frankincense was to be gathered up in the handful. The word "handful" is *qamats*. It is a verb which means "grasp with the hand," or "take a handful." The Hebrew repeats the noun form of the word, and thus it reads, "...and take a handful from there, a full handful." In this handful was to be all of the frankincense.

^{2 (con't)} And the priest shall burn *it as* a memorial on the altar, an offering made by fire, a sweet aroma to the Lord.

This full handful, including all of the incense, was to be burnt on the brazen altar where the other offerings were burnt. The word for "burn" signifies a burning of incense. Therefore, it is more than a mere burning, but one which is to be, as is then noted, a sweet aroma to the Lord.

This portion was to be an *azkarah*, or a memorial offering. This is the first of seven times that the *azkarah* will be mentioned, all but one time will be in Leviticus. It comes from the word *zakar* which means "to remember." Thus it is as a memorial.

Everything about this points us to Christ. The frankincense is His work. This is why all of it is burnt. Our works are only acceptable if they are done in Him. The oil, the grain, the words used, each aspect is to lead us to an understanding of what Christ has done for us,

and which then makes our works acceptable to God. Thus, the memorial is of what Christ has done. Without it, there would not be anything worthy of remembering.

It must be noted that the word used in the Greek translation of the Old Testament for “memorial” is the same as that which is used in Acts 10:4 when speaking of the prayers and alms of Cornelius –

“Your prayers and your alms have come up for a memorial before God.”

This is not without importance in understanding that the faith of Gentiles was considered as a memorial which led them to Christ where they could then be sealed with the Holy Spirit. God is looking for faith in His faithless creatures. When that faith is united with belief in Christ, it leads to salvation.

³The rest of the grain offering shall be Aaron’s and his sons’.

It would make no sense for the offeror to receive back his offering, and the memorial portion was satisfactory for the picture of Christ and His work. Therefore, all that was left of the offering, was given to the priests as their portion. This is important because...

^{3 (con’t)} It is most holy of the offerings to the Lord made by fire.

What was not burnt up was still considered as wholly offered up to the Lord by the offeror. It was *qodesh qadashim*, or “holy of holies” to the Lord. Unlike the offerings which were completely burnt up on the altar which were not called holy of holies to the Lord, the term is necessary here.

The reason is that if it was burnt up, there could be no possibility of anything remaining being used for profane purposes. However, because this offering had something remaining, it was given this descriptor so that all would know that it was dedicated to the priests alone.

What will it take to please the Lord; how much work will do?

When will my deeds be enough?

I think I have satisfied Him through and through

But then I ponder about my life... all the bad stuff

And then I see that the bad outweighs the good

And so I do a bit more hoping it will be enough

*But the nagging sensation makes it understood
That doing wrong makes the good disappear like a puff*

*And then I heard that He had done it all for me
Jesus' works were perfect; God deemed it enough
Like frankincense, His life was accepted. How can it be?
His works are sufficient to cover all of my bad stuff*

II. The Baked Offerings (verses 4-13)

⁴ 'And if you bring as an offering a grain offering baked in the oven, it shall be unleavened cakes of fine flour mixed with oil,

This offering is one baked in a *tannur*, or oven. These are usually small firepots or even portable earthenware furnaces, but they can even be holes dug in the ground and coated with plaster. After bread was kneaded, it would be flattened out into a circular shape and hand-pressed against the inside of the oven. It would bake while adhering to the wall and then be removed.

The *tannur* are still used in parts of the world today. The same word for them is used to describe the smoking oven which represented the presence of God that Abraham saw in Genesis 15. In Isaiah and Malachi, the *tannur* represents divine judgment.

The bread is *khalot matsot*. *Khalah*, means "to pierce." Therefore it is pierced or punctured cakes. *Matsot* is unleavened bread. The word comes from a root meaning sweetness. These cakes were to be mixed with oil.

Each aspect again pictures Christ. There is the divine judgment on sin which was reckoned to Him on our behalf, seen in the *tannur*. There is the piercing of His body, seen in the *khalah*. There is the sweetness of His sinless life, seen in the *matsot*. And the divine/human life seen in the mixing in of the oil.

⁴ (con't) or unleavened wafers anointed with oil.

This is another type of bread, *raqiq*. It comes from *raqaq*, which means "to spit." So it is a thin cake, like a wafer. They are also unleavened, but are only anointed with oil. These likewise look to the offering of Christ.

In Leviticus 15:8, it will note that if a person defiled by a discharge were to spit, *raqaq*, on a person, they would be unclean. This bread then pictures Christ when He was spit on and beaten by the unclean Gentiles as is stated in Luke 18. This was prophesied in Isaiah, using the word *roq* which comes from *raqaq* -

"I gave My back to those who struck Me,
And My cheeks to those who plucked out the beard;
I did not hide My face from shame and spitting." Isaiah 50:6

But, this bread is said to be unleavened, "anointed" with oil. The word is *mashakh*. It is the same word used to identify the coming Messiah in Isaiah 61:1 -

"The Spirit of the Lord GOD *is* upon Me,
Because the LORD has anointed Me
To preach good tidings to the poor;
He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted,
To proclaim liberty to the captives,
And the opening of the prison to *those who are* bound." Isaiah 61:1

Thus, this pictures Christ as the sinless One anointed to fulfill the messianic pictures presented in the Old Testament.

⁵ But if your offering is a grain offering baked in a pan, it shall be of fine flour, unleavened, mixed with oil.

The next baked offering is one on a plate, or *makhabath*, This is the first of just five times it will be seen. The last is in Ezekiel 4:3 where it is used in an object lesson to Israel—

"Moreover take for yourself an **iron plate**, and set it *as* an iron wall between you and the city. Set your face against it, and it shall be besieged, and you shall lay siege against it. This *will be* a sign to the house of Israel."

The same fine flour is used; it was to be unleavened; and it was to be mixed with oil.

⁶ You shall break it in pieces and pour oil on it; it is a grain offering.

This bread is then broken into pieces, and then oil is poured on it. The symbolism here looks to protection from judgment because of the judgment rendered on the sinless

Christ. The pieces of the bread would signify many various aspects of His work, all fully mixed with the presence of the Spirit, seen in the mixing of the oil.

⁷ ‘If your offering is a grain offering *baked* in a covered pan, it shall be made of fine flour with oil.

The covered pan, or *markhesheth*, is introduced here and it will only be seen two times, both in Leviticus. It comes from the word *rakhash*, which means “to overflow.” It is only seen in Psalm 45 –

“My heart is **overflowing** with a good theme;
I recite my composition concerning the King;
My tongue *is* the pen of a ready writer.” Psalm 45:1

This final baked offering is also reflective of Christ where the purity of His life is literally saturated with the Spirit of God. His fully human and perfectly sinless nature, which is intricately bound to His divine nature, is that which overflows in goodness towards the objects of His affections.

⁸ You shall bring the grain offering that is made of these things to the Lord. And when it is presented to the priest, he shall bring it to the altar.

What is implied here is that whichever of the three offerings were prepared, it was done by the people before going to the sanctuary. When they were ready, they were brought to the Lord, meaning to the sanctuary. It is at that time that they were presented to the priest who then brought it to the altar. The lay people could not approach the altar because it was deemed as most holy.

Some scholars state that these offerings were also made with frankincense, but nothing it said of this. Verse 15 does seem to imply that all grain offerings would have it offered though, despite the lack of it being explicitly stated here.

⁹ Then the priest shall take from the grain offering a memorial portion, and burn *it* on the altar. *It is* an offering made by fire, a sweet aroma to the Lord.

Like the grain offering of fine flour, a memorial portion is taken out. The Hebrew uses the word *rum*, which indicates “to raise,” or “to exalt.” He exalts one portion above the rest as an offering which will be burned as a sweet aroma to the Lord. Again, the word for burn means more than just to consume. It indicates to be fragrant, like incense. It is

again, like before, a picture of Christ who was raised on the cross and exalted before God as a memorial portion to Him.

¹⁰ And what is left of the grain offering shall be Aaron's and his sons'. It is most holy of the offerings to the Lord made by fire.

The words are identical to Leviticus 2:3, word for word.

¹¹ 'No grain offering which you bring to the Lord shall be made with leaven, for you shall burn no leaven nor any honey in any offering to the Lord made by fire.

Both leaven, or yeast, and honey were not to be burnt upon the altar due to fermentation, a type of putrefaction. When heated, they would swell and froth, producing an appearance which represents moral evil. This prohibition is a negative one which looks only to the positives in Christ. Matthew Henry gives us his thoughts on verses 1-11 –

“Meat-offerings may typify Christ, as presented to God for us, and as being the Bread of life to our souls; but they rather seem to denote our obligation to God for the blessings of providence, and those good works which are acceptable to God. ... These meat-offerings are mentioned after the burnt-offerings: without an interest in the sacrifice of Christ, and devotedness of heart to God, such services cannot be accepted. Leaven is the emblem of pride, malice, and hypocrisy, and honey of sensual pleasure. The former are directly opposed to the graces of humility, love, and sincerity, which God approves; the latter takes men from the exercises of devotion, and the practice of good works. Christ, in his character and sacrifice, was wholly free from the things denoted by leaven; and his suffering life and agonizing death were the very opposites to worldly pleasure. His people are called to follow, and to be like him.” Matthew Henry

Every verse has thus far looked to the work of Christ. The next will in another way...

¹² As for the offering of the firstfruits, you shall offer them to the Lord,

This is a positive statement concerning the offering of leaven and/or honey. The word “them” is referring to these ingredients. When the firstfruits were offered, they would be included. This is seen, for example, in Leviticus 23 –

“You shall bring from your dwellings two wave *loaves* of two-tenths of an *ephah*. They shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven. *They are* the firstfruits to the Lord.” Leviticus 23:17

The honey could even be given as an offering itself, just as the yield of any crop or gathering. This is seen in 2 Chronicles 31:5 –

“As soon as the commandment was circulated, the children of Israel brought in abundance the firstfruits of grain and wine, oil and honey, and of all the produce of the field; and they brought in abundantly the tithe of everything.”

¹² (con’t) **but they shall not be burned on the altar for a sweet aroma.**

The prohibition is again stated. Repetition demands full attention to this precept. The picture of Christ is to be maintained at all costs and in all ways.

¹³ **And every offering of your grain offering you shall season with salt; you shall not allow the salt of the covenant of your God to be lacking from your grain offering. With all your offerings you shall offer salt.**

Salt has exactly the opposite effect of leaven or honey. Instead of corruption, it produces and signifies incorruption. It strengthens the food in which it is, and also preserves it. Thus, it is a sign of faithfulness and covenant keeping. It goes so far as to indicate the perpetual nature of the covenant. It will never be broken as long as it is in force. Jesus refers to this command in Mark 9:49, 50 –

“For everyone will be seasoned with fire, and every sacrifice will be seasoned with salt. ⁵⁰ Salt *is* good, but if the salt loses its flavor, how will you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace with one another.”

The inclusion of salt pictures Christ’s incorruption, having never sinned before God. It represents His covenant keeping nature, and even as One who will never break the covenant He makes.

It should be noted that the use of salt is never given a set measure in Scripture. Any amount, and indeed any greater amount, was acceptable. It was to be without limit. This is, in itself, a picture of Christ Jesus who is infinitely incorrupt, and for those who come through Him they are thus infinitely acceptable to God. There is no end to His

faithfulness, no end to His covenant keeping ability, and no end to His ability to preserve those who are in Him.

*An offering baked in an oven, an offering to the Lord
Another baked in a flat pan, mixed with oil
Another is heated in a covered pan, according to the word
In that pan it does boil*

*And then they are offered to the Lord
The priest takes a portion to the altar
And with it he presents salt of the covenant
In this duty he is never to falter*

*The salt of the covenant, it reminds us each time
Of the covenant faithfulness of our Lord
We wait in an anticipation wonderfully sublime
For Him to come as promised in the word*

*Send us now, O God, send us Jesus
We await the salvation promised so long ago to us*

III. The Grain of the Firstfruits (verses 14-16)

¹⁴ 'If you offer a grain offering of your firstfruits to the Lord,

The firstfruits here are, in Hebrew, *bikkurim*. They signify the first fruits of a crop which ripen, and are thus the “hasty fruits.” The word comes from *bakar* which means “to bear new fruit,” or “to constitute as first-born.”

In the Bible, there are two symbolic uses of the firstfruits. The first is a picture of Christ, and the second is a picture of the first of those who are in Christ. These pictures will be seen more clearly as we continue through Leviticus. For now, specifically, they point to the new birth in Christ, and thus to His resurrection.

¹⁴ (con't) you shall offer for the grain offering of your firstfruits green heads of grain roasted on the fire, grain beaten from full heads.

These are words filled with new or unique thoughts in Scripture. First, the “green heads” mentioned here is the Hebrew *aviv*. It is from an unused root meaning to be tender, and

thus green. Hence, it is a young ear of grain. From this, comes the name of the Hebrew month Aviv which is the first month of the redemptive calendar, and the time of year when these grains would be green. It is the March/April time-frame. This is the only time the word is used when speaking of the grains rather than the month named because of the grains.

The word for roasted is *qalah*. This is the first of four times it will be seen. It is identical to the word *qalah* which means dishonored or degraded. The idea is that the grains would be shriveled and wrinkled through the roasting, as a person is metaphorically when he is degraded.

And then is the word “beaten.” It is *geres*, and it is found only here and in verse 16 in the entire Bible. It indicates grain which is crushed.

And finally, there is the word *karmel*, which is translated as “full heads.” It is from the same root as *kerem*, or vineyard. The word gives the sense of fertile, or being fruitful. The hints and shadows of Christ are plenty here.

Aviv is the time of year when Christ was crucified, at the Passover. He was crucified at this time, but He was also resurrected at this time, thus He is the Firstfruits of the resurrection, as Paul notes explicitly in 1 Corinthians 15:20 & 23. In the time of His passion, He was degraded and dishonored, just as the grains imply.

He was also beaten, even crushed for our iniquities, just as Isaiah 53:5 states. And He came in the fullness of time, when there was a great field of harvest awaiting, just as the full heads of grain imply. He was the Firstfruits of many who would follow after. Every detail, again, points to Christ and what He has done for us.

Of this verse, Adam Clarke notes that eating parched half ripe ears is something the poor people would do. There has been a downward succession of these offerings, from the greatest to the least, just as there was in Chapter 1 with the burnt offerings. Clarke thus states –

“As God is represented as keeping a table among his people, (for the tabernacle was his house, where he had the golden table, shewbread, etc)., so he represents himself as partaking with them of all the aliments that were in use, and even sitting down with the poor to a repast on parched corn!”

This then is a beautiful picture of Christ who did not, and does not, shun any, even the poorest or basest of the people, but was and is welcoming to any and all who come to Him in faith and show faithfulness to the God who establishes His people.

¹⁵ And you shall put oil on it, and lay frankincense on it.

The offering would have oil added, and just as was stated above, it was to have *levonah*, or frankincense, added on it. Thus, it pictures Christ in exactly the same way as before. The oil is the presence of the Spirit, and only His works, or the works of those who are in Christ, are sufficient to please God. The symbolism shouts out the work of Christ.

¹⁵ (con't) It is a grain offering.

These words seem to indicate that all grain offerings were to have frankincense added to them. Even though several did not explicitly state this, it seems implied from these words that it is so. Regardless, this final offering explicitly states it. And the use is the same as before, just as our last verse of the chapter indicates...

¹⁶ Then the priest shall burn the memorial portion: *part* of its beaten grain and *part* of its oil, with all the frankincense, as an offering made by fire to the Lord.

The priest would take a memorial portion of the offering and all of the frankincense, and burn it on the altar, just as was noted before. And again, the word for “burn” indicates the burning of incense, not merely the consuming of what is laid there. The offering was to be as a sweet savor when offered by fire to the Lord.

As I said at the beginning of the sermon. So many people get to the chapters we are in, and they stop reading this precious treasure; this gift of God. But it is so rich with hints of Christ, and in understanding them, we have a much, much better appreciation for what is written in the New Testament. I would hope that the next time you wind your way through these chapters, that you would stop to ponder the unusual words, used once or maybe twice in the entire Bible and say, “The Lord put that word in here just for me to know Jesus a bit better.”

A sermon about how to make your day a bit nicer is as effective as your mood is on that day. But a look into the details of the Bible is worth much more to carry you through the longer term difficulties that we all must face. We can have the firm foundation that God has blessed us with these details to tell us that for those in Christ, there is a great and wonderful future which lies ahead.

The minute attention here concerning Christ is enough to let us know that we are now, and always will be, on the right track. Let us never waiver in this, knowing that His attention to the details of Christ translate directly into His attention on us because of Christ. And finally, if you have not yet received Him, why don't you make today the day. He looked after the poorest soul in Israel, giving them a chance to fellowship with Him intimately.

And you, if you are without Christ, you are far poorer than you might realize, but He will still fellowship with you if you will simply come with an offering of faith.

Closing Verse: *“So rend your heart, and not your garments;
Return to the Lord your God,
For He is gracious and merciful,
Slow to anger, and of great kindness;
And He relents from doing harm.
¹⁴ Who knows if He will turn and relent,
And leave a blessing behind Him—
A grain offering and a drink offering
For the Lord your God?” Joel 2:13, 14*

Next Week: Leviticus 3:1-17 (The Peace Offering) (4th Leviticus Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if you have a lifetime of sin heaped up behind you, He can wash it away and purify you completely and wholly. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Grain Offering

When anyone offers a grain offering to the Lord
His offering of fine flour shall it be
And he shall pour oil on it
And put frankincense on it; so it shall smell sweetly

He shall bring it to Aaron's sons, the priests
One of whom shall take from it
His handful of fine flour and oil
With all the frankincense, as to you I now submit
And the priest shall burn it

As a memorial on the altar, according to My word
An offering made by fire
A sweet aroma to the Lord

The rest of the grain offering shall be
Aaron's and his sons'
It is most holy of the offerings to the Lord made by fire
Thus it is for them; they the only ones

And if you bring as an offering a grain offering
Baked in the oven, yes this type of toil
It shall be unleavened cakes
Of fine flour mixed with oil

Or unleavened wafers anointed with oil
For something baked, in this you shall toil

But if your offering is a grain offering baked in a pan
It shall be of fine flour, unleavened, mixed with oil
You shall break it in pieces and pour oil on it
It is a grain offering; such is the grain offering's toil
If your offering is a grain offering baked in a covered pan
It shall be made of fine flour with oil
Thus you are to relay to them this plan

You shall bring the grain offering that is made
Of these things to the Lord
And when it is presented to the priest
He shall bring it to the altar, according to this word

Then the priest shall take
From the grain offering a memorial portion; now you have heard
And burn it on the altar
It is an offering made by fire, a sweet aroma to the Lord

And what is left of the grain offering
Shall be Aaron's and his sons'
It is most holy of the offerings to the Lord made by fire
It is for them; they are the only ones

No grain offering which you bring to the Lord
Shall be made with leaven according to this word
For you shall burn no leaven nor any honey
In any offering made by fire to the Lord

As for the offering of the firstfruits
You shall offer them to the Lord
But they shall not be burned on the altar
For a sweet aroma, with this you shall be in accord

And every offering of your grain offering
You shall season with salt; so shall you do
You shall not allow the salt of the covenant of your God
To be lacking from your grain offering, as I now instruct to you

With all your offerings you shall offer salt
In adhering to this, you shall not be found in fault

If you offer a grain offering of your firstfruits to the Lord
You shall offer for the grain offering
Of your firstfruits green heads of grain
Roasted on the fire, grain beaten from full heads as a proffering

And you shall put oil on it
And lay frankincense on it
It is a grain offering
So to you these details I now submit

Then the priest shall burn the memorial portion
Part of its beaten grain and part of its oil, according to this word
With all the frankincense
As an offering made by fire to the Lord

Time and time again, they came to do these things
Year after year they continued in this obligation
In anticipation of the One to whom the heart sings
They waited on the Messiah of the Hebrew nation
And He came right on time, the glorious Lord
He who was seen in each detail of the grain offering

And He fulfilled each picture according to the word
To God His life was made the final proffering

Thank You O God for what was done by Jesus
Thank You for what You did through Him for each of us

A covenant of salt, perfect and eternal
Was kept by You and fulfilled in what He alone could do
He has kept us from the pit, fiery and infernal
And so in His name, we send our praises to You

Hallelujah and Amen...

LEVITICUS 3:1-17

(THE PEACE OFFERING)

If you really want to get to know someone, you have them over for a meal. It is where the impersonal becomes personal. It is where the walls come down. And it is where real fellowship takes place. If God sent Jesus to atone for our sins and nothing else, we would be left with a void in our lives.

We could say, "I can't wait to go back to Eden, but I'm sorry the Lord won't be meeting us there." And if the process ended with our sanctification, we would still have a void. "It sure is great being in paradise, and it sure is great that we aren't living the lives we did before on earth, but it sure would be nice if the Lord would come by and spend some time with us.

But we don't have to worry about that. We already have Him coming by, and He will be coming by in an even more intimate way some wonderful day in the future.

There has been a logical sequence of offerings so far in the book of Leviticus. First was the burnt offering where life is given up wholly to the Lord. It is our coming to Christ and being saved. Chapter 1 explained that in detail.

Next there is the pursuit of that life through the process of sanctification. The grain offering revealed that to us. Through Him, our works in the Lord are acceptable. What He did makes it so for what we do. Chapter 2 gave us insights into that.

Today we will see the peace offering. It looks to our fellowship with the Lord as occurring in a most intimate way. Each step takes us through a picture of our own redemption and life in Christ. The Israelites were given a way of having this personal fellowship with the Lord by coming to Him through the offerings we will look at. They took them to the sanctuary, offered them up, and then received back a portion of what was offered. It showed them that they were, in fact, in fellowship with God. The two partook of the same meal, symbolizing this fellowship.

But that was only a taste of a greater fellowship which lay ahead. The Jews could come and fellowship with God, but the Gentiles were left out. There was a wall of separation between the two which prohibited us from drawing near to God. But in Christ, that wall is broken down...

Text Verse: *“For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, ¹⁵ having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, ¹⁶ and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. ¹⁷ And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. ¹⁸ For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.” Ephesians 2:14-18*

Now, through Christ, we have access, as Paul says, by one Spirit to the Father. But just what is the wall that Paul speaks of. Is it that we as Gentiles are granted access to the Father through observance of the law? No indeed! In fact, exactly the opposite is true.

The law did allow a type of access, but it also set up a wall all its own, restricting that access as well. They could come so far, but no further could they come. Paul explains exactly what the wall and the enmity is. He says it is “the law of commandments contained in ordinances.”

The very law which the Israelites adhered to is that wall. And that very same wall is abolished, not strengthened. It is true that we come to God through the law, but not through *our* observance of it. Rather, it is through Christ’s observance of it. In Him, the law is abolished and peace is restored. In Him, we now have full and unfettered access to God. This is what is seen in today’s verses. It’s all to be found in His superior word. And so let’s turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. An Offering of the Herd (verses 1–5)

¹ **‘When his offering is a sacrifice of a peace offering,**

So far in Leviticus, we have seen the instructions for the burnt offering in Chapter 1 and then the grain offering in Chapter 2. We now turn to the *shelem*, or peace offering, which will take the entire chapter as well. The words of this verse correspond to the words of Leviticus 1:3. They both introduce the type of offering to be explained from then on.

The *shelem* is a sacrifice, and it is a voluntary offering of thanks, and for alliance and friendship. Hence, the term “peace” offering is used. Some versions call it a “fellowship” offering, but the term peace, if understood from a Hebrew perspective, describes it fully.

It indicates a state of peace which speaks of harmony, prosperity, happiness, friendship, fellowship, and unity. We can sum it up with the words “wholeness & contentment.”

Whereas the burnt offering looked to a state of atonement, and the grain offering looked to the process of sanctification, the peace offering looks to a state of acceptance and interaction. This offering can be equated directly to the Lord’s Table, or communion, in the New Testament church.

In other words, with Christ as our *shelem*, or peace offering, we are united to Him, and thus we have fellowship and communion with God. This is what the peace offering did for Israel, and this is what Christ’s peace does for us. There is atonement, sanctification, and then true fellowship.

This particular offering was first mentioned in Exodus 20, right after the giving of the Ten Commandments and during the explanation of the Earthen Altar which would be used for offerings by the Israelites.

These offerings will be mentioned throughout the Old Testament, but the vast majority of times will be in Leviticus and Numbers. They are always spoken of in the plural with but one exception which is found in Amos 5:22.

There are actually three kinds of peace offerings which will be defined later. There is the thanksgiving, the vow, and the free-will offerings. The time allotted for the eating of the offering is the main thing which defines these subdivisions. These will be explained in Leviticus 7.

Unlike the previous two chapters, the term “most holy” is not used here. They will be called “holy” in Chapter 7, but the distinction is given to show that the people, along with the priests, could, and did, partake of the offerings.

¹ (con’t) **if he offers *it* of the herd, whether male or female,**

Here is something new concerning the offerings. Unlike those previously described, these could be either male or female. The two previous ones were solely in regard to God, being the best Being, and therefore only that which is preeminent was offered.

These peace offerings, however, stood in regard to the Lord being the Benefactor to His people, and therefore either was acceptable, male or female. This then follows through with what is stated in Galatians 3:28 –

“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”

There is strength and weakness in Christ. Strength in His obedience, and weakness in His humanity and suffering. Together we fellowship with God through Christ in both our weaknesses and in our strengths. It is for this reason that either a male or female is deemed acceptable to offer.

Also, the word for “female” here is *neqevah*. It was first used in Genesis 1:27 to describe the female as contrasted to the male. It hasn’t been seen since Genesis 7, and it will only be found in the books of Moses with but one exception, which is in Jeremiah 31:22. Without giving blushing specifics, it is a word which is based on the form which distinguishes a male from a female.

¹ (con’t) **he shall offer it without blemish before the Lord.**

Again like the other two offerings, this one is to be *tamim*, or perfect – without spot or blemish. It again takes us to a picture of Christ who is described in this manner in 1 Peter 1:19. Nothing defiled is acceptable to the Lord, picturing the perfect and undefiled Christ.

Although not yet specified in this chapter, the peace offering is one which is shared between the Lord and the people. Matthew Henry provides his insights into what lies ahead –

“The peace-offerings had regard to God as the giver of all good things. These were divided between the altar, the priest, and the owner. They were called peace-offering, because in them God and his people did, as it were, feast together, in token of friendship. The peace-offerings were offered by way of supplication. If a man were in pursuit of any mercy, he would add a peace-offering to his prayer for it. Christ is our Peace, our Peace-offering; for through him alone it is that we can obtain an answer of peace to our prayers. Or, the peace-offering was offered by way of thanksgiving for some mercy received. We must offer to God the sacrifice of praise continually, by Christ our Peace; and then this shall please the Lord better than an ox or bullock.” Matthew Henry

² **And he shall lay his hand on the head of his offering,**

Like the burnt offering, hands are laid upon the head of the offering before it is slaughtered. However, in this case, it would not be for confession of sin and a request for the substitute to die in the place of the offender.

Although not explicitly stated, there would be an utterance of thanks and praise for being allowed to fellowship through the sacrifice which would take place. It is exactly what we do in the Lord's Supper each week as is recorded in 1 Corinthians 11 –

“For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.” 1 Corinthians 11:26

Unlike the burnt offering of Chapter 1, there is nothing in these verses that corresponds to the idea of either acceptance or atonement. This offering implies that the offeror is already atoned for and accepted. Joseph Benson, citing Conradus, gives a wonderful description of the meaning of this gesture –

“This laying on of hands signifies devotion and faith, with an acknowledgment of the benefits, for which we can offer nothing of our own, but only return to God what we have received; that we may understand gratitude and thanksgiving to be the greatest sacrifices.” Conradus

^{2 (con't)} **and kill it *at* the door of the tabernacle of meeting;**

The Hebrew says “tent,” not “tabernacle.” The slaying was done at or around the brazen altar, but as noted from previous sermons, the altar and the door are intricately connected as if one. By saying it is at the door of the tent, it implies that the sacrifice is what opens the access through that door.

^{2 (con't)} **and Aaron's sons, the priests, shall sprinkle the blood all around on the altar.**

The Hebrew here says the blood will be “splashed” or “scattered” around the altar, not sprinkled. The blood was literally cast upon the sides of it. The specificity demands attention. The purpose of this blood being splashed on the altar “expresses one's complete, voluntary surrender, and readiness to die while yet living” (Lange).

In type, it points to Christ who poured out His blood for us, allowing us fellowship with God through Him. When we are in Christ, then that same yielding on our part is reckoned as acceptable to God. Fellowship is restored, and our thanks, vows, and offerings are deemed as acceptable to God once again.

³ Then he shall offer from the sacrifice of the peace offering an offering made by fire to the Lord.

This verse begins an even greater divergence from that of the burnt offering than we have already seen. Unlike that, which was wholly burnt up on the altar, this one is not so burnt up. Only a portion from it is to be burnt. This particular portion alone is to be by fire.

^{3 (con't)} The fat that covers the entrails and all the fat that *is* on the entrails,

Fat in the Bible signifies abundance. The fat around the entrails then signifies specifically health of life; its abundance. This is seen, for example, from David in Psalm 63 –

"My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness,
And my mouth shall praise *You* with joyful lips." Psalm 63:5

⁴ the two kidneys and the fat that *is* on them by the flanks,

Both kidneys with their attached fat were to be removed. The kidney's position within the body makes them almost inaccessible. When an animal is cut up, they will be the last organs which are reached. Because of this, the kidneys symbolize the hidden parts of man, and thus the mind.

The term *al ha'kesalim*, or "by the flanks," is new to Scripture. The *kesel* is seen just thirteen times, and it indicates the loin which is the seat of the leaf fat. The word is then elsewhere translated as both "confidence" and "foolish." The difference is in how it is applied. It can indicate the place where one puts their hope. This is seen, for example, in Psalm 78 –

"That the generation to come might know *them*,
The children *who* would be born,
That they may arise and declare *them* to their children,
⁷ That they may set their **hope** in God,
And not forget the works of God,
But keep His commandments;" Psalm 78:6, 7

It can also indicate that which is foolish –

“This is the way of **those who are foolish**,
And of their posterity who approve their sayings. *Selah*

¹⁴ Like sheep they are laid in the grave;

Death shall feed on them;

The upright shall have dominion over them in the morning;

And their beauty shall be consumed in the grave, far from their dwelling.”

-Psalm 49:13, 14

^{4 (con't)} **and the fatty lobe *attached* to the liver above the kidneys, he shall remove;**

The *yothereth*, or lobe above the liver, was also to be removed from the animal. The liver signifies the seat of emotions and feeling. It is used synonymously with disposition and character. The fat attached to it is thus representative of the entire liver. In Lamentations, Jeremiah says -

"My eyes fail with tears; my bowels are troubled; my liver is poured upon the earth, for the destruction of the daughter of my people because the children and the sucklings faint in the streets of the city." Lamentations 2:11 (Jubilee Bible)

All of this specificity is calling out for us to pay attention to it. We are to stop and question why certain things are demanded, and why other things are not mentioned.

⁵ **and Aaron's sons shall burn it on the altar upon the burnt sacrifice, which *is* on the wood that *is* on the fire,**

These things from verses 3 and 4 were to be burnt on the altar. The word for burn signifies incense, or a fragrant offering. All of these were, as it says, “upon the burnt sacrifice.” In other words, these were placed on top of the continual burnt offering which was the daily sacrifice of the lamb which was already on the altar.

The burnt offering signifies Christ, our Atonement. Upon that are then placed the things which represent the abundance of the very deepest parts of Christ the Man, and thus those same things in us who are in Christ Jesus. The fat is the abundance and health of life. The kidneys signify the mind and reasoning. The fat by the loins signifies where one places his confidence. And the fat lobe above the liver represents the emotions and feelings of the person.

These then were to be offered to the Lord because they symbolized His most intimate aspects, and ours as well. They are the very substance of who He is and who we are.

They are returned to Him by fire. They were offered to the Lord for fellowship to take place. And this is the same symbolism that is seen in the Lord's Supper now. Concerning our inward secrets, Paul says 1 Corinthians 11 –

“Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks *this* cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. ²⁸ But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. ²⁹ For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.” 1 Corinthians 11:27-29

⁵ (con't) **as an offering made by fire, a sweet aroma to the Lord.**

All of these things, representing the most intimate aspects of both Christ, and of us who are in Christ, are returned to God as a sweet incense to Him. This is what makes fellowship possible, and this is what is seen in the Old and in the New. It all points to Christ and our relationship with God through Him.

*An offering to God; an offering for peace
One which signifies fellowship so sweet
It stems from our daily trod, and in Christ it shall never cease
Because in Him our fellowship is complete*

*Cleanse us in our inward parts; lead us in Your peace
May we join together with You, O precious Lord
Purify our minds and hearts; may this joy never cease
Through Christ, may we always be in one accord*

*Thank You for the cross from whence atonement came
Upon that offering, we can now add an offering of peace
Together they point to the same great Name
Both look to Jesus where joyous fellowship will never, never cease*

II. An Offering of the Flock (verses 6–17)

⁶ If his offering as a sacrifice of a peace offering to the Lord is of the flock, *whether* male or female, he shall offer it without blemish.

The flock consists of both lambs and goats which will next be described separately. And again, like an animal of the herd, the offering could be either a male or a female. And

also like that of the herd, the animal must be without blemish. As before, the symbolism remains the same here. All of it points to Christ.

⁷ If he offers a lamb as his offering, then he shall offer it before the Lord.

It is argued that the word translated here as “lamb” is more rightly translated as a sheep. It signifies one full grown and in its prime. Either way, it is a word used only in the books of Moses to describe them.

⁸ And he shall lay his hand on the head of his offering, and kill it before the tabernacle of meeting; and Aaron’s sons shall sprinkle its blood all around on the altar.

The same process which was followed before with the animal of the herd is followed again here. It is generally believed that the one who is making the offering is also the one who kills the animal. After he has cut its throat, the priests would stand with a bowl to collect the blood before splashing it out. Again as before, it is the tent of meeting, not the tabernacle, and it does not say “sprinkle,” but rather “splash.”

⁹ Then he shall offer from the sacrifice of the peace offering, as an offering made by fire to the Lord, its fat *and* the whole fat tail which he shall remove close to the backbone.

For the sheep, there is an additional note which was not mentioned for the animal of the herd. Here it mentions the *khelbo ha’alyah temimah*, or “the whole fat tail.” This is only the second of five times that the fat tail will be noted in the Bible. It is described in detail for us by Jamieson-Faucett-Brown –

“There is, in Eastern countries, a species of sheep the tails of which are not less than four feet and a half in length. These tails are of a substance between fat and marrow. A sheep of this kind weighs sixty or seventy English pounds weight, of which the tail usually weighs fifteen pounds and upwards. This species is by far the most numerous in Arabia, Syria, and Palestine, and, forming probably a large portion in the flocks of the Israelites, it seems to have been the kind that usually bled on the Jewish altars. The extraordinary size and deliciousness of their tails give additional importance to this law. To command by an express law the tail of a certain sheep to be offered in sacrifice to God, might well surprise us; but the wonder ceases, when we are told of those broad-tailed Eastern sheep, and of the extreme delicacy of that part which was so particularly specified in the statute [Paxton].” JFB

When an animal was offered to the Lord, this especially marvelous part was reserved for the Lord alone, and was not to be eaten by the priests. There is further specificity concerning it. Not only was it to be the “whole” fat tail, but it then notes that it was to be removed “close to the backbone.”

This is the only time the *atseh*, or backbone, is seen in the Bible. It, in turn, comes from *atsah*, or “shut,” such as in shutting one’s eyes firmly. Thus the backbone is that which gives firmness to the body. Again, this could have simply been left unmentioned, and it wouldn’t seemingly change a thing concerning the process. And so it is asking us to consider why it is mentioned at all.

The word *atsah*, or shut, is used just twice in the Bible. Once it is used in Proverbs concerning a person shutting his eyes in order to devise perverse things. The other time in Isaiah it says –

“This *is* the purpose that is **purposed** against the whole earth,
And this *is* the hand that is stretched out over all the nations.” Isaiah 14:26

The word speaks of firm determined purpose, just as the backbone of the animal is firm and fixed. Thus the fat attached to this is being equated with the firm and fixed purposes of the Lord. It speaks of the resoluteness of Christ in completing His work and thus making our fellowship with God acceptable once again. It can be summed up in the words of Luke 9 –

“Now it came to pass, when the time had come for Him to be received up, that He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem, ⁵² and sent messengers before His face. And as they went, they entered a village of the Samaritans, to prepare for Him. ⁵³ But they did not receive Him, because His face was *set* for the journey to Jerusalem.” Luke 9:51-53

Each new word comes to us for a reason. Each unique word, such as this, is not intended to be skipped over, but considered. In the end, each leads us to a fuller understanding of our own fellowship with God because of the determined work of the Lord on our behalf. Along with this fat tail and all it signifies, and like the previous animal of the herd, we continue with the following...

^{9 (con’t)} **And the fat that covers the entrails and all the fat that *is* on the entrails,**

These directions are the same as for the previous animal.

¹⁰ the two kidneys and the fat that *is* on them by the flanks, and the fatty lobe *attached* to the liver above the kidneys, he shall remove;

And once again, the same is true with this verse. It states essentially the same thing as was seen before. Though repetitive, it is not unnecessary. As is seen anywhere in human life, if something is not made explicit, then people will find a reason not to follow through with what is stated. The word is being minutely detailed to ensure that everything is followed precisely. Nothing is left to questioning because all of it points directly to Christ. Therefore, the specificity is not at all superfluous.

¹¹ and the priest shall burn *them* on the altar *as* food, an offering made by fire to the Lord.

Again, the word for “burn” is one which speaks of fragrance, like incense. The smell to the nose of man equates to the fragrance of Christ to God. But here an additional description is given. It is “on the altar as food.” The word is *lekhem*, or “bread.” Thus it is as bread to God.

This is specifically stated to show that as the part that is eaten by the offeror is his food, so the part offered to God is as food as well. In other words, there is a joining together in the meal as if the two are dining at peace with one another. Again, it anticipates the greater and more perfect table set before us because of Christ. He was, as it were, made an offering by fire to the Lord for, and on behalf of, us. It is reflective then of the words of Revelation 3:20 –

“Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.”

¹² ‘And if his offering *is* a goat, then he shall offer it before the Lord.

The third type of peace offering is the *ez*, or goat. This comes from the word *azaz*, which means “to be strong,” or “to prevail.” It is the strong member of the flocking animals. The instructions for the goat are the same as for the ox, and so it can be inferred that either a male or female is acceptable. The term implies the whole species, whether a he-goat, a she-goat, or a kid. The reason why it is listed separately from the sheep is because the goat does not have a fat tale like the sheep. Therefore, the specificity was needed in describing that offering.

13 He shall lay his hand on its head and kill it before the tabernacle of meeting; and the sons of Aaron shall sprinkle its blood all around on the altar.

These are the same procedures as before with the same mistranslations as before. It is the tent, not tabernacle, of meeting, and the blood is splashed, not sprinkled. The most major difference between this and verse 2 is that in verse 2 it said to kill the animal at the door of the tent of meeting. Here it says, before the tent of meeting. The two mean the same thing.

14 Then he shall offer from it his offering, as an offering made by fire to the Lord. The fat that covers the entrails and all the fat that *is* on the entrails,

This verse is identical to verse 3 with the exception of the word “peace offering.” Here it is understood as such and so that is not repeated.

15 the two kidneys and the fat that is on them by the flanks, and the fatty lobe *attached* to the liver above the kidneys, he shall remove;

The Hebrew of this verse is exactly, letter for letter, the same as verse 4 with but one exception. An additional letter, a *vav*, is added into the second use of the word “kidneys” in verse 4. Despite being downright perplexing, I have no answer as to why. This happens from time to time in the Bible, and there is always a reason. This time, it escapes me.

16 and the priest shall burn them on the altar *as* food,

These words are almost identical to what was said in verse 11.

16 (con't) an offering made by fire for a sweet aroma;

This is closely related to the words of verse 5. As you can see, there is a pattern which is running back and forth between the three offerings, the words build upon each other and intertwine in a most exciting way. Though one verse, or a part of a verse, may differ here, it is still more closely tied over there. The entire passage then merges into one beautiful whole. Each of the three are united into one larger picture of the overall peace offering.

16 (con't) all the fat *is* the Lord's.

kal khelev I'Yehovah – “All the fat to Yehovah.” These final words of verse 16 are given in anticipation of verse 17. The fat, signifying that which is best, is dedicated solely to the Lord. It is a most wonderful picture of Christ – “Only the best for the Lord.”

Understanding this, the law of the fat applies in the specifics given above, and it applies only to those animals given above. In other words, the specific named animals are included in this mandate, but others are not. This is known by other passages where other non-sacrificial animals are mentioned, but the fat is not –

“However, you may slaughter and eat meat within all your gates, whatever your heart desires, according to the blessing of the Lord your God which He has given you; the unclean and the clean may eat of it, of the gazelle and the deer alike. ¹⁶ Only you shall not eat the blood; you shall pour it on the earth like water.”
Deuteronomy 12:15, 16

Secondly, the other fat which is in the animal is not included in this mandate. This is seen in Deuteronomy 32 where the fat of sacrificial animals was eaten, meaning other than the special part reserved for the Lord –

“He made him ride in the heights of the earth,
That he might eat the produce of the fields;
He made him draw honey from the rock,
And oil from the flinty rock;
¹⁴ Curds from the cattle, and milk of the flock,
With fat of lambs;
And rams of the breed of Bashan, and goats,
With the choicest wheat;
And you drank wine, the blood of the grapes.” Deuteronomy 32:13,14

That which pictured Christ is forbidden, and nothing else. This is what we are to learn from these passages.

¹⁷ ***This shall be a perpetual statute throughout your generations in all your dwellings:***

This word is given specifically for the duration of the Law of Moses. It is not to be taken as binding in this dispensation. The law of the fat portion is fulfilled in Christ; it is set aside in Christ; and it is annulled in Christ. As with all things, context is king, and the context of the Bible is that the mandates and prohibitions of the Law of Moses were

only in effect until that same law was annulled in the coming of the New Covenant. This is the context, and this is therefore a statute which no longer applies to us.

^{17 (fin)} **you shall eat neither fat nor blood.”**

Again, this is fulfilled in Christ, and it is annulled. However, the New Testament does give continued guidelines during the early church period concerning the drinking of blood. This was for a specific reason which is defined in the Council of Jerusalem in Acts 15. Nothing is ever said of the fat prohibition in the New Testament in any way at all. Matthew Henry gives us his insights into these final words of Leviticus 3 –

“Here is a law that they should eat neither fat nor blood. As for the fat, it means the fat of the inwards, the suet. The blood was forbidden for the same reason; because it was God’s part of every sacrifice. God would not permit the blood that made atonement to be used as a common thing, Heb 10:29; nor will he allow us, though we have the comfort of the atonement made, to claim for ourselves any share in the honour of making it. This taught the Jews to observe distinction between common and sacred things; it kept them separate from idolaters. It would impress them more deeply with the belief of some important mystery in the shedding of the blood and the burning the fat of their solemn sacrifices. Christ, as the Prince of peace, made peace with the blood of his cross. Through him the believer is reconciled to God; and having the peace of God in his heart, he is disposed to follow peace with all men. May the Lord multiply grace, mercy, and peace, to all who desire to bear the Christian character.” Matthew Henry

As we have seen, this offering, like the previous two, perfectly reflects the ongoing work of Christ – His atonement, His sanctification, His allowing us fellowship with the Father through Him. Though the peace offering appears disconnected from the cross itself, it is not. It is His cross which grants us the peace we now have. Isaiah explained that for us long before the Day came –

“But He *was* wounded for our transgressions,
He was bruised for our iniquities;
The chastisement for our peace *was* upon Him,
And by His stripes we are healed.” Isaiah 53:5

Paul confirms that the cross is what grants us this fellowship in His words of the Lord’s Supper. In it, we “proclaim the Lord’s death till He comes.” Without the cross of Christ, nothing else can bring us near to God. With His cross, all fellowship – close, personal, and even intimate, is available to us once again.

Before we finish and partake of our weekly communion then, it is necessary to take one more moment to explain how this fellowship can come about for the lost soul...

Closing Verse: *“Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ² through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.” Romans 5:1, 2*

Next Week: Leviticus 4:1-12 *It won't be until part II that we get done...* (The Sin Offering, Part I) (5th Leviticus Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if you have a lifetime of sin heaped up behind you, He can wash it away and purify you completely and wholly. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Peace Offering

When his offering is a sacrifice of a peace offering
If he offers it of the herd
Whether male or female
He shall offer it without blemish before the Lord

And he shall lay his hand on the head of his offering
And kill it at the door of the tabernacle of meeting; so shall it be
And Aaron's sons, the priests
Shall sprinkle the blood all around on the altar completely

Then he shall offer from the sacrifice of the peace offering
An offering made by fire to the Lord
The fat that covers the entrails
And all the fat that is on the entrails, according to this word

The two kidneys and the fat
That is on them by the flanks, you see
And the fatty lobe attached to the liver
Above the kidneys, he shall remove accordingly

And Aaron's sons shall burn it
On the altar upon the burnt sacrifice

Which is on the wood that is on the fire
As an offering made by fire, a sweet aroma to the Lord, quite nice

If his offering as a sacrifice of a peace offering
To the Lord is of the flock whether male or female
He shall offer it without blemish
So shall it be according to each detail

If he offers a lamb as his offering
Then he shall offer it before the Lord
Yes, he shall do this thing

And he shall lay his hand on the head of his offering
And kill it before the tabernacle of meeting; so shall it be
And Aaron's sons shall sprinkle its blood
All around on the altar accordingly

Then he shall offer from the sacrifice of the peace offering
As an offering made by fire to the Lord
Its fat and the whole fat tail
Which he shall remove close to the backbone
-----According to this word

And the fat that covers the entrails
And all the fat that is on the entrails too
The two kidneys and the fat that is on them by the flanks
Paying heed to this word, so shall he do

And the fatty lobe attached to the liver
Above the kidneys, he shall remove; according to this word
And the priest shall burn them on the altar as food
An offering made by fire to the Lord
And if his offering is a goat, as I now say
Then he shall offer it before the Lord in the following way

He shall lay his hand on its head
And kill it before the tabernacle of meeting; they shall not falter
And the sons of Aaron shall sprinkle its blood
All around on the altar

Then he shall offer from it his offering
As an offering made by fire to the Lord
The fat that covers the entrails
And all the fat that is on the entrails, according to this word

The two kidneys and the fat that is on them by the flanks
And the fatty lobe attached to the liver above the kidneys too
He shall remove; and the priest shall burn them
On the altar as food; this thing he shall do

An offering made by fire for an aroma which is sweet
All the fat is the Lord's
Your following these directions shall be complete

This shall be a perpetual statute
Throughout your generations in all your dwellings
You shall eat neither fat nor blood
You shall not do these things

Peace with God, full and complete
Has come to us through the blood of Jesus
Once again, there is fellowship so sweet
Marvelous things He has done for us

And so, O Lord, to You we give our heartfelt praise
And to You, O God, we shall sing out for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

LEVITICUS 4:1-12 (THE SIN OFFERING, PART I)

There is an elderly gentleman who comes to 7-11 many mornings while I'm working there. He's a really nice guy, and after seeing me working for several months, he came up and got friendly with me as many people eventually do. They realize I'm not just a bum sorting through the garbage, but rather, I'm the guy picking up and taking out the garbage.

I guess the bare feet, dirty clothes, and shaggy beard lead to the initial impression which has to be overcome through repetitive visual experience. But as I tell folks once they get to know me, "I'm not going to wear a suit and tie to take out the trash."

Anyway, this guy eventually found out that I preach. Probably, he heard one of the people behind the counter holler out, "Good morning Pastor" when I walk in to get trash bags. I think they do this on purpose to see the reaction of the people standing in line, looking at me as if I need to be ejected from the store.

Somehow he figured it out, and since then he has come up to me and hinted at wanting to come by the church some time. Each time he does, I tell him he's always welcome. I've let him know that he would be a spring chicken there – he's only in his 80's. I tell him this so he knows it's not just a biker church or something.

He's driven by, he knows where it is, and I know he's looked into the windows... I just know it. He really wants to come by, but I think he's afraid of something in his past which he thinks will prevent him from being accepted. Maybe he thinks hell's fire will burn him up when he steps through the door. I just don't know. Whatever it is, he must be ignorant of God's grace, and he must have gone astray at some point in his life in a way which he feels is simply beyond that grace.

Text Verse: *"For every high priest taken from among men is appointed for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins. ² He can have compassion on those who are ignorant and going astray, since he himself is also subject to weakness. ³ Because of this he is required as for the people, so also for himself, to offer sacrifices for sins."* Hebrews 5:1-3

My old friend at 7-11 came up to me the week I typed this sermon, and he said, "I know what you can do for me... When I die and get up to the gates, I'm hoping you will put in a good word for me." I told him that wouldn't do any good at all. I said that if he was

hoping on me being his advocate, he had his hope in the wrong place. But I told him that Jesus would put in a good word for him if he just received Him.

He backed away, as he always does, and said, “Well, I was really just kidding, you know.” I know he wasn’t. He is truly scared of death and he sees that I am not. He wants someone he can trust to help him with the problem he knows exists. As I sat typing, I also sat praying. He needs Jesus; we all need Jesus.

Everyone of us knows that the disconnect is there. Some shun it, some ignore it, some can’t stop thinking about it, some try to earn their way around it... but we all know it is there. God took care of it for us. It’s so very simple to get it, and yet it takes the greatest act of all to receive it – put aside self and come with empty hands.

But when we do, the sin-debt is paid, and the restoration is available. Jesus, Jesus, Jesus. It is all about Jesus, He is our sin-offering, and He is our place of propitiation. It’s all to be found in His superior word. And so let’s turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. The Sin Offering (verse 1 & 2)

¹ Now the Lord spoke to Moses, saying,

These words form the first introductory words since Leviticus 1:1. In other words, there were the words in Leviticus 1:1 which said, “Now the Lord called to Moses, and spoke to him from the tabernacle of meeting, saying...” Since that time, there has been one continuous proclamation from the Lord. It included the Burnt Offering, the Grain Offering, and the Peace Offering.

Those were all noted in order, and their particular order was given for specific reasons which were all detailed. Each of those offerings was already known to generations past, but they were detailed again in order to give them both legal sanction under the Law of Moses, and to exactly detail how the offerings were to be made. As we saw, they all pointed in every way to Christ.

The offerings of chapters 4 & 5 are new types of offerings which are being introduced into the Bible, and therefore they are now preceded by these offset introductory words. The first three chapters were probably all spoken at the same time as Moses penned what he was told. Now, an entirely new train of thought is being presented.

It may be that he compiled the first instructions on one day and then these new ones came on the next. Whatever is the case, Moses is in the Most Holy Place of the sanctuary where he receives the oracles of God. This is certain based on the words of Exodus 25 -

You shall put the mercy seat on top of the ark, and in the ark you shall put the Testimony that I will give you. ²² And there I will meet with you, and I will speak with you from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which *are* on the ark of the Testimony, about everything which I will give you in commandment to the children of Israel. Exodus 25:21-22

Concerning these instructions, and how they logically follow the previous offerings, Matthew Henry states the following -

“Burnt-offerings, meat-offerings, and peace-offerings, had been offered before the giving of the law upon mount Sinai; and in these the patriarchs had respect to sin, to make atonement for it. But the Jews were now put into a way of making atonement for sin, more particularly by sacrifice, as a shadow of good things to come; yet the substance is Christ, and that one offering of himself, by which he put away sin. The sins for which the sin-offerings were appointed are supposed to be open acts. They are supposed to be sins of commission, things which ought not to have been done. Omissions are sins, and must come into judgment: yet what had been omitted at one time, might be done at another; but a sin committed was past recall. They are supposed to be sins committed through ignorance.” Matthew Henry

This chapter, dealing with sin offerings, is most important. Where the previous offerings were voluntary, these are required. They must be made, and they were actually needed to be made before any of the other offerings mentioned so far could be accepted. As there is a rift between God and man because of sin, the sin had to be dealt with in order to restore a propitious relationship between the two. These sin-offerings were intended to do that.

In the atonement of sin, propitiation was restored. Because these sin offerings are mandated, it shows us that the blood of the previous sacrifices was insufficient for the purpose of full atonement. In this, we are taught an immensely important lesson.

This sin-offering looks forward to the cross of Christ Jesus. He is the true and necessary sin-offering for mankind. In Him, sin is atoned for, wrath is appeased, and propitiation is restored. Each offering looks to the cross in one way or another, but there is a logical

need for them to come in a certain order. The sin must be dealt with first. Only then can the other offerings have any value. That Christ is our sin-offering is stated many times in the New Testament, such as in Hebrews 10 -

“And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. ¹² But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, ¹³ from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool. ¹⁴ For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.” Hebrews 10:11-14

Christ’s cross was a one-time and for-all-time sin-offering for the people of the world. We are, as it says, “perfected forever” through His cross.

² **“Speak to the children of Israel, saying:**

dabber el bene yisrael. These are the exact same words that were said in Leviticus 1:2. They tell us that the instructions given to Moses are to be relayed directly to the people of Israel, and not merely to the priests who will receive the offerings which will be laid out next. This then is a corporate instruction intended for all of the covenant people.

Though the priests were intended to follow through with the instructions as well as maintain the oracles of God, the words were to be known and adhered to by the people as well. In other words, just as the word of God is intended for all people today, it was also intended for all of the people in the past as well.

It is true that there weren’t printing presses, and there wasn’t a copy of the word in every tent, but the word was not to be secreted away from the people. They were to be explained what it said and they were to pay heed to those regulations.

As these words are to the whole congregation, it is to the people who are already in a covenant relationship with God. As this is true, they are the people to whom the promise of Genesis 3:15 will come through. That is the promise that the Seed of the woman will crush the serpent’s head. Because this is so, then all of what they are required to do in the coming regulations merely look forward to Him. As we are told in Hebrews 10 -

For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect. ² For then would they not have

ceased to be offered? For the worshipers, once purified, would have had no more consciousness of sins. ³ But in those *sacrifices there is* a reminder of sins every year. ⁴ For *it is* not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins.

-Hebrews 10:1-4

In other words, everything given in these sacrifices is actually temporary and ineffective, except as it points to the coming Christ. How people miss this, even to this day, is astonishing.

2 (con't) **'If a person sins**

nepesh ki tekhata – “If a soul wanders away.” The word for “sin,” *khata*, means just that. It is to miss or go wrong. If one shoots an arrow at a mark and misses, this is the idea that is given. There is a mark, or standard, which God expects. However, man is prone to miss that mark. When this is the case, a remedy is required.

The words here apply to the entire chapter, not just what will be stated in verse 3. In other words, “If a person sins” is dealing with the priest of verse 3, of the whole congregation in verse 13, of the ruler in verse 22, and any of the common people in verse 27. Everything from verse 3 through verse 34 is included in the words we are reading now.

2 (con't) **unintentionally**

This is key to understanding much of what lies ahead. If one sins intentionally, or with a high hand, it calls for punishment. This will be explained later. What is being mandated here is a sacrifice for unintentional sin. However, exactly what it means by saying intentionally or unintentionally will take careful consideration.

The word here for “unintentionally” is *shegagah*. This is the first of 19 uses of it in the Bible. It signifies a mistake or inadvertent transgression such as through error, ignorance and so on.

Suffice it to say for now that the two classifications certainly refer to the relation of the conscience by the offender towards God. It cannot relate to outward action alone. In other words, if a person kills another person and is unrepentant, it is intentional sin. However, if a person kills another person and is repentant, it is not necessarily intentional. The account of King David and Uriah shows us this about as clearly as any other in Scripture.

Therefore, it logically follows that if a person refuses to bring a sacrifice for his sin which he is aware of, or if he brings a sacrifice with an uncaring conscience, meaning what he is doing is for show and not from the heart, then his sin must be considered intentional. This, for example, was the case with Cain's offering. The rule must apply in both ways. And Scripture will bear this out. This then explains the otherwise difficult passage found in Hebrews 10:26 -

“For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins...” Hebrews 10:26

Our relationship with God always comes down to a matter of the heart. One who has sinned and has not come through Jesus has no sacrifice which is suitable to atone for what he has done. The 19th Psalm speaks of that which is unintentional and that which is intentional -

Who can understand *his* errors?

Cleanse me from secret *faults*.

¹³ Keep back Your servant also from presumptuous *sins*;

Let them not have dominion over me.

Then I shall be blameless,

And I shall be innocent of great transgression. Psalm 19:12 13

^{2 (con't)} **against any of the commandments of the Lord *in anything* which ought not to be done, and does any of them,**

Going against the commandments of the Lord include not doing that which should be done, and doing that which should not be done. When the Lord speaks, His word is law. Therefore, when one strays away from what He has spoken, it is a violation of His law. Of this, John Gill states the following –

“The Jewish writers distinguish the commandments of the Lord into affirmative and negative, and make their number to be six hundred and thirteen; two hundred and forty eight are affirmative, according to the number of bones in a man's body, and three hundred sixty five are negative ones, according to the number of the days of the year; and they observe, it is only the transgression of negative precepts that is here meant, and for which a sin offering was to be brought.” John Gill

Like Matthew Henry's comments earlier which say something similar, this is not correct. This cannot mean negative commandments only. To leave undone that which should be

done may be correctable to some point, but not in all instances. If someone transgresses, they have sinned.

The verse doesn't delineate between negative and positive. We cannot justify this. It would be to ignore the Lord's command. Further, a biblical year is 360 days, not 365. Also, there are 270 bones in the body at birth, and after some fusing together, we are left with 206, not 248. The Jewish writers are wrong in all cases.

*An offering for sin to restore the peace
I come to petition my God at the burnt altar
Until I do, the enmity will never cease
But knowing He will forgive, in this I will not falter*

*At the altar, and by the door of the tent
The animal is slain, its life ebbs away
In that exchange, God's wrath is spent
Harmony is restored, and has come a new day*

*Innocent and pure, no fault of its own
The death truly touches my heart
But in this exchange, I am clearly shown
That only through death, can there be a new start*

*Thank God that Another can die in my place
In His death I can again look upon God's face*

II. The Sin of the High Priest (verses 3-12)

³ if the anointed priest sins,

Ha'kohen ha'mashiakh – “the priest, the anointed.” This is the high priest. This term is used only four times in the Bible. Three are in this chapter and one is in chapter 6. The provision is for him if he sins. This immediately tells us something we have already learned in earlier Exodus sermons. It shows that the high priest of the Law of Moses is a fallible person, and that he can never be made perfect by the Law of Moses.

Both are to be clearly understood from the context. Because of this, the truth of Hebrews 10:1 is made clear. The law can make none perfect. It could only anticipate the

coming of Christ who would fulfill the law and set it aside in order to bring in a New Covenant in His blood. As Matthew Henry says about this -

“The law begins with the case of the anointed priest. It is evident that God never had any infallible priest in his church upon earth, when even the high priest was liable to fall into sins of ignorance.” Matthew Henry

This sin-offering is for the high priest. Each subsequent sin offering will be a grade lower. It will next be for the congregation as a whole, then the prince of the congregation, and then for the individual. The importance of the position is how these are listed.

3 (con't) bringing guilt on the people,

When the high priest sinned, the entire nation became guilty because of his sin. He was the representative of the people to God. No person could have his sins removed until the one who mediated for the people had his sins atoned for. Therefore, all who were under his authority became guilty through Him.

The opposite for us is then true. In Christ who bears no guilt, we too are deemed not guilty. God is not counting our sins against us because our perfect Mediator covers us with His perfection.

3 (con't) then let him offer to the Lord for his sin which he has sinned a young bull without blemish as a sin offering.

The sin-offering for the high priest is the same as that for sin committed by the entire congregation which is noted in verse 14. The bull thus stands for the people just as the high priest stands for the people. This will become clear in Leviticus 16. On the Day of Atonement, the high priest must sacrifice for his own sins first with a bull. After that, the sins of the congregation are dealt with by using a ram.

As this is so, the bull is typical of Christ. And this is actually pictured in the first sentence of the Bible where the middle of the seven words is spelled with two letters, an *aleph* and a *tav*. The letter *aleph* is represented by a bull, and the *tav* is represented by a cross. The bull and the *tav* thus picture Christ and the cross.

The *par*, or bull, comes from the word *parar* which carries the meaning of defeat, or make void, although it can be variously translated. The idea of Christ is written all over this. It is He who defeated the devil, making void that which the devil had wrought.

This required bull is to be *tamim*, or “without blemish.” Again as in all sacrifices it looks to Christ. Only a perfect offering could be considered an acceptable sin-offering. And as before, it looks to Christ – our perfect sin-offering. Each detail is given for this purpose, and with an eye to what is coming in Him.

⁴ He shall bring the bull to the door of the tabernacle of meeting before the Lord,

As has been seen before, presenting the offering at the door of the tent of meeting actually means that it is being offered at the altar. But it is the altar that then allows symbolic access through the door. The connection between the altar and the doorway is inseparable.

⁴ (con't) lay his hand on the bull's head,

Here we have a man who has sinned laying his hand on a perfect bull, one without blemish. It is also an animal without the ability to reason which implies it is innocent. Each detail looks to Christ. We have the sinner in need of a Savior, and the innocent Man who is the perfect Substitute.

The high priest himself places his hands on the bull, thus he is acknowledging that this is *his* sacrifice. He is the offender, and it is his offering. He is asking that the offended, meaning God, will accept the bull, which looks forward to Christ, in his place. The implication is that if not accepted, then his life is lost already and would remain lost.

Further, it is implied that this sacrifice is sufficient to accomplish the mission. The Lord has mandated it, and therefore it is suitable to the task. The sin is symbolically transferred from the high priest to the bull. This is known as imputation. The bull is reckoned as receiving his sin, and he is reckoned as receiving the bull's innocence.

However, unlike what this bull pictures, meaning Christ, any time he sins, another sacrifice must be made. Therefore it can only mean one thing, which is that this sacrifice is but a *temporary* stay of God's wrath, anticipating a final, more perfect offering to come.

⁴ (con't) and kill the bull before the Lord.

It doesn't say that the bull could be kept in a pen, separate from all other bulls for the rest of its life. Nor could it be sent to Exile Island to live out its days. As with all such offerings, the Bible says that there can be no atonement for sin without the shedding of

blood. And for us, there is no other atonement for sin than that of the shed blood of Christ. He *had* to die in order for us to be saved.

⁵ Then the anointed priest shall take some of the bull's blood and bring it to the tabernacle of meeting.

Something new is now done with the blood of the bull. The previous sacrifices had the blood splashed around the altar of burnt-offering. Now however, the blood must be brought to the tent of meeting itself. What was sufficient before is not sufficient here.

The reason is because it involves the mediator who stands between the people and the Lord. As he is the one to come into the holy place each day, he would be unqualified to do so unless his sin was dealt with first. His duties would be ineffective, and therefore there would be no forgiveness for the people he represented.

⁶ The priest shall dip his finger in the blood and sprinkle some of the blood seven times before the Lord, in front of the veil of the sanctuary.

With the blood of the bull, he was only to go as far as the veil. His duties as mediator prohibited him from going behind the veil except once a year, on the Day of Atonement. Therefore, for any sin committed during the year, the shed blood was needed as far as his regular duties allowed him to go.

In the Holy Place he was to dip his finger into the blood. The word gives the sense of immersion. In other words, it wasn't just the tip of the finger, but he immersed the finger into the blood. From there he was to *nazah*, or sprinkle the blood seven times before the Lord who was behind the *paroketh*, or veil. Thus it says, "in the face of the veil."

The word *finger*, or *etsbah*, comes from another word, *tsebah*, which indicates dyed material and thus one gets the idea of grasping something. Therefore, the finger is that which accomplishes a task. The creation is said to be the work of the Lord's fingers in the 8th Psalm. Thus in this verse, the mercy, the refuge, and the remission of the sins is granted by God, but it is accomplished by the work of the petitioner's fingers.

This word, *nazah*, or sprinkle is used now for only the second time. It was first used in Exodus when the oil of ordination was called for in order to be sprinkled on Aaron and his sons. Now it is used for the second time in the atonement process for the high priest.

The reason for the seven sprinklings has met with fanciful interpretation, claiming that this is the number of times that Christ shed His blood during His time leading up to the cross. However, no such analysis is born out by the writers of the gospel. That has to be forced in order to arrive at the number.

He shed blood when He wept, He was pierced in His hands and His feet – do we count that as 1 cumulatively, 2 for the hands and for the feet, or four for the four appendages? He certainly bled when He was whipped, but the record does not say this. He probably bled when the crown of thorns was placed on His head, but the record doesn't say that. He bled internally through bruising, but that doesn't qualify for shed blood. In the end, we can only use what is explicit, and doing so leaves nothing which matches what is called for here.

Simply, seven is the number of spiritual perfection, and it is used countless times in Scripture to denote this. There is no reason to go beyond this basic and full explanation. As Christ Jesus is the epitome of spiritual perfection, the sprinkling of the blood is emblematic of this innate perfection which was given for the sins of His people. The seven sprinklings are done to petition the Lord's mercy and to acknowledge the death of the innocent substitute.

That this is done before the *paroketh* is of great significance though. As we saw in Exodus, the word *paroketh* means "veil," but it comes from the word *perek* which means "cruelty" or "rigor." That then comes from an unused root meaning to "break apart" or "fracture."

On one side is the Lord, on the other side is fallen man. The veil with cherubim woven into it is a picture of the fracture between God and man which occurred at the fall. When Adam sinned, he was cast to the east of Eden where cherubim were placed as guards. With the sin of the high priest, all access to God is lost, even to the prayers of the people. In sprinkling the blood before the veil, it is asking that the mediation would again be allowed so that He would hear the prayers of His people. This continues to be seen in the next verse...

⁷ And the priest shall put some of the blood on the horns of the altar of sweet incense before the Lord, which is in the tabernacle of meeting;

This verse corresponds somewhat to that of Exodus 29:12 which details the ordination of Aaron and His sons. The ordination made them acceptable to serve as priests, but his sin has now caused that to cease until it is atoned for.

As we saw in Exodus, the altar of incense corresponds to the Ark with its Mercy Seat. Incense signifies the prayers of the people. The incense is the only thing that would waft through the veil and into the Lord's immediate presence each day. If the sins of the high priest were not atoned for, then the incense placed there would not be considered acceptable to the Lord. Therefore, the altar of incense had to be atoned for as well.

Putting the blood on the horns, or *qarnoth*, of the altar is symbolic of petitioning for mercy and safe refuge. Horns are a symbol of strength. Just as a horn grows out of the head of an animal, these likewise protrude directly from the altar. They demonstrate the intercessory power of Christ to God.

For the blood to be placed on them signifies the petitioning of mercy because wrath has already been transferred to the bull. In this application, there is a transcendence from the earthly to the heavenly realm.

7 (con't) and he shall pour the remaining blood of the bull at the base of the altar of the burnt offering, which is at the door of the tabernacle of meeting.

The Hebrew here says "all the blood," but "remaining" must be implied. Any blood left after that which was sprinkled was to be poured out at the base, or "foundation" of the altar. It was not to be splashed on the altar as was to be done with the previous offerings.

The atonement within the Holy Place was sufficient, and so the remainder was to be poured out, allowing it to sink into the ground.

8 He shall take from it all the fat of the bull as the sin offering.

After the application and disposal of the blood, proving the death of the animal, there was now the job of handling the body of the animal. As it is a sin-offering, it could not be wholly burnt on the altar. Therefore, the fat alone was to be removed.

8 (con't) The fat that covers the entrails and all the fat which is on the entrails,

These words are almost identical to Leviticus 3:3, word for word. The same with the peace-offering, so with the sin-offering.

9 the two kidneys and the fat that is on them by the flanks, and the fatty lobe attached to the liver above the kidneys, he shall remove,

These words are identical, to the letter, with Leviticus 3:4, with but the addition of a single letter, *yod*, in the middle of the word translated as “them.” Another mystery which I have no explanation for, but from which I did obtain a large sized headache trying to figure out why the change.

¹⁰ as it was taken from the bull of the sacrifice of the peace offering; and the priest shall burn them on the altar of the burnt offering.

The same procedure is given for these parts that was given for the peace-offering with one notable difference. In verse 3:5 it said that the peace offering was to be burnt “on the altar upon the burnt sacrifice,” meaning the daily offering. However, this sin-offering would need to precede the daily offering, which could not be considered acceptable until the sin was first dealt with. It would make no sense to offer the daily offering, which would not be accepted because of the mediator’s sin. Whenever the sin was discovered, it had to take priority.

This obviously shows us that no offering to God can be acceptable until our sin is dealt with first. Above all, Christ is our sin-offering. After that, He fulfills every other type in the proper order. Though God does not exist in time, there is a logical order of sacrifices for us who do. This is seen in the many details of the offerings which are carefully laid out for us.

However, as with the parts of the peace offering, the same symbolism is seen in these parts of the sin-offering. They represent the abundance of the very deepest parts of Christ the Man. The fat is the abundance and health of life. The kidneys signify the mind and reasoning. The fat by the loins signifies where one places his confidence. And the fat lobe above the liver represents the emotions and feelings of the person.

These then were to be offered to the Lord because they symbolized His most intimate aspects. They are the very substance of who He is, and so they are returned to God by fire.

¹¹ But the bull’s hide and all its flesh, with its head and legs, its entrails and offal—

This signifies all the rest of the bull which is left. Only the blood and the items of the previous verses are excluded. Even the skin, which was normally given to the administering priest, is included here.

¹² the whole bull he shall carry outside the camp to a clean place, where the ashes are poured out, and burn it on wood with fire; where the ashes are poured out it shall be burned.

The flesh of some sin offerings was acceptable to be eaten by the priests as will later be explained. However, Leviticus 6:30 will show why this is not the case here –

“...no sin offering from which any of the blood is brought into the tabernacle of meeting, to make atonement in the holy place, shall be eaten. It shall be burned in the fire.” Leviticus 6:30

The disposal of the animal is determined by the use of the blood. Because the blood of the bull was brought into the holy place, the animal must be burned and not consumed. Instead, the bull was to be taken outside of the camp to a clean place and burned.

The sinfulness of the sin, being of the high priest himself, is indicated in the need for the blood to be brought into the holy place, and for the remainder of the animal to be taken outside the camp. The extreme treatment of both shows us the most severe nature of the offense, and so an even greater immensity of the atonement which was provided is also seen.

The acceptance of the bull’s death as a substitute highlights the extremely merciful act of forgiveness granted to the priest. In his cleansing, the body of the bull now bore the sin of the mediator. Because of this, it needed to be purged from the camp entirely. And what a picture of Christ to finish our verses today.

I have already showed that the bull pictures Christ, but this isn’t just me making a dubious connection and then applying it to Him. Rather, the Bible explicitly shows us the connection between the two. In Hebrews 13, we see why these requirements were given here in Leviticus and what they prefigure -

The high priest carries the blood of animals into the Most Holy Place as a sin offering, but the bodies are burned outside the camp. ¹² And so Jesus also suffered outside the city gate to make the people holy through his own blood. ¹³ Let us, then, go to him outside the camp, bearing the disgrace he bore.

-Hebrews 13:11-13

What was given to Israel in type and shadow is realized in its fullness in Christ. There is a problem which infects man, and its source is that of the devil himself. The only way to

defeat what he did was for Christ to take it away from us. We are told that He was made to be sin for us so that we could then become the righteousness of God in Him. What a bargain God has offered us!

All our misdeeds, all of our errors and failings, and our once-lost state is taken away and nailed to the cross through the death of Jesus Christ. Matthew Henry explains it in his own eloquent way –

“All pretensions to act without error are sure marks of Antichrist. The beast was to be carried without the camp, and there burned to ashes. This was a sign of the duty of repentance, which is the putting away sin as a detestable thing, which our soul hates. The sin-offering is called sin. What they did to that, we must do to our sins; the body of sin must be destroyed...” Matthew Henry

And the body of sin can be destroyed. Through faith in what Jesus did, it can be completely removed so that fellowship with God is possible once again. That is what Christ did for us by having His own life taken from Him as He suffered outside the camp. Let us go to Him there and be joined to Him through the greatest act of love ever expressed – let us go to Calvary.

Closing Verse: *“Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him;
He has put Him to grief.
When You make His soul an offering for sin,
He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days,
And the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand.” Isaiah 53:10*

Next Week: Leviticus 4:13-35 *What marvelous things are ahead for you...* (The Sin-offering, Part II) (6th Leviticus Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if you have a lifetime of sin heaped up behind you, He can wash it away and purify you completely and wholly. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Sin Offering

Now the Lord spoke to Moses, saying
These are the words He began relaying

“Speak to the children of Israel, saying:
‘If a person sins unintentionally
Against any of the commandments of the Lord
If such a thing as this comes to be

In anything which ought not to be done
And does any of them, yes any such one

If the anointed priest sins
Bringing guilt on the people, to them it is pinned
Then let him offer to the Lord for his sin
Which he has sinned

A young bull without blemish as a sin offering
Such shall be his proffering

He shall bring the bull to the door
Of the tabernacle of meeting before the Lord
Lay his hand on the bull’s head
And kill the bull before the Lord, according to this word

Then the anointed priest shall take
Some of the bull’s blood, this he shall do
And bring it to the tabernacle of meeting
As I now am instructing you

The priest shall dip his finger
In the blood and sprinkle some of the blood, so it shall be
Seven times before the Lord
In front of the veil of the sanctuary

And the priest shall put some of the blood
This task he shall be completing
On the horns of the altar of sweet incense before the Lord
Which is in the tabernacle of meeting

And he shall the remaining blood pour
Of the bull at the base of the altar of the burnt offering
Which is at the tabernacle of meeting’s door

He shall take from it all the fat
Of the bull as the sin offering, so he shall do
The fat that covers the entrails
And all the fat which is on the entrails too

The two kidneys and the fat
That is on them by the flanks as I behoove
|And the fatty lobe attached to the liver
Above the kidneys, he shall remove

As it was taken from the bull of the sacrifice
Of the peace offering
And the priest shall burn them on the altar
Of the burnt offering, such is the proffering

But the bull's hide and all its flesh
With its head and legs, its entrails and offal, no doubt
The whole bull he shall carry outside the camp
To a clean place, where the ashes are poured out

And burn it on wood with fire, as you have learned
Where the ashes are poured out it shall be burned

Our Lord Jesus died outside the walls of the city
He died there for the sins of all men on that day
God demonstrated His merciful pity
And in that crucified body, God has opened the way

We now can come home to Him once again
We are reconciled through what He alone has done
May we be willing to share this marvel with all men
That God has given us new life through His Son

Praises to God who has done this most marvelous thing for us!
All praises to God, through our glorious Lord Jesus!

Hallelujah and Amen...

LEVITICUS 4:13-35

(THE SIN OFFERING, PART II)

For as long as 3000 years, there has been in India what we would call the Caste system. The word is actually derived from the Portuguese word *casta* which means “race, breed, lineage” and the like. That was derived from an earlier concept meaning “pure” or “unmixed.”

The actual words used to describe the Caste system are Varna and Jati (Jaytee). Varna means “color” and is used as a framework for grouping people into classes. Jati means “birth.” This is considered to have its basis in religion. In the end, this is not uncommon in the world. Religion often finds ways of oppressing people. In the case of the Indian Castes, there are five major groups. At the top are the Brahmins, and at the bottom are the Dalits.

None of the Castes are to intermarry, but the poor Dalits, or untouchables, aren’t even be spoken to or looked at for the most part. As a Caste, they are considered so low that they aren’t even considered a Caste. They were excluded from the four-fold Varna system and simply formed into the unmentionable “Fifth Varna.” And so they are a Caste that isn’t a Caste.

Although there are high-ranking and low ranking people within the Hebrew society, there is the underlying truth that all humans are created in God’s image and are of equal worth. This may not always be the idea which comes forth out of many Jewish sects today. Some of the religious sects look at the Gentile world as “far below them.” They are the righteous and favored, the Gentiles are the dogs. Such is life for those who reject the truths of the Bible, or who selectively pick and choose certain verses to merge with a presupposition about others.

Even in Christianity, there have been those who have used the Scriptures to justify the notion that one group of people is less valuable than another. Slavery, subjugation of other people groups, and a diminishing of the value of life grows naturally out of a liberal view on humanity.

However, the more biblically fundamental a person is, and the more conservative they are in their life, political, and work ethic, the more a true sense of value for human life is realized. The notion of abortion becomes abhorrent, the concept of euthanasia is seen for the evil that it truly is, and the equality of all men is brought into its highest place. Why is this? It is because the ground is level at the foot of the cross.

There is but one offering by which all must come to God the Father. The richest person can offer no more, and the poorest person can come with no less. The cross is, above all, the great equalizer. No wonder the lower Castes in India love the message of the gospel, and the higher classes shout to have it banned.

The Old Testament focuses almost solely on the Hebrew people and their relationship with God, with but a few exceptions. The outside nations did their own thing, and they were, for the most part, regarded in a negative light, but the value of the individual – whether Hebrew or Gentile – is actually quite prominently on display.

However, if we were to just look at the dealings within the Hebrew society, and nowhere else, we would note that there is no such thing as a Caste system. There were Hebrew slaves, but they became that way for a reason, and they were to be given their freedom after certain intervals of time, or if certain other occasions required it by law.

There were also nobles within the society, but they were bound under the exact same laws as everyone else. In the end, one cannot find a system where the poor, or certain other groups, were intentionally kept subjugated by the framework for the society which is the Law of Moses. In fact, just the opposite is true.

Text Verse: *“Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ’s behalf, be reconciled to God. ²¹ For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” 2 Corinthians 5:20, 21*

The sin offerings of Israel highlight the fact that all were bound under the law, all had to come to God for forgiveness when they transgressed the law, and all were given equal forgiveness when they came forward for it. But within the sin offerings, there are clues that God actually exalted the lowly. The terminology used in the verses today highlights the offerings of the poor people in a way that is not highlighted for the high priest or the ruler who sinned. These things need to be highlighted, because they show that God looks on the poor and lowly and regards them.

He doesn’t look more favorably on some and less on others just because of their looks, the size of their pocketbook, or the type of car they drive. Instead, he looks on the heart and determines the value of the person. As I said, at the foot of the cross, the ground is level. What a wonderful God to allow all who will come, to come.

If you have bad breath because you can't afford to go to the dentist, or if you make minimum wage and live with your parents because there is no other place you can afford, that in no way means that you are lacking worth in God's sight. If you have called on Christ, you are well-loved and highly favored. Paul writes about that a lot in the New Testament. We'll get there soon enough, but it's even evident here in the Old. Yes, these things are all to be found in His superior word. And so let's turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. The Sin of the Congregation (verses 13-21)

¹³ **'Now if the whole congregation of Israel sins unintentionally,**

As was saw in the previous sermon, the words of verse 3 which say, "...if a person sins," is speaking of each of the categories that will then be listed. The first was a sin of the high priest. The next category is now given which deals with the entire congregation. The categories are following a descending ladder of importance.

If the high priest were to sin, there could be no mediation for anyone until his sin was atoned for. That is why his category was first. Now, the sin of the entire congregation is given. As a unified whole, atonement must be made before the congregation can have a proper relationship with the Lord once again. An example of corporate guilt is that of the sin of Achan in Joshua 7.

One person transgressed the command of the Lord, but it brought guilt upon the entire congregation. Until that sin was dealt with, the entire congregation was considered as guilty. This type of corporate sin is seen again in 1 Samuel 14 when the people collectively slaughtered and ate meat which still contained the blood in it. This is the type of sin being referred to here.

The word which is translated as "unintentionally" is *shagah*. This is the first of 21 times it will be used. It means to cause to go astray or to make wander. It in essence is the committing of sin through ignorance. For example, in Proverbs it is used of the person being led astray, not the one doing the leading –

"Whoever causes the upright **to go astray** in an evil way,
He himself will fall into his own pit;
But the blameless will inherit good." Proverbs 28:10

There would be two kinds of unintentional sin which would qualify here. The first would be where attention is called to the sinfulness of an act, and that sin is then acknowledged. The second would be where a sinful act is not understood to be sinful until the law is explained. Once the explanation is given, and the deed was realized as sinful, a sin-offering would be needed. Either way, what was wrong was revealed after being hidden...

¹³ (con't) **and the thing is hidden from the eyes of the assembly, and they have done *something against* any of the commandments of the Lord *in anything* which should not be done, and are guilty;**

These words show the fundamental truth that ignorance before the law is no excuse. The congregation has violated a commandment and they bear guilt because of it. In 2 Samuel 21, we will see that when Saul violated the covenant which was made between Israel and the Gibeonites, there was a famine in the land because of it. David had to inquire of the Lord to find out why the famine persisted. Such examples show that the congregation was considered guilty before the Lord because a violation of a covenant between men is still a violation of the Lord's word because vows are to be held sacred. Here two new words are introduced into the Bible. The first is *alam*, translated here as "hidden." It means blind, hide self, secret thing. It comes from a root meaning to veil from sight. Solomon uses it in Ecclesiastes as a thing hidden from sight –

“For God will bring every work into judgment,
Including every **secret thing**,
Whether good or evil.” Ecclesiastes 12:14

The second new word translated here as “and are guilty” is *asham*. This word is variously translated, having come from a root which means “to be guilty.” Thus, by implication, it can mean “to be punished” or even “to perish.” Ezekiel, speaking of the sins of Jerusalem, uses the word to identify their guilt –

“You **have become guilty** by the blood which you have shed, and have defiled yourself with the idols which you have made. You have caused your days to draw near, and have come to *the end of* your years; therefore I have made you a reproach to the nations, and a mockery to all countries.” Ezekiel 22:4

And so with these two new words, we see that even with a sin that was hidden from the people's knowledge, they were still considered guilty. That leads to our next verse...

¹⁴ when the sin which they have committed becomes known, then the assembly shall offer a young bull for the sin, and bring it before the tabernacle of meeting.

Other than the Day of Atonement, there would be no reason for an offering for sin when there was no idea that the congregation had sinned. However, should the sin become known, an offering would then be required. What is implied is that if one was not made after the guilt was realized, the sin would go from being unintentional to intentional. To avoid this, the offering had to be made. In this case, the same offering as for that of the high priest of verse 4 would be required, a young bull.

Because the whole congregation was guilty, it included the high priest. Therefore, in type and picture, there needed to be the same sin-offering as there was for just the priest. As we saw, the bull points to Christ. Without a sin-offering for the priest, who is included in this transgression, there would be no one to mediate between the people and God. Having said this, we read the following in Numbers 15:24 –

“...then it will be, if it is unintentionally committed, without the knowledge of the congregation, that the whole congregation shall offer one young bull as a burnt offering, as a sweet aroma to the Lord, with its grain offering and its drink offering, according to the ordinance, and one kid of the goats as a sin offering.”

Here in Leviticus a bull is the stated requirement, but in Numbers, the sin-offering is to be a goat. The difference is believed by some to be that Numbers is speaking of a sin of omission concerning a ceremonial duty rather than a violation of a commandment. However, it never says this.

What seems more likely is that the sin-offering mentioned in Numbers 15 is speaking of that which is detailed for the sin of the congregation on the Day of Atonement. The priest offered a bull for his sins during the year, and then he offered a goat for the sins of the people. If, however, the sin is recognized during the year, before the day of atonement, and which involved the whole congregation, then a bull was to be used for all of the people, including the high priest.

And, as a point of clarification, this verse says that “the assembly” shall offer the bull. The intent is not that every person in the congregation would have to lay their hands on the animal. Rather, it is an idiomatic expression that the bull will be offered on behalf of the assembly. Whether the leaders of the tribes, or certain designated people performed the ritual, they stood on behalf of the entire assembly. This becomes more evident with the next words...

15 And the elders of the congregation shall lay their hands on the head of the bull before the Lord. Then the bull shall be killed before the Lord.

The NKJV has done a good job of terminology in these three verses. Two different words are used for “congregation” and “assembly” in the Hebrew. As two different words are used, it makes sense to distinguish them in the English as well. They are both very close in meaning, but the Lord decided to use them both, so hat’s off to the NKJV for being precise.

There is the assembly which is here noted as being a congregation, led by these elders. It is they who are designated to lay their hands upon the head of the bull in the presence of the Lord. Thus, they are signifying the transfer of the sin from the entire congregation, through them, to the bull. As the high priest shared in the guilt of the congregation, and as he belonged to a tribe of Israel, then we can infer that either he, or a designated leader of Levi, would stand and confess for the entire tribe. Once this was done, the bull was then to be slaughtered. Again as always, there is no remission of sin without the shedding of blood. An innocent must die in the place of the guilty.

16 The anointed priest shall bring some of the bull’s blood to the tabernacle of meeting.

This verse corresponds to verse 5, and the wording is very similar in the Hebrew. The same procedures were to be followed because the matter involved the mediator who stood between the people and the Lord. As he was to come into the holy place each day, he would be unqualified to do so unless his sin – which was united with the whole congregation – was dealt with first. His duties would be ineffective, and therefore there would be no forgiveness for himself or the people he represented.

17 Then the priest shall dip his finger in the blood and sprinkle *it* seven times before the Lord, in front of the veil.

Again, the words are very similar to, but not exactly the same as, those in verse 6. As with verse 6, every detail points to Christ. If you missed that sermon, you have your assignment for this evening. Just as God created in six days and rested on the seventh, being satisfied with His accomplished work, so the blood is sprinkled until there is satisfaction for the sins committed. This picture of the work of Christ is realized in the seventh sprinkling. In all ways, whether it is a Sabbath day observance, or full cleansing from sin, each instance of Christ’s work shows completion for the believer.

¹⁸ And he shall put *some* of the blood on the horns of the altar which *is* before the Lord, which *is* in the tabernacle of meeting; and he shall pour the remaining blood at the base of the altar of burnt offering, which is at the door of the tabernacle of meeting.

Once again, this verse is similar to verse 4:7. It says essentially the same thing, just restructuring the words a bit. However, the same procedures are followed as for that sin-offering.

¹⁹ He shall take all the fat from it and burn *it* on the altar.

This verse is a condensed form of verses 4:8-10. What was more exactly described then, is now simplified. However, it carries the same meaning.

²⁰ And he shall do with the bull as he did with the bull as a sin offering; thus he shall do with it. So the priest shall make atonement for them, and it shall be forgiven them.

The same result of atoning for the high priest's sins of the earlier verses will be the result for the entire congregation in these verses. The sin of the high priest, which was included in the sin of the congregation was forgiven, and thus his mediation on behalf of the people is to be accepted as well. The sin-debt was removed in the death of the bull and its associated rituals.

²¹ Then he shall carry the bull outside the camp, and burn it as he burned the first bull.

This verse corresponds to verse 12. As was done with the bull for the high priest's sin, so is done with the bull for the sin of the congregation.

²¹ (con't) *It is* a sin offering for the assembly.

The sin-offering did not undo the sin, and any wrong which was done was left unchanged, but the guilt for the sin was removed. The sin was taken from His sight so that the people stood before Him without fault. A New Testament equivalent of this corporate sin is found in Acts 3 -

“The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our fathers, glorified His Servant Jesus, whom you delivered up and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let *Him* go. ¹⁴ But you denied the Holy One and the Just, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, ¹⁵ and killed the Prince of life,

whom God raised from the dead, of which we are witnesses. ¹⁶ And His name, through faith in His name, has made this man strong, whom you see and know. Yes, the faith which *comes* through Him has given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.

¹⁷ ‘Yet now, brethren, I know that you did it in ignorance, as did also your rulers.’”

-Acts 3:13-17

The people of Israel crucified Christ in ignorance, and thus they were guilty. However, as He is the final sacrifice for the sins of the people, which these only looked forward to, then their collective guilt remained. One must go outside the camp to Christ, just as the carcass of the bull was carried outside the camp. The collective guilt of Israel remains to this day. Until they collectively call out to Him, the national guilt will remain. Such is the nature of rejecting the One to whom these rites and rituals only pointed. This will become abundantly evident when we get to Leviticus 16. Stay tuned for amazing details.

*We have sinned and now we realize what we have done
We rejected God's offer, the Gift he sent to us
We have crucified our Lord, God's perfect Son
Together we have rejected the Lord Jesus*

*But we did it in ignorance and so there is hope
For us there is an offering for sin
It is through His blood, atonement unlimited in scope
Through Him peace is restored, and there can be fellowship again*

*Thank God for His tender mercies upon us
Thank God for this marvelous thing He has done
Through the cross of Calvary and the death of Jesus
We are whole once again, and the victory is won*

II. The Sin of the Ruler (verses 22-26)

²² ‘When a ruler has sinned, and done *something* unintentionally *against* any of the commandments of the Lord his God *in anything* which should not be done, and is guilty,

The next category to be specified is the *nasiy*, or ruler. It is a common word which is translated as “prince,” “chief,” “captain,” “ruler,” etc. The word is derived from *nasa*, which means “to rise,” or “to lift.” Thus, it is one lifted up or exalted. What this

particular verse is referring to is debated. Some say it is speaking of a main ruler, like the judge or king of Israel. Others say it is referring to anyone placed above others, as in a leader of a tribe.

However, if we look at the other sin-offerings, we may come to the correct conclusion. In verse 4:2, 4:3, 4:13, and 4:27, at the beginning of each category, it uses the term Lord, meaning Yehovah. However, in this verse, it says *Yehovah elohav*, or “The Lord his God.” Thus, it appears to be speaking of a ruler who is appointed directly by God.

In Numbers 1, the leaders of each tribe were designated by name. Probably, this sacrifice would then include them. Moses was specifically called, and so this would probably refer to him. Judges were called by God, and so it would seem to refer to them. The kingly line was called by God, and so it would likely refer to them. It would not be right to be dogmatic here, but the specific term seems to speak out to one who was specifically called by God, and then those who followed after them in that same line afterwards. Whatever the true meaning, when this person sinned unintentionally before the Lord his God, he became guilty.

²³ or if his sin which he has committed comes to his knowledge,

This is all one thought, and so it should read “and,” “if,” or “also,” but not “or.” The word in Hebrew is *ow*, and so most translations say “or,” but because it is one continuous thought, it indicates the result of what he has learned. He committed a sin, and then at some point he became aware of it. Upon realizing the error, he must make atonement for that same sin.

^{23 (con't)} he shall bring as his offering a kid of the goats,

The animal here is not a bull, but rather a goat, but more specifically it is a *sa'iyir izzim*, or hairy goat. The word *sa'iyir* was first used to describe Esau, the hairy son of Isaac. To understand the significance of this offering, one must understand the significance of hair in the Bible. It denotes awareness. But more specifically, it denotes an awareness of sin. Esau was used as a picture of Adam, who gained a conscience, at the time of the fall.

Thus, the hairy goat is used as a symbol of the consciousness of sin. The bull pictured Christ the high priest. Likewise, it pictured Christ the leader of the congregation, to whom the congregation is united. Here, the goat pictures Christ, who came to die for the awareness of sin in fallen man. He is the sin-offering for all who acknowledge their sin,

because they are conscious of it. In this case, it is the ruler of the people who is accountable to God for his sin.

²³ (con't) **a male without blemish.**

Only a perfect specimen could be sacrificed in place of the sin of the ruler. Again, it looks to Christ who, as Peter notes, was without spot or blemish. He was the perfect Sacrifice for the sins committed by one appointed by God because He too was appointed by God, but was without sin of His own.

²⁴ **And he shall lay his hand on the head of the goat,**

As always, this signifies that the guilty is requesting mercy because an innocent is being offered in place of the offender. It looks to Christ as our perfect Substitute, dying in our place.

²⁴ (con't) **and kill it at the place where they kill the burnt offering before the Lord.**

This is on the north side of the altar, corresponding to the north part of Jerusalem where Christ died in fulfillment of the prophetic picture which we are here given. As in type, so in Anti-type...

²⁴ (con't) **It is a sin offering.**

The hairy goat took the place of the man who had become conscious of his sin. The conscious Christ, takes the place of those appointed by God to lead, and who become conscious of their sin, requesting God's mercy and that they be pardoned through Christ who removes the guilt from them.

²⁵ **The priest shall take some of the blood of the sin offering with his finger, put it on the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and pour its blood at the base of the altar of burnt offering.**

Here, the blood does not need to be carried into the Holy place and handled as it was for either the high priest or the whole congregation. This is because in fulfillment of the type, Christ died, thus becoming our high priest. He is able to purify His people constantly, having no sin of His own to restrict Him from entering the Lord's presence.

The horns denote the presence and power of God. As there are four pointing out in four directions, they denote the power of God in Christ which is realized to the four corners of the earth. His sacrifice is sufficient to forgive any and all who come to Him. His omnipresence and omnipotence are thus symbolized in these horns.

²⁶ And he shall burn all its fat on the altar, like the fat of the sacrifice of the peace offering.

As we saw, and without repeating all of the details, the fat looked forward to Christ and His work. It was to be burned as incense upon the altar to be a sweet fragrance to God. Such is the atonement of man's sin through the work of Christ for him.

We are at verse 26, and we have already seen about 6 jillion pictures of Christ. Every aspect of these seemingly mundane and outdated rituals points directly to our wonderful Savior who has done all of the work necessary to reconcile us to God.

^{26 (con't)} So the priest shall make atonement for him concerning his sin,

As I just noted, Christ is our High Priest. As the work of Christ is the fulfillment of what was needed for the priests, they can now be used to picture his work. He is the One who makes atonement for us. As you can see, each subsequent offering follows logically after the one which precedes it. One step at a time, the entire process is given to show us the totality of what He has done for us.

^{26 (con't)} and it shall be forgiven him.

This forgiveness is judicial, meaning that it is legally forgiven. Thus, it is forgiven from a civil standpoint within the community, and it is also forgiven in an actual manner as well. This means that it is really and forever forgiven based upon faith in the Messiah to come. Faith, however, is the key. The prophets of Israel speak of the useless nature of offerings which were made without true repentance for what the offerings signified.

*What kind of a ruler have I been?
I am supposed to be an example for those under me
And yet, I have transgressed the command, am I done in?
My sin is exposed; I have been found guilty*

*But I know God's law offers mercy for what I have done
With an offering at the altar I can find release*

*I confess my sin against God, against the Holy One
And in my offering, the enmity will cease*

*Thank God for the cross of Calvary where my sin is put away
Thank God for the blood shed there for me
In calling out for mercy shines the light of a new day
Such glorious forgiveness streaming from that cross on Calvary*

III. The Sin of the Common People (verses 27-35)

²⁷ 'If anyone of the common people sins unintentionally by doing *something* against any of the commandments of the Lord *in anything* which ought not to be done, and is guilty,

When I lived in Malaysia, they had a term for indigenous people, *bumiputera*, or sons of the soil. This was a term brought in from the Sanskrit word *bhumiputra* – *bhumi* meaning “earth” or “land,” and *putra* meaning “son.” The Malay people adopted this term in the 1970s to refer to themselves because they lived there all along.

However, the Chinese moved in, and like Chinese do, they worked hard and procreated quickly. They became wealthy, prosperous, and numerous. The Malays live a little less aggressively. Nap time is more important than work time, and eating durian is preferable to racing off to the tin mines.

Eventually, the Malays, who were still in the majority, voted themselves in many benefits at the expense of the harder working Chinese. Had they not done this, they would never get nice cars and houses... working for stuff like that is so much more difficult than having someone else do it for you. In America, you would lump them under the larger term “democrat.” Instead of eating durian, they mostly prefer Starbucks, but the attitude is the same.

This has nothing to do with the sin-offerings mentioned here, except that the fourth category of sin-offering is that of the *am ha'arets*, or “people of the land.” It is a term which indicates all of the common people.

Here though, the words *v'im nephesh ahat* are used – “And if soul, one.” In other words, rather than a corporate sin as was seen in verses 13-21, this is speaking of the sin of an individual, but not one of the other two categories of the high priest or the ruler. This

group of individuals will finish up the sin-offering requirements. If any one person so designated was to commit an unintentional sin as is specified, and they become guilty...

²⁸ or if his sin which he has committed comes to his knowledge,

Again as in verse 23, rather than being a contrasting word, “or,” this should be a word of explanation, “and.” He has sinned, and now the sin has come to his attention. When this is the case...

^{28 (con't)} then he shall bring as his offering a kid of the goats, a female without blemish, for his sin which he has committed.

The offering here, instead of being a *sa'yir*, or male hairy goat, is to be a *seirah*, or female hairy goat. The reason for the change is the same as with the other offerings. The female was of less value, and therefore it was more affordable for the common people. As always, the Lord is looking after the people, attending to them in the most merciful way. However, the symbolism is the same. The hairy goat is a symbol of the awareness of sin.

²⁹ And he shall lay his hand on the head of the sin offering, and kill the sin offering at the place of the burnt offering.

These words very closely correspond to those of verse 24 with just a few small changes in the wording. The acknowledgment of sin is made, the hands are placed, and the animal is slaughtered at the north side of the altar. How could Christ do this for us!

³⁰ Then the priest shall take *some* of its blood with his finger, put *it* on the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and pour all *the remaining* blood at the base of the altar.

This verse very closely corresponds to verse 25. There is small change in the wording, and the intent is the essentially the same. Every type and picture of Christ seen then for the ruler is seen again here for the people of the land, the common folk.

³¹ He shall remove all its fat, as fat is removed from the sacrifice of the peace offering; and the priest shall burn it on the altar for a sweet aroma to the Lord.

Just as with the previous offering, so it is with this one. The fat which was detailed for there is removed in this one also, and it is burnt as incense to the Lord. However, unlike

the offering for the high priest, the congregation as a whole, or the ruler, the words “for a sweet aroma to the Lord” are added.

Although the particular word, *qatar*, or that of burning like incense, was used in all of them, only this sin-offering includes the extra words of favor. Each detail is repeated, and even expanded on, to show that the sin of the lowly person is forgiven just as fully and as graciously as it is for the greatest of all. In fact, the forgiveness of the lowly person is actually exalted in the use of the terminology.

³¹ (con't) **So the priest shall make atonement for him, and it shall be forgiven him.**

As it was for Israel with a fallible high priest, so it is for those in the church with the perfect and eternal High Priest. The common folk are provided the same atonement, and they receive the same forgiveness.

³² **If he brings a lamb as his sin offering, he shall bring a female without blemish.**

As an additional option for the common folk, a *kebes*, or lamb could be brought instead of a hairy goat. The word *kebes* is used more than 105 times, and yet all but less than 20 are used in connection with sacrifices. The word comes from a root which means “to dominate.” It thus symbolizes Christ’s domination over sin, and so this offering is an acceptable one for this reason. In this lamb, we hear the words of John the Baptist ringing out –

“Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” John 14:29

This, like all other sacrifices, was to be *tamim*, or without blemish.

³³ **Then he shall lay his hand on the head of the sin offering, and kill it as a sin offering at the place where they kill the burnt offering.**

These words are very close to those of verse 29. All pointing to Christ, all calling us to remember His marvelous deeds which for 1500 years were typified, day in and day out, at the sanctuary where the people came to confess and be **restored** to a right standing with the **Lord**.

³⁴ **The priest shall take *some* of the blood of the sin offering with his finger, put *it* on the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and pour all *the remaining* blood at the base of the altar.**

These words are practically identical to those of verse 30, but with only a couple small changes. Exactly the same ritual is performed here as with that of the female goat, and that ritual points ahead in time to the cross of Calvary, and the pure and perfect atonement which is found in Christ Jesus the Lord.

³⁵ He shall remove all its fat, as the fat of the lamb is removed from the sacrifice of the peace offering. Then the priest shall burn it on the altar, according to the offerings made by fire to the Lord. So the priest shall make atonement for his sin that he has committed, and it shall be forgiven him.

These words closely correspond to those of verse 31, telling us the same thing once again. The only major difference here is that a lamb can be selected instead of a goat. Both animals picture Christ in their own way, and both are thus ultimately fulfilled in His one-time and for-all-time sin-offering for the common people. How blessed we are to be the recipients of such marvelous wonder!

Though I have tied each and every offering in to that of Christ's offering, it should be noted that the Greek word used by Paul in 2 Corinthians 5:21, which was our text verse for the day, is *harmartian* – a sin-offering. That same word was used by the Greek translators of the Old Testament more than 80 times for the Hebrew word *khatta'ah*, or sin. It is then translated into the English as "sin-offering."

The Lord has spent an enormous amount of time in man's history here on earth trying to wake us up to the fact that it is all about Jesus Christ. Every word, not just from a biased view by myself or an aberrant group of Jesus-nut scholars, but every word from countless texts and commentaries which span the ages, shows us that Jesus Christ is the sole Person that God wants us to focus on.

Let's do our best to not get caught up in fawning over sports stars, eloquent orators, fancy musicians, or even have crazy ideas about religious figures like Mary, Krishna, muhammed, or anyone else. Instead, let us fix our eyes on Jesus, let us fix our attention on His word, and let us secret away in our hearts God's love for us, all prominently displayed in the cross of Calvary.

May our one boast be in the cross of Christ by whom the world has been crucified to us, and we to the world. Live your life with that high and noble banner ever before you. Jesus Christ *is* our sin-offering. He *is* the perfect and unstained Lamb of God who truly and forever takes away the sin of the world. Praise God for Jesus Christ our Lord.

Closing Verse: *“Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. ² And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.” Ephesians 5:1, 2*

Next Week: Leviticus 5:1-19 *Something to make your heart sing...*(The Trespass Offering)
(7th Leviticus Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if you have a lifetime of sin heaped up behind you, He can wash it away and purify you completely and wholly. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

Christ, Our Sin Offering

Now if the whole congregation of Israel sins unintentionally
And the thing is hidden from the eyes of the assembly

And they have done something against
Any of the commandments of the Lord
In anything which should not be done
And are guilty, according to His word

When the sin which they have committed
Becomes known, then the assembly
Shall offer a young bull for the sin
And bring it before the tabernacle of meeting, so shall it be

And the elders of the congregation
Shall lay their hands on the head of the bull before the Lord
Then the bull shall be killed before the Lord
This is according to My word

The anointed priest shall bring
Some of the bull's blood to the tabernacle of meeting

Then the priest shall dip his finger
In the blood and sprinkle it seven times before the Lord
In front of the veil
So he shall do according to this word

And he shall put some of the blood on the horns of the altar
Which is before the Lord
Which is in the tabernacle of meeting, in this he shall not falter

And he shall pour the remaining blood
At the base of the altar of burnt offering
Which is at the door of the tabernacle of meeting
Such shall be the appropriate proffering

He shall take all the fat
From it and burn it on the altar
And he shall do with the bull
As he did with the bull as a sin offering; in this he must not falter
Thus he shall do with it
To this he shall commit
So the priest shall for them atonement make
And it shall be forgiven them for their sake

Then he shall carry the bull outside the camp
And burn it as he burned the first bull
It is a sin offering for the assembly
Yes, for the assembly as a whole

When a ruler has sinned
And done something unintentionally
Against any of the commandments of the Lord his God
In anything which should not be done, and is guilty

Or if his sin which he has committed
Comes to his knowledge, so he shall do
He shall bring as his offering a kid of the goats
A male without blemish, as I am instructing you

And he shall lay his hand
On the head of the goat, which is his proffering
And kill it at the place where the burnt offering is killed
Before the Lord. It is a sin offering

The priest shall take some of the blood

Of the sin offering with his finger, such is the case
Put it on the horns of the altar of burnt offering
And pour its blood at the altar of burnt offering's base

And he shall burn all its fat on the altar
Like the fat of the sacrifice of the peace offering
So the priest shall make atonement for him
And it shall be forgiven him, his sin concerning

If anyone of the common people
Sins unintentionally by doing something
Against any of the commandments of the Lord
Which ought not to be done, and is guilty in anything
Or if his sin which he has committed
Comes to his knowledge, so it is now admitted

Then he shall as his offering
A kid of the goats bring

A female without blemish, so shall it be
For his sin which he has committed against Me

And he shall his hand on the head of the sin offering lay
And kill the sin offering at the place of the burnt offering
As to you I now say

Then the priest shall take
Some of its blood with his finger, let this be the case
Put it on the horns of the altar of burnt offering
And pour all the remaining blood at the altar's base

He shall remove all its fat
As fat is removed from the sacrifice of the peace offering
And the priest shall burn it on the altar
For a sweet aroma to the Lord, an acceptable proffering

So the priest shall for him make atonement
And it shall be forgiven him without postponement

If he brings a lamb as his sin offering
He shall a female without blemish bring
Then he shall lay his hand on the head
Of the sin offering

And kill it as a sin offering, such the proffering
At the place where they kill the burnt offering

The priest shall take some of the blood
Of the sin offering with his finger, in this he shall not falter
Put it on the horns of the altar of burnt offering
And pour all the remaining blood at the base of the altar

He shall remove all its fat
As the fat of the lamb is removed
From the sacrifice of the peace offering
This instruction is what I have approved

Then the priest shall burn it on the altar
According to the offerings made by fire to the Lord
So the priest shall make atonement for his sin
That he has committed, and it shall be forgiven him
According to this word

Our Lord Jesus died outside the walls of the city
He died there for the sins of all men on that day
God demonstrated His merciful pity
And in that crucified body, God has opened the way

We now can come home to Him once again
We are reconciled through what He alone has done
May we be willing to share this marvel with all men
That God has given us new life through His Son

Praises to God who has done this most marvelous thing for us!
All praises to God, through our glorious Lord Jesus!

Hallelujah and Amen...

LEVITICUS 5:1-19 (THE TRESPASS OFFERING)

Have you ever been pulled over for speeding and had no idea you were 10 miles an hour over the posted speed limit? Since you had gotten onto the road, there was no speed limit sign. And it just happens that the last sign was posted one road BEFORE you turned onto it. How can it be your fault when something like that happens? Well it is. Ignorance of the law is _____?

The same is true with going to another state and finding out that something you are doing is against the law, whereas you do it in your state every day, and twice on Sunday. Too bad; so sad. Pay the fine, and dontchew whine.

This is the idea behind the passage today. There are things which caused the people to become guilty, even if they didn't realize it. There are a variety of ways this could come about, but the fact that they did come about is all that matters. When the person discovered their transgression, they were considered guilty.

From there, they were to confess their guilt and then make an offering for atonement, or covering over, what they had done. This is what was expected of them. During times when people actually cared about their wrongs, the stream of blood from the sacrifices must have gone on and on.

I can look back on my life and think of countless times that I did something I later realized was not legal. Add in the times that I knew I was doing wrong, and the list would go on pretty much continuously. You do realize that the speed limit from here to my house has been set too low, and so it's not really my fault that I go 60 instead of 40 most of the way.

Text Verse: *Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation,¹⁹ that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. 2 Corinthians 5:18, 19*

God has a standard, and that standard is the law. The law has expectations and demands which must be met, and it is the truly foolish person that would think, even for a moment, that they believed they perfectly met all of those requirements. And yet, there's a guy in Sarasota, even right down the road from where we are now, that has the

folks in his synagogue believing the he has done exactly that. A friend of mine attends there and he told me once that his rabbi perfectly meets all 613 of the law's commands.

Well, I could probably show him at least a hundred that it is impossible for him to meet because there is no temple and there are no sacrifices, and so what he claims cannot be true. But even apart from that, nobody will ever tell me that they have never coveted. If they were to do so, I'd say then that they were also a liar... oops, there's two. We could go on, but there is no point. We are told in Leviticus that the man who does the things of the law will live.

The unstated, but obvious implication is that the man who does not do the things of the law will die. One final command in the law which is kind of the death knell for this rabbi concerns that of the Prophet. The Lord told Moses, who then told the people that He would raise up a prophet like Moses who would speak the word of the Lord to people. He then said that whoever would not hear His words which He spoke in the Lord's name, well it would be required of Him. That prophet is Yeshua, and this guy ain't listening to the Lord through Yeshua. I would pray that he realizes the err of his ways before that great Day of judgment comes.

But for those of us who know Him, Yeshua, or "Jesus," our debt is paid, our transgressions are covered over, and we have peace with God once again. Instead of many sacrifices for many infractions, we have one for all of them. Thank God for Jesus Christ who is the fulfillment of everything pictured here in Leviticus. It's all to be found in His superior word. And so let's turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. The Hidden Thing that Becomes Known (verses 1-13)

¹ 'If a person sins

The last chapter dealt with the sin-offerings to be presented for various groups. There was one for the high-priest, being the spiritual head of the people. There was one for the whole congregation. There was one for a ruler of the people. And finally, there was one for the individual members of the congregation.

Now, specific instances of sins which are committed are identified. They are of a type which is of less magnitude than those mentioned in chapter 4. In the committing of these sins, there must be an offering for atonement to come about. In the Hebrew, the word *nephesh*, or soul, is used for "person" here. "If a soul sins..." It indicates that there is a will and a desire which drives the person, and it is that part of the person which is

being highlighted. In all, three particular types of sin will be mentioned.

^{1 (con't)} **in hearing the utterance of an oath, and *is* a witness, whether he has seen or known *of the matter*—**

The word here for “oath” is *alah*. It indicates a curse, cursing, an oath, swearing, etc. For this reason, some tie the offense being described in with a curse against another person, as in a verbal attack. However, this is not the intent of what is being said.

Rather, the main idea is that of a person being asked by the civil authorities to answer on oath, but subsequently refusing to tell what is known concerning the matter being looked into. The word is used in Psalm 10, where it is translated as “cursing.” But if the context is looked at, it is a cursing which is not a verbal attack on another, but rather one which is tied into deceit and oppression –

“His mouth is full of cursing and deceit and oppression;
Under his tongue *is* trouble and iniquity.” Psalm 10:7

If one were to use the word “oath” instead of “cursing” there, the sense of the offense is better understood. “His mouth is full of oaths and deceit and oppression...” In other words, it is speaking of the kind of person who voluntarily makes oaths which are deceitful and harmful to others. “Mark’s money was stolen, did you know anything about this John?” “No, I swear I didn’t know a thing about it!”

As Israel is a society of people which forms a whole, it was an individual’s duty and responsibility to provide whatever the authorities needed to maintain the integrity of proper functioning of the society which was ultimately guided by God’s divine law.

There are times where a matter was being looked into, and an answer to the offense could not be found. In such an instance, it may be that the authorities would ask an entire congregation of people to make a vow, stating that they did not know anything about the offense which occurred. In this, if one of the people was aware of what occurred, but did not speak up, he was guilty.

The law of the unsolved murder of Deuteronomy 21:1-9 might be such an instance. If anyone aware of the offense did not come forward to speak during that rite, he was actually considered in the Lord’s eyes to have participated in what occurred. This had to be remedied. Until the matter was cleared up, it was an offense which carried its own burden...

¹ (con't) **if he does not tell *it*, he bears guilt.**

The weight of the guilt was laid upon him. It is a matter of his conscience. He has committed a crime, and he is conscious of the sin he bore. This is evident because if he wasn't conscious, there would otherwise be no reason to bring a sacrifice as will be prescribed in the coming verses. This is a willful concealing of a matter which affects some other part of the Lord's overall control of the people through His law. Of this type of oath which is demanded of another, an example is found in the New Testament, at the trial of Jesus.

And the high priest arose and said to Him, "Do You answer nothing? What *is it* these men testify against You?" ⁶³ But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest answered and said to Him, "I put You under oath by the living God: Tell us if You are the Christ, the Son of God!"

⁶⁴ Jesus said to him, "*It is as* you said. Nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven."

⁶⁵ Then the high priest tore his clothes, saying, "He has spoken blasphemy! What further need do we have of witnesses? Look, now you have heard His blasphemy! ⁶⁶ What do you think?"

They answered and said, "He is deserving of death."

⁶⁷ Then they spat in His face and beat Him; and others struck *Him* with the palms of their hands, ⁶⁸ saying, "Prophecy to us, Christ! Who is the one who struck You?"

-Matthew 26:62-68

Jesus was placed under oath by the high priest. Because of the position of the high priest, He was bound by the Law of Moses, which He gave to Israel, to tell the truth. He did, and therefore He remained without guilt in the matter. There is an irony that runs through the Bible that is astonishing when properly considered.

² **'Or if a person touches any unclean thing,**

The second type of trespass is for that of defilement due to touching something unclean. Here the noun *tame*, or unclean, is used for the first time. It comes from the verb *tame* which is the act of defilement, such as when Dinah, Jacob's daughter, was defiled by Hamor the son of Shechem in Genesis 34. It is a word which will become common in the Hebrew society from this point on. If a person came into contact with something defiled, they took on that state of defilement until it was dealt with. There are a host of things which would make one unclean in this way, such as...

² (con't) **whether *it is* the carcass of an unclean beast, or the carcass of unclean livestock, or the carcass of unclean creeping things,**

The word *nebelah*, or carcass, is introduced here. It indicates what is left after death; a corpse. In touching a corpse, defilement was transferred to the person who touched it. Three categories are given to show what corpse was included. The carcass of an unclean beast would be something like a pig. The carcass of unclean livestock might be a donkey, and the carcass of unclean creeping things would be something like a reptile. The general categories are given to signify all unclean animals in regards to dietary laws.

² (con't) **and he is unaware of it,**

There are four likely reasons why a person would be unaware of his defilement. The first would be because he simply didn't know he had touched something dead. The second would be because he was unaware of the requirement of the law which told him of his defilement. The third would be that he forgot he had touched something dead. And the fourth would be that he willingly ignored the offense. An example of someone doing this is given in Judges –

So Samson went down to Timnah with his father and mother, and came to the vineyards of Timnah.

Now *to his* surprise, a young lion *came* roaring against him. ⁶ And the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him, and he tore the lion apart as one would have torn apart a young goat, though *he had* nothing in his hand. But he did not tell his father or his mother what he had done.

⁷ Then he went down and talked with the woman; and she pleased Samson well. ⁸ After some time, when he returned to get her, he turned aside to see the carcass of the lion. And behold, a swarm of bees and honey *were* in the carcass of the lion. ⁹ He took some of it in his hands and went along, eating. When he came to his father and mother, he gave *some* to them, and they also ate. But he did not tell them that he had taken the honey out of the carcass of the lion. Judges 14:5-9

Samson was certainly aware of having touched the defiled animal, but he may have been unaware of the law, which is unlikely, or he may have simply ignored the command of the law. The parents became guilty through the act of eating the honey as well, but they were at this time unaware of the defilement. In all three cases, they were required to follow the procedures of the law given here when the trespass became known.

The matter extending to that which is unknown is important in that it shows that those who are even unaware of their defilement are still guilty. It is an exhortation then to be aware of one's surroundings, and to not simply assume that passing through life is an excuse for one to not pay heed to what is going on around him. This is made explicit with the following words...

² (con't) **he also shall be unclean and guilty.**

This, by default, is a ceremonial, not a moral guilt. The conscience is not naturally defiled by touching a carcass. However, because this is a part of the ceremonial law, a person is considered defiled ceremonially, and thus they bear guilt until they take the necessary action to have the guilt removed.

³ **Or if he touches human uncleanness—**

This is another new word, *tum'ah*. It is uncleanness which comes from being unclean. In other words, a human that is unclean because of defilement is in a state of defilement. A woman in the time of her period is in this state. A person who has a discharge is in this state. And so on. If any person touches such uncleanness, they too become defiled. This word is used in the instructions to Samson's mother for the rule and conduct of his life —

So the woman came and told her husband, saying, "A Man of God came to me, and His countenance *was* like the countenance of the Angel of God, very awesome; but I did not ask Him where He *was* from, and He did not tell me His name. ⁷ And He said to me, 'Behold, you shall conceive and bear a son. Now drink no wine or *similar* drink, nor eat anything **unclean**, for the child shall be a Nazirite to God from the womb to the day of his death.'" Judges 13:6, 7

³ (con't) **whatever uncleanness with which a man may be defiled, and he is unaware of it—when he realizes *it*, then he shall be guilty.**

As with defilement of the previous verse, so it is here. The person is considered defiled whether they realize it or not. Once realized, they were to consider themselves guilty because they were guilty.

⁴ **'Or if a person swears, speaking thoughtlessly with *his* lips**

Now a third way of becoming guilty is introduced. It is through the act of speaking in a certain manner. The word "swears" here is not meant in the way we use it today, such as

in using a bad word. Rather it is swearing as in an oath or a vow. When a person so swears through speaking thoughtlessly, then guilt may come about. The words “speaking thoughtlessly” are a single word in the Hebrew, *bata*. It is a rare word, found only four times in the Bible. It means “to babble.” From that comes the idea of speaking rashly or unadvisedly. It is used in the psalms when speaking of Moses -

They angered *Him* also at the waters of strife,
So that it went ill with Moses on account of them;
³³ Because they rebelled against His Spirit,
So that he spoke rashly with his lips. Psalm 106:32, 33

So what we have in this verse is a person who speaks an oath in a rash manner to do something, but they don't consider the oath afterwards, forgetting it when the trouble has subsided. A perfect example of this is found in 1 Samuel 25 –

Now David had said, “Surely in vain I have protected all that this *fellow* has in the wilderness, so that nothing was missed of all that *belongs* to him. And he has repaid me evil for good. ²² May God do so, and more also, to the enemies of David, if I leave one male of all who *belong* to him by morning light.” 1 Samuel 25:21, 22

David made the vow to kill all of the males of Nabal's household, but Nabal's wife, Abigail, came to pacify David over the rude treatment he had received. David was, in fact, pacified. He never followed through with his vow, but he was now guilty because of it. If it was brought to his memory, he needed to rectify the matter.

Another such vow is found in Acts 23 where a group of Jews made a vow not to eat or drink until they had killed Paul. It was less rash, than pre-planned, but it was still a vow which was not fulfilled. Unfortunately for them, Christ had died in fulfillment of the law. Thus, any sacrifice they made would have been unsuccessful in removing their guilt. Only in coming to Christ could they hope for their guilt to be removed.

⁴ (con't) **to do evil or to do good,**

This is an idiom which is all-encompassing concerning matters which fall under the extremes of good and evil, and thus it represents all human actions. If a vow is made from one extreme to the other, or anywhere in the middle, it is to be performed. If it is not, or if it was a rash vow that should not be performed, one is still guilty for the vow which had been made.

⁴ (con't) **whatever *it is* that a man may pronounce by an oath, and he is unaware of it— when he realizes *it*, then he shall be guilty in any of these *matters*.**

Again, as before, once the matter was brought to the attention of the offender, the person was guilty before the law. In being guilty, he would then need to seek pardon through the required sacrifices which are to be prescribed.

⁵ **‘And it shall be, when he is guilty in any of these *matters*, that he shall confess that he has sinned in that *thing*;**

This covers all of the offenses noted so far – 1) remaining silent in hearing the utterance of an oath; 2) touching something unclean which brings about defilement; and 3) making a rash oath. In any such instances, when the matter is brought to mind, the person becomes guilty through the offense. When that happens, then the matter needs to be confessed as sin, because he has, in fact, sinned.

The necessity to confess shows that the offering itself is not sufficient without the confession. This is an advanced taste of the gospel itself. Jesus Christ *is* our sin-offering, and yet, without confession of one’s need for Jesus, the offering is not accepted on his behalf. In other words, there is no such thing as universal salvation. Atonement is unlimited in its potential scope, but it is limited in actuality. This is built upon by Paul in Romans 10 –

“The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart” (that is, the word of faith which we preach): ⁹ that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. Romans 10.8-10

Confession, whether of sin or for salvation, is necessary for things to happen.

⁶ **and he shall bring his trespass offering to the Lord**

The verb *asham*, which speaks of being guilty, was seen in chapter 4, and in verse 2 of this chapter, is now changed to the noun form, *asham*, which indicates the offering for that guilt. Here it is called a trespass offering. This is what is required for the committed sin which is now realized. It is, in essence, a fine which has become due for one who is guilty. Without the payment of the fine, the guilt remains. It is an anticipatory look to Christ, who is said to be our *asham*, or sin-offering in Isaiah 53 –

Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him;
He has put *Him* to grief.
When You make His soul an **offering for sin, (asham)**
He shall see *His* seed, He shall prolong *His* days,
And the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand. Isaiah 53:10

As each offering unfolds and is explained, we continue to find hints of Christ to come, who alone could fulfill these countless types and pictures which were given to Israel until His incarnation.

6 (con't) for his sin which he has committed,

The words in Hebrew say, “for his sin which he has sinned.” To understand why I mention this now, stay tuned for verse 7.

6 (con't) a female from the flock, a lamb or a kid of the goats as a sin offering.

In chapter 4, the required offering for the sin of one of the common people was to be a female hairy goat, or a male lamb. Here, the same two are required. The only difference is that both, either lamb or goat, were to be females of the flock. The lesser valued of the species was specified most likely because these are sins of ignorance which have come to mind. Therefore, the Lord is granting an allowance for their now-realized transgressions.

6 (con't) So the priest shall make atonement for him concerning his sin.

Through confession and offering, the atonement would then be handled by the attending priest, and the sin would be covered. It is, as with all such things, looking to the final work of Christ who is both our offering, and the One who offers the offering. The entire process of our atonement is of, by, and from Him. We simply need to confess and to receive what He has already done. It is not a difficult thing in one way, and yet it is something which is immensely difficult in another, because it requires faith.

7 'If he is not able to bring a lamb,

The Hebrew here forms a metonymy which says, “And if his hand is not able to reach what is sufficient for a lamb.” In other words, the hand is used to describe what the hand acquires. It would be like saying, “Sam’s head is not able to attain what is necessary for a degree.” The head is being used to signify the knowledge required for

the degree. Here, the words are intended to mean that the person is too poor to be able to afford one of these two animals. In such a case, provision was made for him...

7 (con't) then he shall bring to the Lord, for his trespass which he has committed,

The words here say, “for his trespass which he has sinned.” Verse 6 said, “for his sin which he has sinned.” Different words from verse 6 are used to describe the same offense. Thus, the words “trespass” and “sin” must be considered synonymous in this context.

7 (con't) two turtledoves or two young pigeons:

These are the same offerings allowed for the poor which were seen in Leviticus 1:14. The Lord is granting allowances for the poor so that none are excluded from His mercy. Despite their lowly state in the society, they were of no-less value in the eyes of the Lord.

7 (con't) one as a sin offering and the other as a burnt offering.

Here, there is a difference between the birds and the other animals. One was to be for sin, the other was to be a burnt offering. It may seem curious at first, but it becomes obvious when considering the size of the birds. Because the fat parts of the bird could not be separated from the bird as with the other animals, and it was the fat part that was to be burned on the altar, and further because burning the bird completely on the altar would then destroy the nature of the trespass offering by making it a whole burnt-offering, two separate birds were used. The first would represent the Lord’s portion which would be burnt on the altar, while the second one would become the priest’s portion of the offering.

8 And he shall bring them to the priest, who shall offer *that* which *is* for the sin offering first, and wring off its head from its neck, but shall not divide *it* completely.

This is similar to the procedures of Leviticus 1:15. Between those two verses are found the only uses of the word *malaq* in the Bible. It is a word which appears to mean “wringing the neck.” The head is wrung off, but it is not to be completely divided from the body.

9 Then he shall sprinkle *some* of the blood of the sin offering on the side of the altar, and the rest of the blood shall be drained out at the base of the altar.

The wringing of the bird's neck, and the sprinkling and pouring out of the blood give us the same picture as for the other animals. Christ's death was violent, but it was offered for the sins of the richest even to the poorest. Each sacrifice has its own typical fulfillment in the work of the Lord.

⁹ (con't) **It is a sin offering.**

This is called a sin-offering, but nothing has been instructed about the blood being applied to the horns of the altar as was mandated in chapter 4. This and several other variations in the details show that the priest was to be attentive to the specifics of each offering, carefully ensuring that they were minutely fulfilled.

¹⁰ **And he shall offer the second as a burnt offering according to the prescribed manner. So the priest shall make atonement on his behalf for his sin which he has committed, and it shall be forgiven him.**

The words, "according to the prescribed manner" are given to direct the priest's attention back to the original instructions for the burnt-offerings which are detailed in chapter 1. In following those already-set guidelines, the priest would make atonement for the offender, and the sin would be considered forgiven.

¹¹ **'But if he is not able to bring two turtledoves or two young pigeons, then he who sinned shall bring for his offering one-tenth of an ephah of fine flour as a sin offering.**

For the very poorest of the land, an even more merciful hand was extended. They were allowed to bring one tenth of an ephah, or less than one half a gallon, of fine flour. This was to be considered their acceptable sin-offering.

¹¹ (con't) **He shall put no oil on it, nor shall he put frankincense on it, for it is a sin offering.**

As was seen in the grain offering, the flour pictured Christ, oil symbolizes the presence of the Spirit, and frankincense pictures works. All of these were offered in the grain offering, but only the flour is offered here. This is a sin-offering, intended for atonement. It demonstrates to us that God finds sin offensive and detestable. When sin is present, the Spirit is quenched and our works are unacceptable. Only in the offering of Christ can the sins be removed and atonement result.

¹² Then he shall bring it to the priest, and the priest shall take his handful of it as a memorial portion, and burn *it* on the altar according to the offerings made by fire to the Lord. It *is* a sin offering.

The procedure is similar to Leviticus 2:2, only that there was to be no oil or frankincense in the handful. Rather, the fine flour alone would be burnt as a memorial portion of the whole as an offering for sin. Though it is an offering without blood, it is still considered as a blood offering on behalf of the poor sinner. The burning of the flour still gives the needed picture of the sufferings of Christ.

¹³ The priest shall make atonement for him, for his sin that he has committed in any of these matters; and it shall be forgiven him. *The rest shall be the priest's as a grain offering.*"

"In any of these matters" is speaking of one of the three types of offenses mentioned in verses 1-4. This non-blood grain offering has been accepted as a blood offering. Christ is our Bread of life, and He gave His body for us. Despite there being no death in reality at the altar, there is death in picture for us to consider and be thankful for. Even the poorest of all sinners has a suitable, merciful offering to God in Christ Jesus.

*It is the law of the Lord
The standard by which our judgment will come
And any single infraction of the word
Will mean the sounding of the condemnation drum*

*How can I ever meet these commands?
Many speak of things I didn't even know I'd done
The bar is too high, I cannot attain to His demands
I've transgresses so many, and all it takes is one*

*But now I understand what I had before not understood
I can be deemed as if justified in every precept, as if not failing one
What I thought was against me was for my good
Because every detail has been fulfilled in His Son*

*Through a simple act of faith, I am restored and whole
Now there is no condemnation; I am entered on heaven's roll*

II. The Holy Things of the Lord (verses 14-19)

¹⁴ **Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying:**

These are the exact same words, letter by letter, as were last seen in Leviticus 4:1. A new thought is now being introduced to consider.

¹⁵ **“If a person commits a trespass,**

A new type of offense is now introduced. It is the word *maal* which comes from a primitive root, and it essentially means, “to cover up.” It is used in a figurative sense as in acting covertly, and thus treacherously.

^{15 (con't)} **and sins unintentionally in regard to the holy things of the Lord,**

“The holy things of the Lord” is generally considered to mean things like neglecting to redeem the first-born, not observing the law of the tithe, failing to offer the firstfruits, and the like. It is a defrauding in spiritual matters. The intent of the words “sins unintentionally” is the same as before. When the matter is brought to the offender’s attention, it was to be rectified. Withholding such holy things was considered stealing from God and was an offense to Him. This is recorded in Malachi 3 -

“Will a man rob God?
Yet you have robbed Me!
But you say,
‘In what way have we robbed You?’
In tithes and offerings. Malachi 3:8

^{15 (con't)} **then he shall bring to the Lord as his trespass offering a ram without blemish from the flocks, with your valuation in shekels of silver according to the shekel of the sanctuary, as a trespass offering.**

The Hebrew is obscure enough here where it can mean one of two things. It might mean the ram is to be valued and then a fifth is added to its price, or the value of the holy thing which he defrauded was to be set. Then a fifth was to be added to its price to make the total fine, and then a ram was to be added in for the satisfaction of the offering. The ram being worth a set price according to the shekel of the sanctuary. The latter makes more sense. It wouldn’t seem reasonable to have to only pay a ram when

the tithe may have included rams, goats, oxen, and grain... or even more. This appears to be borne out by the next verse.

The ram is a symbol of strength. It is a defender of the flock as it can butt with its horns. The symbolism here fits Christ, in that these holy things of the Lord were to be provided for those who had no inheritance of their own, or who were living in poverty. This is true with priests in that they had no inheritance of land and were dependent on the people's offerings for their livelihood. As far as the poor, this was especially true with the tithes. These things were there to provide for them -

“At the end of *every* third year you shall bring out the tithe of your produce of that year and store *it* up within your gates. ²⁹ And the Levite, because he has no portion nor inheritance with you, and the stranger and the fatherless and the widow who *are* within your gates, may come and eat and be satisfied, that the Lord your God may bless you in all the work of your hand which you do.”

-Deuteronomy 14:18, 29

Like the ram who defends the flock, the Lord is said in the 68th Psalm to be a Father of the fatherless and a defender of widows. The symbolism is seen in the ram offering.

¹⁶ And he shall make restitution for the harm that he has done in regard to the holy thing, and shall add one-fifth to it and give it to the priest.

This seems to lean to the thought that it is not the ram to which a fifth is added, but to the original amount defrauded. As I said, it would otherwise not make sense. The amount defrauded could be enormous in comparison to a mere ram. Once that was taken care of, then the ram would be presented.

^{16 (con't)} So the priest shall make atonement for him with the ram of the trespass offering, and it shall be forgiven him.

The procedures for the ram of the trespass offering are found in Leviticus 7, and they closely match those of the sin-offerings with a few exceptions.

¹⁷ “If a person sins, and commits any of these things which are forbidden to be done by the commandments of the Lord, though he does not know *it*, yet he is guilty and shall bear his iniquity.

In verses 17-19, we have a partial repeat of what was just seen in verses 14-16. The difference is that those in 14-16 were a matter of certainty. The offense was known, the amount could be set, and restitution had to be made. Here, however, there is a doubt in the matter. A person may have forgotten the details of his error, or he may feel that he has erred without really even knowing why. In such a case, even though he is unsure of his guilt, he is still guilty. I would call this, the state of constant stomach problems. It is as if the person is getting ulcers from the nagging guilt on his mind and he needs to have it taken away.

18 And he shall bring to the priest a ram without blemish from the flock, with your valuation, as a trespass offering.

When the person who feels he is guilty comes to the priest, he is to bring a ram without blemish, just as with the one of certain guilt. The valuation was to be set by the priest, just as before, but nothing is said of the one-fifth addition. The person has come forward over a matter he is not even sure of, and is not being penalized for his acknowledgment. Instead, the ram itself will be the only addition, and which is meant for atonement...

18 (con't) So the priest shall make atonement for him regarding his ignorance in which he erred and did not know it, and it shall be forgiven him.

The life of the ram is sufficient for the sin of ignorance where the person erred and didn't even know it. He stands forgiven because of the substitute. The picture of Christ's work for us is marvelous. We have certainly offended God in ten million ways that we have forgotten about. And yet, the debt is paid and we stand justified before the Lord despite those sins known but to Him.

19 It is a trespass offering; he has certainly trespassed against the Lord."

asham hu ashom asham l'Yehovah – "Trespass offering it (is); trespassing, he has trespassed against Yehovah." The intent here is that despite not having the fifth part added in, it is still considered a trespass-offering. In ignorance of the law, or whatever reason existed that brought the matter to mind now, there was no excuse for an infraction against the Lord. The sacrifice was necessary, and it was accepted as such by the Lord.

The special significance tied to this trespass-offering, is that there is a need for the satisfaction of such offenses against the Lord, and that these types and shadows lead to the Antitype which is found in Christ. He is the final, fully-sufficient, perfect, and

complete, satisfaction for the sins of the world. Nothing needs to be added in, and all debts are paid in Christ Jesus.

And speaking of debts, a friend who watches these sermons asked about the sin offering requirements of last week. In them, the least valuable offering authorized for a layman is a female lamb. He asked, "What about a poor person? If they could not afford a sin offering, wouldn't that be a detriment for them as there was no other way, at that time, to make themselves right with God?"

I told him that the trespass-offerings we would look at this week would do just that. The severity of the sin offering though required a lamb. If a poor person couldn't afford one, they could have someone else pay for their offering, something seen in the book of Acts concerning the paying of a vow for another. There was also the Day of Atonement which was given to cover their sins.

And also, this is what the tithing system was set up to do. It was there for the poor of the land to use, as prescribed in Deuteronomy. And finally, if they had no access to help by a friend, or from the collection of tithes to pay their sin-offering, they could always sell themselves for the money in order to pay the offering.

A Hebrew slave was to be given exceptional treatment during his time of servitude, and he was to be given provision when that time of slavery ended, which was at set intervals prescribed by the Lord. The question is, "Would a person be willing to sell himself into slavery in order to be obedient to the law of the sin offering?"

If so, then it showed his priorities were on the Lord and not on himself. In the end, we are all slaves to something. If we are a slave to sin, we cannot be a slave of the Lord. And if we are a slave of the Lord, then we are free from the condemnation which arises from sin.

The law was exceptionally gracious in its treatment of the people, and in the end, it is merely a reflection of the even more exceptional treatment which is found in Jesus Christ.

Closing Verse: *"My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. ² And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world."* 1 John 2:1, 2

Next Week: Leviticus 6:1-30 *This will hopefully be a load of fun...* (The Mediator's Duties, Part I) (8th Leviticus Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if you have a lifetime of sin heaped up behind you, He can wash it away and purify you completely and wholly. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Trespass Offering

If a person sins in hearing the utterance
Of an oath, and is a witness; yes, the truth is spilt
Whether he has seen or known of the matter
If he does not tell it, he bears guilt

Or if a person touches any unclean thing
Whether it is the carcass of an unclean beast
Or the carcass of unclean livestock
Or the carcass of unclean creeping things, from greatest to least

And unaware of it is he
He also shall be unclean and guilty

Or if he touches human uncleanness
Whatever uncleanness with which a man may be defiled
And he is unaware of it
When he realizes it, then he shall be guilty
----- needing to be reconciled

Or if a person swears, speaking thoughtlessly
With his lips to do evil or to do good
Whatever it is that a man may pronounce by an oath
And he is unaware of it; it was not understood

When he realizes it, so shall it be
Then in any of these matters guilty shall be he

And it shall be, when he is guilty
In any of these matters at hand

That he shall confess that he has sinned in that thing
That he does not understand

And he shall bring his trespass offering to the Lord
For his sin which he has committed in this thing
A female from the flock
A lamb or a kid of the goats as a sin offering

So the priest shall make atonement for him
So shall it be concerning his sin

If he is not able to bring a lamb
Then he shall bring to the Lord
For his trespass which he has committed
Two turtledoves or two young pigeons, according to this word
One as a sin offering and the other as a burnt offering
Such shall be his proffering

And he shall bring them to the priest
Who shall offer that which is for the sin offering first, you see
And wring off its head from its neck
But shall not divide it completely

Then he shall sprinkle some of the blood
Of the sin offering on the side of the altar, he shall do this thing
And the rest of the blood shall be drained out
At the base of the altar. It is a sin offering

And he shall offer the second as a burnt offering
According to the prescribed manner; a task somewhat grim
So the priest shall make atonement on his behalf
For his sin which he has committed, and it shall be forgiven him

But if he is not able to bring two turtledoves
Or two young pigeons, he cannot bring
Then he who sinned shall bring for his offering
One-tenth of an ephah of fine flour as a sin offering

He shall put no oil on it

Nor shall he put frankincense on it
For it is a sin offering
This to you I now submit

Then he shall bring it to the priest
And the priest shall take his handful of it, according to this word
As a memorial portion, and burn it on the altar
According to the offerings made by fire to the Lord

It is a sin offering
Such is to be this proffering

The priest shall make atonement for him
For his sin that he has committed in any of these matters
----- any such thing
And it shall be forgiven him
The rest shall be the priest's as a grain offering

Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying
These are the words he was then relaying

If a person commits a trespass
And sins unintentionally in regard to the holy things of the Lord
Then he shall bring to the Lord as his trespass offering
A ram without blemish from the flocks, according to this word

With your valuation in shekels of silver he shall bring
According to the shekel of the sanctuary
As a trespass offering

And he shall make restitution
For the harm that he has done in regard to the holy thing
And shall add one-fifth to it
And give it to the priest; so shall be his offering

So the priest shall make atonement for him
With the ram of the trespass offering
And it shall be forgiven him
The Lord shall forgive his trespass in this thing

If a person sins, and commits any of these things
Which are forbidden to be done by the commandments of the Lord
Though he does not know it
Yet he is guilty and shall bear his iniquity; so stands the word

And he shall bring to the priest a ram without blemish from the flock
With your valuation, as a trespass offering
So the priest shall make atonement for him
In which he erred, his ignorance this thing regarding

And did not know it
And it shall be forgiven him as I to you submit

It is a trespass offering; so understand the word
He has certainly trespassed against the Lord

Lord, how many countless times have we offended You
In things we have done, and those things left undone as well
We have hidden our hands from what is right
And have earned a one-way path to hell

And yet through one marvelous offering
The sins of all the world are taken away
If we but come to Jesus
If we to Him call out and pray

Marvelous are You O God for what You have done for us
You have come in human flesh; You have come O Lord Jesus

Thank You for being our Substitute; now hear our praise
Thank You O God Almighty; we sing to You now and for eternal days

Hallelujah and Amen...

LEVITICUS 6:1-30 **(THE MEDIATOR'S DUTIES, PART I)**

The book of Leviticus gives lots and lots (and lots) of rules for the priests to follow. And when speaking of the duties of the high priest, it will often note that the same duties will devolve to the next high priest who is anointed to assume the duties of the previous high priest.

What is implied there is that the high priest was limited to a certain term which was due to end at his death. As this is the case, then it tells us that the high priest was not immune from death, nor would he ever be capable of being immune from it. If it was possible, then the Bible would have said as much.

But in speaking of the ordination and carrying on of the duties of the high priest by another generation, the implication is that death was a certainty. As the Bible clearly shows from its first pages that death is the result of sin, then we can easily deduce that the law could not cure the sin problem.

If the law is the super duper thing that Israel, even Israel of today, seems to think it is, then the law would be able to take care of the whole "I'm destined to die" thing. But nobody ever talks about being exempt from death because of the law.

Christians, on the other hand, talk about it all the time. While at the same time as expecting our end because of inevitable death, Christians also have the hope of actually never tasting death. If that is available to Christians, and it is, then that means that the sin-generated death problem is already fixed. The plan just has not yet been fully put into place.

Text Verse: *"Also there were many priests, because they were prevented by death from continuing. ²⁴ But He, because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood. ²⁵ Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them." Hebrews 7:23-25*

God did something marvelous in Christ Jesus. He fixed the death problem for us, by having Someone die who could not stay dead. Think about that for a moment. When someone offered a sacrifice for sin in Israel, the priest would eat of that person's sacrifice because he was bearing the sin of that person as the mediator between him and God.

However, when a priest sacrificed for himself, he could not eat of the sacrifice because it would be as if he was taking his sin back upon himself again. But in Christ, we have a High Priest who is always alive. He died for our sin, but not His own. There was no sin that could come back to Him. And so for us, there is now no sin that can come back to us as well.

The sinless One is there mediating for His people, bearing their sins, but not facing death because of His own sins. The law which stood opposed to us was nailed to His cross. It died with Him, and so now we can live to God through Christ. It really is an amazing thing which God has done.

As we go through the many verses today, think about the symbolism as it looks forward to Christ. Some of it will be explained, some of it will be reexplained, and some of it should be well known enough to you already where it doesn't need to be explained, but it is all about Jesus, and it is all to be found in His superior word. And so let's turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. A Trespass Against the Lord (verses 1-7)

¹ And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying:

These words were last seen in verse 5:14. They are brought in now to signify a new train of thought is being introduced. The previous section dealt with things holy to the Lord; this now deals with offenses against one's neighbor. Something you should know is that the division of the Hebrew Bible is different than how we divide it. Charles Ellicott explains this for us and it is well worth remembering -

"It is repeatedly stated, in some of our best commentaries, that Leviticus 6:1-7 form part of Leviticus 5 in the Hebrew Bible, and that our translators unfortunately adopted the division of the Septuagint, instead of following the Hebrew. Nothing can be more erroneous than this statement. The Hebrew Scriptures in manuscript have no division into chapters at all. The text is divided into sections, of which there are no less than 669 in the Pentateuch. The book of Leviticus has ninety-eight of these sections, while in our Authorised Version it has only twenty-seven chapters. The divisions into chapters, now to be found in the Hebrew Bibles, were adopted in the fourteenth century by the Jews from the Christians for polemical purposes, and the figures attached to each verse are of a still later period."

In other words, the Jews of the 14th century illogically divided the Scriptures as a means of attacking the divisions of the Christian Bible, but the Christian Bible follows the divisions of the Greek translation of the Old Testament which predates even Christ's coming. The words of this first verse of chapter 6 show us that this is an entirely separate thought from that of verse 5:14, and therefore, the new chapter division is appropriate.

² "If a person sins and commits a trespass against the Lord

The same word, *maal*, which was introduced into the Bible in verse 5:15 is used here again. It indicates committing a trespass, or dealing treacherously. In both verses, it is called a trespass against the Lord, even though this offense is against a neighbor.

The idea is that when someone defrauds or steals from a neighbor, it subverts social life. As the social life of the Israelites is established by God in His law over them, then to act against a neighbor is an insult to God. Thus, the sin is against the Lord, even if it is the neighbor who has been violated.

^{2 (con't)} by lying to his neighbor about what was delivered to him for safekeeping, or about a pledge, or about a robbery, or if he has extorted from his neighbor,

The word for "lying" here is *kakhash*. It has only been used once so far, in Genesis 18:15 when Sarah denied that she laughed when the Lord said she would bear a child. It is a lie of denial or deception. This lying is said to be to the person's *amith*, or neighbor. This is a new word in Scripture which will be found only in Leviticus with one exception which is Zechariah 13:7. It gives the sense of an associate or a companion.

Each of the things which involve lying to the neighbor are based on rare Hebrew words, or words which are now introduced for the first time, or even the only time. The words then, like those of any judicial instruction, are specific and precise. When one listens to a court proceeding, they may hear words which they have never heard before, but the law carries the need for precision which is often meant to explain the regular evil-doing of man in a way which intimately describes the actions he is involved in.

What is being relayed in this verse concerns the normal way things were done in Israel. If a person was going on a journey perhaps, they would need their things taken care of while gone. Suppose they had animals which needed to be tended to. They would be given over as a *piqadon*, or a deposit. The intent was that the thing would be kept safe for the individual.

The next example might be something precious which needed to be kept. The term is *bitsumet yad*, or a security (in) hand. This would be something small and precious, like money or jewelry. It would be handed to another for safekeeping. This is an offense which has already been explained, at least in part, in Exodus 22 –

“If a man delivers to his neighbor money or articles to keep, and it is stolen out of the man’s house, if the thief is found, he shall pay double. ⁸If the thief is not found, then the master of the house shall be brought to the judges *to see* whether he has put his hand into his neighbor’s goods.” Exodus 22:7, 8

The third example is of a *gazel*, or robbery. It is something taken by violence. And the final example is that of *ashaq*. This is extortion or taking through oppression. Each of these was wrongdoing against one’s neighbor, but it is an offense within society, and thus offensive to God.

³ or if he has found what was lost and lies concerning it,

This is a fifth thing which falls under the same major category, finding something which was lost by another and lying concerning it. Exodus 23:4 specifically speaks of an enemy’s ox going astray which is found by someone. Even in such a circumstance, they were to acknowledge that which they found and return it to its rightful owner. Thus the enemy of Exodus 23:4 must be considered as the *amith*, or neighbor, of this verse for sake of the law.

^{3 (con’t)} and swears falsely—in any one of these things that a man may do in which he sins:

The swearing falsely here covers all of the previous five categories. One may lie about a deposit, a pledge in hand, about robbery, extortion, or finding something which didn’t belong to him. Each of the categories against another man unites in the one idea of it being sin against God.

The question we should stop and ask ourselves at this point is, “Have we ever done any such thing?” Even if the answer is, “No,” we have probably thought of doing one or more of them many times. The law is intended to bring out of us a sense of the state of wrongdoing that exists deep in the human heart.

⁴ then it shall be, because he has sinned and is guilty, that he shall restore what he has stolen, or the thing which he has extorted, or what was delivered to him for safekeeping, or the lost thing which he found,

The idea here is that the person willingly admits his guilt through a sense of remorse or a nagging conscience. It is not to include being caught and being convicted without a confession. This is certain because of the penalty which is imposed in the next verse. For someone who is guilty without confession, the penalty has already been established in earlier Exodus verses, one of which I cited a minute ago. For this, the first thing he is to do is to restore the thing which was involved in the offense.

⁵ or all that about which he has sworn falsely. He shall restore its full value, add one-fifth more to it, *and* give it to whomever it belongs, on the day of his trespass offering.

The person who was defrauded is to receive the restoration and accept one-fifth of the value added to it by the offender. What is implied, is that it is to be accepted. There is nothing stating that he has either a right to deny it or to request more. The matter is to be considered as settled. If one looks at it from this viewpoint, it is as much a protection for the one who is trying to make right, as it is for the person who was defrauded in the first place.

From here, he is then to also give his trespass offering. The two were to occur one immediately after the other. The restitution to the aggrieved party was not considered sufficient for the offense. A trespass offering was required as well. It was to be a sign of sorrow for his transgression against another, against society, and against God. The penalty of this offering, and its accompanying ritual are the same as for the offenses noted in chapter 5 as is seen next...

⁶ And he shall bring his trespass offering to the Lord, a ram without blemish from the flock, with your valuation, as a trespass offering, to the priest.

The difference between this trespass and one directly against the Lord is that the one who is offended receives the additional one-fifth value for the wrong done toward him. Whereas in an offense against the holy things of the Lord, the one-fifth value was given to the priest. Other than that, the same ram is required as before.

⁷ So the priest shall make atonement for him before the Lord, and he shall be forgiven for any one of these things that he may have done in which he trespasses."

This verse corresponds to 5:16. In both instances, the priest makes atonement for the offender, and he is forgiven for the wrong he has done. Again as in the previous chapter, the entire process looks ahead to the work of Christ for all of these same offenses which we have committed against our fellow man, our society, and our God. In the end, our offenses are ultimately offenses against Him.

*I defrauded my neighbor, but have taken it to heart
I did him wrong, when I should have been upright
Now it is time I make a new start
A new day now ends the anxious, sleepless night*

*No more will I swear falsely, I will pay for what I have done
And to the Lord I will offer a ram to set things right
Against Him I have sinned; He the offended One
But my offering will end this miserable plight*

*My High Priest will make atonement for me
I will be made right because of my Lord
I am trusting in Jesus to once and forever set me free
I have faith in the truth of His marvelous word*

II. The Law of the Burnt Offering (verses 8-13)

⁸ Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying,

Again, after just a few verses, an entirely new section is introduced which will include the laws for the burnt, grain, sin, trespass, and peace offerings which have all been laid out already. One might wonder why these are detailed now instead of in those chapters.

The reason is that up to now, the details showed the people the circumstances which necessitated bringing an offering, and how it was to be done. Now the directions are given for how the priests are to actually conduct their duties on behalf of the people.

Many scholars claim that this is where the chapter should actually begin, and that verses 1-7 should belong to chapter 5, but there is no reason to conclude this. Verses 1-7 were their own section. Their placement here is therefore not at all uncalled for. The divisions are logical and orderly as they are compiled in the Christian canon.

⁹ **“Command Aaron and his sons, saying,**

The directions from the Lord now are to be relayed as a commandment to Aaron and his sons. The intent is that until the next major section, everything that will be spoken is a responsibility of theirs. This section will take us all the way to verse 7:21 when the children of Israel are again the addressees.

^{9 (con't)} **‘This is the law of the burnt offering:**

The term, “This is the law of” will be seen at the beginning of each section right through verse 7:21, all of which are spoken to Aaron and his sons. After that, instructions will be spoken again to the children of Israel. Each section is a part of the larger set of instructions which the Lord is giving.

^{9 (con't)} **The burnt offering *shall* be on the hearth upon the altar all night until morning, and the fire of the altar shall be kept burning on it.**

This first type of offering, the burnt-offering, is the one detailed in Exodus 29. It is the daily lamb offerings which were offered in the morning and then in the afternoon at a time known as “between the evenings.” They were to be offered every day without fail, and they pointed in a marvelous way to the work of Christ on the day of His cross. If you missed that sermon, or if you have forgotten it, it’s time for you to brush up by re-viewing it once again.

The last sacrifice upon the altar each day was one of the lambs of this burnt-offering, and the first offering upon the altar each next day was, again, to be this daily lamb offering. It was to be kept burning all night, right up until morning, and then the next offering was to be made. The fire was never to go out, but was to be kept burning perpetually. The reason for this is that the fire was sanctified by the Lord at the consecration of the altar. After that, the same fire, sanctified by Him, was to consume all sacrifices from then on out. This will be seen in just a few more chapters –

“Then the glory of the Lord appeared to all the people, ²⁴ and fire came out from before the Lord and consumed the burnt offering and the fat on the altar. When all the people saw *it*, they shouted and fell on their faces.” Leviticus 9:23, 24

This then is a picture of the eternal fire of the Lord, consuming the sin of man. Either it is done on behalf of man by Christ, or it is done to man in the Lake of Fire. Either way, sin will be judged, and the fire is that from the Lord Himself.

¹⁰ And the priest shall put on his linen garment, and his linen trousers he shall put on his body, and take up the ashes of the burnt offering which the fire has consumed on the altar, and he shall put them beside the altar.

The specificity for the priest to put on his linen garments is not unnecessary. The ashes were a part of the holy offering of the daily sacrifices. Therefore, the person doing the labor of removing the ashes was to be attired properly for the task. The linen garment he is to wear is described by a new word in Scripture, *mad*. It would be a full length robe. The “trousers” are undergarments which come from a word which gives the sense of “hiding.”

The linen they are made of in Hebrew is *bad*. It is probably from the word *badad*, or “shoots.” Thus one gets the idea of divided fibers that are woven together. The nakedness of the priests was to be covered in order to reflect purity and holiness instead of indecency. A sense of the holiness of the duties was to be reflected in the wearing of this attire. In these garments, he was to gather up the ashes of the burnt-offering, and then place them by the altar.

¹¹ Then he shall take off his garments, put on other garments, and carry the ashes outside the camp to a clean place.

The holy garments were to be worn in the sanctuary and for holy duties. However, he was not to go outside the sanctuary with them. And so after gathering the ashes of the fat, he was to change into common garments where he would then carry them outside of the camp to a place which was not defiled in any way. No carcasses, dung, or any other thing which caused defilement was to be found in the place where the ashes of the fat were disposed of.

¹² And the fire on the altar shall be kept burning on it;

These words are given as a stern warning that while the ashes were being removed, the priest was to ensure that the fire would not be quenched during the process. He was not to knock the still-burning pieces of the offering which were the fuel for the fire and thus cause the fire to go out. And then to stress this it says...

¹² (con't) it shall not be put out.

The word for “shall be put out” is a new word in Scripture, *kabah*. It means to extinguish. The same thought is restated in a new way. The fire was not to go out, but was to be kept burning always.

¹² (con't) **And the priest shall burn wood on it every morning, and lay the burnt offering in order on it; and he shall burn on it the fat of the peace offerings.**

The fire that was left from the previous night was to be rekindled with wood each morning in preparation for the morning offering. When that lamb was sacrificed, it was then laid on the wood in its regular order as prescribed, and any time peace offerings were offered, the fat of those, as previously detailed, was to also be burnt on it. The fire then was to be continuously fueled by the fire provided by the congregation, and by the sacrifices of these daily offerings. And then, once again, the strict warning is given...

¹³ **A fire shall always be burning on the altar; it shall never go out.**

There is no exception. When the altar was moved, the fire was to be kept burning. From day to day and year to year, the same fire that was first sanctified by the Lord was to burn. It is His fire of judgment, and only His fire. No strange fire was to be introduced, because only the Lord's judgment upon sin is acceptable.

The repetition is intended to show us this truth. All judgment is of the Lord. His judgment upon our sin in Christ is eternally effective, or His judgment upon man's sin will be eternally applied. This is seen in Isaiah 66 where the same word, *kabah*, which was in both verse 11 and 13 is seen there –

“And they shall go forth and look
Upon the corpses of the men
Who have transgressed against Me.
For their worm does not die,
And their fire **is not quenched**.
They shall be an abhorrence to all flesh.” Isaiah 66:24

*A lamb precious and pure is given
For to my God I desire to provide my very best
He has brought me to the place of abundant livin'
And to please Him is my heart-filled quest*

How good and pleasant it is to offer the lamb

*I pray that He is pleased with the condition of my heart
I love my Lord God, the great I AM
And so to Him this precious lamb I do impart*

*May the Lord accept this offering in my place
And look with favor upon me as I go my way
May the Lord turn to me His glorious shining face
And may He bless my steps each and every day*

III. The Law of the Grain Offering (verses 14-23)

¹⁴ 'This is the law of the grain offering: The sons of Aaron shall offer it on the altar before the Lord.

The directions here are a close repeat of Leviticus 2:1-3, but with some additions as well. The Hebrew says that the grain-offering was to be offered before the Lord and before the altar, not "on the altar" as the NKJV reads. Further, conducting this duty was limited to the sons of Aaron, meaning any of the descendants of him from that point on who were ordained to be priests.

¹⁵ He shall take from it his handful of the fine flour of the grain offering, with its oil, and all the frankincense which is on the grain offering, and shall burn it on the altar for a sweet aroma, as a memorial to the Lord.

These words are a close repeat of Leviticus 2:2, all of the symbolism as we saw points to Christ. The fine flour, the oil, the frankincense, all of it is given as anticipatory pictures of the coming work of Christ. It is He and His work which is ultimately the true sweet aroma and memorial to the Lord.

¹⁶ And the remainder of it Aaron and his sons shall eat; with unleavened bread it shall be eaten in a holy place; in the court of the tabernacle of meeting they shall eat it.

The word "with" does not belong here. The remainder of the grain-offering was not to be eaten "with" unleavened bread. Rather, it was to be eaten "as" unleavened bread. If your Bible says "with," make a note. The grain-offering was to be made into unleavened cakes and then eaten in a holy place. Only males could eat this as it was deemed as a most holy offering. However, any male who ceremonially defiled could not partake of this offering.

17 It shall not be baked with leaven.

This shows that the word “with” in the previous verse is incorrect. The remainder of the offering was not to be baked with leaven. It was to be eaten as unleavened bread. The reason is...

17 (con't) I have given it as their portion of My offerings made by fire; it is most holy, like the sin offering and the trespass offering.

Notice the use of the first person. The Lord claims this offering as His, but He gave it to the priests as their portion. Thus it is considered *qodesh qodashim*, or holy of holies. As leaven pictures sin, there was to be no leaven mixed with this most holy offering.

18 All the males among the children of Aaron may eat it. It shall be a statute forever in your generations concerning the offerings made by fire to the Lord.

The words are specific and exclude any female, and they also exclude anyone outside of the priesthood of Aaron and his sons from partaking of this offering. This was to be a statute forever according to the time of the continuance of the covenant. The term, “forever” simply means “to the vanishing point.” It does not mean eternally. In Christ, the law is ended, and the prohibitions no longer apply. However, as there are seven years left for Israel under the Old Covenant according to Daniel 9, then this prohibition will be in effect during those final seven years.

18 (con't) Everyone who touches them must be holy.”

There are two views on this. The first is that only someone who was holy, or set apart, could touch these offerings. The second is that if someone touched them, they became holy. If the latter is true, and which seems to be the case, it means that any common person who touched them would become devoted to the Lord. As they had no right to the priestly privileges, it would mean a life filled with inconvenience because of their transgression.

19 And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying,

This introduces a new section within “the laws of” which began in verse 9, and they continue the laws of the grain offering, but the instructions are solely for the anointed priest concerning the grain offerings which apply to him, not to those of the general congregation.

²⁰ “This is the offering of Aaron and his sons, which they shall offer to the Lord, *beginning* on the day when he is anointed:

The wording here needs a moment of explanation. Aaron was anointed, and the ordination process took seven days to complete. During that time, this offering wasn't made. It only took effect upon the completion of his ordination, and from that time forwards. The term “on the day” then is speaking of the time-frame of the ordination. Upon the completion of that time-frame, the offerings were to be made day by day.

²⁰ (con't) one-tenth of an ephah of fine flour as a daily grain offering, half of it in the morning and half of it at night.

One-tenth of an ephah is an omer, or as much as a person would eat in a single day. This was to be offered each day as a grain-offering to the Lord, and it was to be divided into one portion in the morning, and the second in the evening. The term here for “night” is not the same as the time of day that the lamb was sacrificed. This word means precisely, “in the evening.”

²¹ It shall be made in a pan with oil. *When it is mixed, you shall bring it in. The baked pieces of the grain offering you shall offer for a sweet aroma to the Lord.*

The wording here is very precise, and it was solely the responsibility of the high priest to accomplish this task each day. He was to use a flat pan, like a griddle, mix it with oil, and bake the pieces before offering them to the Lord on the altar. Jewish tradition says he made six pieces in the morning and six at night, being the same number as the bread of the Presence, but this is not included as part of Scripture.

The word for “mixed” here is *rabak*. It is found just three times in Scripture, and all three are pertaining to this same process. It gives the sense of soaking bread in oil for the purpose of frying it.

²² The priest from among his sons, who is anointed in his place, shall offer it. *It is a statute forever to the Lord.*

The meaning here is that this duty each day rested solely with the high priest. Whoever succeeded him would then assume this particular duty. This is the meaning of “who is anointed in his place.” There was but one anointed priest at a time. Nothing is said

about what was done if the high priest was sick or incapacitated. And this verse does not seem to give the high priest any chance of going on vacation, even for a weekend.

The duty was his, it was done twice a day, and it was done by him until he was succeeded by a new high priest. This was to continue on as long as the law remained in effect. As Christ is the fulfillment of this practice, and the Initiator of the New Covenant, the words “forever to the Lord” point to Him having accomplished this now, once and forever.

22 (con't) It shall be wholly burned.

The other grain-offerings brought by the people had a memorial handful taken out and presented to the Lord on the altar. After that, the rest belonged to the priests for their use. On the other hand, this offering had to be *kalil taqetar*, or wholly burned (as incense). The reason for this is that it would be unseemly to make an offering to the Lord and then partake in it. And, as he was the highest official, the offering could not be passed down to a lower station from Him. It was solely the property of the Lord, and it was to be wholly burnt up as an aroma to Him.

This offering which is not a bloody offering was not intended for expiation of sin, but was rather a type of the fruits of sanctification. Again, it looks forward to Christ. As the daily sacrificed lamb was a type of His cross as a perfect sin-offering, this is a type of His perfect life, lived wholly to God.

23 For every grain offering for the priest shall be wholly burned. It shall not be eaten.”

Again, the prohibition is repeated as a type of emphasis. The grain-offering of the priest belonged to the Lord, not to the priest. In picture, it is the priest living for the Lord, not for himself. As he is a type of Christ, it is emblematic of Christ living for God and not for Himself. He yielded His life to the Father, being literally saturated with the Holy Spirit, just as this bread was saturated in oil. This is what is seen in this daily grain-offering of the high-priest.

What will it take to please the Lord; how much work will do?

When will my deeds be enough?

I think I have satisfied Him through and through

But then I ponder about my life... all the bad stuff

And then I see that the bad outweighs the good

*And so I do a bit more hoping it will be enough
But the nagging sensation makes it understood
That doing wrong makes the good disappear like a puff*

*And then I heard that He had done it all for me
Jesus' works were perfect; God deemed it enough
Like frankincense, His life was accepted. How can it be?
His works are sufficient to cover all of my bad stuff*

IV. The Law of the Sin Offering (verses 24-30)

²⁴ Also the Lord spoke to Moses, saying,

The word “also” here is inappropriate. It is the exact same words as have been seen at the beginning of each section. It should simply read, “And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying,” just as it has each time. However, though it is a new direction from the Lord, it still continues the same major section which began in verses 8 and 9 which are commandments directly to Aaron and his sons. This section expands on the instructions given in Leviticus 4.

²⁵ “Speak to Aaron and to his sons, saying, ‘This *is* the law of the sin offering: In the place where the burnt offering is killed, the sin offering shall be killed before the Lord. It *is* most holy.

The place where the burnt-offering is killed is specified in Leviticus 1:3 as being at the door of the tent of meeting, but this properly means, at the altar, and specifically on its north side (1:11). It is the sacrifice at the altar which allows entry through the door. The two are linked together as one. A sin offering is considered one which falls into the class of most holy offerings. As Albert Barnes notes about this term being applied here –

“The flesh of the victim, which represented the sinner for whom atonement was now made, was to be solemnly, and most exclusively, appropriated by those who were appointed to mediate between the sinner and the Lord. The far-reaching symbolism of the act met its perfect fulfillment in the One Mediator who took our nature upon Himself.” Albert Barnes

²⁶ The priest who offers it for sin shall eat it.

The symbolism here is that the priest thus bore the sin of the person that brought the offering. This is explicitly stated in Leviticus 10:17. Thus, it looks forward to Christ bearing the sin of His people. In practical day to day life, it also was a means of providing for the priests who had no inheritance of their own. Unfortunately, this symbolism of the priests bearing the sin of the people was abused by them when they went on to revel in their own sins. This is seen in Hosea 4 –

“The more they increased,
The more they sinned against Me;
I will change their glory into shame.
⁸They eat up the sin of My people;
They set their heart on their iniquity.
⁹And it shall be: like people, like priest.
So I will punish them for their ways,
And reward them for their deeds.” Hosea 4:7-9

²⁶ (con't) In a holy place it shall be eaten, in the court of the tabernacle of meeting.

The court is everything outside of the tent itself, but within the hangings which surrounded the tent, forming the courtyard. The priests would have a place set apart where they would gather and eat their meals within this courtyard.

²⁷ Everyone who touches its flesh must be holy.

The same terminology is used here as before. Either the person touching the flesh must be holy, or the person who touches the flesh will become holy, meaning devoted to the Lord. Scholars punch it out over which is correct, but the latter does seem to be more likely. This seems even more so because of what is next said about the blood.

²⁷ (con't) And when its blood is sprinkled on any garment, you shall wash that on which it was sprinkled, in a holy place.

Any blood which was inadvertently sprinkled on any garment needed to be washed off, there in a holy place designated for such things. This was done to show the high and precious value of the blood of the sacrifice which was not to be taken into any profane place, or among anything common or unclean. The blood of the sin-offering is typical of the precious blood of Christ which is to be treated with the highest respect and regard for what it signifies in the life of the believer.

²⁸ But the earthen vessel in which it is boiled shall be broken.

The *kheres*, or earthen vessel, is introduced here. It is any pot or potsherd made of earthenware. If such a vessel was used for boiling the sacrifices, it was to be broken, because it could absorb the fat of the offering into it. Later in Leviticus, the exact opposite will necessitate the breaking of earthen vessels. If they touch anything defiled, they were to likewise be broken.

In the Bible earthenware jars are used at times to symbolize people and the Lord is the Potter. The lesson should not go unlearned. The holy is not to be mixed with the profane, and we, as earthen jars, are to be filled with that which is holy. After that, we are to keep ourselves from being mixed with that which is profane.

²⁸ (con't) And if it is boiled in a bronze pot, it shall be both scoured and rinsed in water.

A pot of bronze would not be subject to soaking up defilement, and so it would need to be scoured and then rinsed to purify it. Both words, scour and rinse, are introduced here. One gives the sense of polishing, the other gives the sense of overflowing with water in order to cleanse. As bronze signifies judgment in Scripture, there is a picture of sin being judged and cleansed away. In such a case, the bowl could be reused. Such was not the case with a vessel of clay.

The typology is impressive, and it shows that the Lord has our sanctification and holy living on His mind, even with the vessels used in the sacrificial rites and customs.

²⁹ All the males among the priests may eat it. It is most holy.

The meat of the sin-offering was allowed to be eaten not only by the officiating priest, but by any of the priests, and any of their male children. Despite the high honor of this for the priests, the New Testament says that believers in Christ have an even higher honor in that we have an altar from which those who served at the tabernacle have no right to eat. We have partaken of what these types and shadows only prefigure in the Person and work of Christ.

³⁰ But no sin offering from which *any* of the blood is brought into the tabernacle of meeting, to make atonement in the holy *place*, shall be eaten. It shall be burned in the fire.

This takes us back to the sin offerings for the high priest, or of the congregation as a whole, which were seen in Leviticus 4, and which will be seen for the sin offering of the Day of Atonement rites of Leviticus 16. Any such sin offering had its blood brought into the holy place of the tent of meeting. There atonement was made by sprinkling seven times, and upon the horns of the altar of incense before the Lord. Such an animal was not to be eaten by the priests as it would then symbolize the sin returning to the one who needed atonement in the first place.

Again as we keep seeing, the verses show us of the fallible nature of the law. Not because the law was with fault, but because man is with fault, and the law is above man's ability to to meet its requirements. The symbolism keeps showing us this.

Each step of the process shows the fallible nature of the common people, and the fallible nature of the priestly class as well. Anyone who has to sacrifice for himself is in need of that sacrifice. And any sacrifice that cannot be partaken of by the offeror implies that what has occurred with that sacrifice becomes beyond the holiness of the that same offeror.

In order for perfection to be realized under the law, there must be One who is already perfect. Thus He would need no sacrifices for His own sins, and He could then fulfill the law in this capacity. In fulfilling the law, then He could give His life in exchange for the sins committed under the law, not as an offering for Himself, but as an offering for others.

And as sin under the law brings death, but because He had no sin of His own, then death could not hold Him. One receives wages for what He has earned. If He did not earn the wages of death, then death could not be a final payment for His works. The state of death must release Him. And in His release, our release would also be realized because He had died in exchange for our sins. If you just think each step through to its logical conclusion, it is more than amazing... it is perfect. What God has done in and through Jesus Christ is absolutely perfect.

And it is ours to be received by a mere act of faith. This is the most marvelous part of the entire deal. The work is done and it is fully effective to complete the task of reconciliation for us, and all God asks for is simple faith. "I believe that what You have done is all-sufficient for what I need. I receive it by faith." In that act, you are set on a new path, and are freed from the constraints of the law which could save no one.

I would hope that you are seeing this more and more with each new passage we look at. God has been doing something absolutely marvelous in the stream of human existence, all leading up to the glory which was revealed in Christ Jesus. And now that is leading up to a new glory which lies ahead for those who have received this marvelous offer. Call on Christ, and be reconciled to God today through His shed blood.

Closing Verse: *“But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, ²² even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵ whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, ²⁶ to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.” Romans 3:21-26*

Next Week: Leviticus 7:1-21 *More things for the priests to do...* (The Mediator’s Duties, Part II) (9th Leviticus Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if you have a lifetime of sin heaped up behind you, He can wash it away and purify you completely and wholly. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Mediator’s Duties

And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying
These are the words he was relaying

If a person sins and commits a trespass against the Lord
By lying to his neighbor about what was delivered to him
For safekeeping, or about a pledge, or about a robbery
Or if he has extorted from his neighbor; an action quite grim

Or if he has found what was lost
And lies concerning it, and swears falsely
In any one of these things that a man may do in which he sins
Then it shall be, because he has sinned and is guilty

That he shall restore what he has stolen
Or the thing which he has extorted
Or what was delivered to him for safekeeping
Or the lost thing which he found, when it went unreported

Or all that about which he has sworn falsely
He shall restore its full value, add one-fifth more to it
And give it to whomever it belongs
On the day of his trespass offering, as to you I submit

And he shall bring his trespass offering to the Lord
A ram without blemish from the flock, with your valuation
As a trespass offering, to the priest
Such is the set determination

So the priest shall make atonement for him before the Lord
And he shall be forgiven for any one of these things
That he may have done in which he trespasses
When upon himself guilt he brings

Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying
This he next began relaying

Command Aaron and his sons, saying
This is the law of the burnt offering, as I to you submit
The burnt offering shall be on the hearth upon the altar all night
Until morning, and the fire of the altar shall be kept burning on it

And the priest shall put on his linen garment
He shall do this thing
And his linen trousers he shall put on his body
And take up the ashes of the burnt offering

Which the fire has consumed on the altar
And he shall put them beside the altar; in this he shall not falter

Then he shall take off his garments
Put on other garments; yes the others he shall replace
And carry the ashes

Outside the camp to a clean place

And the fire on the altar shall be kept burning on it
It shall not be put out, so to you I submit
And the priest shall burn wood on it every morning
And lay the burnt offering in order on it

And he shall burn on it the fat of the peace offerings, no doubt
A fire shall always be burning on the altar; it shall never go out
This is the law of the grain offering; according to this word
The sons of Aaron shall offer it on the altar before the Lord

He shall take from it his handful of the fine flour of the grain offering
With its oil, and all the frankincense which is on the grain offering
And shall burn it on the altar for a sweet aroma
As a memorial to the Lord, so shall be this proffering

And the remainder of it Aaron and his sons shall eat
With unleavened bread it shall be eaten in a holy place
In the court of the tabernacle of meeting they shall eat it
It shall not be baked with leaven; such shall be the case

I have given it as their portion of My offerings made by fire
It is most holy, like the sin offering and the trespass offering too
All the males among the children of Aaron may eat it
Follow now as I am instructing you

It shall be a statute forever in your generations
Concerning the offerings made by fire to the Lord
Everyone who touches them must be holy
So shall it be according to this word

And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying
These words the Lord began relaying

This is the offering of Aaron and his sons
Which they shall offer to the Lord
Beginning on the day when he is anointed
On that day according to My word

One-tenth of an ephah of fine flour as a daily grain offering
Half of it in the morning and half of it at night shall be this proffering

It shall be made in a pan with oil
When it is mixed, in it you shall bring
The baked pieces of the grain offering you shall offer
For a sweet aroma to the Lord, such is this offering
The priest from among his sons
Who is anointed in his place, shall offer it
It is a statute forever to the Lord
It shall be wholly burned, as I to you submit

For every grain offering for the priest shall be wholly burned
It shall not be eaten: follow these instructions you have learned

Also the Lord spoke to Moses, saying
These continued words He was relaying

Speak to Aaron and to his sons, saying
This is the law of the sin offering; according to this word
In the place where the burnt offering is killed
The sin offering shall be killed before the Lord

It is most holy
This is how it is to be

The priest who offers it for sin shall eat it
In a holy place it shall be eaten, so shall it be
In the court of the tabernacle of meeting
Everyone who touches its flesh must be holy

And when its blood is sprinkled on any garment
You shall wash that on which it was sprinkled, in a holy place
But the earthen vessel in which it is boiled shall be broken
Such instructions shall be the case

And if it is boiled in a bronze pot
It shall be both scoured and rinsed in water, so shall it be
All the males among the priests may eat it

It is most holy

But no sin offering from which any of the blood
Is brought into the tabernacle of meeting
To make atonement in the holy place, shall be eaten
It shall be burned in the fire, of them there shall be no eating

Lord God, in ourselves we are not acceptable to You
But You have made a way for it to come about
Through the offering of Your Son who is faithful and true
We can approach You without fear or doubt

We now can come home to You once again
We are reconciled through what Christ alone has done
May we be willing to share this marvel with all men
That God has given us new life through His Son

Praises to God who has done this most marvelous thing for us!
All praises to God, through our glorious Lord Jesus!

Hallelujah and Amen

LEVITICUS 7:1-21

(THE MEDIATOR'S DUTIES, PART II)

So far, we've gone through the Mediator's Duties concerning three offerings, the burnt, grain, and sin offerings. There are two more to look over, the trespass, and the peace. These offerings each had special significance to Israel, and they each pointed to a different aspect of their spiritual lives.

The final offering, that of the *shelem*, or peace-offering, is divided in this section into three separate types. One of them is the thanksgiving offering. It is an offering which means more than just your daily giving of thanks, but it is an offering which comes from a heart which is overwhelming with thanks for something wonderful that has happened in the life of the person.

This is certain, because it involved travel to the place of sacrifice, a sacrifice which had value, and it also required other things to accompany it. In other words, it's not the kind of thing you do every day, but it is something that you do when the Lord has truly made your day.

Not too long ago, the quarterly budget was read for the church, and I did the calculation wrong at first. Paul, being a numbers guy caught my error and said, you undervalued this part by fifty percent. I thought, "That can't be. We're a church of twenty some people, and an extended audience who would otherwise be unknown to us unless they purposefully made themselves known in one way or another.

And on top of that, despite knowing that we cannot function without the Lord's gracious hand tending to our needs, no call has ever been made to solicit help for our budget. When Paul showed me the correction, I couldn't believe it, and immediately my mind went to both gratitude and a desire to share that gratitude.

Our needs had been met and exceeded, something for which I will always be filled with thanks, even if tomorrow I return to my old employment. And in gratitude, I thought about how to share this with our missionaries. It doesn't matter what was done, something was, in fact done. The Lord had blessed the church with abundance, and those dependent on the church would share in that. Such is the idea of a thanksgiving

offering. Such should be the idea of thanksgiving for each of us.

Text Verse: *“Oh come, let us sing to the Lord!*

Let us shout joyfully to the Rock of our salvation.

² *Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving;*

Let us shout joyfully to Him with psalms.

³ *For the Lord is the great God,*

And the great King above all gods.” Psalm 95:1-3

Words cannot describe how truly thankful I am to each person who has helped bring this ministry to the point that it is at. I cannot express it other than to wish for a thousand-fold return on all who have helped it to become established.

And so, how much more am I unable to express my thought to the Lord who has, in fact, established us. It is His church, and as long as He feels we are exalting Him and His word, may we continue. And should we fail to do that, may He determine to not let us take an aberrant path which would lead to a stain upon His name.

Instead, I would pray that He would simply stop the flow of blessing, and send us to another place where He will again be exalted. In the end, all true thanksgiving belongs to Him and to Him alone. May we each carry this in our hearts as a reminder that every good and perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights. Let us be thankful to this great God who leads, and will lead, His people faithfully through to a glorious end. Such truth is to be found in His superior word. And so let's turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. The Law of the Trespass Offering (verses 1-10)

There are two offerings left which require explanation for Aaron and his sons to properly carry them out. They are the Trespass Offering, and the Peace Offering.

This then takes us back to verses 6:8 and 6:9 which said, “Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, ⁹“Command Aaron and his sons, saying...” Since that time, there has been no new introduction by the Lord, and so everything we will see up until verse 21 is contained within these instructions for them to know their responsibilities.

¹ **'Likewise this is the law of the trespass offering**

There is no “likewise” in the Hebrew here. It simply says *v'zot torat ha'asham* – “and this the law the guilt (offering).” The directions simply move from the previous type of offering to this new one. The directions here are for Aaron and his sons, meaning the priests, to supplement those already given in 5:1-13. They are intended for their guidance in the performance of their duties.

The *asham* is a guilt or trespass offering which is brought by a person who has violated some precept as was laid out already. The congregation has been explained what infractions require such an offering, now the priests are being instructed on how to handle it.

¹ (con't) **(it is most holy):**

qodesh qadashim hu - “holy of holies it.” These words are identical to the ending of verse 6:25 as pertained to the sin offering. The two offerings are extremely similar, but there are a few small differences. The sin-offerings dealt with sins for various groups. There was one for the high-priest, being the spiritual head of the people. There was one for the whole congregation. There was one for a ruler of the people. And finally, there was one for the individual members of the congregation.

The trespass offering deals with specific instances of sins which are committed and identified. They are of a type which is of less magnitude than those of the sin offerings. In the committing of these sins, there must be an offering for atonement to come about. The person presents their offerings, and then the priest conducts his duties. Everything is being carefully and minutely detailed because everything ultimately points the Person and work of Christ. He came to fulfill the law, and the specificity is given to point to His accomplishing just that.

² **In the place where they kill the burnt offering they shall kill the trespass offering.**

The place where the burnt-offering was slaughtered is identified in Leviticus 1:11 –

“He shall kill it on the north side of the altar before the Lord; and the priests, Aaron’s sons, shall sprinkle its blood all around on the altar.”

As we have seen, different terminology is used to describe this same place of slaughter, but the north side of the altar is the explicitly named location.

² (con't) **And its blood he shall sprinkle all around on the altar.**

As seen several times already, the word used here means to scatter or cast, not sprinkle. The blood is collected in a bowl, and it is cast upon the sides of the altar. The specificity is necessary to understand the greater pictures which are being made, and so it is important to identify what is being done, when, and why.

As for this trespass, or guilt-offering, the procedures differ from the sin offering here because in the sin offering, and depending on who had committed the sin, the blood was either sprinkled before the Lord and applied to the altar of incense, or it was applied to the horns of the brazen altar, and then for both, the rest of it was poured out at its base. Here, it is cast upon the sides of the altar.

³ **And he shall offer from it all its fat.**

Fat in the Bible signifies abundance. It is also considered the richest or choicest part. All associations speak of the Person and work of Christ, in whom is the abundance of God's blessing, and He being the Source of all true riches, and also being the choicest and fairest as the Son of God.

³ (con't) **The fat tail**

Here the *alyah*, or "fat tail" is mentioned for the third of just five times. It is the rump or tail which was found on sheep and rams, and which is very large. This is specified, because in the trespass offering, the animal must always be a ram. Though described already, it is good that it be re-explained so that you remember what it was. It is described by Jamieson-Faucett-Brown –

"There is, in Eastern countries, a species of sheep the tails of which are not less than four feet and a half in length. These tails are of a substance between fat and marrow. A sheep of this kind weighs sixty or seventy English pounds weight, of which the tail usually weighs fifteen pounds and upwards." JFB

When an animal was offered as a trespass offering, this especially marvelous part was reserved for the Lord alone, and was not to be eaten by the priests. This being the most magnificent example of richness and abundance, it is in type a picture of Christ who is certainly the very essence of God's richness and abundance. Along with this fat tail, we continue with the following...

³ (con't) **and the fat that covers the entrails,**

As fat signifies abundance and the choicest and richest part, the fat around the entrails signifies that quality in the inner being. The word translated as "entrails" is *qerev*, which signifies the midst or inward part. It is emblematic of the inward abundance and richness of Christ. It is His inward qualities that are presented as an acceptable offering to God.

⁴ **the two kidneys and the fat that is on them by the flanks,**

Translations vary on these words to say either, "both kidneys with the fat on them near the loins" (NIV), or "and the two kidneys and the fat that is on them and that which is on the flanks" (Jubilee). What is probable is that the latter is correct. There are two individual types of fat being described. That on the kidneys, and that which is on the flanks.

Both kidneys with their attached fat were to be removed. The kidney's position within the body makes them almost inaccessible. When an animal is cut up, they are the last organs which are reached. Because of this, the kidneys symbolize the hidden parts of man, and thus the mind. In picture, the mind of Christ is returned to God through His sacrifice. His work was acceptable, and therefore, God was pleased with His perfect mind as an offering.

The term *al ha'kesalim*, or "by the flanks," indicates the loin which is the seat of the leaf fat. The word is then elsewhere translated as both "confidence" and "foolish." The difference is in how it is applied. It can indicate the place where one puts their hope. This is seen, for example, in Psalm 78 –

"That the generation to come might know *them*,
The children *who* would be born,

*That they may arise and declare them to their children,
7 That they may set their **hope** in God,
And not forget the works of God,
But keep His commandments;” Psalm 78:6, 7*

It can also indicate that which is foolish –

“This is the way of **those who are foolish**,
And of their posterity who approve their sayings. *Selah*
14 Like sheep they are laid in the grave;
Death shall feed on them;
The upright shall have dominion over them in the morning;
And their beauty shall be consumed in the grave, far from their dwelling.”

-Psalm 49:13, 14

The inward parts of a man are what identify him as either dependent on God, or who acts independently of Him, and thus foolishly. The fat which is identified here looks to Christ who remained faithfully dependent on the Father. This is seen of Christ in Hebrews 5:7, 8 –

“...who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear, ⁸ though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered.”

^{4 (con't)} **and the fatty lobe *attached* to the liver above the kidneys, he shall remove;**

The *yothereth*, or lobe above the liver, was mentioned several times in Chapter 3. This also was also to be removed from the animal. The liver signifies the seat of emotions and feeling. It is used synonymously with disposition and character. The fat attached to it is thus representative of the entire liver. In Lamentations, Jeremiah says (Jubilee Bible) -

"My eyes fail with tears; my bowels are troubled; my liver is poured upon the earth, for the destruction of the daughter of my people because the children and the sucklings faint in the streets of the city." Lamentations 2:11

This part of the animal, symbolizing the disposition and character of Christ which is wholly acceptable as an offering to God, was likewise to be removed for burning.

⁵ and the priest shall burn them on the altar as an offering made by fire to the Lord.

All of these items from the animal, and each of which represents some aspect of Christ, was to be burnt on the altar. Again, as we have seen, the word for “burn” signifies that of incense, and thus a sweet-smelling smoke sacrifice. They together are typical of His final and complete offering, being a sweet-smelling savor to God on our behalf. He bore the divine wrath in place of His people.

^{5 (con't)} It is a trespass offering.

An offense was committed, and these parts of the animal were selected to make atonement for the offense because in them are realized the superior qualities of the perfect Christ. In their burning, symbolic of His perfect execution in place of our failings, God is well pleased to receive them as an offering of the finest incense. Having satisfied the wrath of God for the committed offense, the rest of the animal was, like the sin offering, granted to the priests as is next noted...

⁶ Every male among the priests may eat it.

All of the males were allowed to partake. It could not be passed on to wives or daughters of the priests. However, we will see later that there are restrictions even on the priests concerning their ability to participate in the eating of this offering.

^{6 (con't)} It shall be eaten in a holy place.

In order to ensure that no violations of who could eat this might occur, this is now specified. By mandating that it be eaten in a holy place, it excluded anyone unclean, because an unclean person was not allowed into a holy place during the time of their uncleanness. Also, only males could enter such a place. The restriction kept the offering from being taken to anywhere other than a holy place where an unauthorized person could then eat of it.

^{6 (con't)} It is most holy.

qodesh qadashim hu – “holy of holies it.” This is identical to the words in verse 1. It is stated again to stress that this offering was to be treated with exceptional care and there was to be no deviation from how it was to be handled.

⁷ The trespass offering is like the sin offering; there is one law for them both:

ka'khatat ka'asham – “as the sin-offering, as the trespass-offering.” The rules of the sin offering concerning this precept are found in 6:27, 28. Therefore, anything omitted in the guidelines for one must then be supplied from the directions of the other. Between the two, a full picture of what was expected is seen. Because of the same procedures here, these parts of the service then have the same meaning. In other words, every trespass is considered a sin.

^{7 (con't)} the priest who makes atonement with it shall have it.

One must remember when considering what occurs here, there is a guilty party, there is an offering which transfers that guilt, and there is the priest who conducts the process for atonement. In type, Christ fulfills two of those roles. He is both the offering, and He is the offeror. In essence, He partakes of the benefits of the offering of Himself to God. It is His to do with as he pleases, but as we saw, any male of the priests could participate. What is being seen here is that the offering of Christ belongs to Christ, but He can – and He certainly does – share of Himself to those He calls as priests.

⁸ And the priest who offers anyone's burnt offering, that priest shall have for himself the skin of the burnt offering which he has offered.

The wording here is clear that the skin of the burnt-offering belonged to the officiating priest as did the flesh of the animal. However, it was understood that the flesh could also be shared with the other male priests. Though this could also be the case with the skins, it is not stated as such, and so at least in type, the skin belonged to the priest who officiated, and to him alone to do with as he wished. This then takes us back to the first time that *owr*, or skin, is used in the Bible. It is found in Genesis 3:21 –

“Also for Adam and his wife the Lord God made tunics of skin, and clothed them.”

In this verse, we see that something died in order to cover over the nakedness of these

two fallen beings. The *owr*, or skin, comes from the word *ur*, which means to be exposed, or bare. The priest possesses that which covers nakedness. As it was the Lord who made the tunics of skin, and then covered Adam and His wife, so it is the Lord who covers us.

He is the offering and the priest. The skin of the offering which makes atonement, typical of Christ, is that which belongs to the officiating priest, also typical of Christ. It is his alone to do what he wishes with it. And thus, it is Christ alone who possesses the correct covering of the atonement, which is Himself.

As always, each thought comes down to Christ and His work for those who come to Him. He is the One who can, and does, cover us from our naked and exposed state before God. He is the atonement, and He is the one who will transform us to His likeness in the twinkling of an eye.

⁹ Also every grain offering that is baked in the oven and all that is prepared in the covered pan, or in a pan, shall be the priest's who offers it.

There was a portion of these offerings which was removed, and which was presented on the altar to the Lord. After that, the rest of the prepared grain-offerings, which were outlined in 2:4 – 2:10, belonged solely to the officiating priest.

¹⁰ Every grain offering, *whether* mixed with oil or dry, shall belong to all the sons of Aaron, to one *as much* as the other.

The other grain offerings, which were not prepared, belonged to all the sons of Aaron. These are noted in verses 2:1, 2:15, and 5:11. As they were grain which had not been prepared, they became common property of the priests. The terms here will show us the pictures we need to see.

The word for “mixed” is *balal*. It give the sense of confusion, as when the Lord confused the languages of the people in Genesis 11. The grain becomes mixed or confused with the oil. The other word, dry, is new in Scripture, *kharev*. It is connected to the more common verb, *kharav*, which gives the idea of being desolate, dried up, or decayed. It in turn comes from a root which indicates to be parched through drought.

Here then we have symbolism which is similar to the hide and the flesh of the animal. The flesh belonged to the priest, but could be shared with other priests as is specifically noted. But the skin belonged to the priest alone, without any note of it being shared. The same thing happens here. The prepared offering, that which had a change in its appearance, belonged to the priest, just as the skinning of the animal changed its appearance. The flesh could be shared with the other priest, just as the unprepared grain offerings were to be shared.

The flesh speaks of that which is earthly. The oil and grain mixture looks to that which is confused. The dry grain looks to that which is parched. All are states of fallen man, and all belong to the priests. It is their duty to prepare them. And, it is the duty of the priesthood of believers to prepare the world's people for Christ. However, that which is prepared, or which has been transformed belongs to the officiating priest, typical of Christ, who alone can and does make the transformation complete in fallen man.

*The offering is most holy to make atonement for you
It is a trespass offering meant to restore, covering your sin
This is what is expected, and so you shall follow through
It will keep you from being done in*

*In the rite which I have ordained to be completed
Follow the details carefully, they speak of My Son
In adhering to My word, you shall not be unseated
As My attending priest, ensure each step is properly done*

*And for both, layman and priest, to you this I say
There is a reward for following carefully through
Be obedient to my word, tending to each precept along the way
And in due time, I will send my Son who will make all things new*

II. The Law of the Peace Offering (verses 11-21)

¹¹ 'This is the law of the sacrifice of peace offerings which he shall offer to the Lord:

In Hebrew, the sentence begins with "And." It is a continuation of the same line of thought, but with a new type of offering for the priest's instruction, which is now added

to what was given in Chapter 3. There are three individual types of peace offerings to be explained. One is for thanksgiving, one is for the fulfillment of a vow, and one is as a free-will offering.

The “he” in this verse is not speaking of the priest, but of the one to offer. Therefore, it can be translated as one, anyone, or even in the passive, such as “which shall be offered.” This is true with the coming verses as well.

¹² If he offers it for a thanksgiving,

Surprising maybe, but this is the first time that *todah*, or “thanksgiving,” is mentioned in Scripture. The word comes from *yadah*, which means praise, but it gives the sense of throwing or casting. One can see that in thanksgiving, there is a casting out of praise to the Lord.

Such an offering would be brought to the Lord to acknowledge some special mercy or favor which had been received, such as deliverance from an illness or from captivity, or something similar. One would naturally be so grateful that they would go further than just praising God with their lips. Instead, they would want to make an outward demonstration of their gratitude.

^{12 (con't)} then he shall offer, with the sacrifice of thanksgiving,

The “sacrifice of thanksgiving” is that which was mentioned in Chapter 3. It being an animal of the herd or flock.

^{12 (con't)} unleavened cakes mixed with oil, unleavened wafers anointed with oil, or cakes of blended flour mixed with oil.

Each of these has been previously seen, and each made a marvelous picture of Christ. If you want to review, the unleavened cakes mixed with oil, and the unleavened wafers anointed with oil are first described in Exodus 29. The cakes of blended flour mixed with oil are closely described to those in Leviticus 2. Re-reading or re-watching those sermons will keep you from watching too much TV, and so it is highly recommended.

It should be noted that no specific amount of these things are provided. Thus it is totally

up to the giver as to how thankful he is, and how much he will thus give in appreciation for the favor he has been so blessed with.

¹³ Besides the cakes, as his offering he shall offer leavened bread with the sacrifice of thanksgiving of his peace offering.

In addition to the three types of cakes mentioned already, he was to bring leavened, yes leavened bread, with the sacrifice. This is one of only two times that leaven was to be brought forth as an offering. The other time is during the feast of Shavuot, or Pentecost, which is detailed in Leviticus 23. One must ask, “Why would leaven, which pictures sin, be brought forward as an offering?” The answer is that as a peace-offering of thanksgiving, it is acknowledging that the Lord has accepted his offering despite his sin. The Lord will not turn away an offering of thanks, even from a fallen, sin-filled man. This offering is noted in Amos 4 as being inclusive of leaven -

Offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving with leaven,
Proclaim *and* announce the freewill offerings;
For this you love,
You children of Israel!”
Says the Lord God. Amos 4:5

The Lord states these words, however, as a rebuke. Their offerings were as sinful as they were sin-filled. They were made as external shows, but there was no sincerity or truth behind their giving.

¹⁴ And from it he shall offer one cake from each offering as a heave offering to the Lord.

These cakes, including the one with leaven, were to be lifted as a *terumah*, or heave offering to the Lord. However, none of these were to be burnt on the altar. It would be completely against the grain of Scripture to think that an offering which included something typical of sin would be so offered to the Lord. Christ was wholly sinless. This is an offering to the Lord, not of Himself, but of the grateful state of one towards Him.

¹⁴ (con't) It shall belong to the priest who sprinkles the blood of the peace offering.

This is speaking of the heave offering of one of each of the cakes. From there, it is implied then, and it stated in Jewish tradition, that the remainder of the cakes were returned to the offeror.

¹⁵ ‘The flesh of the sacrifice of his peace offering for thanksgiving shall be eaten the same day it is offered. He shall not leave any of it until morning.

This prohibition is similar to that of the Passover Lamb in Exodus 12, and of the Manna in Exodus 16. Both of these were types of Christ, and so it is reasonable to assume that this third prohibition points to Him as well. This is especially so because the other two types of peace-offerings are less stringent in this regard.

What seems probable, is that the thanksgiving is for something which has been accomplished, such as deliverance from affliction of some sort. God delivered or provided, and so it wouldn't be appropriate for an acknowledgment of it to be dragged out.

To consume the offering over more than one day would be to do just that, thus one would be benefiting off of the Lord's deliverance instead of being grateful for it. If there was too much for one person to eat it, he should then share the offering with others, such as is explicitly prescribed in Deuteronomy 12. To not do so would not be showing the thanks that the offering implied. And to not share Christ, follows in the same self-centered way. Who is saved, truly grateful for that salvation, and yet unwilling to share what they have been given in Christ! This then is a theme fully developed by the author of Hebrews –

“Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of *our* lips, giving thanks to His name. ¹⁶ But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.” Hebrews 13:15, 16

¹⁶ But if the sacrifice of his offering is a vow or a voluntary offering,

The difference between these two is that a *neder*, or vow, is something promised. It is in anticipation of its fulfillment, some benefit is expected concerning peace between the Lord and the offeror. On the other hand, a *nedevah*, or voluntary offering, is simply the tribute of a heart-filled rejoicing in peace with the Lord.

An example of the first would be the vows made by the sailors who were with Jonah. They were delivered by Him and so they made sacrifices, but they also made vows, intending to continue the relationship with Him and they were thus in anticipation of a right standing before Him; peace with Him being their future hope.

The voluntary offering, however, is not specifically one of thanksgiving, but rather of simple gratitude. This is seen in the 119th Psalm where it says –

“Accept, I pray, the freewill offerings of my mouth, O Lord,
And teach me Your judgments.” Psalm 119:108

16 (con't) it shall be eaten the same day that he offers his sacrifice; but on the next day the remainder of it also may be eaten;

Unlike the thanksgiving offering, either of these could be eaten on the second day as well. One would not tread on the Lord's kindness by allowing either of these to be eaten over a second day. In fact, both of these are more personal than a thanksgiving offering which should rightly be shared.

A person may travel to the tabernacle in order to make such a vow, and have a desire to slowly meditate on the offering, or carefully petition the Lord through the offering. And so a second day is allowed for it to be eaten.

17 the remainder of the flesh of the sacrifice on the third day must be burned with fire.

An offering which was held to the third day would be susceptible to corruption. Also, it might be that instead of obedience to the precept, it would be used for some type of superstitious fulfillment, or if the attending priest, he might be saving up the offering against a shortcoming in the offerings that might come later. If so, then it would show a lack of trust in the Lord's provision.

And finally, this prohibition certainly looks forward to Christ who was resurrected on the third day, and who saw no corruption. As this is a peace offering which is shared in by both the Lord and the offeror, it would be wholly unsuited to that typology.

18 And if *any* of the flesh of the sacrifice of his peace offering is eaten at all on the third

day, it shall not be accepted, nor shall it be imputed to him; it shall be an abomination to him who offers it, and the person who eats of it shall bear guilt.

In this, there is a rare word which is introduced into Scripture, *pigul*, translated here as “abomination.” It is seen just four times, and it gives the idea of a foul thing, or refuse. It comes from a root meaning “to stink.” Thus it is figuratively used as something ceremonially unclean. The word “abomination” is used by most translations, but another word is often translated that way, and so it confuses the meaning of the word. Something more specific like “putrid thing” would more fully convey the idea. There is death which has turned to stink.

Nothing of the peace-offering was to be consumed on the third day, and if it was, the offering would no longer be accepted by the Lord, and there would be no credit imputed to the offeror. For a person to make such an offering, and then to be so stingy as to allow it to start to rot, would show that the offering was more important to him than the purpose of the offering. For this reason, it then says that the person who did eat of it would bear guilt. This is to be considered a most serious matter and a warning would have been clearly given when the offering was made.

¹⁹ ‘The flesh that touches any unclean thing shall not be eaten. It shall be burned with fire.

What this means is that if the flesh of the offering touched an unclean person, or anything that was considered unclean, such as an unclean animal, bowl, garment, or whatever else the law deemed as unclean, that flesh was not to be eaten. Instead it was to be burned. It was not even to be cast to unclean dogs because it was part of an offering which had been made to the Lord. It is a picture of the judgment seat of Christ burning up our unacceptable deeds.

¹⁹ (con't) And as for the *clean* flesh, all who are clean may eat of it.

Any flesh of the animal which was not defiled by uncleanness could be eaten, but it could only be eaten by someone who was clean. If there was a person with leprosy, you could not give it to him as a gesture of kindness. To do so would mix the holy with the profane, and it would be an offense to God who sanctified the offering. The offering itself would then become defiled.

²⁰ But the person who eats the flesh of the sacrifice of the peace offering that *belongs* to the Lord, while he is unclean, that person shall be cut off from his people.

This must be speaking of someone who is knowingly unclean. Leviticus 5:2 has already shown that a person can be unclean without knowing it. If so, then they would need to make amends for this as an infraction against the Lord. However, if someone knowingly ate of the sacrifice of a peace offering while unclean, they were to be excommunicated from the people of Israel. At times, being “cut off” can mean the death penalty, but this is probably not the case here.

Although, that still may very well be the case due to the severe nature of the infraction. As this is an offering shared by both the Lord and the person, to allow defilement into the process would be to dishonor Him. This is what Paul speaks of in 1 Corinthians 11 concerning the Lord’s Supper, to which this offering corresponds.

²¹ Moreover the person who touches any unclean thing, *such as* human uncleanness, *an* unclean animal, or any abominable unclean thing, and who eats the flesh of the sacrifice of the peace offering that *belongs* to the Lord, that person shall be cut off from his people.”

The passage ends on this stern note. It is especially poignant when considering that this offering was one stemming from the free-will of a person. However, the Lord looks at intent of the heart, and if the intent of the heart was to defile his offerings, then there would be severe consequences for it.

The various types of uncleanness mentioned here will be further explained in the chapters ahead. One however is introduced here and which is translated as “abominable unclean thing.” It is the word *sheqets*, and will be seen 11 times in the Old Testament. It is later used to describe any seafood without fins and scales. It is also used to describe unclean birds, winged insects with four legs, swarming things, creeping things, and the like.

If someone had contact with any such thing – or any of the other prohibited things – and then sat down to eat of the meal – that person was to be cut off from his people. Again, this probably meant that they were to be separated from Israel. However, it is not

beyond the possibility that it meant they were to be put to death.

We've just gone through some of the most complicated verses yet in Scripture concerning details of things which are almost completely foreign to us. Further, the offerings of these past two sermons have already been detailed once, and now they have had more details added into them. To try to remember everything seen so far, and then to also try to remember everything associated with them, would take a brain the size of Manhattan, maybe bigger.

The point of going through these ancient words is, as always, to see our desperate need for something greater than the law. To imagine the yoke of the law being brought down our shoulders, and then to assume that we could live up to it, is either the height of arrogance, or the height of stupidity. It's a coin toss which is more certain, probably it would land on the edge and shout out, "Stupid, arrogant fool!"

In each offering, Christ is on prominent display, calling out for us to put our burdens behind us, trust in His completion of these things, and to rest in that fully and forever finished work. This is what makes it so very sad when we are faced with someone who is attempting to be justified before God by this law, in part or in whole, when it is already fulfilled and nullified through Jesus.

Dare we reject such a great offer and go back to that which could never save? I dare say, "We dare not." I dare you to say otherwise! It is a self-condemning act. Let us trust in Christ, let us rest in Christ, and let us praise God because of Christ. He is our Burnt-offering; He is our Grain-offering; He is our Sin-offering; He is our Trespass-offering; and He is our Peace-offering.

And more, He is our Sabbath Rest, He is our Circumcision, and our Heavenly meal. Let us put away works of the law and be pleased to find our home in the safe recesses of His heart. He loves us so much that He did all necessary to restore us to our heavenly Father. Praise be to God because of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Closing Verse: *"For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, ¹⁵ having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, ¹⁶ and that He might reconcile them both to*

God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. ¹⁷ And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. ¹⁸ For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.” Ephesians 2:14-18

Next Week: Leviticus 7:22-38 It will be an interesting sermon, just you wait and see...
(The Mediator’s Duties, Part III) (10th Leviticus Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if you have a lifetime of sin heaped up behind you, He can wash it away and purify you completely and wholly. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Mediator’s Duties

Likewise this is the law of the trespass offering
Most holy is this proffering

In the place where they kill the burnt offering
They shall kill the trespass offering as well
And its blood he shall sprinkle all around on the altar
As to you I do now tell
And he shall offer from it all its fat
The fat tail and the fat that covers the entrails too
The two kidneys and the fat that is on them by the flanks
As I am now instructing you

And the fatty lobe attached to the liver above the kidneys
He shall remove; and the priest shall burn them on the altar
As an offering made by fire to the Lord
It is a trespass offering, and so in this he shall not halter
Every male among the priests may eat it
It shall be eaten in a holy place
It is most holy as I to you submit

The trespass offering is like the sin offering
There is one law for them both, you see

The priest who makes atonement with it shall have it
This is how it shall be
And the priest who offers anyone's burnt offering
That priest shall have for himself the skin
Of the burnt offering which he has offered
This is an allowance intended for him
Also every grain offering that is baked
In the oven and all that is prepared in the covered pan
Or in a pan, shall be the priest's who offers it
It shall belong to this man

Every grain offering, whether mixed with oil or dry
Shall belong to all the sons of Aaron
To one as much as the other, so they shall comply
This is the law of the sacrifice of peace offerings
Which he shall offer to the Lord
So shall be these profferings

If he offers it for a thanksgiving, then he shall offer
With the sacrifice of thanksgiving, unleavened cakes with oil mixed
Unleavened wafers anointed with oil
Or cakes of blended flour mixed with oil, so it shall be fixed
Besides the cakes, as his offering he shall offer leavened bread
With the sacrifice of thanksgiving of his peace offering
As to you I have specifically said

And from it he shall offer one cake
From each offering as a heave offering to the Lord
It shall belong to the priest who sprinkles the blood
Of the peace offering according to this word
The flesh of the sacrifice
Of his peace offering for thanksgiving
Shall be eaten the same day it is offered
He shall not leave any of it until morning
But if the sacrifice of his offering is a vow or a voluntary offering
It shall be eaten the same day that he offers his sacrifice

But on the next day the remainder of it also may be eaten
These directions are concise

The remainder of the flesh
Of the sacrifice on the third day
Must be burned with fire
Be careful to follow what I to you now say
And if any of the flesh of the sacrifice
Of his peace offering is eaten at all on the third day
It shall not be accepted, nor shall it be imputed to him
So you shall be obedient in this way

It shall be an abomination to him who offers it
And the person who eats of it shall bear guilt
So to you I now submit
The flesh that touches any unclean thing shall not be eaten
It shall be burned with fire
And as for the clean flesh
All who are clean may eat of it, if they so desire
But the person who eats the flesh of the sacrifice
Of the peace offering that belongs to the Lord
While he is unclean, that person shall be cut off
From his people, according to My word

Moreover the person who touches any unclean thing
Such as human uncleanness, an unclean animal as well
Or any abominable unclean thing
Pay heed as I continue to tell
And who eats the flesh of the sacrifice
Of the peace offering that belongs to the Lord
That person shall be cut off from his people
So shall it be according to My word

Peace with God, full and complete
Has come to us through the blood of Jesus
In Him, there is fellowship so sweet

Marvelous things He has done for us

And so, O Lord, to You we give our heartfelt praise
And to You, O God, we shall sing out for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

LEVITICUS 7:22-38 (THE MEDIATOR'S DUTIES, PART III)

This is now our tenth Leviticus sermon, and it completes the rules and regulations for the laws concerning the sacrificial offerings. What may have seemed confusing in many of the verses when we started have all actually come together to form a harmonious and logical set of instructions for the people to abide by, and for the priests to effectively administrate in their duties.

There is enough information available so that error should be avoided, but there is not so much detail that the people would be bogged down with a never-ending stream of rules and regulations. What is needed for those verses which leave some things unstated is a dose of common sense in order to fill in the blanks.

Unfortunately, common sense is often lacking in the world, and so by the time of Jesus, the leaders of Israel had added in rule upon rule and precept upon precept. Instead of just following the spirit and intent of the law, there was a great burden laid upon the people if they wanted to be considered righteous in the eyes of the leaders.

At least the law, which was already impossible to fully obey, offered the people grace and mercy in several important ways. But even with these allowances, the law could never perfect anyone. We have seen this time and again in the various offerings which have been detailed for us. If the people could have been perfected, then the offerings would have ceased in the perfection of the people. Such never happened.

But then came Jesus. He didn't need to be perfected because He was already perfect. These types and shadows were meant to lead the people to Him, and in Him they were fulfilled. Now, through Him, something so, so much better is available to us...

Text Verse: *"But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises." Hebrews 8:6*

The mediator's duties have been carefully laid out and explained. We've already seen some of the things which were granted to them for the conduct of their duties. Today, we will see some more of the benefits they received because of the accomplishment of them.

The Lord granted the priests particular parts of the offerings for their maintenance. As they had no inheritance of their own, the Lord was their inheritance, and thus they

shared in the Lord's portion. Today, the same is true. Those who minister to the Lord generally receive their livelihood from their service in the ministry.

Unfortunately, and not to start the sermon on a bad note, the priests of Israel took advantage of the offerings that they received. This was noted even before the time of the Kings. In 1 Samuel 2, the sons of Eli the high priest are noted as doing this. In this, it says that the sin of the young men was very great before the Lord.

Even worse, in the next chapter the Lord said, "I have sworn to the house of Eli that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be atoned for by sacrifice or offering forever." What a sad commentary on those who should have been the preeminent example of holiness to the people of Israel.

Thank God that our High Priest is the perfect High Priest who we can trust completely, rely on with full confidence, and look to for help in our time of need. And for those who minister under him, let us pray that they will do their very best to do so with integrity and honesty at all times.

Our lives are short, and eternity ain't. Let us not squander the future by filling ourselves up now with greediness and a self-serving attitude. Let us look to Jesus and allow Him to be our one and only Mediator, and our true Peace-offering to God, an offering which continues to be prefigured in the final verses of Chapter 7, along with some other important details concerning the Law of Moses, all of which ultimately point to Christ. It's all to be found in His superior word. And so let's turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. The Fat and the Blood (verses 22-27)

²² And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying,

As normal, these words introduce a new section of thought for Moses to write and then relay to the people. However, this section and the next are still a continuation of the law of the peace offering. What will be explained to him now builds upon the single verse found in Leviticus 3:17 -

"This shall be a perpetual statute throughout your generations in all your dwellings: you shall eat neither fat nor blood."

Now, a more detailed explanation of that will be given. The peace offering is the only one of these offerings that is at least partly consumed by the offeror. Therefore, there must be prohibitions stated and defined at this time in order to ensure that the offering would not become defiled and thus rejected by the Lord.

²³ “Speak to the children of Israel, saying: ‘You shall not eat any fat, of ox or sheep or goat.

Moses is told to instruct the children of Israel concerning the eating of fat. What is understood, but which could be easily misunderstood without examining the entire passage, is that this is speaking of the fat already detailed in the offerings, each of which pointed clearly to the working of Christ. It is for this reason that the particular fat is specified. In other words, the prohibition is not speaking of all fat, but just the particular fat of the offerings. The eating of other fat *is not* forbidden.

This begins to be further defined right in this verse with the words, “of ox or sheep or goat.” These are the three types of animals which were acceptable as offerings to the Lord, and so the particular fat of these types of animals which was offered on the altar is what is specified. It means that even when such an animal was not offered as a sacrifice, this particular fat was still not to be eaten by the people.

If it belonged to the altar of the Lord in a sacrifice, then it was not to be eaten at any time or any other place as a personal meal. Any fat which was separated from the flesh in this way was forbidden, but other fat which is of the animal was not forbidden. Again, the entire context needs to be understood in order to see this. These things are known by other passages where non-sacrificial animals are mentioned, but the fat is not –

“However, you may slaughter and eat meat within all your gates, whatever your heart desires, according to the blessing of the Lord your God which He has given you; the unclean and the clean may eat of it, of the gazelle and the deer alike. ¹⁶ Only you shall not eat the blood; you shall pour it on the earth like water.” Deuteronomy 12:15, 16

Further, the other fat which is in these three animals is not included in this mandate. Deuteronomy 32 shows that the fat of sacrificial animals was eaten, meaning other than the special part reserved for the Lord –

“He made him ride in the heights of the earth,
That he might eat the produce of the fields;
He made him draw honey from the rock,

And oil from the flinty rock;
¹⁴ Curds from the cattle, and milk of the flock,
With fat of lambs;
And rams of the breed of Bashan, and goats,
With the choicest wheat;
And you drank wine, the blood of the grapes.” Deuteronomy 32:13,14

As always, if we can simply remember that the Lord is highlighting and foreshadowing the work of Christ in these verses, they will continue to make sense. Why would He care about the fat in this way unless He was ultimately showing us the work of the Lord in it? He has no nose, He doesn't need to eat, and the same type of fat is found in other animals in which the prohibition does not exist. But because Christ is seen in the offerings, the minute care and attention is given.

²⁴ And the fat of an animal that dies *naturally*, and the fat of what is torn by wild beasts, may be used in any other way; but you shall by no means eat it.

This verse seems superfluous at first. The meat of an animal that died naturally was forbidden to be eaten. This will later be seen in Leviticus 22 -

“Whatever dies *naturally* or is torn *by beasts* he shall not eat, to defile himself with it: I *am* the Lord.” Leviticus 22:8

However, despite this being a law, it was understood that it could happen. And so a provision for someone who ate such meat was given as well. This is seen in Leviticus 17:15 -

“And every person who eats what died *naturally* or what was torn *by beasts*, *whether he is* a native of your own country or a stranger, he shall both wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. Then he shall be clean.”

Understanding this, the prohibition of this verse makes complete sense. Even if a person were to eat the meat of one of these three types of animal that died naturally, or one that died because it was torn by beasts, the particular fat which would otherwise belong to the altar of the Lord was still forbidden.

However, the prohibition only extended to consumption. The fat could be used for making soap, candles, medicine, lubricant, or whatever else fat can be used for, but it

was not to be eaten. That which pictures Christ belongs to God alone, and it is forbidden for man to participate in it through consumption.

Nothing is said anywhere of the fat of birds as nothing is mentioned concerning that in relation to offerings. Again, only those things which prefigure Christ are relative to what is being mentioned here.

²⁵ For whoever eats the fat of the animal of which men offer an offering made by fire to the Lord, the person who eats *it* shall be cut off from his people.

This verse is obviously referring to the type of animal, not only the fat of those which are offered. If the animal was offered, the fat would have been handled by the priest in the manner prescribed by the rites given to the priests. Thus, the verse would be superfluous to state again. But, in saying this now, it defines what fat is acceptable, what fat is not acceptable, and in what type of animal the categories of fat are defined.

Anything not defined here would then, by default, be acceptable to eat. The verses are stated logically in order for there to be no mistake. But this is only true as far as all of the verses are taken as a whole and in context.

²⁶ Moreover you shall not eat any blood in any of your dwellings, *whether* of bird or beast.

This prohibition goes back to Genesis 9 -

And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be on every beast of the earth, on every bird of the air, on all that move *on* the earth, and on all the fish of the sea. They are given into your hand. ³ Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. I have given you all things, even as the green herbs. ⁴ But you shall not eat flesh with its life, *that is*, its blood. ⁵ Surely for your lifeblood I will demand *a reckoning*; from the hand of every beast I will require it, and from the hand of man. From the hand of every man's brother I will require the life of man.

-Genesis 9:2-5

The life is in the blood, and therefore it is what the Lord used for atonement of the people. This is made explicit in Leviticus 17 –

For the life of the flesh *is* in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it *is* the blood *that* makes atonement for the

soul.’¹² Therefore I said to the children of Israel, ‘No one among you shall eat blood, nor shall any stranger who dwells among you eat blood.’ Exodus 17:11, 12

In this verse now, it is explicitly forbidding any blood, not just that of the sacrificial animals where the fat was prohibited. Whether the creature was legally prescribed as a sacrifice or not, consuming its blood is forbidden.

Having noted that, it specifically states only bird and beast. There are clean fish which could be eaten by the Israelites, and nothing is specifically said about this concerning them. According to the law, there are also certain insects which could be eaten, locusts for example. In Matthew 3:4, it is said of John the baptist that his food was locusts and wild honey. The law speaks of neither the fish nor the insects specifically.

However, the prohibition against eating blood stands, and therefore it must be assumed that the consumption of fish blood must fall under this prohibition. However, it would be unrealistic to assume that someone was purposefully eating a locust in order to consume its blood. And to attempt to bleed out a locust would be an exercise in futility. Simple common sense, and a right heart-attitude towards the spirit of the law must be considered.

From this, the New Testament continues with the prohibition during the early church. In Acts 15, which contains the decree of the Jerusalem counsel, the warning against consuming blood is repeated. However, it is an admonition, not a command –

“For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things:²⁹ that you abstain from things offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well.” Acts 15:28, 29

There are several reasons for issuing this at the time, and the prohibition is repeated in Acts 21:25. However, the prohibition is not repeated by Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles in his prescriptive letters. At the same time, the issue of food sacrificed to idols which is also mentioned in both Acts 15 and Acts 21 is clarified by Paul, showing that it is a matter of conscience, but that there is actually nothing wrong with the meat itself.

As Paul never mentions the matter of blood, it must be inferred then that no penalty for consuming blood in this dispensation can be brought against a believer. The earlier warning in Acts was given until the Holy Spirit had issued God’s full counsel through the

hands of the apostle. Now that it is received, we can see the reason for those earlier warnings which were given in Acts.

27 Whoever eats any blood, that person shall be cut off from his people.”

There are an amazing number of commentaries from ancient sources on this prohibition. Some state that this only concerned the blood by which the animal was animated while living. In other words, one couldn't eat the blood which was bled out of a living animal, nor could one eat the limb of an animal that was taken off while it was alive and its blood was still pulsing through it. And on and on the commentaries go. They build one precept upon another, and confuse the plain reading of the verse.

When an animal was killed, it was to be slaughtered by cutting its neck. From there, the blood would come forth until the animal was drained of blood. Once that occurred, the meat would be considered free of blood. The prohibition stands that the blood was not to be eaten. The life is in the blood, and the blood was to be removed from the animal before it was eaten. It is a simple, straight-forward command. If it was not followed, the person was to be expelled from the community of Israel.

*The life is in the blood, and you are not to eat the blood
I have given that as atonement for you
Purge it from yourselves, like a crimson flood
This is what I command you to do*

*In the shedding of the blood, the life is at its end
But if you consume the blood, what does that say of you?
With what will the fracture between us now mend?
Stop and consider my words; stop and think them through*

*From the guilty to the innocent the transfer is made
And then the blood of the innocent is shed; away ebbs the life
And in the act, there is a sin-debt paid
And in that same act, comes an ending of the strife
Thank God for atonement through an innocent Substitute
On that day when to Him my sin God did impute*

*And to me was granted His perfect righteousness
And so to God through Him, my soul shall ever bless*

II. The Lord's Portion (verses 28-38)

²⁸ Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying,

Another new thought, still contained under the overall category of the peace-offering, is once again introduced. This section will specifically deal with the Lord's portion of the peace-offering, which is inclusive of the portion which is given to Aaron and his sons. As they are his designated representatives, and as the high-priest is the mediator between the people and the Lord, the portion which goes to Aaron and his sons should rightfully be termed and considered as falling under the Lord's portion.

²⁹ "Speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'He who offers the sacrifice of his peace offering to the Lord shall bring his offering to the Lord from the sacrifice of his peace offering.

When reading this, it might seem like the sacrifice is actually made somewhere else, but then the parts which are burned on the altar – and the parts which belong to the priest alone – were then carried to the sanctuary where they were handed to the priest. That would not be a correct assumption.

Instead, in the instructions for the peace-offering in verses 11-14 of this chapter mention things which are to accompany the sacrifice itself. These, along with the sacrifice, were to be brought to the Lord. The entire offering, animal and accompanying cakes of bread, is one actual offering. They were to be brought forth at one time, and the animal was to be slaughtered at the tent of meeting, not at the residence of the offeror.

As most of the animal is actually to be eaten by the offeror, it may have been considered more expedient to only bring the parts of the animal which were to be offered to the Lord, and not the whole thing. But this is incorrect. The law regards the entire offering as being offered to the Lord, and therefore, the entire offering is brought before Him. This becomes clearer with the next words...

³⁰ His own hands shall bring the offerings made by fire to the Lord.

The one making the offering was required to bring the animal and the accompanying cakes with his own hands. This could not be delegated to a servant or a friend. It would thus show that the offering is personal, it is voluntary, and that the offeror was happily joining together with the Lord in a feast. To delegate this to another would completely negate the personal nature of the offering.

^{30 (con't)} The fat with the breast he shall bring, that the breast may be waved as a wave offering before the Lord.

The word translated as “breast” is *khazeh*. It comes from *khazah* which means “to see” because it is the part that is most seen when looking at the front of the animal. That, in turn, comes from a root which indicates to gaze at, and to mentally perceive, as in a vision.

This particular part of the animal, along with the fat, was to now be waved before the Lord as a *tenuphah*, or “wave offering.” It comes from *nuph*, which means to wave or move to and fro. By making a waving motion, the breast would thus be “before” or “in the face of” the Lord. It was an acknowledgment of the omnipresence of His vision. Although from extra-biblical writings, Charles Ellicott describes how this offering was conducted at the time of Christ when it was brought by the offeror to the temple in Jerusalem -

“The manner in which this rite was performed in the time of Christ was as follows:—The offerer killed the sacrifice, and the priest sprinkled the blood. The victim was then flayed, and the officiating priest took out the inwards, cut the flesh into pieces, and separated the breast and the right shoulder. Whereupon he laid the fat first upon the owner’s hands, then the breast, then the shoulder above it; the two kidneys and the caul of the liver above them again, and the bread above the whole, put his own hand under that of the offerer, and waved it all before the Lord. Hereupon the priest salted the inwards, and burned them upon the altar. The breast and right shoulder, as well as the bread waved before the Lord, were eaten by him and his brother priests, whilst the remainder of the flesh and the rest of the bread were eaten by the owner and his friends. If two persons brought a peace offering in partnership, one of them waved for both; and if a woman brought it, the waving was performed by the officiating priest, since women were not allowed to wave except in the offering of jealousy and of a Nazarite.”

³¹ And the priest shall burn the fat on the altar,

The fat alone was to be burnt, as if the smoke of incense, upon the altar to the Lord. As we have already seen several times, this is that part which reflects the inner qualities of Christ which are offered to the Lord as a sweet-smelling savor.

^{31 (con't)} but the breast shall be Aaron’s and his sons’.

This most prominent part which signifies vision or perceiving a thing was reserved for the priests who are the mediators of the covenant.

³² Also the right thigh you shall give to the priest as a heave offering from the sacrifices of your peace offerings.

Along with the breast, the right thigh was also designated as the priest's portion. The *shoq*, or thigh, actually can mean the thigh, shoulder, hip, leg. It comes from a word meaning "overflow," and thus "abundant." Thus it is the *abundant* area of meat on an appendage.

As it is the right thigh, it signifies the honorable side. But further, the thigh reflects the power and strength of the animal. In all, that which is abundant, powerful, and most honorable is what is being seen here. As you might have noticed, the breast was offered as a *tenuphah*, or wave offering, whereas the right thigh is offered as a *terumah*, or a heave offering. As explained before, and which you certainly remember perfectly, the *terumah* comes from the word *rum* which means to be high, or exalted.

Thus one can see the idea of something being offered up, like an oblation. The breast which indicates seeing and vision, and thus the acquisition of wisdom, is *waved* in acknowledgment of God's omnipresence, and the right thigh which indicates strength and honor is *lifted* in acknowledgment of God's omnipotence.

Both then speak of Christ's mediatorial abilities which are acknowledged in the waving and heaving of the different parts. He is the wisdom and power of God for His people, and from whom all knowledge and strength is derived. The pictures are perfectly seen in the offerings and how they are presented.

³³ He among the sons of Aaron, who offers the blood of the peace offering and the fat, shall have the right thigh for his part.

Whichever priest was the one who handled the blood of the offering was given this right thigh as his part. The word for "part" here is *manah*. It is a noun from a verb which means "to number," or "to count." Thus it is an assigned portion. This honorable part of the offering, which was first heaved up to the Lord, is reckoned to him for having conducted the rite of the offering before the Lord.

³⁴ For the breast of the wave offering and the thigh of the heave offering I have taken from the children of Israel, from the sacrifices of their peace offerings, and I have given

them to Aaron the priest and to his sons from the children of Israel by a statute forever.”

The term *l'khaq olam*, or “a statute forever,” signifies “to the vanishing point.” It is a term which indicates until the end of the covenant. Whenever the covenant is fulfilled, it is no longer in effect. But something must fulfill it. And so if we look at this verse with a prophetic and pictorial view in relation to Christ, we could make a statement of what is being said here and apply it to Christ.

A sacrifice is being made as a peace-offering, and a portion of it belongs to the high priest and his sons.

The breast, ultimately representing wisdom, and the right thigh, ultimately representing strength, honor, and power, are given to the priest from the children of Israel. The whole verse points to Christ who came from the children of Israel, and who is – according to 1 Corinthians 1:24 the wisdom and power of God. He who possesses these qualities is our High Priest before God.

In fulfillment of the Old Covenant, He continues the picture in the New. And so *l'khaq olam*, or “a statute forever” simply moves this statement in picture to Christ in reality. Who would ever think this while reading through the verses in a cursory manner, and yet when taken word by word, the Person of Jesus Christ literally shouts out from these ancient words compiled by Moses as the Lord spoke them to him.

³⁵ This is the consecrated portion for Aaron and his sons, from the offerings made by fire to the Lord,

The words in Hebrew here are variously translated, and so they should be explained. Translations say, “the portion,” the “rightful share,” “that which is consecrated to,” “the anointing,” “the consecrated portion,” “the allotment,” “the anointing portion,” “the share,” and so on. The Hebrew word is *mishkhaḥ*, which means “ointment,” or “to be anointed.”

The cognate word in Aramaic and Assyrian carries the sense of “to measure.” And so the verse could be translated either as anointing or portion without doing harm to the words in Hebrew, and at the same time they would then include a play on the other sense of the word. The translation by the NKJV of “consecrated portion” gives a very good sense of the intent behind the words.

It is the anointing of the Aaronic priesthood that allows the portion to be received by the priests. It is consecrated to them alone from the offerings made by fire to the Lord. This is then explained in the second half of the verse...

³⁵ (con't) on the day when *Moses* presented them to minister to the Lord as priests.

The name of Moses is inserted here; it is not in the original. The Hebrew simply reads, "...in the day brought near them to serve as priests to Yehovah." Moses did present them, but the Lord called them to be presented. The Hebrew words leave out the nominative. It is a statement of action which does not specifically mention the one doing the action.

³⁶ The Lord commanded this to be given to them by the children of Israel, on the day that He anointed them, *by* a statute forever throughout their generations.

This verse sums up the requirement from beginning to end. On the day of their anointing, until the day that the priesthood would be annulled in Christ, the requirement stood. In this, the Lord was providing for the priests of Israel, while at the same time, he was giving prophetic pictures of Christ to come who would be the fulfillment of what the generations of priests only prefigured.

³⁷ This *is* the law of the burnt offering, the grain offering, the sin offering, the trespass offering, the consecrations, and the sacrifice of the peace offering,

This verse is truly to be an overall statement of pretty much everything seen thus far in Leviticus. However, the order of the sacrifices is different between those first described earlier in Leviticus and those of the supplemental laws for conducting them which were given after that.

Therefore, this verse more significantly forms a concluding statement to that which was described since verse 6:8. All of those verses reflect the order of the offerings as described here with the exception of "the consecrations." This includes those things which were described in Exodus concerning the consecration of Aaron and his sons, and it also includes the duties of Aaron which were described in verses 6:19-22.

As a point of theology which actually bears on the New Testament, these consecrations come from the Hebrew noun *millu*, meaning setting or installing. That in turn comes from the verb *male* which means "to fill."

When we speak in the New Testament of being “filled with the Spirit,” we are in essence being consecrated to act. When Paul says to “be filled with the Spirit” such as in Ephesians 5:18, it is in the passive voice. What that means is that we are not actively, but passively, filled with the Spirit. Because we receive the Spirit when we receive Christ, we will never get more of the Spirit. We have all we will ever receive, in His fullness, the moment we call on Him.

However, the Spirit can get more of us. This is the passive filling which Paul speaks of, and this is why Charismatics and Pentecostals are so hugely wrong in their theology. As a married man, I will never get more married, but my wife can get more of me as I yield to her. As a believer in Christ, I will never get more of the Spirit, but He can fill me as I yield to Him.

When we say, *male oti*, or “fill me,” it must be based on our yielding which comes through praise of God, prayer to God, participation with the people of God, proffering thanks to God, and pondering God’s word. It does not come through pounding on drums, prancing about in church, playing as if super religious, or pontificating about one’s spiritual prowess. We have the Spirit, let Him have us. In Christ, the Lord has consecrated us, and so let us consecrate ourselves so that we can then be consecrated to act.

³⁸ which the Lord commanded Moses on Mount Sinai,

It is not “on” Mount Sinai, but rather “at” Mount Sinai. This was explained in Leviticus 1:1 with the words, “Now the Lord called to Moses, and spoke to him from the tent of meeting, saying...” Moses was in the Tent of Meeting, receiving his instructions from the mouth of the Lord who dwelt between the cherubim.

Mount Sinai is the same place as Mount Horeb, but the name Sinai is used because it is given in anticipation of the cross of Christ. Sinai means, “Bush of the Thorn,” and the name of the location is given in connection with the redemptive workings of God in Christ which look forward to the cross. As all of these offerings look forward to His sacrifice, the name Sinai is specifically given in this final verse of the long section which concerns the details of the offerings.

^{38 (fin)} on the day when He commanded the children of Israel to offer their offerings to the Lord in the Wilderness of Sinai.

Again, in the final clause of the chapter, the name Sinai is used. This time it says *b'midbar sinai*, or "In the wilderness of Sinai." The word *midbar* means desert, but it comes from *davar*, meaning word. The connection between the two is that cattle are driven in an open place by the word of the one driving them.

The Lord is commanding the children of Israel concerning these many offerings made to Him as they are driven to the cross of Christ. They are in a dry and barren land, but the water of the word is what is intended to lead them to the abundance which overflows from Him. The Lord doesn't waste words. When He says something like this, it is intended to give us a picture of something else. And so it does. This final thought of the chapter is intended to get us to realize that everything we have looked at is meant to drive us to the Lord who has fulfilled each and every type and picture we have seen in these past seven chapters.

Although there will be more sacrifices detailed in the pages ahead, and although there will be a ton of other rules and statutes to govern the lives of the people, right now at the end of these many offerings, it is a great time for us to stop... and think about how blessed we are to not have to live under these requirements.

Isn't that so? Every time I read through the law, and especially the book of Leviticus, I find myself thanking the Lord that I am on the other side of the cross. We don't have to travel to Jerusalem to fellowship with the Lord, we don't have to bring an offering in order to do so, and we don't have to worry if we have checked off every detail in the long list of details to ensure all was done properly. Jesus has done it all for us. Everything we've look at has been intended to lead us directly to Jesus and His fulfillment of it all. Thank God for Jesus Christ who has done exactly that.

But Matthew Henry, commenting on the last three verses of this chapter, says something we should take to heart –

"Solemn acts of religious worship are not things which we may do or not do at our pleasure; it is at our peril if we omit them. An observance of the laws of Christ cannot be less necessary than of the laws of Moses."

Because of Christ doing it all for us, we should be more willing, not less, to be obedient to what He has commanded us. He has given us the great commission. He has written through the hand of Paul a long and impressive list of things we are to do, or not do. And He has spoken openly to the seven churches in the book of Revelation. Let us not be slack in doing what we should be doing for the Lord Jesus.

And above all, He asks us to come to Him. That is the first step of obedience for the lost soul. Until we come to Him and receive Him, we cannot be pleasing to God. And so as I do each week, allow me to tell you what you need to know in order to be saved...

Closing Verse: *“But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. ²³ But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. ²⁴ Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. ²⁵ But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.”*

-Galatians 3:22-25

Next Week: Leviticus 8:1-13 *Oh me, Oh my, it will be fun!...* (The Consecration of the Aaronic Priesthood, Part I) (11th Leviticus sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if you have a lifetime of sin heaped up behind you, He can wash it away and purify you completely and wholly. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Mediator’s Duties

And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying
These are the words He was then relaying

“Speak to the children of Israel, saying:
‘You shall not eat any fat, of ox or sheep or goat
And the fat of an animal that dies naturally
And the fat of what is torn by wild beasts, please take careful note

It may be used in any other way
But you shall by no means eat it, so to you I say

For whoever eats the fat of the animal
Of which men offer an offering made by fire to the Lord
The person who eats it shall be cut off from his people
So shall it be according to this word

Moreover you shall not eat any blood
In any of your dwellings, whether of bird or beast

Whoever eats any blood, that person
Shall be cut off from his people; from the greatest to the least

Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying
These are the words He was then relaying

“Speak to the children of Israel, saying:
‘He who offers the sacrifice of his peace offering to the Lord
Shall bring his offering to the Lord
From the sacrifice of his peace offering, according to My word

His own hands shall bring the offerings
Made by fire to the Lord, as you now have heard
The fat with the breast he shall bring
That the breast may be waved as a wave offering before the Lord
And the priest shall burn the fat on the altar
But the breast shall be Aaron’s and his sons, they are the priest’s things
Also the right thigh you shall give to the priest
As a heave offering from the sacrifices of your peace offerings

He among the sons of Aaron
Who offers the blood of the peace offering and the fat also
Shall have the right thigh for his part
To him it shall go

For the breast of the wave offering
And the thigh of the heave offering too
I have taken from the children of Israel
From the sacrifices of their peace offerings, as I instruct you

And I have given them to Aaron the priest
And to his sons from the children of Israel
By a statute forever
These instructions to you I now tell

This is the consecrated portion for Aaron and his sons
From the offerings made by fire to the Lord
On the day when Moses presented them to minister
To the Lord as priests, according to His word

The Lord commanded this to be given to them
By the children of Israel, chosen from among the nations
On the day that He anointed them
By a statute forever throughout their generations

This is the law of the burnt offering, the grain offering
The sin offering, the trespass offering too
The consecrations, and the sacrifice of the peace offering
The law which the priests were instructed to do

Which the Lord commanded Moses on Mount Sinai
On the day when He commanded the children of Israel
To offer their offerings to the Lord in the Wilderness of Sinai
These instructions He thus to them did tell
Peace with God, full and complete
Has come to us through the blood of Jesus
In Him, there is fellowship so sweet
Marvelous things He has done for us

And so, O Lord, to You we give our heartfelt praise
And to You, O God, we shall sing out for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

LEVITICUS 8:1-13

(THE CONSECRATION OF THE AARONIC PRIESTHOOD, PART I)

From time to time, people ask me about my credentials, usually about what denomination I am. I have no set answer for that. I usually say something like, I'm a Bible preacher. However, that just tells what I do, it doesn't tell what brought me to this point.

I met the Lord in 2001. For the first two or so years after that, I read the Bible cover to cover about once a week. I never counted, but I read it at my store, and I was there about 70 hours a week. So unless someone walked in, that's what I was doing. When I got home, I'd keep reading it. After I closed the store and went back into Wastewater, I kept reading it.

I also started answering Bible questions on the beach. You learn a lot more doing that, than you do just reading. When you're put on the spot and look dumb, you determine not to do it again. Eventually, the county took over our wastewater plant, and I had no time for government employment.

And so I asked the preacher of the church I was at about what I needed to do in order to get ordained. He told me to get a Bible-college degree and he would ordain me. I did, and he didn't. It wasn't really his fault, but the story goes back to my beard. We'll leave it at that.

After that, I called the pastor of Grace Baptist Church and he told me to come on over to Grace, let the congregation get to know me for a year, and then he and the deacons would determine if I was ordainable. I went, I was, and they did. After my year of probation, they held a pastor/deacon interrogation, going over the major points of theology, asking anything they wished on Bibliology, Theology Proper (including trinitarianism), Christology, Pneumatology, Angelology, Anthropology, Harmartiology, Soteriology, Ecclesiology, and Eschatology. After that, I had to preach a sermon or two in front of the church. And then... the congregation voted on the matter. Apparently, the beard wasn't an issue there. They approved it, and I was ordained on 24 January 2010. That's it in a nutshell. Well, I did wear a suit, a tie, shoes, and a beard on the day I was ordained.

Text Verse: *"Let Your priests be clothed with righteousness,
And let Your saints shout for joy." Psalm 132:9*

We have already gone through all of the advanced details for the ordination of Aaron and his sons. Those sermons though had to be taken along with everything else concerning the sanctuary and all of its implements. Everything is tied together, and they form a united whole.

Even in today's sermon, we cannot escape going back and picking out some of the details from the past. It's simply not possible without missing a ton of the symbolism of what lies ahead for us. The verses in this chapter lack much of the detail that was given. Even though we will go back to form a broad brushstroke of Christ and His work, we will leave far more out than we will include.

There is just enough added so that you can be reminded that everything about this ordination process is, in type and picture, looking forward to Christ. The details are logical, orderly, and they add in some new information as well. More than anything, the order of what is stated, and the dignity of how everything is accomplished, is what we are to focus on today.

The Lord had called, and now the calling was being acted upon. Time and again in this chapter, the words "as the Lord commanded" are stated. There is a set procedure which He laid out, and that set procedure will be followed carefully. The importance of this is because of the typology. In order for the type to reflect the Anti-type, everything had to be exact.

Now, as we look back on these things, we can clearly see Christ revealed in them. In turn, we are given the surety that our hopes are placed in the right basket. The word we have been given is sure, the hope that we possess is well-grounded, and therefore the things which are promised to us, but are yet future, are certain to come to pass.

It's all to be found in His... wait a minute! Just so you know, Aaron did have a beard as was the custom for all men in Israel. That too is to be found in His superior word, and so let's turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. A Gathering at the Door of the Tent of Meeting (verses 1-5)

¹ And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying:

This is the customary set of words which indicate that a new train of thought is being introduced. In this case, it introduces a section which will last all the way through until verse 10:8. Until then, the ordination of Aaron and his sons will be highlighted in detail.

This ordination process follows directly from the instructions given to Moses concerning the making of the priestly garments in Exodus 28, and the instructions given for the ordination process in Exodus 29. And then, some instructions for what should be done in the official duties of the priest were given in Exodus 30. What was instructed then will be complied with now. At least this is so up to a point. In chapter 10, there will be a deviation from the instructions, and that deviation will result in death.

What is interesting, is that the ordination process that we will now see was directed to be accomplished in Exodus 40 as that book closed out. However, before actually accomplishing it, the Lord first explained the different types of sacrifices that would be handled by the priests. This is what we have seen for the past seven chapters. Only now, after giving those minute instructions, are the priests ready to be installed in their special priestly office.

It would make no sense to ordain priests for the office, and only then explain to them the procedures for the various sacrifices that they needed to perform. Everything is precise, logical, and perfectly laid out. Each step leads to the next, just as one would expect from an instruction manual for putting together a complicated piece of machinery.

²“Take Aaron and his sons with him,

These words once again confirm what has already been seen earlier in Exodus. Aaron was not chosen by Moses because they were brothers, but rather Aaron was chosen by the Lord, and the Lord is now directing the ordination of the one he previously chose. It is intended to negate any feelings of favoritism by the other Israelites. Unfortunately, it is something that won't actually occur until the Lord has to defend His choice at the expense of the lives of those who rebel against His decision.

^{2 (con't)} and the garments, the anointing oil, a bull as the sin offering, two rams, and a basket of unleavened bread;

The description for the garments was given in Exodus 28; those for the anointing oil in Exodus 30, and the requirement for the bull, the rams, and the bread was given in Exodus 29.

In the Hebrew, several definite articles are used to indicate that these things are to comply with what was stated in those chapters. These things were minutely described, and so what was described is now expected to be brought forth. The words are very precise because the typology of Christ is not to be deviated from.

³ and gather all the congregation together at the door of the tabernacle of meeting.”

The words here indicate at least the elders of the assembly who represented their tribes. This is explicitly noted in 9:1. The elders of Israel represented the children of Israel. The size of the courtyard would not allow even a small portion of the people to meet in this location, and so their designated representatives would be witnesses. Any others who could fit in probably did, and it is only speculation, but possible, that others went up on the surrounding hillsides to witness the marvelous spectacle.

The “door” being specified is intended to prefigure Christ. There is the altar where the sacrifices will be made, there is the laver where the water for the washing will come from, but the door alone is specified. Jesus said, “I am the Door.” He is the door to the tent of meeting, or the spot where communion with God takes place. The wording is carefully given to show us what is on God’s mind. Even 1500 years before the coming of Christ, the ordination is shouting out what God would do through Him.

⁴ So Moses did as the Lord commanded him.

The Bible is replete with words like this. For Moses, it is a phrase commonly spoken of him. He was commanded by the Lord to follow certain procedures, and the Bible then notes his obedience to those commands. The same Bible exists today, and the question is, “Would the words recorded about you say the same thing, or would they say that you failed to do as the word of God spoke?”

When Moses did fail to do as instructed, it cost him dearly. That is coming up in the book of Numbers, and to this day his error is recorded for us to, hopefully, learn from. Your life is being recorded as well, and at some point, you will have to stand before the Lord and give an account for your actions. It is hoped that you won’t be ashamed at the time of your trial.

^{4 (con’t)} And the congregation was gathered together at the door of the tabernacle of meeting.

It is a public consecration, and this for a couple of reasons. The first has already been explained, which is to show that Aaron was not simply selected by Moses because he was Moses' brother, but rather it was because the Lord had selected him.

Secondly, because it was public, the people would then be, through their witnessing of the consecration, agreeing to the mediation of Aaron and his sons on their behalf. However many could fit into the courtyard would do so, and as the consecration went on for an entire week, people could come and go, allowing many to witness this national rite of ordination.

⁵ And Moses said to the congregation, "This is what the Lord commanded to be done."

His words here sum up all of what he was presented while on Mount Sinai concerning the ordination process. He presented this to the people as the command of the Lord. As a congregation, they are now summoned together to perform that same word of the Lord which He had commanded.

*Beautiful garments, so rich and glorious
To adorn the high priest of Israel
But they only point to our Lord victorious
In every detail there is a story to tell*

*In them we see His beauty, His splendor and glory
In them we see His work accomplished on behalf of us
Yes, in every detail there is a marvelous story
About the coming Christ; our Lord Jesus*

*And they tell yet more; that of which He does even now
They tell of His work interceding to the Father for us
For to Him God did all high priestly duties endow
Yes, He stands before His Father, our great Lord Jesus*

II. The Consecration – Clothing and Anointing (verses 6-13)

⁶ Then Moses brought Aaron and his sons and washed them with water.

As part of the ordination process, Moses is to wash Aaron and his sons with water. This implies an entire washing of their bodies. At this strategic place, just between where the

people were allowed to come, and the entrance to the place where the Lord dwelt, they were to be prepared for being acceptable to enter His presence.

The people being witnesses of this part of the process was intended to show them that they remained unclean and unacceptable to enter where their King was. Only those chosen and properly prepared could do so. After this full washing of their bodies, the laver will be used differently. This was seen in Exodus 30 -

"Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: ¹⁸ "You shall also make a laver of bronze, with its base also of bronze, for washing. You shall put it between the tabernacle of meeting and the altar. And you shall put water in it, ¹⁹ for Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet in water from it. ²⁰ When they go into the tabernacle of meeting, or when they come near the altar to minister, to burn an offering made by fire to the Lord, they shall wash with water, lest they die. ²¹ So they shall wash their hands and their feet, lest they die. And it shall be a statute forever to them—to him and his descendants throughout their generations."

-Exodus 30:17-21

Each step, in both ordination and in daily duties, they are being progressively instructed in the holiness of God and the need to be pure and undefiled as they approach Him on behalf of the people. This washing pictures the total cleansing of the priests.

In Aaron's case, as the high priest, it symbolizes Christ's perfect purity as our High Priest. It points to His baptism before He entered into His public service in order to fulfill all righteousness. For the sons of Aaron, it pictures those who follow Christ and are purified by His work. This is seen in John 13 where Christ said this -

"He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you." John 13:10

John uses two different words there. One signifies a full bathing, the second indicates a lesser washing. Through Christ's work, we are completely cleaned. We stand justified and free of guilt. However, we also continue to go through a process of sanctification where we need to be purified from time to time.

This is pictured in the priest's need to wash their hands and their feet as they ministered to the Lord. These external washings signify the universal corruption of man and our need for external purification. The water pictures the spiritual regeneration which occurs when we are set apart by Christ.

Only after the washing was accomplished were the garments then put on them. In the case of Aaron, his garments are emblematic of the divine work of Christ. He will next have seven articles placed upon Him – a tunic, a sash, a robe, an ephod, a breastplate, and a turban. Each represents an aspect of Christ’s work. Together, they form a picture of Christ, the Prophet, Priest, and King who is completely distinct and set apart from all others.

In the case of Aaron and his sons though, the cleansing now gives clear symbolic significance. It is to demonstrate, in type and shadow, that cleansing from sin must precede being clothed in righteousness and the anointing of the Spirit. Without being first cleansed, no person can draw near to God or be shown His favor through the sealing of the Spirit.

⁷ And he put the tunic on him,

The kethoneth, or tunic was first mentioned in Exodus 28:4, where it was called a “skillfully woven tunic.” It was mentioned again in Exodus 28:39 where it was said to be made of fine linen thread. An unusual Hebrew word, shabats, was used to describe it. That word means that it was made of a checkered weaving pattern, thus indicating something set or fixed. Flavius Josephus said that it was, “a tunic circumscribing or closely encompassing the body, and having tight sleeves for the arms.”

This garment pictures Christ’s righteousness which is checkered into His being. It is set and unchanging. As it is the garment closest to the body of Aaron, it is typical of Christ’s righteousness that literally adorns Him; it being an essential part of His very nature. As it will protrude out on both of his arms and from under his robe, it is a symbol of the always-evident righteousness of Christ. Even during His last moments before the crucifixion, Pilate proclaimed this aspect of Him –

“I have found no fault in this Man.” Luke 23:14

^{7 (con’t)} girded him with the sash,

This avnet, or girdle, was also mentioned in the same two verses of Exodus 24. It is a belt or a sash that is worn at the waist and was said to be made of “woven work.” Later, in Exodus 39, it was said to be “of fine woven linen with blue, purple, and scarlet thread, made by a weaver.” What is unusual is that it was probably not visible at all as it would be under the other garments. And yet, the instructions were specific concerning its weaving. This hidden sash is reflective of Christ’s divine majesty as is seen in Psalm 93 –

“The Lord reigns, He is clothed with majesty;
The Lord is clothed,
He has girded Himself with strength.
Surely the world is established, so that it cannot be moved.” Psalm 93:1

^{7 (con't)} **clothed him with the robe,**

The meil, or robe, is a type of tunic which would reach from neck all the way down to somewhere around the knees; some believe even as far as to the feet. It was thought to be a completely seamless garment as can be inferred from Exodus 39:22 -

"He made the robe of the ephod of woven work, all of blue."

The term “woven work” implies a seamless garment. However, Flavius Josephus explicitly documents this fact in his commentary on the priestly garments. He says that “the coat did not consist of two parts, nor was it sewed upon the shoulder, nor on the side, but was one long piece of woven work.” This robe is further described in Exodus 28 with these words –

“There shall be an opening for his head in the middle of it; it shall have a woven binding all around its opening, like the opening in a coat of mail, so that it does not tear.” Exodus 28:31

It would have a hole for the head to go through and it had no sleeves. Therefore, the top portion of it would be mostly covered by the ephod and the breastplate which go over it. However, the lower part was fully visible. The plain blue would be a beautiful contrast to the variegated ephod and the gleaming breastplate.

This blue signifies the law, especially in adherence to it. In a type of Christ, this blue robe signifies that Christ Jesus is the embodiment of the law. In Exodus 28, it was described with a word, kalil, translated as “all,” as in “all of blue.” That comes from the verb kalal, which means to complete or make perfect.

Thus the robe was entirely made of only this blue. It is indicative of Christ who perfectly fulfilled the law, completing it on our behalf. He is literally “robed” in the completion of the law. Also, as the robe was seamless, it points to John’s words about Jesus on the cross -

“Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His garments and made four parts, to each soldier a part, and also the tunic. Now the tunic was without seam, woven from the top in one piece.” John 19:23

Shortly after this occurred, John records Jesus’ dying words, “It is finished.” The robe which Aaron is being clothed in now in Leviticus was merely a picture of Christ embodying the law, fulfilling it, and finishing it for us. However, before He died, something else was recorded about Christ’s tunic. Despite dividing His other garments, the value of His tunic led them to say –

“Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be,” John 19:24

In contrast to this, in Matthew 26:65, the high priest of Israel tore his clothes during Jesus’ trial. This was in direct violation of the Law of Moses. In Leviticus 21 it says –

"He who is the high priest among his brethren, on whose head the anointing oil was poured and who is consecrated to wear the garments, shall not uncover his head nor tear his clothes;" Leviticus 21:10

In the treatment of these two garments, there is seen an ending of the old order of things. The Law of Moses was ended in Christ’s work and the New Covenant was established in His blood. The note of keeping the high priest’s robe from tearing was given as a contrasting picture of the true High Priest’s garment not being torn.

But, the recording of the high priest tearing his garment signifies the ending of that priesthood. That Christ’s garment wasn’t torn, and yet His body was, signifies the introduction of the New. In describing this robe in Exodus, a very rare word, takharah, was used to describe the hem around the neck.

The word comes from the verb kharah, which means “to burn with anger.” In this, the symbolism is obvious; the anger of the Lord at the sin of man is what was on display there at the cross. The penalty for that sin was the tearing of Christ’s body, the true robe of humanity.

7 (con’t) **and put the ephod on him;**

The materials for the ephod were described in Exodus 28:5-8 –

“They shall take the gold, blue, purple, and scarlet thread, and the fine linen, ⁶ and they shall make the ephod of gold, blue, purple, and scarlet thread, and fine woven linen, artistically worked. ⁷ It shall have two shoulder straps joined at its two edges, and so it shall be joined together. ⁸ And the intricately woven band of the ephod, which is on it, shall be of the same workmanship, made of gold, blue, purple, and scarlet thread, and fine woven linen.”

The ephod is a sleeveless garment, like a waistcoat. It was made of the same colors as the veil of the tabernacle, but with the addition of gold thread added into it. The colors used in it indicate divinity/royalty for the gold, the law for the blue; royalty for the purple – which is a combination of blue and red; war, blood, and judgment for the red; and righteousness for the woven linen.

This ephod will bear the breastplate which will next be placed over it, just as the Ark bore the Mercy Seat. Though the Ark was described first, it is the Mercy Seat which crowns the Ark. The Ark embodies the law, thus the Old Covenant, while the Mercy Seat pictures the satisfaction of the law through the shedding of blood.

The same is true with the ephod and the breastplate. On the ephod will be two stones with the names of the children of Israel engraved on them. Thus it signifies the high priest’s role to bear the sufferings and labors of his people.

On the breastplate will be twelve stones which will be engraved with the names of the children of Israel. This then signifies that the high priest sympathizes with his people as an intercessor before God. In both, the work of Christ is seen. First He bore our burdens, and then He became our intercessor. This is the reason for the order of each description. Marvelous wisdom is seen even in the order of how each thing is described to Moses.

^{7 (con’t)} **and he girded him with the intricately woven band of the ephod, and with it tied the ephod on him.**

This is the last time that the kheshev, or “band,” is to be seen in Scripture. It has only been used in connection with the ephod. It is the band or belt which would keep the two lower parts of the ephod held close to the body. This particular band was made with the same materials as the ephod itself.

It is believed to have been sewn onto the ephod at one point, and then it could be wrapped around the body and secured by strings, or a button or some other way. Its use is seen at the time of the ordination of Aaron in Leviticus 8.

The idea of this band pictures “readiness for service.” Despite being the high priest, Aaron was to be a servant of the people, mediating for them. Being girded and ready for service is a theme seen numerous times in the Bible, and it was something which Christ Himself did not draw away from, but rather embraced. We read about His being girded to serve in John 13 –

“Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God, ⁴ rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. ⁵ After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples’ feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded.” John 13:3-5

The gold which was woven into this belt anticipated the divine intervention of Christ for us. This is seen in Revelation 1:13 –

“...and in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band.”

Aaron, wearing this ephod and band, was a type of Christ. The particular materials in them symbolize the services which Christ now renders to us as our human/divine Mediator. Though ascended to heaven, the book of Hebrews says that He is there in the presence of God making intercession for us.

⁸ Then he put the breastplate on him,

The instructions for the, khoshen, or breastplate are found in Exodus 28:15-30. Its full name is the breastplate of judgment. It took an entire sermon to describe the marvelous things which are seen in that particular item, and so if you want to know the symbolism, or if you have forgotten it, you will need to take the afternoon off from sports and watch it. There you will see such marvelous pictures of Christ that you simply won’t believe it.

^{8 (con’t)} and he put the Urim and the Thummim in the breastplate.

The Urim and Thummim are described in Exodus 28:30. They are two of the most enigmatic items to be seen in all of the things associated with the sanctuary and the rites which accompany it. Urim is the plural of the word uwr, or “fire.” It means “lights.” Thummim is the plural of the word tom, or “integrity.” It means “perfections” or “that which is blameless or innocent.” Together, they are literally translated “Lights and Perfections.”

Interestingly, it was Moses who deposited the tablets of the Testimony into the Ark of the Covenant, and it is also Moses who places the Urim and Thummim into the breastplate for Aaron. Moses, or “He who draws out,” is the one who puts the items in. A direct tie is being made between the Ark and its two stone tablets and the breastplate and these two stones.

What the Urim and Thummim actually did, what they were, or how they were used is unknown. But we do know that they were used for inquiring of God. This is seen, for example, in Ezra 2:62, 63 –

“These sought their listing among those who were registered by genealogy, but they were not found; therefore they were excluded from the priesthood as defiled. 63 And the governor said to them that they should not eat of the most holy things till a priest could consult with the Urim and Thummim.”

Both the stone tablets and the Urim and Thummim gave forth the word of the Lord. And both the Ark and the Breastplate were containers for that word. In both cases, Moses was the one who placed the stones into their containers.

As I said, Urim means “Lights.” Numerous times in the Bible, the law of the Lord, the word of the Lord, or the judgments of the Lord are said to be light. I’ll cite three examples of this -

“For the commandment is a lamp,
And the law a light;
Reproofs of instruction are the way of life.” Proverbs 6:23

“Listen to Me, My people;
And give ear to Me, O My nation:
For law will proceed from Me,
And I will make My justice rest
As a light of the peoples.” Isaiah 51:4

“Your word is a lamp to my feet
And a light to my path.” Psalm 119:105

Next, Thummim comes from the word tom. This corresponds to the adjective tamim or “perfections,” and thus being blameless. This is seen in the following two verses -

“As for God, His way is perfect;
The word of the Lord is proven;
He is a shield to all who trust in Him.” Psalm 18:30

“The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul;
The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.” Psalm 19:7

In these, and other examples, we can find that the law of the Lord is what is pictured in the Urim and Thummim. And so it has the same meaning as the tablets within the Ark. Christ fulfilled the law and it was secreted away under the mercy seat. He thus embodies the law and His blood covers the sins of the law for His people.

In placing the Urim and Thummin within the Breastplate of Judgment, it signifies that our faith in His work is what justifies us. If we need to consult God, we do it through Christ. Matthew Henry gives a splendid analogy of these things –

“Now, Christ is our Oracle. By him God, in these last days, makes known himself and his mind to us, ... He is the true Light, the faithful Witness, the Truth itself, and from him we receive the Spirit of Truth, who leads into all truth.” Matthew Henry

The truly amazing thing about this is that such minute detail was given for things that were to remain completely unseen, and yet they perfectly describe what Christ has done for us. In Christ, we are safe, we are secure, and we are so forever.

⁹ And he put the turban on his head.

The mitsnepheth, or turban, was also made of the fine woven linen like the tunic which was first put on Aaron. It again reflects Christ’s absolute righteousness. It is what crowns Him and it defines His very character. Together, this tunic and turban symbolize Christ’s pure and unsullied life and authority.

^{9 (con’t)} Also on the turban, on its front, he put the golden plate, the holy crown,

This golden plate, here called “the holy crown,” was described in Exodus 28 with these words -

“You shall also make a plate of pure gold and engrave on it, like the engraving of a signet:
HOLINESS TO THE LORD.

³⁷ And you shall put it on a blue cord, that it may be on the turban; it shall be on the front of the turban. ³⁸ So it shall be on Aaron's forehead, that Aaron may bear the iniquity of the holy things which the children of Israel hallow in all their holy gifts; and it shall always be on his forehead, that they may be accepted before the Lord." Exodus 28:36-38

The word translated as "plate" is tsiyts. It signifies a flower or a blossom. Along with that, a new descriptor is given here in Leviticus with the words nezer ha'kodesh, or "crown the holy." The word nezer, being introduced here, signifies something set apart. It is this golden plate, placed on his forehead, which is the identifying mark of his separation from all others. It pictures the royal kingship of Christ.

Unlike Israel which had offices of king and priest which were not to be intermingled, Christ is the fulfillment of them both. This is explicitly stated by the prophet Zechariah concerning the coming Messiah –

"Take the silver and gold, make an elaborate crown, and set it on the head of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest. ¹² Then speak to him, saying, 'Thus says the Lord of hosts, saying:

"Behold, the Man whose name is the BRANCH!

From His place He shall branch out,

And He shall build the temple of the Lord;

¹³ Yes, He shall build the temple of the Lord.

He shall bear the glory,

And shall sit and rule on His throne;

So He shall be a priest on His throne,

And the counsel of peace shall be between them both.'" Zechariah 6:11-13

The special word used to describe this plate, tsiyts, speaks of Christ's Human and Divine natures. The pure gold represents His pure divinity, but that it is a flower speaks of His humanity. This is seen where the same word speaks of the fading glory of man -

"The voice said, 'Cry out!'

And he said, 'What shall I cry?'

'All flesh is grass,

And all its loveliness is like the flower of the field.'" Isaiah 40:6

Unlike fallen man though, Christ is the unfading flower who stepped out of heaven to restore us to that same beautiful state.

The engraving of HOLINESS TO THE LORD on this plate signifies the perfection of Christ. It is He who is the true Mediator for God's people. It is He who makes our offerings acceptable to God once again, and it is He who restores us – fully and completely – to our heavenly Father.

That there were two words on the engraving also signifies His Divine/Human nature – qodesh Yehovah. The 8 letters signify the new beginnings which are found in Christ Jesus. In fact, the name JESUS in Greek, IESOUS, is numerically equal to 888. Thus He is the ultimate example of the New Beginning for fallen man.

The blue cord which tied the plate to the turban signifies the law as fulfilled which ties the divine Lord to His intercessory role as our high priest. It is He who is the bridge between the infinite Father and finite us.

The specific naming of the placement of the plate on the forehead of the high priest is to show both the place of conscience and of identification. The duality is seen in that He is first conscious of those He ministers for, meaning us. And He is also conscious of His rightful place before His Father.

Secondly, it reveals His priestly identity presented before us and which comes from His Father. It is He who bore our iniquities at the cross, and it is He who still makes our sin-filled lives acceptable as HOLINESS TO THE LORD. Only through Him can we be considered acceptable to God. This is actually realized on the very last page of the Bible with these marvelous words –

“And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him. 4 They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads.” Revelation 22:3, 4

It is this nezer ha'kodesh, or Holy Crown, which in typology is seen to be Christ who is the King/Priest who is set apart by God from among the sons of men.

^{9 (con't)} **as the Lord had commanded Moses.**

The clothing of Aaron as the high priest is now complete. In order to show that it was done in accord with the word of the Lord, this clause is now stated. What was commanded has been performed.

¹⁰ Also Moses took the anointing oil, and anointed the tabernacle and all that was in it, and consecrated them.

After the clothing of the high priest, but before his personal anointing, the tabernacle is next anointed. The word for “anoint” is mashakh, which means to anoint by smearing. This is the first time that the mishkan, or tabernacle, is mentioned in the book of Leviticus. Until this point, the structure has been called ohel moed, or “tent of meeting.” Now the specific tabernacle, which is under the external tent, is mentioned by name.

The anointing oil is described in Exodus 30:22-38, every minute detail of which points to Christ. Those verses also took an entire sermon to explain. Again, if you didn’t see that sermon, or if you don’t remember its details, you can catch up on it this afternoon.

In short, it signifies the presence of the Spirit, in and through the work of Christ. But such a brief explanation does disservice to the majesty of what is seen in the details. You really should check them out. It is this marvelous presence of the Spirit, symbolized by the anointing oil, that is used to anoint the tabernacle and all of the furniture contained within it.

¹¹ He sprinkled some of it on the altar seven times,

This is speaking of the brazen altar where the sacrifices were to be burned. The golden altar of incense, being within the tabernacle, was already anointed. Now, a seven-fold nazah, or sprinkling of the oil is made on the brazen altar. This seven-fold sprinkling has never been noted before in any of the instructions. It is a special procedure that thus signifies the presence of the seven-fold Spirit of the Lord as is seen in Isaiah 11 -

“There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse,
And a Branch shall grow out of his roots.

²The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him,

The Spirit of wisdom and understanding,

The Spirit of counsel and might,

The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.” Isaiah 11:1, 2

This altar is being distinguished by this special seven-fold sprinkling. It is the number of spiritual perfection, and so the sprinkling forms a connection between the offeror and the One to whom the offerings are made. They form a covenantal bond between both which is only a shadow of the bond that now exists between God and His people because of the sacrifice of Christ.

11 (con't) anointed the altar and all its utensils, and the laver and its base, to consecrate them.

A different word is now used, returning again to mashakh, or smear, of verse 10. The utensils of the altar, as well as the laver and its base, are all anointed in the same manner as the tabernacle and everything in it. As before, the anointing of these items signifies the presence of the Spirit in what each item pictures.

In this verse, we can see the extremely high importance placed upon the altar. It is the only item which received the seven-fold sprinkling of the oil. And when the blood of a sacrifice is carried into the holy or most holy place and sprinkled seven times, it is because the animal first died at the north side of this altar.

This particular and special sprinkling points directly to the work of Christ who is the only true, final, and complete Sacrifice for the sins of man. It is what brings about full atonement and peace with God, and thus it is what provides access to the Spirit of God. The details of this Brazen Altar, which will help you to understand the significance of this seven-fold sprinkling, are found in Exodus 27:1-8, be sure to watch that sermon this afternoon as well.

12 And he poured some of the anointing oil on Aaron's head and anointed him, to consecrate him.

Only after the anointing of the items meant for ministry to the Lord is the high priest who ministers to the Lord then anointed. The anointing oil is poured out onto his head in order to mashakh, or anoint, him. It is the basis for the word mashiakh, or "messiah." This was to, as it says, "consecrate him." The word means to set apart. He is the one who is set apart from his brethren by the anointing. Thus, in type, he prefigures Christ the Messiah who was spoken of by Isaiah -

"The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me,
Because the Lord has anointed Me
To preach good tidings to the poor;
He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted,
To proclaim liberty to the captives,
And the opening of the prison to those who are bound;" Isaiah 61:1

13 Then Moses brought Aaron's sons and put tunics on them, girded them with sashes, and put hats on them, as the Lord had commanded Moses.

Our verses today end with these words. The instructions for these tunics, sashes, and hats was given in Exodus 28:40 -

“For Aaron’s sons you shall make tunics, and you shall make sashes for them. And you shall make hats for them, for glory and beauty.”

The tunics and the sashes for Aaron’s sons were to be white. There was nothing else noticeable about them. The instructions are simple and without any special detail. The verb for making the tunics was *asah* instead of *shabats* which identified Aaron's tunic. The garments of the sons were simple, plain pristine white, and yet they were distinct from all people around them.

The word for “hat” is *migbaoth*. This is the last of just four times it is seen in Scripture, and it is used only in reference to these caps for the sons of Aaron. It is from the same root as *gibah* or “hills” and *gabia* or “cups.” Hence, they are caps which fit the head.

It might seem remarkable that plain white garments would be described as “for glory and for beauty,” but white symbolizes righteousness. At times in the Bible, Christ’s garments, or those of angels, are said to be white. The glory and the beauty then is reflective of that which is of God – His righteousness.

These white tunics, sashes, and hats picture those who are in Christ, adorned with His righteousness because of His work. It is He who has brought many sons to glory through His work.

The hats, as I said, are the special word *migbaoth*. which is from the same root as *gibah* or “hills,” and *gabia* or “cups.” Both words are tied directly to the Aramaic word *Gabbatha*, the place where Christ was judged before Pilate. The symbolism is beautiful. The sons of Aaron are types of the sons of God and priests of the Lord Jesus who are granted that status as the helmet of salvation upon their head because of the judgment rendered on Him at *Gabbatha*.

The statement that the garments of the sons of Aaron were “for glory and for beauty” was the same statement made for the making of the garments of Aaron. In other words, because of the work of Christ, His priests now bear the same glory and beauty as He before the Father. Think of it! Imagine what we have been granted!

As we are at the end of our verses today, I’d like to take just a final moment to explain again, as I do each week, why all of this detail is important to you. If you have never

called on Jesus, these things may not make sense, but they are all looking forward for a reason.

Closing Verse: *When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus out and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called The Pavement, but in Hebrew, Gabbatha. 14 Now it was the Preparation Day of the Passover, and about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews, "Behold your King!" John 19:13, 14*

Next Week: Leviticus 8:14-36 In these, there is great stuff for you... (The Consecration of the Aaronic Priesthood, Part II) (12th Leviticus Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if you have a lifetime of sin heaped up behind you, He can wash it away and purify you completely and wholly. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Consecration of the Aaronic Priesthood

And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying
These are the words He was relaying

Take Aaron and his sons with him
And the garments, the anointing oil too
A bull as the sin offering
Two rams, and a basket of unleavened bread; so you shall do

And gather all the congregation together for sure
At the tabernacle of meeting's door

So Moses did as the Lord commanded him
And the congregation was gathered together as one
At the door of the tabernacle of meeting
And Moses said to the congregation
-----"This is what the Lord commanded to be done"

Then Moses brought Aaron and his sons
And washed them with water; yes, he washed these ones
And he put the tunic on him, girded him with the sash
Clothed him with the robe, and put on him the ephod

And he girded him with the intricately woven band of the ephod
And with it tied the ephod on him, as he was previously showed

Then he put the breastplate on him, as the Lord did state
And he put the Urim and the Thummim in the breastplate
And he put the turban on his head
Also on the front of the turban too
He put the golden plate, the holy crown
As the Lord had commanded Moses to do

Also Moses took the anointing oil
And anointed the tabernacle and all that was in it
And consecrated them
As the Lord to him did submit

He sprinkled some of it on the altar seven times
Anointed the altar and all its utensils as well
And the laver and its base, to consecrate them
As the Lord to him did tell
And he poured some of the anointing oil, as the Lord did state
On Aaron's head and anointed him; him to consecrate

Then Moses brought Aaron's sons
And put tunics on them, girded them with sashes
And put hats on them, as the Lord had commanded Moses
He crossed all T's, dotted all I's, and didn't miss any dashes
How amazing! Every detail gives us precious insights to delight
Things that provide our souls with surety
That through Christ's work, all things have been made right
And that our future is secure, a Divine guarantee

Thank You, O God for these marvelous hints of Jesus
Written so long ago, and yet as new as the day before our eyes
They are an anchor for the expectant souls of each of us
As we wait upon His return; He our splendid prize

And because of Him we shall for all eternity give You our praise
Yes, we shall hail You O God because of Jesus for eternal days
Hallelujah and Amen...

LEVITICUS 8:14-36

(THE CONSECRATION OF THE AARONIC PRIESTHOOD, PART II)

The minute and detailed instructions for building the sanctuary were followed up by the careful and precisely recorded construction of it. This was to ensure that everything the Lord had commanded was followed through with, exactly as He specified. The reason this was so important is because in the book of Hebrews we are told that the earthly things were copies and shadows of the heavenly things.

The same is true with the minute and detailed instructions for the ordination of Aaron and his sons. They were given in Exodus, and now in Leviticus we are being given the careful and precisely recorded adherence to what was previously laid out. Again, each detail points to Christ, and so in order to protect the typology, everything is being detailed for a second time.

God guarded these pictures of His Son so that when He arrived, there would be no doubt that He was the fulfillment of them. And yet, because of the laziness of the church, how few ever take the time to look into these things? Thousands of years of meticulous work safeguarding them is pretty much ignored by the church Christ came to establish.

We are too busy claiming prosperity and infighting over minutiae to bother with such wonderful pictures of what God has done for us in Christ. But... for those who are willing to carefully and methodically follow page by page through this treasure we call the Bible, there is an endless stream of wonder and excitement.

Claiming prosperity in Jesus' name is only as effective as your next trip to the hospital or loss of job. When those things come about, it suddenly dawns on you that the preacher's words were a complete waste of time. And fighting with others in the church over silly little pet peeves results in the same headaches and heartbreaks that you will find at work or at home. In the end, nobody gains from such things. How much better to stick to proper doctrine and close and personal fellowship with those who bear Christ's name.

Text Verse: *"Sacrifice and offering You did not desire;
My ears You have opened.
Burnt offering and sin offering You did not require.
7 Then I said, "Behold, I come;
In the scroll of the book it is written of me.*

*⁸ I delight to do Your will, O my God,
And Your law is within my heart.” Isaiah 40:6-8*

The scroll of the book is simply filled with Christ. The words Isaiah penned about the coming Messiah are proven true every time we come to another passage and search Him out. He is there, calling out to us to find Him. And yet, at the same time, everything we read about is literally true.

The Lord used real people, in real circumstances, to give us these wonderful tastes of what lay ahead when He would come and reveal Himself to us. And further, from these types and pictures came moral lessons that show us how only the Anti-type can truly satisfy our souls.

With a law mediated by fallible men, there can only be a fallible hope. But when the infallible Man arrived, He brought with Him a perfect and unsullied hope. As we finish up the ordination of Aaron today, let’s remember that.

Everything God is showing leads us to a better hope where we can come to God in full confidence that our prayers are heard, our offerings are accepted, and our Mediator will perfectly fulfill His duties for us. Keep this in mind. It’s all to be found in His superior word. And so let’s turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. The Bull for the Sin Offering (verses 14-17)

¹⁴ And he brought the bull for the sin offering.

This bull was first ordered in Exodus 29:3 when the Lord gave the instructions to Moses concerning this ordination. It was then mentioned in verse 2 of this chapter. The bull, which pictures Christ, is now brought forward to be the sin offering for the priests.

¹⁴ (con’t) Then Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the bull for the sin offering,

In this act, which we have seen for other sacrifices already, the bull takes on the curse which they deserve for their sins and it is transferred to it. The *par*, or bull, comes from the word *parar* which carries the meaning of defeat, or make void, although it can be variously translated.

The picture of Christ is that He defeated the devil, making void that which the devil had wrought. Thus, Christ can be the Mediator between God and man. For Aaron and his sons, with their symbolic transfer of their sins to the bull, the animal is accursed, and it must die. Thus we have what is known as a *vicarious substitute*.

In type, the bull is Christ who knew no sin, but was made sin for Aaron and his sons so that they might be righteous before God. The sin is symbolically removed from the one and transferred to the other. It is life for life, and therefore...

¹⁵ and Moses killed it.

It is Moses who kills the bull, not Aaron. He is acting as the priest *pro-tempore* during the ordination, but he is also a man born under sin. This shows us the fallibility and temporary nature of the Aaronic priesthood. In type, we see only a shadow of the New covenant where the perfect Christ voluntarily gave His own perfect life. Thus, He is the Mediator of a better covenant.

¹⁵ (con't) Then he took the blood, and put *some* on the horns of the altar all around with his finger, and purified the altar.

This was directed in Exodus 29:12. Once the bull was bled out, it would be a confirmation of the death of the animal for "the life is in the blood" according to Leviticus 17:11. With this proof of the death of the substitute, then some of its blood was to be put on the horns of the altar with his finger.

The horns, or *qarnoth*, of the altar are the place of mercy and safe refuge. Further, horns are a symbol of strength. For the blood to be placed on them signified the granting of mercy and the allowance of safety from the wrath which had been transferred to the bull. As there are four horns pointing toward the four corners of the earth, it further symbolizes the power of the act to fully save and cleanse the sinner. David understood this when he wrote these words -

"I will love You, O LORD, my strength.

² The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer;

My God, my strength, in whom I will trust;

My shield and the **horn** of my salvation, my stronghold." Psalm 18:1, 2

Another point is that Moses is specifically told to apply the blood with his *finger*. The word *etsbah*, or finger, comes from another word, *tsebah*, which indicates dyed material

and thus one gets the idea of grasping something. Therefore, the finger is that which accomplishes a task.

The creation is said to be the work of the Lord's fingers in the 8th Psalm. Thus in this verse, the mercy, the refuge, and the remission of the sins is granted by God, but it is accomplished by the work of the mediator's fingers. In the type we look forward to the Anti-type where the Lord is the Purifier. However, the blood is not only applied to the altar to expiate the sins of Aaron and his sons, but it is also to purify the altar itself. This is explained in Hebrews 9 –

“And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission.” Hebrews 9:22

¹⁵ (con't) And he poured the blood at the base of the altar, and consecrated it, to make atonement for it.

The altar has already been consecrated by the sprinkling with anointing oil in verse 11. However, atonement still needed to be made for it because it was made by sinful hands. An inanimate object is not free from such defilement, and atonement was needed for it.

With the blood of the bull, the altar is now sanctified so that atonement can be made with it. This is only a shadow of Christ then. Unlike the altar which needed to be sanctified, Christ, the true Altar, sanctified Himself so that our lives as gifts to God might be acceptable to Him –

"As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. ¹⁹ And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth."

-John 17:18, 19

As astonishing as it may seem, everything has pointed to Christ. The altar points to Christ, the anointing oil pointed to Christ, the bull points to Christ, the shed blood points to Christ, Aaron is typical of Christ. Every detail, has – and continues to – point to Him. Each provides another aspect of His Person and His work.

¹⁶ Then he took all the fat that *was* on the entrails, the fatty lobe *attached to the liver*, and the two kidneys with their fat, and Moses burned *them* on the altar.

This was explained to Moses in Exodus 29:16. The symbolism of these fat parts has been explained in other offerings, but each points to Christ. They represent the abundance of

the very deepest parts of Christ the Man. Fat is the abundance and health of life. The fat on the entrails represents the inner purity of Christ. The fatty lobe on the liver represents His emotions and feelings, and the two kidneys with their fat signify His mind and reasoning.

These were offered to the Lord by fire, burning as if incense as the word denotes, because they symbolize Christ's most intimate aspects. They are the very substance of who He is, and are thus returned to the Lord by fire.

17 But the bull, its hide, its flesh, and its offal, he burned with fire outside the camp,

The rest of the animal was taken outside the camp and burned with fire. Normally, unless the blood of the animal for a sin offering was sprinkled inside the holy place, the animal would be eaten by the priests. But, even though the bull's blood was not taken there, nothing of it was to remain, and none of it was to be eaten. Moses was not a legally consecrated priest, and the animal was under a curse because of the sins of Aaron and his sons. Thus to eat it would be symbolic of them re-taking the sin into themselves.

Instead, it was to be returned to the old order of things where sin remained. In its place, those for whom the animal died would be reckoned under the new order of things. They would be new men with a symbolic new nature, cleansed from their defilement.

17 (cont) as the Lord had commanded Moses.

The words are given to show complete obedience to the word of the Lord which was given to Moses on Mount Sinai for this ordination process. Every detail points to Christ, and so in order to show that the typology was adhered to, these words are now given.

*The bull is slain, his blood poured out
The proof of the death is evident in the bowl of blood
But for that bull, don't shed a tear or pout
Sin is atoned for by the crimson flood*

*There! On the cross of Calvary hangs a Man
For the sins of mankind, was shed His blood
We ask, "Can it truly atone for sin?" God says, "Yes, it can!"
And so we plunge ourselves 'neath that crimson flood*

*And through His death, our High Priest He came to be
When He went behind the veil and presented His blood
He did this because of God's love – for you and for me
And so let us tell the world of the marvelous crimson flood*

II. The Ram for the Burnt Offering (Verses 18-21)

18 Then he brought the ram as the burnt offering.

Of the two rams for the ordination, one was selected as a burnt offering. This first one is now brought forward by Moses.

18 (cont) And Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the ram,

This was instructed in Exodus 29:15. As seen before, the placing of hands on the head of an animal for a burnt offering is not for confession of sin, but as a way of surrendering oneself wholly and completely to the Lord. Only after the atonement and purification can a person be considered as an acceptable offering to the Lord. In this, they are dedicating themselves as if being living sacrifices.

19 and Moses killed it.

Verse 19 was instructed in Exodus 29:16. The Hebrew does not say "Moses." Rather, it says "he killed it." But, Exodus 29 specifically says Moses was to perform the task. Further, the next clause names Moses specifically. Therefore, like the bull of the sin offering, it is he who kills the ram, not Aaron. He is fulfilling the job of priest *pro-tempore* during the ordination until it is over. Once complete, the tasks will, from that time on, belong to the line of Aaron alone.

19 (cont) Then he sprinkled the blood all around on the altar.

Here it says "...and splashed Moses the blood." The blood is not sprinkled, but cast forth upon the altar. It is symbolic of the complete and voluntary surrender of the priests to die while yet living. When we look at what has transpired so far, we see a logical order. The bull was sacrificed for sin. This is then followed by the ram which is in picture a complete surrender of the priests' will to God. This follows with Paul's words of Romans 6:7-11 –

“For he who has died has been freed from sin. ⁸ Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, ⁹ knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. ¹⁰ For *the death* that He died, He died to sin once for all; but *the life* that He lives, He lives to God. ¹¹ Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

This ram then symbolizes what Paul calls in Romans a “living sacrifice” to God. It sounds contradictory – a living sacrifice – but it is pictured here in the death of this ram for the on-going consecration of Aaron and his sons.

²⁰ And he cut the ram into pieces; and Moses burned the head, the pieces, and the fat.

This was instructed in Exodus 29:17. The dividing of the animal is to ensure that it will fully burn and nothing of it would be left. If it was not so divided, its legs would hang over the side and smolder, but not be consumed.

²¹ Then he washed the entrails and the legs in water.

The inner parts of the animal are washed in order to reflect the inner purity of Christ, in Whom there is no defilement. The legs are washed because they are the part of the animal which picks up worldly defilement as it walks. As Christ was without any such worldly defilement, the washing is done in anticipation of His perfect life, given over wholly to God. Each step is meticulously ordered and then performed in anticipation of Christ to come.

^{21 (con't)} And Moses burned the whole ram on the altar. It was a burnt sacrifice for a sweet aroma, an offering made by fire to the Lord, as the Lord had commanded Moses.

The entire ram was burnt right there on the altar. The expiation of sin is not needed as that was accomplished by the bull. Because of this, the animal is considered an acceptable substitute to be offered to the Lord on behalf of those it replaced. Such a burnt offering, without any associated defilement, represented Christ’s perfect self-sacrifice. For this reason, it was entirely acceptable to God.

The word for “burn” is *qatar*. It is the same word which is used time and again to point to Christ. It signifies making something fragrant through fire. The entire animal was such an offering. In picture, the ram here signifies the wholly-acceptable offering of Christ to

God on behalf of Aaron and his sons. In the bull, He was seen as the sin offering which was burned outside the camp.

But in the ram, He is seen as the whole and complete perfection of every good deed, offered to God on the brazen altar. As the ram is given on behalf of the priests, it means that the execution of their tasks will be pleasing to God because of what the offering pictures; Christ's work. In reality, what the priests do as they minister, is accepted because of the work of Another; because of Christ.

*A sweet smelling aroma to the Lord
An offering made of our lives and our work
We shall be obedient to Him and to His word
No duty that is proper shall we set aside or shirk*

*As Christ our Lord gave Himself for us
We should also walk in love and so be a suitable offering
Let us endeavor to follow our Lord Jesus
And act in emulation of His eternal proffering*

*Offering ourselves and our bodies as a living sacrifice
People living out our lives holy and acceptable to God
Because for our sins, Christ Jesus paid the price
And now it is our duty to be circumspect in this life we tread*

III. The Second Ram (verses 22-29)

²² And he brought the second ram, the ram of consecration.

The Hebrew says, "...the ram, the second." This is then followed up with the words *el ha'millium*, the "ram [of] the consecration," because in the acts associated with it, this portion of the consecration of Aaron and his sons will be complete.

The word *millu*, or consecration, comes from the word *male*, or "to fill." Thus, we can call this "the ram of the filling." If you can see it, there is now another picture of the work of Christ. For Aaron and His sons, there is first the atonement for sins, then the giving of the life over to God, and then the filling of the Spirit.

Although these three occur simultaneously in the believer, they are logically ordered in each of these three offerings. The consecration of Aaron and his sons is what occurs in each person who comes to Christ, pictured in each aspect of this rite of ordination.

22 (con't) Then Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the ram,

This ram is essentially a peace, or fellowship, offering, but because it is a part of the consecration, there is more to it than a normal peace offering. The laying of the hands on the head of the bull was for the transfer of sin. The laying on of hands for the first ram was as an offering of the individual wholly to the service of God. The laying of hands on this animal was to signify the receiving of the authority to serve. Each offering is logically noted, in order, to show the process of acceptable service to God.

23 and Moses killed it.

Again, Moses is not named in this clause, only in the next. But, it is Moses who accomplishes the task, and because it is Moses, the temporary nature of the Aaronic priesthood is once again highlighted. A fallen man cannot institute an infallible priesthood.

23 (con't) Also he took *some* of its blood and put it on the tip of Aaron's right ear, on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot.

The returning of the blood to Aaron signifies his acceptance as high priest and the granting of his authority as such. The blood symbolizes life. The shed blood thus symbolizes death. He now symbolically *dies to self* and henceforward is to *live for God*.

That each point of application is on the right side has meaning in and of itself. The right is the side of strength, blessing, authority, honor, judgment (in salvation), wisdom, cleansing, etc. Applying the blood to the right includes in some measure, each of these.

First, blood is applied to the *tenuk*, or lobe of the ear. This signifies obedience in the sense of spiritual hearing. He was to heed the Divine voice which would speak to him either through the law or through God's prophets. He was to be consecrated to this hearing of the word, in the sense of applying it to his life.

Following this, it was to be applied to the *bohen*, or thumb, of the right hand. This word comes from a root which means "thick." Therefore, it is the thick part of the hand, and thus the thumb. The fingers symbolize human activity. Here, the thumb represents the

whole hand. His hand, thus meaning his spiritual activity, was to be set apart to God, to holiness, and to only that which was sanctified. He was to be a high priest ready to not only hear the Divine voice, but to respond to it through his daily activity.

Finally, the blood was to be applied to the *bohen*, or big toe, of his foot. It is the same word as thumb. As the big toe is the thick appendage, it received the application of blood as representative of the whole foot. It symbolized that he was to walk only in paths of holiness, directing his steps toward God in the race set before him.

This verse, with the three principle points of application, is explained by Paul in many different passages, but it is well summed up by him in Colossians 1 -

“For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; (ear) 10 that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, (toe) being fruitful in every good work (thumb) and increasing in the knowledge of God; 11 strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy; 12 giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light.”

-Colossians 1:9-12

In the application of the blood to these three extremities, there is the sense that his entire life was to be enclosed in the service of God. From head to toe and from hand to foot, he was sanctified as an acceptable high priest. However, there is the truth that even with this application, he still couldn't hear, understand, serve, or walk in a truly proper manner. And, as the blood did nothing but symbolize something else, it only looked forward in type and shadow.

As Aaron only pictured the true High Priest, Christ, then this is only a foreshadowing of the One who literally fulfilled these ancient images. The history of the Aaronic priesthood is one filled with fallible men who often made disastrous decisions. Christ, though, came as the more excellent priest with a more excellent ministry which is established on better promises.

²⁴ Then he brought Aaron's sons. And Moses put *some* of the blood on the tips of their right ears, on the thumbs of their right hands, and on the big toes of their right feet.

The same procedures which picture the same things, were next followed for the sons. As Aaron pictures Christ, the High Priest, these sons of Aaron picture us, who follow Christ in the priestly duties of the church age.

²⁴ (con't) **And Moses sprinkled the blood all around on the altar.**

All of the rest of the blood was scattered around the altar. The reason here is twofold. The first is an indication of the willingness of these men to perform their priestly duties, and the second is the acceptance of that willingness by God. They have had their sins atoned for, they have offered themselves up wholly to God, and now there is a joint acceptance of the duties.

²⁵ **Then he took the fat and the fat tail, all the fat that *was* on the entrails, the fatty lobe *attached to the liver*, the two kidneys and their fat, and the right thigh;**

These special parts of the animal, which signify Christ's most intimate aspects, meaning the very substance of who He is, are gathered together. Along with this is the *shoq*, or thigh. It comes from a word meaning "abundant." Thus it is the *abundant* area of meat on an appendage. As it is the right thigh, it signifies the honorable side. In all, that which is abundant and most honorable is what is being seen here. But there is more to gather...

²⁶ **and from the basket of unleavened bread that was before the Lord he took one unleavened cake, a cake of bread *anointed with oil*, and one wafer,**

The three types of bread were minutely described in Exodus 29. Every detail of them pointed to Christ in an amazing fashion. If you don't remember that sermon, there is today's afternoon assignment for you. These also are gathered up...

²⁶ (con't) **and put *them* on the fat and on the right thigh;**

All of the items mentioned in verses 24 & 25 are piled up on top of the right thigh. Unless one understood the symbolism, it would seem like a rather curious pile of meat, fat, and bread. But in short, it points to the abundance of Christ, the most intimate aspects of Christ, and the work of Christ, including His death on the cross.

²⁷ **and he put all *these* in Aaron's hands and in his sons' hands, and waved them *as a wave offering* before the Lord.**

What is more accurate would be, "...and he put all these *on* the hands of Aaron and *on* the hands of his sons." The reason why is because of the type of ritual to be performed. Aaron and his sons were to open their hands and Moses would then put everything on their open hands. After that, they were to be waved as an offering.

The word is *tenuphah*, or "wave offering." It comes from *nuph*, which means to wave, or to move to and fro. What would happen is that Moses would put his hands under theirs, and then make a waving motion together with them towards the four corners of the heavens, thus indicating that they were being offered to the omnipresent God. This literal filling of the hand is symbolic of the filling of the Spirit. This comes from the Person and work of Christ which is reflected in the various things piled up in their hands.

What Moses is doing here is transferring his *pro-tempore* duties to Aaron. His muscular energy is causing them to perform their first priestly act. It is symbolic of the transfer of all of these aspects to the life of the believer. In Him, God accounts these things to us because of what He has done. In turn we offer them back to God...

²⁸ Then Moses took them from their hands and burned *them* on the altar, on the burnt offering. They *were* consecration offerings for a sweet aroma. That *was* an offering made by fire to the Lord.

The items, waved by the strength of Moses, were then taken back by him as if Aaron and his sons were still common people making an offering to God. They are being endowed with priestly authority, but they are not yet fully installed. Until the completion of the rite, Moses would continue acting as a priest.

The wave offering being returned to the Lord as a burnt offering, and as a sweet aroma, was to signify the complete submission of themselves to the Lord. As each thing in their hands only symbolizes Christ, then the true and eternal priesthood, which these things foreshadow, are embodied in Him.

His work was found acceptable and through it, He obtained a more perfect priesthood and ministry than could ever have been obtained by mere fallible, fallen men and by the blood of bulls and goats. At Aaron's ordination, God looked ahead to the ministry of Christ and He smelled a sweet savor only because of what it pictured, not because of the animal and bread burning there on the altar.

²⁹ And Moses took the breast and waved it *as* a wave offering before the Lord. It was Moses' part of the ram of consecration, as the Lord had commanded Moses.

The word “breast” is *khazeh*. It comes from *khazah* which means “to see” because it is the part that is most seen when looking at the front of the animal. That, in turn, comes from a root which indicates to gaze at, and to mentally perceive, such as a vision.

This particular part of the animal has a special significance, picturing Christ who is the Source of all mental perception and divine vision. It was to now be waved before the Lord. In the future, it will belong to Aaron and his sons, but for now, because Moses is the acting priest, it was assigned to him as his portion.

*Accepted and ready to perform our tasks for the Lord
We gladly give ourselves for this wonderful duty
Sanctified and ready for service according to His word
Robed in garments of glory and of beauty*

*The sacrifice has been made, and we stand ready
The offering in our hands is waved before the Lord
With the Mediators’ hands below, our hands are steady
We are sanctified for service according to His word*

*We come before You, our great God
We offer our lives in Your service now and always
Grant us that we will be worthy in this life we tread
Never faltering throughout all of our days*

IV. Seven Days He Shall Consecrate You (Verses 30-36)

³⁰ Then Moses took some of the anointing oil and some of the blood which *was* on the altar, and sprinkled *it* on Aaron, on his garments, on his sons, and on the garments of his sons with him; and he consecrated Aaron, his garments, his sons, and the garments of his sons with him.

The wording is very distinct, *u-min ha'dam asher al ha'mizbeakh* – “and from the blood that is on the altar.” Despite what scholars say, this is not blood kept from before the blood was splashed and held for this purpose. Instead, Moses takes ram’s blood that had *already* been splashed on the altar. The amount isn’t what is important. Rather the fact that it had been splashed *on the altar* is what is.

There is a specific process here: 1) Slaughter; 2) Splash on the altar; 3) Take blood from the altar to use in sprinkling. It is a confirmation that not only had the blood of the

ordination ram been applied to both priest and altar, but that it was then accepted by God and returned to them along with the anointing oil.

In picture, it is truly their “Pentecost moment.” They had been received as acceptable and they were symbolically endowed with that acceptance. No great amount of blood was necessary. In fact, if it was a heavy amount, it would literally stain the garments.

The word “sprinkle” here is correct. It is *nazah*. It indicates sprinkling for purification, cleansing, atonement, expiation, etc. In this case, it is for the sanctification of Aaron, his sons, and their garments. Only a small amount would be needed to symbolically confirm their consecration and acceptance for duty. This is reflected by Paul’s words of Romans 15 -

“Nevertheless, brethren, I have written more boldly to you on some points, as reminding you, because of the grace given to me by God, 16 that I might be a minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.”

-Romans 15:15, 16

It is the *offering* which is considered acceptable which is sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

³¹ And Moses said to Aaron and his sons, “Boil the flesh *at* the door of the tabernacle of meeting, and eat it there with the bread that *is* in the basket of consecration offerings, as I commanded, saying, ‘Aaron and his sons shall eat it.’

The designated parts of the ram, along with the remainder of the three types of bread taken from the basket, were to be eaten by the door of the tent of meeting. As each of those types of bread individually pictured Christ, as did the ram, the meal is symbolically a partaking of His body. As He said in John, “My flesh is food indeed” (6:55), and “I am the Bread of life” (6:35).

The sharing of it between the Lord and Aaron and his sons is intended to solidify the bond between them. Christ, being He who unites the heavenly and the earthly as One. All during the week of ordination, they were being spiritually prepared for their lifelong duties as priests to the Lord.

³² What remains of the flesh and of the bread you shall burn with fire.

This is the same rule as the Passover. It was not to be eaten on the following day. As there were seven days of ordination, it would be inappropriate to accumulate leftovers from one day to the next. Food which had gone through the night was susceptible to corruption. This would be unacceptable to consume when considering God's holy and incorruptible nature.

Further, it was exclusively to be eaten by the priests. If not, it was to be returned to the Lord by fire, not passed on to another. If another ate of it, it would diminish the entire ordination process because they were not so ordained. It would be, in essence, mixing the holy with the profane.

And finally, if something which was devoted to a sacred use was given to someone else, they could then use it as an object of superstitious worship, as if a talisman. Like the Passover which pictured Christ so well, no such thing was to happen to the holy food of the consecration which also pictures Him in every detail.

³³ And you shall not go outside the door of the tabernacle of meeting for seven days, until the days of your consecration are ended.

This translation implies that they are to be inside the holy place. This is incorrect. They are to station themselves in the courtyard where the sacrifices are made for seven days, and not leave that area. Each day, the same sacrificial ceremonies were to be repeated, but they did not enter the Holy Place to perform priestly duties as they were not yet installed. Those would have been performed by Moses during this period.

What is also obvious is that this is speaking of the conduct of their regular lives. There are obvious reasons why they would have to leave the area, reasons we're all aware of. After those things were tended to, they were to return to their watch in the courtyard.

³³ (con't) For seven days he shall consecrate you.

The words are an idiom. Literally, it says, "For seven days he will fill your hand." The filling of the hand is the consecration. The time period is that which indicates spiritual perfection. The "he" here could be Moses speaking of himself in the third person, because he is the one who does the duties, or it could be referring to the Lord as the Provider. It is unsure which is being referred to.

³⁴ As he has done this day, so the Lord has commanded to do, to make atonement for you.

These words should probably be passive. Instead of “As he has done,” they should say, “As has been done.” It shows that the entire process which was accomplished on the first day was to be followed through for each day of the ordination. In being atoned for during all seven days, they were considered fully consecrated to then perform the holy duties of the priesthood. Furthermore, the altar was also atoned for during this seven-day period. Only when the seventh day of atonement was accomplished would it be considered most holy. From that time on, the sacrifices upon it would be restricted to only the ordained priests.

³⁵ Therefore you shall stay *at* the door of the tabernacle of meeting day and night for seven days, and keep the charge of the Lord, so that you may not die; for so I have been commanded.”

The words concerning “day and night” were not specifically stated before in Exodus 29. However, it is now made explicit that this is what is commanded. The word used to describe their time there is *mishmereth*. It indicates to keep watch, or to guard. Thus, it is the watch of the Lord. They were to carefully guard the instructions they had been given. Should they fail, death would be the result.

As this is a time of probation, they were expected to follow through with the commands precisely. If they could not, then neither could they be relied upon to perform the more vital functions which they would be responsible for when the altar and various offerings were deemed as most holy. And if they failed to properly perform those most holy duties, then their lives would be forfeit. Such disastrous results will be seen in just two chapters.

³⁶ So Aaron and his sons did all the things that the Lord had commanded by the hand of Moses.

The obedience of Aaron and his sons is highlighted, just as Moses’ obedience has been highlighted over the past many chapters. The ordination process is activated, and with the turn of a page, we will truly enter into the time of the Aaronic priesthood, a priesthood that would last from about 1445BC until 70AD when the temple in Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans. But, Daniel 9 tells us that there will be another temple, and the priesthood will be reactivated. This is an unfortunate step which must come to pass, despite the fact that the priesthood was annulled in the coming of Christ.

The Aaronic priesthood came without an oath, and with certainty of its eventual end. It was performed by sinful men who needed to first sacrifice for themselves before they

could sacrifice for those who came to them for mediation. On the other hand, the priesthood of Christ came with an oath, it is an eternal priesthood, and it is performed by the sinless Son of God who sacrificed Himself in order to forever purify those that come to God through Him.

There is an infinite difference between the two. It is one that allows all men to draw near to God in a close and personal way. The lesson of the Bible is that all men must come to God through a mediator. With the coming of Christ, we are shown that He is the one and only Mediator God accepts. All of these types and shadows were given to show us this truth.

Christ is the full and final fulfillment of them all. If you're looking for a close and personal relationship with God, call on Christ, and He will lead you past the altar, through the door, and even through the veil to the very throne of God. And it is all available through simple faith.

Closing Verse: *“For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens; ²⁷ who does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the people’s, for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself. ²⁸ For the law appoints as high priests men who have weakness, but the word of the oath, which came after the law, appoints the Son who has been perfected forever.” Hebrews 7:26-28*

Next Week: Leviticus 9:1-24 Cool things are ahead, it is true... (The Glory of the Lord Will Appear to You) (13th Leviticus Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if you have a lifetime of sin heaped up behind you, He can wash it away and purify you completely and wholly. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Consecration of the Aaronic Priesthood

And he brought the bull for the sin offering
Then Aaron and his sons laid their hands
On the head of the bull for the sin offering
And Moses killed it, according to the Lord’s plans

Then he took the blood

And put some on the horns of the altar all around with his finger
And purified the altar
In his duties, he did not linger

And he poured the blood at the base of the altar, as the Lord did submit
And consecrated it, to make atonement for it

Then he took all the fat that was on the entrails
The fatty lobe attached to the liver too
And the two kidneys with their fat
And Moses burned them on the altar, as instructed to do

But the bull, its hide, its flesh, and its offal
He burned outside the camp with fire
As the Lord had commanded Moses
There outside was the burning pyre

And he brought the bull for the sin offering
Then Aaron and his sons laid their hands
On the head of the bull for the sin offering
And Moses killed it, according to the Lord's plans

Then he took the blood
And put some on the horns
-----Of the altar all around with his finger
And purified the altar
Again, not letting his duties linger

And he poured the blood at the base of the altar
And consecrated it, to make atonement for it
In this duty, he did not falter

Then he took all the fat that was on the entrails
The fatty lobe attached to the liver as well
And the two kidneys with their fat
And Moses burned them on the altar, as the Lord to him did tell

But the bull, its hide, its flesh, and its offal
He burned with fire outside the camp

As the Lord had commanded Moses
Surely in his duties, he got the approval stamp

Then he brought the ram as the burnt offering
And Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head
Of the ram, and Moses killed it
Then he sprinkled the blood all around on the altar as the Lord said

And he cut the ram into pieces
And Moses burned the head, the pieces, and the fat too
Then he washed the entrails and the legs in water
And Moses burned the whole ram on the altar, as instructed to do

It was a burnt sacrifice for a sweet aroma
An offering made by fire to the Lord
As the Lord had commanded Moses
Yes, according to His word

And he brought the second ram, the ram of consecration
Then Aaron and his sons laid their hands
On the head of the ram, and Moses killed it
According to the Lord's preset plans

Also he took some of its blood
And put it on the tip of Aaron's right ear, there
On the thumb of his right hand
And on the big toe of his right foot

Then he brought Aaron's sons
And Moses put some of the blood, as was meet
On the tips of their right ears, on the thumbs of their right hands
And on the big toes of their right feet

And Moses sprinkled the blood all around on the altar
In this task he was careful and did not falter

Then he took the fat and the fat tail
All the fat that was on the entrails, so he did do
The fatty lobe attached to the liver

The two kidneys and their fat, and the right thigh too

And from the basket of unleavened bread
That was before the Lord he took one unleavened cake
A cake of bread anointed with oil, and one wafer
And put them on the fat and on the right thigh; a pile he did make

And he put all these in Aaron's hands
And in his sons' hands as well
And waved them as a wave offering before the Lord
As the Lord to him did tell

Then Moses took them from their hands
And burned them on the altar, on the burnt offering
-----as per His word
They were consecration offerings for a sweet aroma
That was an offering made by fire to the Lord

And Moses took the breast and waved it
As a wave offering before the Lord that day
It was Moses' part of the ram of consecration
As the Lord had commanded Moses, as the Lord did say

Then Moses took some of the anointing oil
And some of the blood which was on the altar too
And sprinkled it on Aaron, on his garments, on his sons
And on the garments of his sons with him, so he did do

And he consecrated Aaron, his garments, his sons as well
And the garments of his sons with him, as the Lord to him did tell

And Moses said to Aaron and his sons
"Boil the flesh at the tabernacle of meeting's door
And eat it there with the bread
That is in the basket of consecration offerings, for sure

As I commanded, saying; yes as I did submit
'Aaron and his sons shall eat it

What remains of the flesh and of the bread
You shall burn with fire, just as the Lord has said

And you shall not go outside the door
Of the tabernacle of meeting for seven days
Until the days of your consecration are ended
For seven days he shall consecrate you, marvelous are His ways

As he has done this day
So the Lord has commanded to do
And what is the reason for this rite?
To make atonement for you

Therefore you shall stay at the door of the tabernacle of meeting
Day and night for seven days, by and by
And keep the charge of the Lord
For so I have been commanded, so that you may not die

So Aaron and his sons did all the things, we understand
That the Lord had commanded by Moses' hand

How amazing! Every detail gives us precious insights to delight
Things that provide our souls with surety
That through Christ's work, all things have been made right
And that our future is secure, a Divine guarantee

Thank You, O God for these marvelous hints of Jesus
Written so long ago, and yet as new as the day before our eyes
They are an anchor for the expectant souls of each of us
As we wait upon His return; He our splendid Prize

And because of Him we shall for all eternity give You our praise
Yes, we shall hail You O God because of Jesus for eternal days

Hallelujah and Amen...

LEVITICUS 9:1-24 (THE GLORY OF THE LORD WILL APPEAR TO YOU)

The Bible says that God has made everything beautiful in its time. I try to remember that whenever I see something we think of as ugly. If we see a spider, we might freak out a bit, knowing what it might do. If it's poisonous, it could bite and either make us really sick or even kill us. If it's not poisonous, it could still bring us pretty quickly out of a dead sleep. And so mostly we don't think of spiders as beautiful.

And yet, if we look really closely at them, we might see colors which are magnificent. We might see capabilities that simply astonish us. We might find an intelligence that we could only describe as beautiful. God made them, and so they bear their own beauty which alone He determined.

The same is true with anything God has created. It bears a special mark of beauty that we can perceive if we just look. A person with a physical deformity might be the most pleasant soul around. We would find them beautiful despite their outward appearance.

A dead tree might not seem particularly beautiful at first sight, but the more you look at it, you will find things that mark it out as a wonderful sight to the eyes. In one way or another, if we just look, carefully we're bound to see beauty in everything we look at that God has placed in our path.

I try my best to think this way, and it often helps me change my attitude about things. But I never leave it there. When I see beauty in something, I try to transfer my gratitude back to the Lord. As He is the Source of all things, then anything which I appreciate as having beauty had to come from Him in the first place.

Text Verse: *"Sacrifice and offering You did not desire,
But a body You have prepared for Me.*

*⁶In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin
You had no pleasure.*

*⁷Then I said, 'Behold, I have come—
In the volume of the book it is written of Me—
To do Your will, O God.'" Hebrews 10:5-7*

If you were in Israel and saw the parts of an animal laying on an altar, you might question where the beauty was in that. It's just a pile of a once-living animal that is going up in smoke. But if you considered what that sacrifice meant, then you might say,

“Isn’t that beautiful? God has allowed my sins to be taken away in this offering.” Or you might say, “The Lord has allowed me to fellowship with Him through that offering.”`

For the faithful believer in the Lord’s word, the sacrifices and offerings would be a truly beautiful thing. And for us, if we think about what they pointed to, we can see the beauty in them as well. Instead of thinking about the brutality of animal offerings, we can see the mercy of God bestowed upon undeserving people.

He created both, and He determined which was more important, and which was of less value. And that then leads us to the cross of Christ. What is the most horrifying thing that could ever have happened, is also the most beautiful thing that could ever have occurred. God saw that the death of Christ Jesus was of less value than the redemption of man. That may seem impossible, but His death had to happen for man to be redeemed.

And because He in fact went to the cross, then we know that He weighed out the cost, set the plan in motion, and carried through with the execution of it. Today, we will see the glory of the Lord as it was revealed to the Israelites at the initiation of the Aaronic priesthood. But that glory is insignificant in comparison to the glory which God revealed when He stepped out of His eternal realm and came to dwell among us. The things He did, the life He lived, and the cross He died upon demonstrate a glory which has sustained His church with a passion that has lasted for 2000 years. And it is only leading to a far greater glory in the time yet ahead.

Every chapter of the Bible is another stepping stone which is leading us on a marvelous trip back to paradise. If we can just learn what each chapter and verse is showing us along the way, it brings sense to what would otherwise seem irrelevant. Nothing in this beautiful word is irrelevant. Wonderful, beautiful things are to be found in His superior word. And so let’s turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. Sacrifices Before the Lord (verses 1-7)

¹ It came to pass on the eighth day

Seven days of ordination have taken place. This is probably the 8th day of the month of Aviv. In Exodus 40:17 we read –

“And it came to pass in the first month of the second year, on the first *day* of the month, *that* the tabernacle was raised up.”

It is probable that the ordination of the priests began on that day as well. The Passover would be coming on the 14th day of the month, and so this leaves just a few days for Aaron and his sons to perform their duties in that function for the first time. In Scripture, the number eight is always used very consistently. In Hebrew it is *sh'moneh* which comes from a root which means “to make fat” or “to cover with fat.” Thus it signifies being super-abundant. As seven is spiritual perfection, then in eight there is that which begins a new series, and so it is the number of new beginnings.

The 8th day is set aside for the perfecting and purifying of both man and beast. When a child is circumcised, it is on the 8th day. When a leper is cleansed from his affliction, he is considered purified on the 8th day. The same is true with other such things. The 8th day is that of perfecting and purifying. And so, like each of these examples, Aaron and his sons have been purified, and are now considered perfected for the object of performing their priestly duties. Here on the 8th day of the process, and probably the 8th day of the month as well, they enter into their new beginnings.

¹ (con't) **that Moses called Aaron and his sons and the elders of Israel.**

The elders are called as representatives of all of the people below them. They are probably the same people who were called in verse 8:3 to observe the ordination process as representatives of all the congregation.

² **And he said to Aaron, “Take for yourself a young bull as a sin offering and a ram as a burnt offering, without blemish, and offer *them* before the Lord.**

Of those just mentioned in verse 1, Aaron is addressed first. He is to bring an *egel ben baqar*, or a “calf, son of the herd,” as a sin-offering, and an *ayil*, or ram, as a burnt-offering. The fact that he was required to make a sin offering, even after having been ordained, shows us the imperfection of the Aaronic priesthood. One whose ministry is imperfect can never make others perfect.

The *egel*, or calf is the same as the adjective *agol* which means circular, or round. The reason is that a calf, especially one nearly grown, will frisk around, dancing and twirling. The mental imagery of this is beautifully seen in Malachi 4:2 –

“But for you who fear my name, the Sun of Righteousness will rise with healing in his wings. And you will go free, leaping with joy like calves let out to pasture.” NLT

The *ayil*, or ram, as has been seen, is an animal which denotes strength. The reason for sacrificing a calf, rather than a bull which was used during their ordination, is debated. The only other time the calf has been seen in the Bible is in the instance of the golden calf, of which Aaron was a participant.

Further, the only other time it will be mentioned in the five books of Moses is in Deuteronomy 9, where twice it will refer once again to the instance of the golden calf. It will be the animal which the witch of En Dor prepares as Saul’s last meal, and it will describe the golden calves fashioned by Jeroboam, king of Israel in defiance of the Lord.

Out of 35 uses in the Bible, it is seen in a positive sense only a few times, such as in Isaiah and Malachi, each of which speaks of youthful exuberance. For this reason, and because Moses is still giving the instructions for the rites, I would suggest that this *egel ben baqar*, or “calf, son of the herd,” is being used to show the youthful, and thus immature nature of Aaron’s priesthood.

Thus, he is reflective of Israel as a whole who remained in a state of youthful disobedience until Christ would come and initiate the New Covenant in His blood. Such is the nature of the ordination of Israel’s high priest under the Law of Moses, and on behalf of the people. Only in Christ would they grow into mature adulthood.

The ram as a burnt-offering reflects the total commitment of Aaron, his natural strength, being offered to God as a living sacrifice. In picture, it looks to Christ who offered all of His natural strength to His Father in His more perfect ministry.

³ And to the children of Israel you shall speak, saying,

It is generally accepted that this means Aaron. After his sacrifices and offerings, he is now the official high priest, and therefore it is he who would, from this point on, speak to the people concerning priestly matters.

^{3 (con't)} Take a kid of the goats as a sin offering,

This is the same offering as was instructed for a ruler of the people in 4:23. It is a *sa'iyir izzim*, or hairy goat. In Scripture, hair denotes awareness. But more specifically, it

denotes an awareness of sin. Thus, the hairy goat is used as a symbol of consciousness of sin.

This goat then pictures Christ, who came to die for the awareness of sin in fallen man. He is the sin-offering for all who acknowledge their sin, because they are conscious of it. In this case, it is the elders of the people who are accountable to God for themselves and those under them.

^{3 (con't)} **and a calf and a lamb, both of the first year, without blemish, as a burnt offering,**

Two animals are required for the burnt-offering. The first is an *egel*, the same as Aaron's sin-offering. The other is a *kebes* or lamb. The *egel*, or calf, would carry the same meaning as before. It is an indication of the youthful, and thus immature, nature of the priesthood. It reflects Israel who remained in a state of youthful disobedience until the New Covenant. The *kebes*, or lamb, comes from a root meaning "to dominate." And so it symbolizes Christ's domination over sin, thus He is acceptable as an offering to God.

⁴ **also a bull and a ram as peace offerings, to sacrifice before the Lord, and a grain offering mixed with oil;**

These as peace offerings were already explained in Chapter 3. The bull, the ram, and an accompanying grain offering were to be presented. The peace offering signifies the approval of the other offerings, and the symbolic dining together of the Lord with them.

^{4 (con't)} **for today the Lord will appear to you."**

This is actually in the past tense, "...for today the Lord has appeared unto you." The words are given as an accomplished fact, even though it has not yet happened. The Lord will manifest himself in a special way to signify his approval of the inauguration of the Aaronic priesthood. It is the same past tense as is seen in Psalm 102:16 –

"For the LORD has built up Zion;
He has appeared in His glory."

The words are actually an anticipatory look to Christ who rose on the day after seventh (Sabbath) day, or on the 8th day. It was then that He appeared to His people, signifying the New beginning that had taken place; God having approved of His more perfect priestly ordination.

⁵ So they brought what Moses commanded before the tabernacle of meeting. And all the congregation drew near and stood before the Lord.

This duty is now carried out by Aaron. He is acting as the priest, just as Moses had instructed. The term “all the congregation” means the elders who stand as representatives of the congregation. Others who were not elders may have come in, but the term specifically speaks of the elders noted in verse 1.

⁶ Then Moses said, “This *is* the thing which the Lord commanded you to do, and the glory of the Lord will appear to you.”

Moses now speaks of things which will come to pass. Thus when they do occur, it will be proof of the Lord’s approval. In performing his required sacrifices and offerings, he would then be considered as the fully-installed high priest. In turn, he would then be acceptable to perform the priestly functions for the congregation who had brought their offerings. In turn, the Lord would appear to the people to confirm the entire process.

⁷ And Moses said to Aaron, “Go to the altar, offer your sin offering and your burnt offering, and make atonement for yourself and for the people. Offer the offering of the people, and make atonement for them, as the Lord commanded.”

As the consecrated priest, Aaron is still required to offer for his sin to make atonement for himself. If no other verse in Scripture (and there are many of them) shows us the fallible nature of the Aaronic priesthood, this one shouts it out to us. The high priest of Israel, who has gone through an elaborate ordination process, must still sacrifice for his own sins. Thus, despite being the mediator between the people and God, he stands on the same level as the people in regard to his manhood. Only after his sins are atoned for can he then offer the offering of the people for their atonement.

*The glory of the Lord will appear to you
With your own eyes you shall see this
As He has spoken, so He shall do
The glory you see will fill you with heavenly bliss*

*At times the Lord’s glory comes in an awesome display
At times it is revealed in something we may actually miss
But if we pay attention day unto day
The glory we see will fill us with heavenly bliss*

*In the creation He has shown His glory to us
And in His word we find glory that was once concealed
And, O what glory when we behold Jesus
In His face is God's glory fully revealed*

*In His face is glory that none can miss
It is glory that shall fill us eternally with heavenly bliss*

II. Aaron's Offerings (verses 8-14)

⁸ Aaron therefore went to the altar and killed the calf of the sin offering, which was for himself.

Aaron himself is the one to bring the knife to the animal of sacrifice. In this, we see that the offering is offered and the mediator is the one to slay it. It looks forward to Christ who willingly gave Himself as our sin-offering. As He said, "No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself."

⁹ Then the sons of Aaron brought the blood to him.

The atonement here is for Aaron, but it is also for his sons who have collected the blood of the animal. What seems curious is that it speaks of sons, rather than a son. One would think one son would hold the bowl and collect the blood, but it says the sons brought the blood to him. As Aaron pictures Christ, so the sons of Aaron picture the redeemed who are the sons of God through faith (Gal. 3:26). Each must, by faith, bring the blood of the Sacrifice.

^{9 (con't)} And he dipped his finger in the blood, put *it* on the horns of the altar, and poured the blood at the base of the altar.

Aaron dips his finger in the blood and puts it on the horns of the brazen altar. In Chapter 4, when a high priest sinned, he was required to bring the blood into Holy Place and sprinkle it before the veil. He was then to put it on the horns of the altar of incense.

This verse then shows us two things. First, this is for Aaron's sin-nature rather than a specific sin. And secondly, he does not yet have access into the Holy Place. That is now obtained through this general sin-offering. It is the altar which allows access through the door of the tent of meeting. From here on, he will have this access.

The blood being placed upon the four horns of the altar typifies Christ's blood which has the power to cleanse and forgive sin, even to the four corners of the earth. The pouring out of the blood is typical of Christ who shed all His blood, even to death.

¹⁰ But the fat, the kidneys, and the fatty lobe from the liver of the sin offering he burned on the altar, as the Lord had commanded Moses.

The words "as the Lord had commanded Moses" are in accordance with the instructions for the sin offering of verse 4:10. These parts, as we have seen, represent the abundance of the very deepest parts of Christ the Man. The fat is the abundance and health of life. The kidneys signify the mind and reasoning. And the fat lobe above the liver represents the emotions and feelings of the person. These then were to be offered to the Lord because they symbolized His most intimate aspects. They are the very substance of who He is, and so they are returned as a fragrant offering to God by fire.

A point of clarity: It says that he burned these things on the altar. It will say this again several times. It means that he placed them on the altar in anticipation of their being burnt. The consequence of the action is placed before the antecedent. This is not unknown in Scripture. This can be further deduced from the next words...

¹¹ The flesh and the hide he burned with fire outside the camp.

This is, again, in accord with the disposal of an animal used as a sin offering for the high priest. It would be unacceptable for the animal to be eaten. In his cleansing, the body of the animal bore the sin of the mediator. Thus, it needed to be purged from the camp entirely. It says here that he burned these things with fire outside the camp. This would logically be done after the ordination ceremony. Though all things are accomplished, they are not necessarily accomplished in the order stated.

¹² And he killed the burnt offering; and Aaron's sons presented to him the blood, which he sprinkled all around on the altar.

The next animal to be slain is the burnt offering. Once sin is atoned for, then one can give himself up wholly to God. This is the order in the sacrifices, and it is the order in salvation and sanctification.

¹³ Then they presented the burnt offering to him, with its pieces and head, and he burned *them* on the altar.

The word translated as “presented” in verses 12 and 13 is not the same as has been used in past passages. It should say they handed the blood and the burnt offering to him. They are right there with him, and the animal has already been brought forward and killed. They merely process the animal and hand it to Aaron.

¹⁴ And he washed the entrails and the legs, and burned *them* with the burnt offering on the altar.

As we have seen, and without a lot of elaborate detail, this washing of the entrails is symbolic of the inward purity of Christ. The washing of the legs is symbolic of His perfect life, having picked up no worldly defilement. This is to be emblematic of this same conduct in the lives of Aaron and his sons.

*An offering for sin; atonement for what we have done wrong
It covers over those things which have offended our Lord
Though sin besets us and its power is strong
With the sin offering, we are again in one accord*

*Through the blood of our Savior we can fellowship again
It washes away all that we have done wrong
And it is available to all of the children of men
Because of Christ Jesus we have a new and heavenly song*

*Thank You, O God, for what You have done for us
When we were lost in sin, and objects of wrath just the same
You sent Your Son, Our Lord Jesus
To atone for our sin, and so we praise Your holy name*

III. The People’s Offerings (verses 15-24)

¹⁵ Then he brought the people’s offering, and took the goat, which was the sin offering for the people, and killed it and offered it for sin, like the first one.

As he had made an offering for his own sin, he was now acceptable to act as mediator for the people. Therefore, their sin offering can now follow his. The order is carefully detailed to show us how the redemptive process works. One must have an acceptable mediator before they can then be made acceptable.

The remains of this particular goat were to be eaten by Aaron and his sons because they dealt with the sin of the congregation, not their own, and because the animal's blood was never carried within the Holy Place. However, what becomes of this animal will not be according to that mandate. Rather, it will be a temporary source of consternation for Moses. This will be seen in Chapter 10.

¹⁶ And he brought the burnt offering and offered it according to the prescribed manner.

After the sin offering of the people was made, only then could their burnt-offering be accepted. This follows the same pattern as that of Aaron and his sons, and indeed all such offerings.

¹⁷ Then he brought the grain offering, took a handful of it, and burned *it* on the altar, besides the burnt sacrifice of the morning.

There are two lambs which were to be offered on the altar every day. This is the burnt sacrifice of the morning which was mandated by the Lord in Exodus 29:39. This verse seems to show that the grain offering which Aaron has in his hand is now burnt along with that regular morning offering. This is not correct.

The daily offerings would have been offered by Moses until the time of Aaron's ordination. Moses would have already offered the morning offering. Along with that offering, a grain offering was to be presented each day. Moses would have already offered it. But, it is possible that the morning offering was also waiting to be burnt with the Lord's initial fire.

Aaron is now taking a handful of the grain mentioned in verse 4 and placing it on the altar with the other offerings required in this chapter. This grain offering is in addition to the one already given in the morning offering, not a part of it.

¹⁸ He also killed the bull and the ram *as* sacrifices of peace offerings, which *were* for the people. And Aaron's sons presented to him the blood, which he sprinkled all around on the altar,

The procedures for this burnt-offering are found in verse 3:1. As per the directions noted there, Aaron now carefully follows through with them.

¹⁹ and the fat from the bull and the ram—the fatty tail, what covers *the entrails* and the kidneys, and the fatty lobe *attached to the liver*;

An entirely new word is introduced here, *mekasseh*. It is seen just four times in Scripture, and it means a “covering.” This is the only time it is used to indicate the fat which covers the kidneys. However, it is to be taken as synonymous with the fat parts which are seen in other passages already looked at. These choice parts of fat, all picturing Christ as we have seen numerous times, are removed from the animal.

²⁰ and they put the fat on the breasts. Then he burned the fat on the altar;

The breasts were the part of the wave offerings which were reserved for the priests. The fat would be placed on them, they would be waved, and then they would be burned on the altar.

²¹ but the breasts and the right thigh Aaron waved as a wave offering before the Lord, as Moses had commanded.

Though the fat is said to already be burned, it isn’t actually burned until after the wave offering is made. Further, as I said some time ago, all of the offerings will be burned at the same time, when the Lord’s fire ignites them.

²² Then Aaron lifted his hand toward the people, blessed them,

Aaron has now completed the functions necessary to show that he is fully installed as high priest. He has had his sins atoned for, and he has mediated on behalf of the people as well. The offerings are laid out, and are about to be burned to the Lord. In honor of this moment where he has demonstrated his authority to mediate, he now confirms it by blessing the people.

The Bible notes that the lesser is blessed by the greater. It is now his honor to serve in this special office, and so he lifts his hands and blesses the people. The blessing would be something similar to the high priestly blessing which is given in Numbers 6, but it is fantasy to assume that he would have given that exact blessing before it was ever instructed to be given. One tradition says that the words of Psalm 90:17 closely reflect what Aaron said –

“And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us,
And establish the work of our hands for us;
Yes, establish the work of our hands.”

This is not unlikely, because this is the oldest Psalm in the Bible, and the only one penned by Moses.

When a blessing is given, the one blessing would place their hands on the head of the one being blessed. However, when blessing a congregation, the symbolism is maintained by raising the hands above the heads of the people and pronouncing the blessing. This act of Aaron which acknowledges his right to bless the people as their mediator is a mere shadow of the blessing which was given by Christ to His people when it was revealed to them that He is the true Mediator of God's people –

“And He led them out as far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them. ⁵¹ Now it came to pass, while He blessed them, that He was parted from them and carried up into heaven.” Luke 24:50

²² (con't) **and came down from offering the sin offering, the burnt offering, and peace offerings.**

The words “came down” are mis-interpreted by most scholars. They say that the altar was elevated above ground level. This is incorrect. The law of the earthen altar which is found after the giving of the Ten Commandments mandates that a ramp, and not steps, be used to go up to it. But that has nothing to do with the brazen altar.

The words “came down” have one of two possible meanings. It either means that there was a frame upon the altar which the priest would stand on in order to place the offerings on it, which is unlikely. It was only three cubits, or about 4 ½ feet tall. More likely, it means that it is nearer to the tent of meeting than the people would be, and so by leaving the altar and approaching the people, he would be coming down not in elevation, but in place of importance.

²³ **And Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle of meeting,**

There is no explanation concerning these words. All we can do is speculate as to what occurred in the tent. Having said that, it can be inferred that the transfer of the priestly duties is completed in this act. Aaron has never gone in as priest, Moses will never again go in as priest.

Moses probably repeated the instructions which have been given while visually pointing out everything. They probably also presented themselves to the Lord at the altar of incense before the veil and prayed while there. As I said, it is all speculation, but their

going in, if nothing else, has the purpose of showing that Aaron is accepted as the high priest. It is an acceptance which will be validated moments after they come out.

23 (con't) and came out and blessed the people.

This is probably a blessing spoken in unison, possibly repeating what Aaron has already spoken. Again, what is unstated can only be speculated upon. However, their blessing upon the people now ushers in a new sight for the people to behold...

23 (con't) Then the glory of the Lord appeared to all the people,

As with the previous two clauses, we can only speculate what this means. Does this glory come from the pillar of cloud, from inside the tent of meeting, or is it a separate manifestation of Him? It doesn't say, but it was there, and the Bible records that the people personally saw it.

24 and fire came out from before the Lord and consumed the burnt offering and the fat on the altar.

The words are careful to note that the fire came out from the Lord. It cannot be interpreted that Moses and Aaron simply went into the presence of the Lord and brought fire out to ignite the sacrifice. Rather, the fire came from the Lord, consuming the offerings. It is a note of divine approval which is seen elsewhere in Scripture.

And the offering didn't just burn. Rather the word *akal*, which means to consume, should be taken in its most literal sense. The offering was completely consumed by the fire. There are five other explicit times when something similar occurred during the acceptance of an offering, and one which may be inferred. The first, which must be inferred would be the acceptance of Abel's offering over that of Cain.

The next comes here in Leviticus 9. Then in the case of Gideon's offering in Judges 6. This is followed by the offering of Manoah and his wife in Judges 13. Then comes the offering given by David when dedicating the threshing floor of Onan in 1 Chronicles 21. Then comes the dedication of Solomon's temple in 2 Chronicles 7, and finally in the case of Elijah's offering in 1 Kings 18.

At various times in redemptive history, the Lord would provide a visible confirmation of His intents, purposes, and divine approval by sending out fire in order to accept an offering made to Him. The people of Israel at Moses' time were blessed to have such a

visible demonstration of His approval, and yet they quickly forgot what they saw and treated His glory with a special irreverence which has marked their character for the past 3500 years.

Because of this, they have suffered greatly. But the day is ahead when they will come to see and know the Lord in a much deeper way than they ever have before. That will be the day when they call out to Jesus, “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.”

²⁴ (fin) **When all the people saw *it*, they shouted and fell on their faces.**

At least for the moment, the people realized what they had seen, and accepted it for what it truly was... a divine miracle. This is now the very first time that the word *ranan* is used in the Bible. It means more than just shout, but “to shout for joy.” It will be used mostly in the Psalms and Isaiah concerning shouting to the Lord with joy or shouting for joy because of the works of the Lord.

Here in these verses today, we have seen the installation of a man born in sin, and who also died in sin. And each of those who followed after him inherited sin from him as well. And even more, the man who installed them, Moses, was a fallible, sin-filled man. Despite his high and exalted status within the nation, he was not exempt from death because he was imperfect.

The question we can ask is, “How can perfection come out of imperfection?” There is an answer to this question, but it is not found in the Law of Moses, or in the priesthood which administered that law. Nothing perfect ever resulted from it. Instead, it simply highlighted the imperfection of those under it.

However, perfection can come out of imperfection if there is something perfect to initiate the process. And this is what God did in Christ Jesus. He, being perfect in all ways, sent His perfect Son to accomplish the task. Every detail we have seen in today’s verses, and even in all of what we have seen so far in Leviticus, exactly points us to Him. God is directing us to think on the purpose of the law, the giving of His Son, and the difference between the two. Let us not fall short by trusting in a law which can never perfect, and thus never save. Instead, let us put our hope in Christ Jesus alone.

Closing Verse: *“The glory of the Lord shall be revealed,
And all flesh shall see it together;
For the mouth of the Lord has spoken.” Psalm 40:5*

Next Week: Leviticus 10:1-7 *The Law's instructions should not be ignored...* (Profane Fire Before the Lord) (14th Leviticus Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if you have a lifetime of sin heaped up behind you, He can wash it away and purify you completely and wholly. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

We Beheld His Glory

It came to pass on the eighth day
That Moses called Aaron and his sons also
And the elders of Israel
And he said to Aaron these words, as we know

Take for yourself a young bull as a sin offering
And a ram as a burnt offering, according to this word
Without blemish shall be this proffering
And offer them before the Lord

And to the children of Israel you shall speak, saying
'Take a kid of the goats as a sin offering, so do
And a calf and a lamb, both of the first year
Without blemish, as a burnt offering, as I instruct you

Also a bull and a ram as peace offerings
To sacrifice before the Lord, as to you I now say
And a grain offering mixed with oil
For the Lord will appear to you today

So they brought what Moses commanded
Before the tabernacle of meeting
And all the congregation drew near
And stood before the Lord, awaiting His greeting

Then Moses said, "This is the thing
Which the Lord commanded you to do
And the glory of the Lord
Will appear to you

And Moses said to Aaron
"Go to the altar, offer your sin offering and your burnt offering
And make atonement for yourself and for the people
So shall you do with this proffering

Offer the offering of the people
And make for them atonement
As the Lord commanded
This is your solemn assignment

Aaron therefore went to the altar
And killed the calf of the sin offering which was for himself
In this duty he did not falter

Then the sons of Aaron brought the blood to him
And he dipped his finger in the blood
Put it on the horns of the altar
And poured the blood at the base of the altar; a crimson flood
But the fat, the kidneys, and the fatty lobe from the liver
Of the sin offering he burned on the altar, so was the pyre
As the Lord had commanded Moses
The flesh and the hide he burned outside the camp with fire

And he killed the burnt offering
And Aaron's sons presented to him the blood
Which he sprinkled all around on the altar
A second crimson flood

Then they presented the burnt offering to him
With its pieces and head, and he burned them on the altar too
And he washed the entrails and the legs
And burned them with the burnt offering on the altar
----- as instructed to do

Then he brought the people's offering
And took the goat, as was said to be done
Which was the sin offering for the people
And killed it and offered it for sin, like the first one

And he brought the burnt offering, as described
And offered it according to the manner prescribed

Then he brought the grain offering
Took a handful of it, and burned it on the altar
Besides the burnt sacrifice of the morning
In his duties, he did not fail or falter

He also killed the bull and the ram
As sacrifices of peace offerings, which for the people were
And Aaron's sons presented to him the blood
Which he sprinkled all around on the altar

And the fat from the bull and the ram
The fatty tail, what covers the entrails and the kidneys too
And the fatty lobe attached to the liver
And they put the fat on the breasts as instructed to do
Then he burned the fat on the altar
But the breasts and the right thigh
Aaron waved as a wave offering before the Lord
As Moses had commanded, by and by

Then Aaron lifted his hand toward the people
Blessed them, and down he came
From offering the sin offering, the burnt offering
And peace offerings, according to each name

And Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle of meeting
And came out and blessed the people, a solemn word
Then the glory of the Lord appeared to all the people
And fire came out from before the Lord

And consumed the burnt offering
And the fat on the altar as well
When all the people saw it
They shouted and on their faces they fell

Lord God, Israel beheld Your glory
And they saw the fire come forth from You

But that is just a taste of the magnificent story
Which speaks of Your glory, through and through

And an even greater glory was seen by the blessed eyes
Of those who beheld the coming of Christ Jesus
And someday we too shall behold Him
When in the twinkling of an eye, He comes for us

And for the ages of ages we shall see
Your glory shining out through Him unto us
Our joy will be full for all eternity
As we behold our magnificent Lord, radiant and glorious

Hallelujah and Amen...

LEVITICUS 10:1-7

(PROFANE FIRE BEFORE THE LORD)

We use a fist bump to show a special approval of someone we know and meet up with. It is more friendly than a handshake, and it is definitely not something that we would consider offering to someone of higher stature than we are unless they offered one first.

In other words, when meeting the president, we would be foolish to put out our fist and say, "Hey Don, put it there buddy." He very well may put it there, but he also may think, "What an arrogant jerk." Rather, etiquette would have us wait for him to make the first offer, and then we would respond to that. This is an unwritten code, and yet it is a sensible thing to do because this is what culture expects.

In the case of God, we too often act as if we have a right to extend our hand in a fist bump and expect that He will respond accordingly. Preachers treat him this way, and the stupidity of it has flowed down to the youngest child in the pews.

Christian radio will often speak of the personal nature of our relationship with God because of Christ, but they will, at times, bring it down to that close and personal fist bump level. We are the initiators of it, and He will certainly respond accordingly.

In many ways, the sense of the true and absolute holiness of God is all but gone except in a very few churches in regard to the whole. But God is God. Despite having come in the form of man, and having lived among us, we must remember that He is holy. It is His very nature.

Reading the law is a good thing because it reminds us of that. Today's passage is a perfect example for us to study and consider. Yes, we are under a far superior covenant, with a much closer and more personal Mediator, but we are still the created, and He is the Creator. Let us remember this as we live in His presence.

Text Verse: *"Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. ²⁹ For our God is a consuming fire."* Hebrews 12:28, 29

Hebrews is a part of which testament? Anyone? Really? The New? But it says that we are to serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear. What about the fist bumping? Does that qualify? Let us not treat our position in Christ as something that allows us to

be flippant in our attitude toward the Lord. And let us not deviate from the sound and fixed words of instruction we have been given.

Two of Aaron's sons did exactly this, and it cost them their lives. We have an anointing that rests upon us which asks us to be holy, not to act as if we are above the very word that led us to the position we now possess. May this precious word instruct us, fill us and guide us all our days as we live in His glorious presence, performing our duties to Him and for His honor. The way to do this is to be found in His superior word. And so let's turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. Fire From the Lord (verses 1 & 2)

In the Bible, and especially during the time of the giving of the law, there are things which are prescribed, and then there is often a noted incident where a violation of that thing which is prescribed occurs. This is then followed with a most severe punishment for the violation. For example, in Leviticus, there is a violation of blaspheming the name of the Lord which is followed with the punishment of being stoned to death. The same is true in Numbers with a violation of the Sabbath. It is certain, as the Bible records, that other such violations were not handled in the same manner. But the examples are given to show what is the just due for violating such a law. In not executing judgment on the first of such a violation, it would set a precedent that such an evil act or tendency was actually acceptable and that nothing would ever be done about such infractions.

In the coming verses, we will see such an instance. Laws were given, standards were expected, and the holiness of God was to be considered. If the Lord did not take the action that He took, it would have set the precedent that nothing would be done about all future violations that matched what occurred here. In fact, it would demonstrate an unjust and fickle nature of God to let the first instance be overlooked, and then to arbitrarily choose to punish a later violation of the same nature.

However, no such fickleness would be seen if a later violation was forgiven. Instead, it would demonstrate the merciful nature of God whose holiness was again violated, but who was willing to forgive the transgression nonetheless. Understanding this, each one of us has seen the latter aspect of God.

We have been the recipients of His mercy when we were once objects of His wrath. Thank God that He did not hold us to the same standard as those who at first offended

Him. Keep these things in mind as you ponder what happens in this account, and what really should happen to all people who are separated from the infinite holiness of God.

¹ Then Nadab and Abihu,

These two sons of Aaron were introduced into the Bible in Exodus 6:23 in the genealogical listing of the family of Moses and Aaron. They were then invited up Mount Sinai with Moses, Aaron, and seventy of Israel's elders. There they had a meal in the presence of God. They were then called by name to minister as priests before the Lord, along with their father and two brothers in Exodus 28.

Nadav means something like Volunteer, or Willing (in the sense of willing to give). It comes from a primitive root which gives the sense of volunteering or offering something spontaneously. Avihu means something like "Whose Father (is) He," when referring to God. Understanding that the term "father" in the Bible signifies one who is in authority, and thus to whom respect and honor is due. It is something implied in the use of the term. Thus one under the father's authority is under obligation to perform their duty when requested.

^{1 (con't)} the sons of Aaron,

Now they are introduced alone, apart from their father for the first time. Unfortunately, being unattended by their father, they assumed they could be true men of Israel on their own accord and stand before the Lord in whatever manner of their choosing. The Bible will later note that neither has children, and so they are still certainly young. Their youthful indiscretion will be a most costly lesson for the priestly line of Israel, and for Aaron in particular.

^{1 (con't)} each took his censer and put fire in it, put incense on it, and offered profane fire before the Lord,

The sins to be found in these recorded words are several. First, each took *his* censer. This implies that that these were censers not fashioned for use in the sanctuary, and which had not been part of the consecration process. The word for censer in Hebrew is *makhtah*. It comes from the word *khathath* which means terror, ruin, or destruction. It is a fitting concept in regards to what occurs.

This is the first time that this word has been translated as "censer," and yet it is certainly correct in its use. Their using it in this manner shows that not everything that was to be

done in the sanctuary was specifically recorded. Rather, there were rites and implements which had purpose which are not specifically a part of the written code, or which will later be included as a part of the written code. Such is the case with this type of censer.

Secondly, they came together to offer incense. This was a duty which was only to be conducted by one attending priest at a time.

Thirdly, incense offered in a censer was only allowed by the high priest. According to the law, it is never noted as an offering made by anyone but him. The incense offered by the other priests was burnt in the golden altar in the holy place, or along with offerings on the brazen altar, but never in censers.

Forth, it says that they offered profane (meaning strange) fire. According to verse 16:12, the high priest was to take the fire for the incense from the brazen altar, which had been sanctified by the Lord's fire. It is the same fire which had come out and burnt the ordination offering on it. This is the fire that was to never be extinguished from that first time it was lit. It is a celestial fire, having been sanctified by Yehovah himself.

Instead of using this fire, sanctified by the Lord, they lit their own fire to ignite the incense. The word used to describe the fire is *zarah* which means "another." It can be used when speaking of another god, an adulteress who goes after another, etc. They failed to use what was holy and fitting for their offering and instead used that which was another; thus it was profane.

Fifth, it says that they offered this profane fire *liphne Yehovah*, or "in the face of the Lord." This could be disregarded as a mere idiom that they did it in any given spot, intending it to be as an offering to the Lord, but such is not the case.

Rather, they went directly to the Most Holy Place, and there they offered this incense. We know this is the case because Leviticus 16 begins with these words –

"Now the Lord spoke to Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they offered *profane fire* before the Lord, and died; ² and the Lord said to Moses: "Tell Aaron your brother not to come at *just* any time into the Holy *Place* inside the veil, before the mercy seat which *is* on the ark, lest he die; for I will appear in the cloud above the mercy seat." Leviticus 16:1, 2

It is after the death of these two sons that the Lord warns Aaron that even he is not allowed to come anytime he wished inside the veil. The implication is that this was at least a part of why they were destroyed, along with all the other infractions of their assigned sacred duties.

Verse 4 seems to imply that their bodies were laying before the sanctuary when they were to be carried out, and almost all great and noted scholars cite this being the case. However, the word when translated as “sanctuary” is not correct. We will see the intended meaning when we get there. It does not merely mean that they were to be taken away from the sanctuary’s presence.

In all, these transgressions demonstrated an uncaring attitude towards the highly specific, God-directed, commands that had been previously laid out. They probably felt that because they were ordained as priests, they had a run of the place and that they were even above the laws which ordained them in the first place, something not uncommon in those ordained, even to this day.

Ancient tradition, which is actually included in verse 9 of the Palestinian Chaldee version, says that these two sons had drunk too much of the drink offerings and were therefore drunk at the time they did this. This seems more than possible, because the very first prohibition after this account is finished is that of the priests not drinking alcohol when they performed their duties before the Lord. It is thus one of only two instances in the Bible that the drinking of alcohol is expressly forbidden, the second being during the performance of a Nazirite vow in Numbers 6.

^{1 (con't)} **which He had not commanded them.**

asher lo tsivah otam – “that no commanded them.” This is a figure of speech where the negative form is used for an emphatic affirmative. Thus, there is more to be understood than is expressed in the words. Not only did they do something which was without some sort of command or authority from God, but they did it against his expressed command. Therefore, it should read something like, “...which was expressly forbidden to them.”

There is no such command recorded for us to read, but not everything they were told to do is necessarily recorded. And even more, it is implicitly to be understood from Leviticus 6:12 that the only authorized fire to be used is to come from the fire sanctified by the Lord when He consumed the offering of the ordination. The two sons have done what was expressly forbidden, and in so doing, there is now a consequence for their actions...

² So fire went out from the Lord and devoured them, and they died before the Lord.

va'tese esh miliphne Yehovah va'tokal otam – “And there went out fire from the face of Yehovah and consumed them.” It is the exact same words, word for word, which were used only 2 verses earlier, but instead of “them,” it spoke of the offering on the altar. The timing of this event is made all the more notable because it was the last thing recorded, right at the end of Chapter 9 –

“Then Aaron lifted his hand toward the people, blessed them, and came down from offering the sin offering, the burnt offering, and peace offerings. ²³ And Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle of meeting, and came out and blessed the people. Then the glory of the Lord appeared to all the people, ²⁴ and fire came out from before the Lord and consumed the burnt offering and the fat on the altar. When all the people saw *it*, they shouted and fell on their faces.”

-Leviticus 9:22-24

The words are the same, the Source is the same, the effect is the same, and yet the result is quite the opposite. Life and acceptance was realized in the offering upon the altar; death and disavowal was realized in these two young men.

1 Peter 4, citing an example found in Ezekiel 8, tells us that judgment begins at the house of God. Such is the case here. It is the first such time it is seen in Scripture, right at the very beginning of the time of the Aaronic priesthood, but it will not be the last. This, however, is a truly memorable incident which follows directly on the heels of that other memorable incident.

The Lord had shown His approval of the ordination process, He had accepted the offering made to Him, and He thus indicated that the ministry of Aaron and his sons would be acceptable before him. The fire of the Lord indicated all of this. It was a fire of approval, acceptance, and affirmation. But within an extremely short period of time, be it minutes or hours, His fire became one of disapproval, disavowal, and destruction.

The same sanctifying fire of the Lord which came out to acknowledge and accept the sanctity of the ordination process had now come out to sanctify that which had been profaned after completion of the ordination process. Instead of an offering for sin upon the altar, their lives were taken. Paul speaks of exactly this concept in 2 Corinthians 2:14-16 –

“Now thanks *be* to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place. ¹⁵ For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing. ¹⁶ To the one *we are* the aroma of death *leading* to death, and to the other the aroma of life *leading* to life.”

A New Testament example of what has occurred here is found in Acts 5:1-11 –

But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession. ² And he kept back *part* of the proceeds, his wife also being aware *of it*, and brought a certain part and laid *it* at the apostles’ feet. ³ But Peter said, “Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back *part* of the price of the land for yourself? ⁴ While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God.”

⁵ Then Ananias, hearing these words, fell down and breathed his last. So great fear came upon all those who heard these things. ⁶ And the young men arose and wrapped him up, carried *him* out, and buried *him*.

⁷ Now it was about three hours later when his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. ⁸ And Peter answered her, “Tell me whether you sold the land for so much?”

She said, “Yes, for so much.”

⁹ Then Peter said to her, “How is it that you have agreed together to test the Spirit of the Lord? Look, the feet of those who have buried your husband *are* at the door, and they will carry you out.” ¹⁰ Then immediately she fell down at his feet and breathed her last. And the young men came in and found her dead, and carrying *her* out, buried *her* by her husband. ¹¹ So great fear came upon all the church and upon all who heard these things.

What happened to Nadav and Avihu is certainly what happened to Ananias and Sapphira. In verse 5, we will see that these two will be carried out by their tunics. Because of this, the fire of the Lord spoken of here is not a fire of heat, but one which quenches life nonetheless, just as it was in Acts. The price for the disobedience in both of these instances was high because there is always the necessity of God vindicating His own glorious majesty.

Having said this, there is no reason to make the mental jump from temporal judgment to eternal punishment. Such is the case in both Leviticus and Acts. God knows who are His, and He will choose the discipline or punishment He feels is worthy of the offense, both

in order to rectify the situation, and to demonstrate and reveal His divine attributes as He sees fit. And just because some are punished more severely than others, it does not mean that their position in heaven is necessarily forfeit. Of this verse, Adam Clarke judiciously notes –

“The Lord is a consuming fire! He will either hallow or destroy us: he will purify our souls by the influence of his Spirit, or consume them with the breath of his mouth! The tree which is properly planted in a good soil is nourished by the genial influences of the sun: pluck it up from its roots, and the sun which was the cause of its vegetative life and perfection now dries up its juices, decomposes its parts, and causes it to moulder into dust. Thus must it be done to those who grieve and do despite to the Spirit of God. Reader, hast thou this heavenly fire? Hear then the voice of God, Quench not the Spirit.”
Clarke

*Profane fire is offered to the Lord
Wrath and indignation is the result
First and foremost we should have checked His word
What has happened is only our fault*

*The Lord has shown us what is right and good
What is proper is carefully laid out
His word is not difficult; it can be understood
In careful study, we can be sure – having no doubt*

*But it is so much easier to have our ears tickled
Careful study is hard work, it causes the head pain
But if we allow ourselves to stew and become pickled
We will throw our heavenly rewards right down the drain*

*Help us Lord, to be attentive to Your word
Help us to pay attention to the instruction we have heard*

II. The Holiness of the Lord (verses 3-7)

³ And Moses said to Aaron, “This is what the Lord spoke, saying:

Moses immediately steps in to keep the situation from getting out of hand. He already knows the glory of the Lord in a way no other person could imagine. And so he reminds Aaron of the penalty for displaying anything other than holiness, even now. Moses is

even more concerned about Aaron's life being kept safe than he is about his emotional distress at the loss of his sons.

Therefore, in order to keep him from doing something rash and also dying before the Lord, he reminds him of the Lord's own words. None of what he says next is a direct quote of anything we have read, but the principles have already been seen several times.

In other words, what Moses says is to be taken in a reflective tense, not a passive one. It is how things are with God at all times. He was this way; He is this way. Everything about how the Lord has dealt with Israel, Moses, and Aaron has been a demonstration of what Moses will now speak. He simply speaks of the judgment of God which always exists and which necessitated what came about.

³ (con't) **'By those who come near Me
I must be regarded as holy;**

biqrovay e-qadesh – "In those who come near me, I will be shown as holy." The words here bear directly on what will be said in the next verse. They are words which confirm that the two sons of Aaron died, not in the courtyard, but in the Most Holy Place, there before the Ark itself where they had gone to present their fatal offering of incense before the Lord.

They had made a sad lapse in judgment, assuming that they were immune from judgment, and thus above the law of the Lord, because of their consecrated status. Assuming they were encouraged with a little wine as well, they were emboldened when they should have been humble. They were tipsy when they should have been of sound mind. And they were set on a course of death rather than one of life.

The cherubim woven into the veil warned them of attempting to work their way into paradise, but they brushed the figures aside and proudly produced their scented offering. But it bore the stench of death, not the aroma of life. They drew near to holiness, but their hearts, filled with pride at their newly attained office, were their downfall in that Most Holy presence.

He had shown that in those who come near Him, He would be seen as holy. He had done this for them in the ordination process, but they had failed to live up to what was bestowed upon them, and so He was shown holy in them through the punishment He inflicted.

³ (con't) **And before all the people
I must be glorified.”**

v'al pene kal ha'am ekaved - “and before face (of) all the people, I will glorify myself.” The Lord had shown His glory numerous times already, and so it should have been a perfectly understood axiom that He was, in fact, glorious. The garments of the priests were given, as we were told, for glory and for beauty.

These things, and countless others, were done to display the glory of God to the people. He glorifies Himself in such ways. But when one of his chosen priests sinned openly and in a public way, he vindicated His honor and His glory through their destruction. There is nothing arbitrary or unreasonable about what has occurred. It was evident from His first dealings with Israel, and it had become even more evident with each step of the process that led them to where they were at the moment.

If we consider this from our own time and situation, how much more just and acceptable will it be when He glorifies Himself through judgment on the world in the tribulation period. We have another 3500 years of proofs of His glory demonstrated in fulfilled prophecy – in Christ the Lord, in His church, and in His return of Israel to their land. Imagine the severity of judgment which is due upon the false preachers, teachers, and ministers of His word.

³ (con't) **So Aaron held his peace.**

v'yidom aharon – “and was mute Aaron.” Upon realizing the just nature of what occurred, Aaron completely shut up any possible questioning of the Lord’s judgment. He realized that what happened was just, it was right, and it was necessary. It reflects the words of David in the 39th Psalm –

“I was mute, I did not open my mouth,
Because it was You who did *it*.” Psalm 39:9

We can rage against the judgments of man. We can be angry at the unfair decisions of our boss. We can shake our fist in the judge’s face, or demonstrate against the injustices brought upon us by our government, but we cannot question the Lord’s decisions. What He determines is perfect, fair, and final. It is a lesson Paul passes on to both Jew and Gentile as he sums up a portion of his argument in the book of Romans –

“Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.” Romans 3:19

The Lord is a consuming fire, and He is especially jealous for the sake of His own holy name. When that name is dishonored, or when His glory is diminished through the actions of His chosen, a demonstration of wrath is the natural result. Therefore, we should pray as the Shulamite did towards her beloved -

“Set me as a seal upon your heart,
As a seal upon your arm;
For love *is as* strong as death,
Jealousy *as* cruel as the grave;
Its flames *are* flames of fire,
A most vehement flame.” Song of Solomon 8:6

⁴ Then Moses called Mishael and Elzaphan, the sons of Uzziel the uncle of Aaron, and said to them,

Moses now has a duty which needed be attended to. There are two corpses which must be removed from the camp. This cannot be accomplished by Aaron or one of his remaining sons. To touch a dead body would defile them, and they could not perform their duties. And so he calls for Mishael and Eltsaphan.

Mishael means “Who (is) what God (is)? Eltsaphan means something like “God has concealed,” or “God has hidden.” These two are the sons of Uzziel, or God of Strength. He is the uncle of Aaron, making the other two his cousins. The word for “uncle” is *dod*, which interestingly and literally means “Beloved.” They now have a somber duty awaiting them.

⁴ (con't) “Come near, carry your brethren from before the sanctuary out of the camp.”

The words here are very precise. Two verbs in a row without any adjoining “and” begin the clause. It simply says, *qirbu se-u* – “go near; carry.” He uses the verb form of the adjective that he just used in verse 3, *qarav*, or “come near.”

It then says that they are to carry their brothers, meaning their relatives, from the face of “the holy.” He repeats another word that he just cited of the Lord in the previous verse, *qadosh*, or “holy.” The Lord said, “In those who come near me, I will be shown as

holy.” Now he says “Come near, carry your brothers from the face of *ha’qodesh*, or the holy.”

He is explicitly instructing them to do what would otherwise be forbidden. Nobody but a priest could enter the presence of the Lord, but the exceptional circumstances demanded exceptional actions. They were to enter the presence of the Lord and remove the bodies of those in whom He had shown Himself holy.

A picture is formed out of these seven names. Moses, or “He who draws out” calls Mishael and Eltsaphan, or “Who (is) what God (is)?, and “God has concealed,” for a task. They are the sons of “God is My Strength.” Who is the beloved of Aaron, or “Very High.” They are to carry out Nadav or “Willing,” and Avihu, or “Whose Father (is) He.”

The entire verse points to the work of Christ who 1) draws out for us the nature of God so that we can understand it. It is He 2) who is what God is, and He reveals what 3) God has concealed. In these revelations of Himself, He is the Son of 4) the God of Strength and who is the 5) Beloved of the one who is 6) Very High, meaning God the Father. The dead are the 7) Willing and 8) whose Father (meaning God) is He. The unfortunate death of these two men is recorded in the most marvelous way to give us a snapshot of the incarnation and death of Jesus Christ. It is that by which the Lord, in the highest sense, has shown Himself holy.

⁵ So they went near and carried them by their tunics out of the camp, as Moses had said.

The two cousins of Aaron do as they are directed. Having the expressed permission to enter the Most Holy Place, they retrieve the bodies of Nadav and Avihu and carry them, by their priestly garments, out of the camp. Tradition holds that the garments of the priests, when worn out, were used as wicks for use in the lamps of the sanctuary. However, these could not be so used as they were defiled. They, together with the corpses of the bodies, were buried outside the camp.

Several scholars have deduced from verses such as this that modern practices of burying people within the confines of cities is an abhorrent practice. They go further then and note that it is utterly contemptible that the dead should be buried on the grounds of churches. That is both highly legalistic, and it is stupid.

The camp of Israel cannot be equated with any such notion in either the modern city or the church. Common sense and reason does need to be used when considering our

internment processes. The defilement caused by death ceased in Christ. Death has lost its sting, and a dead body is simply a shell which will decompose, but which possesses no power to cause the redeemed to become unclean. This is a precept of the law which is fulfilled in Christ.

As far as the account in Leviticus, it is now the 8th day of the ordination process, and it is just 6 days before the Passover was to be slain. Because of their defilement in touching these corpses, they will now be excluded from being allowed to participate in the Passover. Thus, they are at least partly included in the account recorded in Numbers 9 -

Now there were *certain* men who were defiled by a human corpse, so that they could not keep the Passover on that day; and they came before Moses and Aaron that day. ⁷ And those men said to him, “We *became* defiled by a human corpse. Why are we kept from presenting the offering of the Lord at its appointed time among the children of Israel?”

⁸ And Moses said to them, “Stand still, that I may hear what the Lord will command concerning you.”

⁹ Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, ¹⁰ “Speak to the children of Israel, saying: ‘If anyone of you or your posterity is unclean because of a corpse, or *is* far away on a journey, he may still keep the Lord’s Passover. ¹¹ On the fourteenth day of the second month, at twilight, they may keep it. They shall eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. ¹² They shall leave none of it until morning, nor break one of its bones. According to all the ordinances of the Passover they shall keep it. ¹³ But the man who *is* clean and is not on a journey, and ceases to keep the Passover, that same person shall be cut off from among his people, because he did not bring the offering of the Lord at its appointed time; that man shall bear his sin.

Numbers 9:6-13

⁶ And Moses said to Aaron, and to Eleazar and Ithamar, his sons, “Do not uncover your heads nor tear your clothes,

The priests were held to a very high standard, as we will see with other such things that will continue to be required within the law. The word used concerning uncovering the head is *para*. This comes from a root which means “to loosen.” Thus the idea is to let the hair be free or disheveled, or to shave it off such as in a sign of mourning. To so uncover one’s head or to tear the clothes were outward signs of mourning.

However, because they were adorned in their priestly clothes, they were to maintain dignity and honor before Lord, thus showing the Lord as holy, exactly as was stated explicitly in verse 3.

Eventually, the law will specify in chapter 21 that the priests who were sons of Aaron could show signs of mourning for their close relatives, but in verse 21:10 its says that the high priest could never uncover his head or tear his clothes. At this time, Aaron and both his sons had the anointing oil on them, and they were thus held to the highest standard of all.

Further, such signs could imply to others that they believed the punishment was unmerited and they were accusing the Lord of unjust severity in His actions. Should they treat Him as unholy again, as Nadav and Avihu did, then there would be consequences...

^{6 (con't)} **lest you die, and wrath come upon all the people.**

The Lord has already shown that the severest punishment would result from such an offense. How much more if the offenses continued right on the heels of His judgment on the first offense! The only thing they could expect would be death. But even more, wrath would come upon all the people. There would be no ordained mediator left for the people, and as we saw in Chapter 4 concerning the sin offerings, guilt would then be on all.

Without a high priest to mediate, only guilt would remain, and with guilt then only wrath could be the just due. They had verbally agreed to the terms of the covenant, and they had made themselves liable to all that it encompassed when they did. This included placing themselves under the high priest as their sole mediator before the Lord. This concept of a corporate sense of belonging continues on in the church. As Paul says in 1 Corinthians 12:26 -

“And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with *it*; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with *it*.”

^{6 (con't)} **But let your brethren, the whole house of Israel, bewail the burning which the Lord has kindled.**

The word says, “*And* let your brothers.” It could be translated as “but,” thus showing a contrast to Aaron and his sons, but it could also mean something entirely different. If the intent is “and,” which seems likely, then the verse would read, “And let your brethren,

the whole house of Israel mourn over the burning that the Lord has kindled.” Instead of mourning over the lost sons of Aaron, it is a mourning directed to the people of Israel who had seen the glory of the Lord diminished through the actions of their representatives.

At the very beginning of the priesthood, which comprises the mediatorial aspect of the Law of Moses, there had been a major failing which resulted in the indignation of the Lord, and an outward sign of His vast displeasure at their conduct under the law. From the outset of the priests’ mediation of the law, death was the first thing seen.

This then is set in direct contrast to the mediation of Christ under the New Covenant. Instead of death, God had accepted the first duties of the Mediator, His atoning sacrifice, and approved of it. Having so approved of it, He confirmed that approval in the... resurrection. It is the ultimate sign of His extreme approval at Christ’s conduct under this New Covenant.

The contrast could not be clearer. Instead of the fallible, and sin-filled nature of the priests of the Aaronic priesthood, we see the infallible, sinless nature of Christ the High Priest of the New Covenant. In all ways, His is the superior mediation.

⁷ You shall not go out from the door of the tabernacle of meeting, lest you die,

This is telling them that they were not to follow Mishael and Eltsphan to the burial, nor were they to attend any funeral service which would be conducted, thus taking them from their place at the door of the tent of meeting. As I said, there are similar prohibitions which are specifically stated for the high priest in Chapter 21 –

“He who is the high priest among his brethren, on whose head the anointing oil was poured and who is consecrated to wear the garments, shall not uncover his head nor tear his clothes; ¹¹ nor shall he go near any dead body, nor defile himself for his father or his mother; ¹² nor shall he go out of the sanctuary, nor profane the sanctuary of his God; for the consecration of the anointing oil of his God is upon him: I am the Lord.” Leviticus 21:10-12

The high priest was never to leave the sanctuary at such a time, lest it would appear to the people that he had a greater duty to attend to the dead than minister between the people and the living God. Such is the case now for not only the high priest, but for his sons also. Service to the Lord comes before all things.

^{7 (con't)} **for the anointing oil of the Lord *is* upon you.”**

The anointing oil is symbolic of the Holy Spirit. He is a Spirit of life, not death. As this is so, they were to have nothing in common with death because sin is the source of death. In Christ, we are reckoned as dead to sin because of His work. We are dead to the law, and thus dead to sin. This is why we are, according to Paul, sealed with the Holy Spirit upon belief. Again, the contrast is made perfectly clear that the Law of Moses is wholly inferior to the New Covenant in Christ.

^{7 (fin)} **And they did according to the word of Moses.**

The obedience of Aaron to the word of Moses is explicitly stated here to show that Aaron and his sons understood the gravity of the situation, and were obedient to the precept. It was a lesson for them, and for the people of Israel, that the priests were first and foremost responsible to the Lord. From this, there would always be the reminder of how the priests were to conduct themselves.

The failings of future priests, and what occurs to them for their failures, would be understood in accord with this first precedent- setting account which came at the very inception of the priesthood. As a sober warning, Adam Clarke states these words concerning this passage –

“Every part of the religion of God is Divine. He alone knew what he designed by its rites and ceremonies, for that which they prefigured – the whole economy of redemption by Christ – was conceived in his own mind, and was out of the reach of human wisdom and conjecture. He therefore who altered any part of this representative system, who omitted or added any thing, assumed a prerogative which belonged to God alone, and was certainly guilty of a very high offense against the wisdom, justice, and righteousness of his Maker.” Adam Clarke

Adam Clarke is spot on. The sons of Aaron added to the word of God, doing that which their own minds conjured up, and they suffered for it. The warning to not add to or subtract from God’s word is repeated several times in Scripture. Under the New Covenant, we are given broad latitude in conducting our lives, both personal and religious, in the presence of the Lord.

However, we are also given many specific and direct admonitions as well. We are not to depart from them, and we are not to add to them in the sense of mandating that which is contrary to His word. I personally tremble for the many pastors who stand in the pulpit

and claim a word from the Lord in order to conduct their ministries as they see fit, or to impose upon the congregation in a manner which suits them, but is not according to Scripture. Let us never allow this into our lives.

Rather, let us offer holy fire to the Lord, in accord with His word and in a manner which He will find acceptable. But, there is the truth that no offering to the Lord can be considered acceptable unless we first belong to that same Lord. The way to do this is through calling on Jesus. Only through that act can we be reconciled to God the Father, and only in that can we then make right offerings to Him.

Closing Verse: *“For if the ministry of condemnation had glory, the ministry of righteousness exceeds much more in glory. ¹⁰ For even what was made glorious had no glory in this respect, because of the glory that excels. ¹¹ For if what is passing away was glorious, what remains is much more glorious.” 2 Corinthians 3:9-11*

Next Week: Leviticus 10:8-20 *It’s really cold at this temperature you know... (Absolute Zero) (15th Leviticus Sermon)*

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if you have a lifetime of sin heaped up behind you, He can wash it away and purify you completely and wholly. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Burning Which the Lord Has Kindled

Then Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron
Each took his censer and put fire in it, put incense on it
And offered profane fire before the Lord
Which He had not commanded them; not good we must admit

So fire went out from the Lord, a deadly sword
And devoured them, and they died before the Lord

And Moses said to Aaron, “This is what the Lord spoke, saying:
These words to him he was relaying

By those who come near Me
I must be regarded as holy

And before all the people I must be glorified
So Aaron held his peace, after his sons had died

Then Moses called Mishael and Elzaphan
The sons of Uzziel the uncle of Aaron, and to them said
“Come near, carry your brethren from before the sanctuary
Out of the camp, now that they are dead

So they went near and carried them by their tunics out of the camp As Moses had said;
according to his authoritative stamp

And Moses said to Aaron
And to Eleazar and Ithamar, his sons, as well
“Do not uncover your heads nor tear your clothes, lest you die
And wrath come upon all the people, as to you I tell

But let your brethren, the whole house of Israel
Bewail the burning which the Lord has kindled, for a spell

You shall not go out from the door
Of the tabernacle of meeting, lest you die; so you have heard
For the anointing oil of the Lord is upon you
And they did according to Moses’ word

Lord, how good we have it in the age of grace
We have the whole word laid out before us
In obedience to You we are sure of a heavenly place
By faith, and faith alone in the finished work of Jesus

This is what Your word tells us
That the law only brought death, sorrow, and pain
But now we are saved by faith alone, nothing plus
Help us not to throw such a gift right down the drain

Give us wisdom to pursue You through Your superior word
And be obedient to it by calling on Jesus
Yes, may we not deviate from the gospel we have heard
And which is able to save each and every one of us

Hallelujah to You, O God, hear our praise!
Hallelujah to You, O Lord, as to you our voices raise!

Hallelujah and Amen...

LEVITICUS 10:8-20 (ABSOLUTE ZERO)

The last few verses of this chapter are almost always wholly mis-analyzed by scholars, and their comments are, thus, completely wrong. I think the reason why this is stems from a human desire to prove that we somehow can merit a favorable opinion from God, even when we completely blow what we are doing.

In other words, it comes back to works-based salvation, even by those who claim that they have no works which merit their salvation. Somehow, deep inside, we try to find good, even despite that which is completely bad.

Can you name two things which are impossible for us to do as humans? Well, there are a lot of things that are impossible. Making me handsome is certainly beyond the realm of possibility, but that's not what I'm talking about. What are some scientific things which are literally impossible for us to do?

Well two of them are attaining the speed of light, and cooling to absolute zero. Both face the identical problem. Getting to the speed of light requires an infinite amount of work, or energy, in order to overcome the mass which is being propelled forward. Getting down to absolute zero requires extracting an infinite amount of heat from the thing being cooled. Both of these are impossible.

Spiritually, what is something impossible for us to do? Well, if you know even basic theology, you know that there is nothing you can actively do to please God in order to be saved, no matter how much you do, just like going the speed of light. It's simply not possible. And the reason why is because we can never get ourselves to the spiritual state of absolute zero sin.

If you've been paying attention to the Leviticus sermons, you know that man is born in sin. It is a part of his very nature. If we equate the heat that we need to extract in order to reach absolute zero, to the sin we need to extract in order to reach absolute perfection, we have a great parallel. The sin is in us, and we, of ourselves, can never fully extract it. And the Law of Moses, which was to be our sin-extractor, simply wasn't up to the task.

Text Verse: *"For every high priest taken from among men is appointed for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins."*

-Hebrews 5:1

The law says, “You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, which if a man does, he shall live by them: I *am* the Lord” (Leviticus 18:5). Whoo hoo! The sin extractor is given. The Law of Moses says that we can live if we do the things of it. Strap on your sin-extractor and set it to “eternal life” mode. It’s a snap I tell you.

Well, maybe not. Aaron’s words to Moses in verse 19 show us that there is a snag in the snap. In verse 20, we read that Moses was content with Aaron’s words, but if he stopped, sat down, and contemplated the words Aaron spoke, he probably would have broken down in tears and said, “Just take me now Lord.” Or maybe he would have said what King Solomon said 500 years later –

“Vanity of vanities,” says the Preacher;

“Vanity of vanities, all *is* vanity.”

³ What profit has a man from all his labor

In which he toils under the sun? Ecclesiastes 1:2, 3

The sin infection is too deep, the sin-extractor is ineffective, and man remains separated from His infinitely glorious heavenly Father. What a sad state of affairs. But thanks be to God for the true sin-Extractor. Thanks be to God for Jesus Christ our Lord who can take away our sin. The law was given to show us what was impossible, but what is impossible with man is possible with God. Yepperino... It’s all to be found in His superior word. And so let’s turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. A Word From the Lord to Aaron (verses 8-11)

⁸Then the Lord spoke to Aaron, saying:

v'daber Yehovah el aharon lemor – “And spoke Yehovah unto Aaron, saying.” Verse 8 is one which is unique in all of Scripture. The Lord speaks directly to Aaron alone. In Exodus 7:8 and 12:1, the Lord spoke to both Moses and Aaron. This will occur again several times in Leviticus and Numbers after this. But in this verse alone, the Lord speaks directly to Aaron. It is something which concerns him and the priesthood, and it is an order which is therefore directed solely to him.

It is also an advanced indication that what has just occurred in the death of his sons is directly related to what will now be said. The two are being connected together. Though it is merely conjecture that this is so, it is sound conjecture. Nearly one half of the priest-

hood has been destroyed by the fire of the Lord. Those remaining have been told that they are not to mourn over what occurred.

Because of these things, there could be the assumption on their part that the Lord is displeased with the newly established priesthood. They could also assume that they will all die before the Lord over the slightest infraction. But this is not so. The law of the sin-offering was given, and the first sacrifice in that law was specifically for the high priest who had sinned. Therefore, they could rest assured that not all infractions would lead to death.

With the Lord's words being directly spoken to Aaron, there is an assurance that what has happened is not the standard, as long as the holiness of the Lord was not violated by their actions. However, if the Lord was truly displeased with the priests, they could expect judgment. And so, the Lord now speaks to Aaron with a command to him and those who issue from him who will minister as priests. These words will keep the priests from a sad repeat of what has occurred in the deaths of Nadab and Abihu.

⁹“Do not drink wine or intoxicating drink, you, nor your sons with you, when you go into the tabernacle of meeting, lest you die.

yayin v'shekhar al teshet - “Wine and super-strong drink, no drink.” The word *yayin*, or wine, is explained in this and other passages, such as when it was introduced in Genesis 9:21 when Noah got drunk, as fermented wine with an alcohol content. The word *shekhar* is introduced into Scripture here, and it indicates a beverage with a very high alcohol content – blinco juice.

If one were to stop with the first few words of this verse, as many seem to enjoy doing when citing their aversion to people drinking alcohol, there might be made a case for no person ever drinking. But the words do not stop with “Do not drink wine or intoxicating drink.” They go on to a further explanation – “...you nor your sons with you, when you go into the tent of meeting.” There is a specific group who are named and a set time when the prohibition is given.

Further, along with the priests during the conduct of their duties, the only other time alcohol is prohibited in the entire Bible is in the rules for the Nazirite vow in Numbers 6. People like Samson and John the Baptist were considered as Nazirites from birth, and thus the prohibition extended to them. At all other times, no such prohibition exists, and the drinking of wine and *shekhar* are condoned throughout Scripture as long as it does

not lead to brawling, addiction, and the like. One time when their consumption is specifically stated as a good thing is in the law of the tithe in Deuteronomy -

“You shall truly tithe all the increase of your grain that the field produces year by year. ²³ And you shall eat before the Lord your God, in the place where He chooses to make His name abide, the tithe of your grain and your new wine and your oil, of the firstborn of your herds and your flocks, that you may learn to fear the Lord your God always. ²⁴ But if the journey is too long for you, so that you are not able to carry *the tithe*, or if the place where the Lord your God chooses to put His name is too far from you, when the Lord your God has blessed you, ²⁵ then you shall exchange *it* for money, take the money in your hand, and go to the place which the Lord your God chooses. ²⁶ And you shall spend that money for whatever your heart desires: for oxen or sheep, for **wine or similar drink**, for whatever your heart desires; you shall eat there before the Lord your God, and you shall rejoice, you and your household. ²⁷ You shall not forsake the Levite who *is* within your gates, for he has no part nor inheritance with you.” Deuteronomy 14:22-27

In the New Testament, Paul says the following to the saints at Corinth -

“Therefore when you come together in one place, it is not to eat the Lord’s Supper. ²¹ For in eating, each one takes his own supper ahead of *others*; and one is hungry and another is drunk. ²² What! Do you not have houses to eat and **drink in**? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I do not praise *you*.”

-1 Corinthians 11:20-22

There Paul doesn’t tell them not to drink alcohol. Instead, he tells them that if they want to do so (the word he uses indicates this), to not do so at the Lord’s Supper, but rather do it at home. The ceremony was to be conducted with respect. Paul’s prohibition to Timothy and Titus concerning elders not being given to wine uses a word which indicates being “quarrelsome over wine” and thus an abusive brawler. It cannot be seen as a prohibition against any consumption, as he tells Timothy that it is OK elsewhere.

This is not my attempt to change anyone’s mind on whether they will drink or not. Rather, it is an analysis which is necessary from time to time, like everything else in Scripture, to avoid the unbiblical and legalistic rules which are constantly pounded into believer’s heads. Whether it is the law of the tithe, or the law of alcohol for the priests in the sanctuary, there is a context which needs to be considered and not carried beyond that context.

⁹ (con¹) **It shall be a statute forever throughout your generations,**

huqat olam l'dorotekem – “statute forever to your generations.” The prohibition is only for the times that the priests were engaged in their official duties, but it was for all times henceforth. If a priest were to drink, he was expected to not do so when ministering before the Lord. Until the coming of Christ, and the fulfillment of the law through His work, the statute was to be adhered to by all of Aaron’s sons in their official duties.

¹⁰ **that you may distinguish between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean,**

Though perfectly understandable, the verse here is not well translated. Each noun is preceded by a definite article. It should read, “that you may distinguish between the holy and the unholy, and between the unclean and the pure.” There are definite and set categories being described. One of those categories is seen for the first time in Scripture, *khol*, or “unholy.” It will be used only seven times, once in Leviticus, twice in 1 Samuel, and the rest in Ezekiel. It refers to that which is ordinary rather than holy.

The verse is given to show the importance of not being inebriated when performing the duties of a priest. Again, what is implied is that Nadab and Abihu failed to do this, and it cost them their lives. What is rather sad are the countless comments concerning alcohol by scholars which are tied to this verse which insist, at the expense of the rest of the body of Scripture, on the prohibition of drinking for either some or all believers. It is inappropriate to insert personal biases into Scripture to form a doctrine about a matter.

¹¹ **and that you may teach the children of Israel all the statutes which the Lord has spoken to them by the hand of Moses.”**

What is peculiar to me is to see how almost all translations which did a good job in verse 10, turn around and did a marginal job with verse 11, and vice versa. The NKJV perfectly translates this verse, even to the term “by the hand of Moses.” It is an exact translation showing that when the Lord spoke to Moses, he carefully recorded, by hand, everything he heard. The term, *b’yad*, or “by the hand,” is an idiom which indicates authority, or capability to accomplish. This is what is seen in the words as they are used here of Moses. The inspiration of Scripture is exactly implied in these words. The Lord spoke, and Moses’ hand responded accordingly.

As far as this verse, the prohibition of the priests drinking while serving is further explained here. It is because they were to be instructors of the people concerning the law. If they were drunk while on duty, they would be ineffective teachers. But this is the

Lord's word, received directly by the hand of Moses, and therefore, they were to treat its instruction as a holy duty. The teaching of the priests is noted in Malachi 2 –

“For the lips of a priest should keep knowledge,
And *people* should seek the law from his mouth;
For he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts.” Malachi 2:7

However, throughout the years, the priests are seen to have been negligent, and even failures, at the task to which they were called. This is seen, for example, in Ezekiel 22 –

“Her priests have violated My law and profaned My holy things; they have not distinguished between the holy and unholy, nor have they made known *the difference* between the unclean and the clean...” Ezekiel 22:26

Because of the failure of the prophets, the priests, and the kings of Israel to perform their duties in the holy manner to which they were called, the people fell away and eventually were judged for having completely left the way of the Lord.

*Do not imbibe while attending to your station
Not wine or something stronger shall you at that time partake
You are the instructors of Israel, your nation
And so fermented drink you shall forsake*

*That which is holy and that which is unholy do not mix
That which is unclean and that which is pure you shall separate
If you are drunk, how can you other people's problems fix?
Only greater problems will you create*

*Be holy as I am holy, this I am instructing you
Tend to your duties with that always on your mind
To your tasks you shall be faithful and you shall be true
Carefully execute the duties you have been assigned*

II. Obedience to the Law (verses 12-15)

¹² And Moses spoke to Aaron, and to Eleazar and Ithamar, his sons who were left:

As a reminder, the four names given in this verse mean: Moses – He who draws out; Aaron – Very High; Eleazar – God has helped; and Ithamar – Land of Palms, palms being

a symbol of uprightness. Moses, speaks to Aaron and his two sons who remain with explicit instructions. By specifically naming Eleazar and Ithamar, and in using the term *ha'notarim*, or “the remaining,” it is showing us that Moses does not want any others in his family to make a similar mistake and also die before the Lord.

¹² (con't) **“Take the grain offering that remains of the offerings made by fire to the Lord, and eat it without leaven beside the altar; for it *is* most holy.**

Despite what happened with the two oldest sons, they were still to continue with the rites of the final day of ordination. This included eating the most holy grain offering. Moses’ instructions now have already been given to the priests, but he is ensuring that they are fully aware of the need to continue through with their duties regardless of what else has taken place among them. This is the grain offering of the people noted in verse 9:17. It was considered most holy, and so it had to be consumed within the courtyard, and it could only be eaten by the designated priests.

¹³ **You shall eat it in a holy place, because it *is* your due and your sons’ due, of the sacrifices made by fire to the Lord; for so I have been commanded.**

Because the grain offering was most holy, it could not be taken outside of the courtyard, nor could it be eaten by anyone else. It was the due of the priests by a statute, and therefore it had to be treated in accordance with the command given to Moses.

¹⁴ **The breast of the wave offering and the thigh of the heave offering you shall eat in a clean place, you, your sons, and your daughters with you;**

These were the offerings of the people mentioned in verses 9:18-21. As they were not most holy, they could be eaten anywhere in the camp as long as it was a clean place, meaning where there was nothing defiled. Chapter 7 showed that these portions of the offerings were given for the maintenance of the priests and their families. This even included the daughters of the priests as long as they were unmarried, widows, or divorced. However, if they were married, they were to be cared for by the husband’s house.

¹⁴ (con't) **for *they are* your due and your sons’ due, *which* are given from the sacrifices of peace offerings of the children of Israel.**

As I said, this was recorded in the law of the peace offerings in Chapter 7. There it said -

“For the breast of the wave offering and the thigh of the heave offering I have taken from the children of Israel, from the sacrifices of their peace offerings, and I have given them to Aaron the priest and to his sons from the children of Israel by a statute forever.” Leviticus 7:34

In order to sustain the priests, these portions of the offerings were set aside and consecrated for them alone. Moses is reminding them of this and ensuring that the meat of these portions is properly tended to so that no other negative occurrences arise.

¹⁵ The thigh of the heave offering and the breast of the wave offering they shall bring with the offerings of fat made by fire, to offer as a wave offering before the Lord.

The word “they” in this verse, as in “they shall bring with the offerings,” is not speaking of the priests, but of the people of Israel. When they brought their offerings, they would include the heaved thigh and the raised breast along with all of the fat. This was a part of the rite of these offerings, and Moses is reminding them that once such an offering was made, the thigh and the breast would then belong to them.

This has been explained before, but the breast, or *khazeh*, comes from *khazah* which means “to see” because it is the part that is most seen when looking at the front of the animal. That, in turn, comes from a root which indicates to gaze at, and to mentally perceive, as in a vision. The *shoq*, or thigh, actually can mean the thigh, shoulder, hip, or leg. It comes from a word meaning “overflow,” and thus “abundant.” And so it is the *abundant* area of meat on an appendage. The right thigh was set aside as the priest’s part. This signifies the honorable side. But it further reflects the power and strength of the animal.

Of these parts, the breast was offered as a *tenuphah*, or wave offering, whereas the right thigh is offered as a *terumah*, or a heave offering. The *terumah* comes from the word *rum* which means to be high, or exalted.

Thus one can see the idea of something being offered up, like an oblation. The breast which indicates seeing and vision, and thus the acquisition of wisdom, is waved in acknowledgment of God’s omnipresence, and the right thigh which indicates strength and honor is lifted in acknowledgment of God’s omnipotence.

Both then speak of Christ’s mediatorial abilities which are acknowledged in the waving and heaving of the different parts. He is the wisdom and power of God for His people, and the One from whom all knowledge and strength is derived. This is why these parts

were given to the priests, and this is why Moses is, once again, being very specific concerning the offerings.

The priests were the mediators between the people and the Lord. Jesus is our One final Mediator between God and man. Moses is carefully ensuring that the typology is not violated by the actions of Aaron or his sons, because it would then violate the picture of the fulfillment of the typology seen in Christ.

^{15 (con't)} **And it shall be yours and your sons' with you, by a statute forever, as the Lord has commanded."**

These parts, which in type looked forward to Christ's greater ministry, were given to Aaron and his sons as a statute for as long as the Law of Moses was in effect. As the priesthood of Aaron was assigned the priestly duties of this law, they were to receive these benefits of their priesthood until such time as the law itself was annulled. This occurred when Christ shed His blood in fulfillment of the law, and in initiation of the New Covenant.

*A statute forever, throughout your generations
This is how it shall be from now on
Though will rise and fall many surrounding nations
You shall continue until this law is gone*

*Until the time it is fulfilled, and thus taken away
You shall continue on as I am instructing you
The requirements must be met from day to day
Until it is fulfilled, and along comes something New*

*And that day will come, be sure of that in your heart
But it will not be because of you or one of your sons
From another tribe of Israel, will come a brand new start
And those who follow Him, will be His chosen ones*

*I will send the Redeemer, and He will finally take away
All of these statutes which I give You today*

III. The Sin Problem (verses 16-20)

¹⁶ Then Moses made careful inquiry about the goat of the sin offering, and there it was—burned up.

These final verses bring in the importance of paying attention to what occurs with the blood of each offering, and what is to happen to that offering after the ritual of the blood is complete. Each offering was to be handled in a way unique to its particular requirements. This sin offering is no different and Moses knew that. And so the Hebrew reads *darosh darash mosheh* - “investigating, Moses investigated.”

As there was a set procedure to be followed, and as he did not see that it was followed, he made a very careful investigation into the matter. There had been enough death for one day, and he didn't want to see more. The inquiry is concerning the flesh of the sin-offering which was presented on behalf of the nation for the eighth day of the ordination. It was the people's offering noted in verse 9:15. The blood rite for that offering was conducted at the altar of burnt-offering. The blood was not taken into the holy place, and it was also not for Aaron's sin, but for that of the congregation. Therefore, the meat of the offering was to have been eaten by the priests, not burned up. But, that is just what happened to it.

Some assume the reason why is because they were grieved at the loss of their brothers and simply had no desire to eat. But nobody except the priests was allowed to eat the meat of this offering. And so to keep it from becoming corrupt, or so that it might not inadvertently be eaten by someone else, they burnt it on the altar.

¹⁶ (con't) And he was angry with Eleazar and Ithamar, the sons of Aaron *who were left*, saying,

Moses singles out the sons of Aaron for his anger. This tells us that it was they who burnt the meat up on the altar. He had investigated, and the investigation pointed to them. If Aaron had participated in it, he would have included him in his rebuke as well.

They had actually violated a command of the Lord and had aggravated the situation even more. This is why, once again, the term *ha'notarim*, or “the remaining,” is used concerning them. The fact that they didn't die, shows that they should have been even more attentive to their duties than ever before. They were not, and Moses is more than displeased with them because of it.

It appears that the sons readily assumed that their eating this meat, or their burning it up on the altar, was an insignificant difference. However, they will now be corrected on this point of the law...

¹⁷ “Why have you not eaten the sin offering in a holy place, since it *is* most holy, and *God* has given it to you to bear the guilt of the congregation, to make atonement for them before the Lord?

The error of the sons of Aaron was not perceiving that their eating of the sin offering actually had more significance than merely being something they could eat as a graciously offered meal – something they could accept or reject at will. In the eating of the sin offering, they actually bore the guilt of the congregation, thus making atonement for them.

The blood was never taken into the holy place. If that had happened, then the animal would have been handled in a different way. But the blood had merely been cast out upon the altar of burnt-offering. In the eating of the flesh, they therefore actually took the sin of the congregation upon themselves for the purpose of canceling it, or making expiation for it. This is what was symbolically intended in eating it. This is described by Keil –

“This effect or signification could only be ascribed to the eating, by its being regarded as an incorporation of the victim laden with sin, whereby the priests actually took away the sin by virtue of the holiness and sanctifying power belonging to their office, and not merely declared it removed.”

The importance of this picture is realized in what Christ did for us. First, John the Baptist, and then Isaiah exactly describe the work of the Lord, showing that what we are looking at here in Leviticus is but a mere shadow of the reality which lay ahead in His marvelous work –

The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” John 1:29

Here, Christ Jesus is said to be the sacrifice. The sin of the people Israel was placed upon an innocent animal that would bear their sin. From there, the sin was then placed upon the priest who mediated between the people and God. In eating the flesh, they then took on the guilt which had been passed to the animal –

“He shall see the labor of His soul, *and* be satisfied.
By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many,
For He shall bear their iniquities.
Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great,
And He shall divide the spoil with the strong,
Because He poured out His soul unto death,
And He was numbered with the transgressors,
And He bore the sin of many,
And made intercession for the transgressors.” Isaiah 53:11, 12

From there, the sin was completely atoned for through the mediator’s duties. In this, the words of Jesus concerning defilement are more readily understood. In Mark 7, we read this –

“Do you not perceive that whatever enters a man from outside cannot defile him, ¹⁹ because it does not enter his heart but his stomach, and is eliminated, *thus* purifying all foods?” ²⁰ And He said, “What comes out of a man, that defiles a man. ²¹ For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, ²² thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. ²³ All these evil things come from within and defile a man.” Mark 7:18-23

You might ask, “How can the priest, picturing Christ, eat the sin-bearing animal and not take on its sin in a final way, thus being forever separated from God?” I was actually emailed this question by a faithful viewer not too long ago. If Christ took on our sin, becoming sin for us, then how could He have been resurrected? The wages of sin is death, and He bore our sin.

The answer is because the priest is already acceptable because of his ordained position. In consuming something from outside, he cannot become defiled, instead, it passes through him and is purified. The priest symbolically consumed all of the evil things which came out of the nation of Israel, and purified them. This is exactly what Jesus is speaking of because this is exactly what Jesus did. He bore upon Himself all the sin of the world, but because He was already pure, and ordained by God for the task, the defilement could not cause Him to become defiled. Instead, it was purified and eliminated through His work, a work which was accomplished as this verse says *liphne Yehovah*, or “in the face of Yehovah.”

Jesus was actually speaking to the people of priestly matters because He is the One, true, and final high priest of God. The sons of Aaron had missed the typology, and therefore, they had missed the picture of Christ's work on behalf of the people. Moses continues to explain this...

¹⁸ See! Its blood was not brought inside the *holy place*; indeed you should have eaten it in a *holy place*, as I commanded."

Two different things are intended with the word "holy" in this verse. The first is speaking of the blood being brought into the holy place within the tent of meeting. This did not happen with this sacrifice, and therefore the meat was to be eaten, not burned up. The place where it was to be eaten is in a holy place, meaning within the sanctuary, but not within the holy place of the tent of meeting. For this reason, and to avoid misunderstandings, a new word is introduced into the Bible, *penimah*. It means "inside." In this case, it is specifying "inside the holy place." This is the first of 13 times the word will be used in the Bible.

Again, as I said before, it is the rite of the blood which determines what occurs with the rest of the sacrifice. The typology must be maintained in order to ensure the picture of Christ to come. The sons of Aaron failed in this.

¹⁹ And Aaron said to Moses, "Look, this day they have offered their sin offering and their burnt offering before the Lord, and such things have befallen me!"

Almost all scholars tie Aaron's words in with his grief, and the grief of his sons, as being the reason for not eating the sin offering of the people, something prescribed by the law. However, this is not the case. Aaron will ask a conditional question based on what he has just noted to Moses, which is that the sons had offered their sin offering, and they had offered their burnt offering before the Lord. And further, they had done it *before* Nadab and Abihu had died. The offerings were on behalf of *all the sons*, not just the two living ones. And yet, two of them still died in sin on that day!

How could they eat the sin offering of someone else when they had not attained to the state of holiness which kept them from dying in their own sin? It is a giant mark upon the Aaronic priesthood, coming on the *last* day of the ordination process which shows its completely fallible nature. It couldn't even perfect its priests. As this is so, how could it be expected to perfect those who came to the Lord through those priests? Indeed, something much greater was needed for that to come about.

The book of Hebrews, which is the 58th book of the Bible, will explain what that “greater than” is. We will be there before you know it, and it will all be explained to you then. Don't miss a single Sunday sermon in the meantime.

19 (con't) *If I had eaten the sin offering today, would it have been accepted in the sight of the Lord?*

The answer to his question is obvious, “No.” If the sin offering and the burnt offerings which were intended to take care of the sins of the priests before they tended to the sins of the congregation were tainted by what occurred, thus meaning they were also tainted, then how could they take on the sin of the people in order to purify them? Aaron’s logic is impeccable, and it shows us how vastly inferior this priesthood is to that of Christ – infinitely so.

The sin of man could never be taken away by the blood of bulls and goats – case in point is the death of Nadab and Abihu. Add into that the future death of Aaron, and then the death of Moses who performed the installation of Aaron, and you have a completely failed system. However, the system itself is not the failure, it is the people within the system. And within the people is the true failure, sin. Contemplating David’s words of the 51st Psalm shows to us the seed of failure contained within the Law of Moses –

“Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity,
And in sin my mother conceived me.” Psalm 51;5

20 So when Moses heard *that*, he was content.

The word “content” is insufficient here. It makes the account end sounding as if Moses accepted the word as satisfactory and nothing more. The Hebrew says, *va'yishma mosheh va'yitav b'enav* – “and heard Moses, and (it was) well-pleasing in his eyes.” There was a failure within the law, and that failure was corrected by what Aaron had done, at least as far as it could be corrected in this regard.

When Moses realized the astuteness of Aaron in regards to his solemn duties, he wasn't just *content*. Rather, he was well-pleased. Where the law had broken down, the high priest had readjusted and overcome. It is a look back on the fall of man, and a look forward to the greater High Priest who would correct that fall. The law of the Garden of Eden had broken down; the true High Priest, our Lord Jesus, had corrected that failing. Surely, when God the Father saw what had been wrought, it was well-pleasing in His eyes.

The question for each of us concerning Chapter 10 is directed at the first seven verses, and it concerns the tragedy which befell Nadab and Abihu. Adam Clarke defines the parameters they used for their actions for us, and then he explains how we can either follow them, or follow the right path...

“Nadab and Abihu would perform the worship of God not according to his command, but in their own way; and God not only would not receive the sacrifice from their hands, but, while encompassing themselves with their own sparks, and warming themselves with their own fire, this had they from the hand of the Lord – they lay down in sorrow, for there went out a fire from the Lord, and devoured them. What is written above is to be understood of persons who make a religion for themselves, leaving Divine revelation; for, being wilfully ignorant of God’s righteousness, they go about to establish their own. This is a high offense in the sight of God. Reader, God is a Spirit, and they who worship him must worship him in spirit and truth. Such worshippers the Father seeketh.” Adam Clarke

The story of Nadab and Abihu highlights to us the impossibility that we could ever reach absolute zero on the sin-scale on our own. We are humans existing within the stream of time. The infection is in us, and we can’t go backwards in order to reverse the curse.

Instead, what we need is something, or better – Someone, that can take us from the corrupt physical world which we dwell in and are a part of, and lead us to the place of where the spiritual can take us to absolute zero sin. That Someone is Jesus. What Moses, Aaron, and the law that they received and mediated, could not do, Jesus Christ could. He was born without the infection, He lived under the Law that He gave to Israel without becoming infected, and He died in fulfillment of it, thus ending it. And in its ending, He offers His work to us as a gift – free and clear. There is nothing we need to do except receive it as the gift it is. Today is the day folks. Be reconciled to God through the gift of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Closing Verse: *“And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, ¹⁴ having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.” Colossians 2:13, 14*

Next Week: Leviticus 11:1-23 *There won’t be any eating crab’s claws, no, none of that fun...* (Dietary Laws, Part I) (16th Leviticus Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if you have a lifetime of sin heaped up behind you, He can wash it away and purify you completely and wholly. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Sin Problem

Then the Lord spoke to Aaron, saying:
To His high priest he was thus relaying

“Do not drink wine or intoxicating drink
You, nor your sons with you
When you go into the tabernacle of meeting, lest you die
This thing you shall not do

It shall be a statute forever throughout your generations
That you may distinguish between holy and unholy
And between unclean and clean
These things certainly shall be

And that you may teach the children of Israel
All the statutes which the Lord has spoken to them
By the hand of Moses; all the things He did tell

And Moses spoke to Aaron, and to Eleazar and Ithamar also
His sons who were left: for them to know
“Take the grain offering that remains
Of the offerings made by fire to the Lord
And eat it without leaven beside the altar
For it is most holy; hearken to this word
You shall eat it in a holy place
Because it is your due and your sons’ due
Of the sacrifices made by fire to the Lord
For so I have been commanded to instruct you

The breast of the wave offering
And the thigh of the heave offering too
You shall eat in a clean place
You, your sons, and your daughters with you

For they are your due and your sons' due
Which are given from the sacrifices
Of peace offerings of the children of Israel to you

The thigh of the heave offering
And the breast of the wave offering, according to this word
They shall bring with the offerings of fat made by fire
To offer as a wave offering before the Lord

And it shall be yours and your sons' with you as well
By a statute forever, as the Lord has commanded; as to you I tell

Then Moses made careful inquiry about the goat
Of the sin offering, and there it was—burned up
-----Of this he made note

And he was angry with Eleazar and Ithamar
The sons of Aaron who were left, saying
“Why have you not eaten the sin offering in a holy place
Since it is most holy; answer me this I am praying

And God has given it to you
To bear the guilt of the congregation
To make atonement for them before the Lord
Atonement for the Israelite nation
See! Its blood was not brought inside the holy place
This you did not do
Indeed you should have eaten it in a holy place
As I commanded you

And Aaron said to Moses
“Look, this day they have offered their sin offering, you see
And their burnt offering before the Lord
And such things have befallen me!

If I had eaten the sin offering today
Would it have been accepted in the sight of the Lord?”
So when Moses heard that, he was content
Upon hearing Aaron's word

Thank You, O God, for such a wonderful word
Thank You for the mysteries which are hidden there
Each that we pull out speaks of Jesus our Lord
Thank you that in His goodness we too can share

For all eternity we shall sing to You our praise
Yes, from this time forth and for eternal days

Hallelujah and Amen...

LEVITICUS 11:1-23 (DIETARY LAWS, PART I)

From a health standpoint, the dietary laws of Israel are argued to make a great deal of sense. Apparently studies have shown that those animals that are allowed under the Law of Moses are good for you. This is what they claim, anyway.

However, the way that the Jews and even many aberrant Christian sects seem to treat the foods not allowed under the law, you would think that the rest of the world should be keeling over at simply smelling the aromatic waft of bacon, or by having something odd for dinner like horse meat.

But that isn't the case at all. From time to time, you will see a person over 100 years old who is being interviewed about their longevity. More often than not, they say something like, "I eat five pieces of bacon every morning and a pork chop every night." Despite being quite an enviable thing in and of itself, it shows that the arguments by these people about the food allowed and prohibited under the law being a health and longevity issue is simply not correct.

And yet, the Lord prescribed these things specifically for His people here in Leviticus. And, they will be repeated again in Deuteronomy. If these things don't add length to life, or cut life short under normal circumstances, then there must be a deeper meaning behind what is presented. Wouldn't you think?

Again, if you look at the Gentile world who have never even heard of the Law of Moses, you will see that folks in any given society live normal lives, about the same length as those who strictly abide by these dietary laws. In fact, the island my wife comes from has more centenarians come from it than any spot on earth. What seems to be the only difference is that those not under the law have a lot more fun stuff to eat than those under the law.

Text Verse: *"But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, ¹⁵ and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." 2 Timothy 3:14, 15*

Another point to consider is that these laws cannot make a person clean or unclean in and of themselves. Only the fact that they are a part of the law can they actually make a person unclean. How do we know this? Well, one thing which the people of Israel could

not eat was anything which had died by itself.

In verse 40, a verse which will not get to today, but which is relevant to the topic, it says that if someone eats of such a dead animal's carcass, they are to wash their clothes and they would remain in a state of defilement until evening. This shows, quite clearly, that it is violating the law itself, and not the eating of the dead thing, which causes someone to be defiled.

If it was the eating of the thing which defiled the person, they would continue to be defiled after sundown. And more to the point, washing one's clothes is an external act. It has nothing to do with what went into the person's mouth.

And even more, if we really want to know if a person is defiled by certain foods, all we need to do is go to the New Testament and see what happens to a person who simply believes in Christ by faith. What is it that happens? They receive the Holy Spirit. The first such record of this was in Acts 10 at the house of a man named Cornelius. He believed, he received, and his tummy was full of whatever unclean foods he had eaten. God made no distinction between him and any believing Jew.

Why is this important? First, it tells us that these dietary laws have a meaning which is not obvious on the surface. Their meaning has to be drawn out from the text. Secondly, it is important because if you really like bacon, or lobster, or clams, or bacon, or pork chops, or bacon you are free to eat any and all of them without fear of upsetting the Lord. Because of Christ, He has accepted you. It's a truth which is to be found in His superior word. And so let's turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. Clean and Unclean Quadrupeds (verses 1-8)

¹Now the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying to them,

The last section which began with the Lord making an address was in verse 10:8, where He spoke directly to Aaron. That was a unique occurrence in the Bible. Now another rare occurrence arises here. This is the first recorded time in the book of Leviticus that the Lord speaks to both Moses and Aaron. The last time they were both addressed in this manner was at the institution of the Passover in Exodus 12:1. That was while they were

still in bondage in the Land of Egypt. Here, the address is made to both of them again.

This addressing of both of them will occur a few more times in Leviticus, but mostly it will be to Moses alone. As Aaron is now fully ordained as the high priest, the address is being made to both – Moses as the chief law-giver, and Aaron as the high priest who will mediate the law and carry out the enforcement of it.

Along with circumcision and the Sabbath, what will be given in the following verses has especially marked the people of Israel for 3500 years. *Disobedience* to the law is normally the order of the day for them as a people, but circumcision, Sabbath keeping, and dietary laws are adhered to by a large percent of those who claim to be Jews, even to this day.

²“Speak to the children of Israel, saying, ‘These *are* the animals which you may eat among all the animals that *are* on the earth:

The translation here is not good. Two different words are used in this verse – *khayah* and *behemah*. The ESV does a much better job of showing us the distinction –

“Speak to the people of Israel, saying, These are the living things that you may eat among all the animals that are on the earth.”

The *khayah*, or “living things,” describes all categories of life. It is then broken down into sub-categories. The implication, already noticeable, is that only living things are considered acceptable. Those things which have died, meaning the corpses of animals, are then excluded. This will be seen and explained later, but the term “living things” given now makes this obvious. There will be four categories of living things, just as there were in the creation account in Genesis 1:26 -

Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

These same four categories, the living things on the land, those in the water, the birds of the air, and the swarming animals, will all be divided into that which is clean, and that

which is unclean. Having noted this, it is obvious that in the beginning all animals were declared good. There was nothing impure in them as the early Genesis account openly declared. Further, many of the animals which are forbidden are perfectly fine to eat. In fact, in Genesis 9, no dietary law was given for any living thing on earth –

So God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them: “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth. ² And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be on every beast of the earth, on every bird of the air, on all that move *on* the earth, and on all the fish of the sea. They are given into your hand. ³ Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. I have given you all things, even as the green herbs.”

-Genesis 9:1-3

For the Gentiles of the world, these restrictions did not apply, nor do they apply now. They are a set of instructions given solely to Israel, and only during the time that the covenant remained in existence. It is a covenant which is annulled in Christ, and which no longer applies. This is made explicit numerous times in the New Testament, but 1 Timothy 4:4, 5 is enough to demonstrate this -

“For every creature of God *is* good, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving; ⁵ for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.”

Paul notes “every creature of God.” It is a term which is set in direct contrast to the words of Leviticus 11, demonstrating perfectly that what is stated in this chapter was a temporary institution until the coming of Christ. Even Christ Jesus Himself said that there is nothing that enters a man from outside which can defile him. It clearly shows that these ceremonial laws were given for a set reason and for a specific period of time.

This should be simple and uncomplicated to understand, but unfortunately it is beyond the grasp of countless people because they simply refuse to pick up the Bible and read it. Denominations all over the place reinsert these dietary laws, in part or in whole, into their *supposed* New Testament theology, and they quickly depart from the word of God in doing so. From this stepping stone, every sort of legalism one can possibly dream up becomes a standard part of their daily religious lives.

³ **Among the animals, whatever divides the hoof, having cloven hooves *and* chewing the cud—that you may eat.**

The first category to be considered are the *behemah*, or “beasts.” Specifically, quadrupeds. Of them, the verse gives very specific details, using several new words which are now brought into the Bible. Three of them – *paras*, *shasa*, and *shesa* – are directed to the cloven nature of the hooves, specifying that they be divided.

These words basically repeat the same thought to ensure that the matter is perfectly understood. It would be like saying, “Whatever splits the hooves, having split hooves.” It isn’t enough to say “splits the hooves,” because some animals do this, but they don’t have fully split hooves. They are to split the hooves so that the hooves are completely split.

The fourth new word is *gerah*, or cud. It is a process of up-chucking food from the first of several stomachs where it is chewed a second time before passing into the second stomach. The idea behind this process is that the maximum amount of nutrition is obtained from the food. It is also necessary because the foods these animals eat are difficult to digest, and so the extra process makes it much easier for them.

The requirements given here do not assign reasons as to why such animals are acceptable for food. They are merely distinguishing marks of what is considered acceptable. And so, this verse gives the specifics of what is authorized. When we get to Deuteronomy, the list of acceptable animals will actually be named –

“These *are* the animals which you may eat: the ox, the sheep, the goat, ⁵ the deer, the gazelle, the roe deer, the wild goat, the mountain goat, the antelope, and the mountain sheep.” Deuteronomy 14:4, 5

It is supposed by some that the meat of these animals is better for people for a variety of reasons, but that doesn’t really explain why God specifies this. One can say, “Oh, of course it is because the Lord wants His people to be healthy, and this is how it will come about.” But that really doesn’t explain anything. In fact, it would simply muddy the theological waters, wouldn’t it! If that were true, then it would imply that He didn’t really care about this in anyone from the time after the flood until the giving of the law. Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Israel, the twelve sons of Israel, and etc. were not under these requirements. It would also then imply that He doesn’t care as much about us now. We have no such dietary restrictions. Don’t we count?

Can we assume that the Lord didn't care about the health of those both before and after the time of the law? Of course not! And so there must be another reason for specifying this. It must be giving us a picture.

How is the Lord transmitting these instructions to His people? It is through His word. And what is it that we are to do with the word of God? Rightly divide it, using it to discern between good and evil. Thus the fully divided hooves give us this picture. And the chewing of the cud gives us another picture. We are not to simply eat, swallow, and forget. Instead we are to call the word back to mind and chew on it, contemplate it, and get every ounce of nourishment that we can out of it. This is especially so because this food is hard to digest, and it must be chewed and re-chewed.

A cow spends about eight hours of every day chewing the cud. This, plus their normal chewing of food totals approximately 40,000 jaw movements a day. Oh how good it would be if all of God's people spent as much time and effort chewing on His superior word, rightly dividing it, and applying it to their lives in a manner which would fully nourish their spirits. Paul, writing to Timothy, gave him words to consider which reflect what is implicitly taught here in Leviticus -

“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, **rightly dividing** the word of truth.” 2 Timothy 2:15 (cloven hooves)

“**Consider what I say**, and may the Lord give you understanding in all things.” 2 Timothy 2:7 (chewing the cud).

⁴ Nevertheless these you shall not eat among those that chew the cud or those that have cloven hooves: the camel, because it chews the cud but does not have cloven hooves, is unclean to you;

The first animal to be singled out as unacceptable is *ha'gamal* or “the camel.” *Gamal* comes from a word which means to either wean, ripen, or deal with fully or adequately – such as in rewarding or repaying. The camel, though it chews the cud, doesn't have cloven hooves. It then is a picture of one who takes in God's word and absorbs it, getting out of it everything he can, but he doesn't rightly divide it.

Many atheists know the word better than most Christians, but they cannot discern the

good from the evil, despite their time in the word. The same is true with those in cults, or those whose sole aim is to profit off of the word of God. They may know the Bible in a magnificent way, and it is fully ripened in their minds, but they divide it according to their desires, and not according to what is proper. They are camels who hold their heads high, and are proud and haughty concerning their humped-up riches, but in the end they will be fully and adequately repaid in a most unhappy way.

⁵ the rock hyrax, because it chews the cud but does not have cloven hooves, is unclean to you;

Ha'shapan, or “the rock hyrax,” comes from the word *saphan*, or treasure. That word is used only once, in Deuteronomy 33 -

“They shall call the peoples *to* the mountain;
There they shall offer sacrifices of righteousness;
For they shall partake *of* the abundance of the seas
And *of* **treasures** hidden in the sand.” Deuteronomy 33:19

These are timid animals that can be seen in Israel even today. They are small and resemble guinea pigs. Their closest relatives are actually elephants and sea cows. In reality, they don't even chew the cud, but their mouths resemble this, and so the terminology used is not scientific, but rather popular. Just as the Bible says the sun rises, even though it doesn't actually rise, these animals are said to chew the cud even though they don't really.

This animal then pictures a person who merely pretends to dine on the word, but doesn't. And what little they do know, they do not rightly divide. They take the treasure of God, and simply hide it in the sand, just as they timidly hide from it themselves. They are reflective of Paul's words in 1 Timothy -

“O Timothy! Guard what was committed to your trust, avoiding the profane *and* idle babblings and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge— ²¹ by professing it some have strayed concerning the faith. Grace *be* with you. Amen.” 1 Timothy 6:20, 21

⁶ the hare, because it chews the cud but does not have cloven hooves, is unclean to you;

Ha'arnebeth, or the hare, which is referred to here, is now believed to be extinct. Like the rock hyrax, this animal doesn't actually chew the cud. It is supposed that *arnebeth* comes from *arah*, "to crop" and "nib" the produce of the ground. Thus they are destroyers of crops, something hares are notorious for. Paul describes such a person pictured by them in Philippians 3 -

"For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, *that they are* the enemies of the cross of Christ: ¹⁹ whose end *is* destruction, whose god *is* their belly, and *whose* glory *is* in their shame—who set their mind on earthly things." Philippians 3:18, 19

⁷ and the swine, though it divides the hoof, having cloven hooves, yet does not chew the cud, is unclean to you.

Oh the pig! We eventually had to get to the bacon maker, and here we are. The pet made of pork, the hog made of ham, the most maligned, and yet cutest, animal in the middle east – the sweet little swine. Despite being so notorious from a kosher perspective, *ha'khazir*, or "the swine," is only mentioned seven times in the Old Testament. The word comes from a root meaning "to enclose" as if penned up.

It divides the hoof, but it does not chew the cud. He is a person who knows the word and divides it properly, but who doesn't meditate on it and dwell on it. He is the scholar who pours over ancient manuscripts; he is the professor who teems with sound doctrine; he is the preacher in the pulpit who gives the finest of sermons... but such are often unwilling to apply that knowledge to themselves.

They have been enclosed in a world of head knowledge, but have excluded heart knowledge. Paul describes them in 2 Timothy 3 as first, "having a form of godliness but denying its power," (vs 5) and then "... always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth" (vs 7).

⁸ Their flesh you shall not eat, and their carcasses you shall not touch. They *are* unclean to you.

This verse has a two-fold idea behind it. The first half signifies not slaying such an animal for food, and the second is that of touching something that has died of itself in one of these categories. Both of such actions were to be considered disgusting acts. For the believer, we should apply this to ourselves in the sense that we should stay far away from anyone who is represented by these most undesirable of traits.

A second reason for including this verse is found in the words, “to you.” It shows that they are *not* unclean in and of themselves, but only to Israel under the law. When the law was annulled in Christ, the wall of partition was taken away. These dietary restrictions went away with the law.

*What’s for dinner ma? I’m hungry and my tummy is achin’
What’s for dinner ma? I can’t wait till we eat
Will we have some burgers topped with cheese and bacon?
I can’t wait to taste the nummy-delicious treat*

*No sonny boy, you can’t have that as you know
I don’t care if that is for what your tummy is achin’
We’re legalists in this house. It is true and that is so
Here we don’t eat anything topped with bacon*

*We are working our way to heaven despite the work of Jesus
We’re on our way; this is the path we’ve taken
I’m sure God will look with super favor on us
When we eat our burgers without any bacon...*

II. Clean and Unclean Water Life (verses 9-12)

⁹‘These you may eat of all that *are* in the water: whatever in the water has fins and scales, whether in the seas or in the rivers—that you may eat.

Of the things in the waters that are acceptable, they must include *senappir* and *gasqeseth*, or fins and scales. The fins will only be seen in the books of Moses, and only in regard to fish. The word for scales is seen elsewhere to include describing scale-armor such as that worn by the Philistine champion Goliath.

Unlike the beasts of verses 2-8, only the positives of sea life are given. Any non-compliant animals are left unnamed. As there is plenty of nummy sea life abounding in the ocean which doesn't meet these qualifications, and as the prohibitions are only for the time during the Law of Moses – not before or after – then we are being asked to determine what fins and scales must represent.

Fins are used to keep a fish swimming properly in moving forward, turning, staying upright, and stopping. They guide the fish smoothly and efficiently through the water. Scales are predominantly used for protection, among other things. The symbolism is perfectly obvious. Like fins, the word of God is intended to keep us moving properly and in an upright manner – ever towards Christ, not racing ahead of ourselves and going beyond what is written. It is to be the rule and guide of our walk. And like scales, it is intended to protect us from harm.

As there are many scales, and as they vary in size, they are indicative of satisfactory good works which the Bible exhorts us to apply to our lives in order to be well-rounded and fully protected from that which would otherwise bring us harm.

¹⁰ But all in the seas or in the rivers that do not have fins and scales, all that move in the water or any living thing which *is* in the water, they *are* an abomination to you.

Simply stated here, anything not authorized in verse 9 is forbidden. It is to be considered detestable to the Israelite. The term *nephesh ha'khayah*, or “soul the living,” is used as an all-inclusive phrase. Of course, this means more lobster for everyone else. In picture, we are to shun anything which rejects Scripture as the rule and guide of our faith, or attempt to cover ourselves in any works which are not of God. Our works are those which stem *from* salvation, not *for* it. Anything not matching this is to be rejected...

¹¹ They shall be an abomination to you; you shall not eat their flesh, but you shall regard their carcasses as an abomination.

Again, the words, “to you” show that such things are not unclean in and of themselves, but only to Israel under the law. With the annulment of the law in Christ, the wall of partition was broken down and the dietary restrictions went away with it.

¹² Whatever in the water does not have fins or scales—that *shall* be an abomination to you.

The positive statement was made in verse 9 concerning what can be eaten. Now for the third time in three verses, the negative statement is made. Eating anything which does not have fins and scales is absolutely forbidden.

*Honey, I went down to the beach and caught us some fish
And while I was down there, I got some lobster too
There's plenty here, more than I could wish
Where should I put them, and what else can I do?*

*Ack! Lobster! What are you nuts my dear?
That isn't clean according to the Law of Moses
We're working our way to heaven, but we won't make it I fear
If you bring home stuff like lobster. We'll get an F minus*

*If we go eating the wrong stuff, things just won't go well
It would be no different than if we were a couple of mobsters
The last thing we need is to be cast into hell
Because we sat down to a nummy meal of buttered-up lobsters*

III. Unclean Birds (verses 13-19)

¹³ 'And these you shall regard as an abomination among the birds; they shall not be eaten, they *are* an abomination: the eagle, the vulture, the buzzard,

Now we come to the category of *oph* or "birds." But unlike the previous two categories, this starts with the prohibited ones first. In all, 20 types of birds, along with the bat are named. The bat being thrown in because it is a type of flying animal, something the word *oph* indicates. The majority of these are those which eat other animals or even carrion.

It should be noted that the identification of many of these birds is highly debated. Like the stones of the high-priest's breastplate, the true identification is often mere conjecture. But, it is the *root* of the names which gives us the information that we need

to determine why each type is specified.

The first mentioned is the *nesher* or “eagle.” The word is derived from a root which means “to lacerate,” something eagles are well known for. Paul explains in Romans and Galatians that circumcision of the body, but not the true circumcision in the heart means nothing. Instead, such people are to be cut off. Pictured by the *nesher*, or eagle.

The *peres* or “vulture,” comes from the same word *paras*, or “divide” used in verse 3 concerning the splitting of the hooves. It gives the sense of the bird who is the breaker, or cleaver – breaking the bones of its prey to obtain the marrow. This bird pictures the person who would divide the fellowship in order to gain from that division. It is what Paul warns against in 1 Corinthians 1.

The third bird is the *ozniyah*, or “the buzzard.” This word is derived from the word *oz*, meaning strength, or might. Paul says that the strength of sin is the law. Elsewhere he says that the strength of Christ is made perfect in weakness. This buzzard is typical of the person who relies on his own strength and merit from the law instead of in the grace of Christ.

¹⁴ the kite, and the falcon after its kind;

Ha'daah, or “the kite,” is a bird named for its swift, majestic gliding. It pauses as if suspended in the air looking for prey. It then engages in rapid flight where it darts swiftly through the air and swoops down on its prey. This bird would picture the person who carefully watches for those he can devour, and then quickly swoops in on them before they suspect anything. It is reflective of the type of person who believers are to be especially watchful for, lest they be consumed by them.

ha'ayyah, or “the falcon,” is derived from the word *iy*, or woe. It is a shrieking expression like “Alas.” Along with the specific bird, it says “after its kind.” It is thus any type of falcon within the species. Such a bird pictures a person who only brings misery and woe to those around him. Some falcons have been considered a delicacy in the surrounding areas of the Middle East, but they were warned against for Israel. Watch out for those who cause woe!

¹⁵ every raven after its kind,

The *orev*, or raven, along with all its kind, was forbidden for Israel to eat. The name comes from the verb *arav* which means to darken, as in the evening. That in turn comes from *erev*, or evening. Paul uses the term “darken” three times in his writings, each signifying a spiritual pall which comes over a person because of their futile walk in this world. He warns against this and all “after his kind.” Instead we are to be renewed in our spirits and minds.

¹⁶ the ostrich, the short-eared owl, the sea gull, and the hawk after its kind;

Verse 16 introduces four more birds, beginning with *bat ha'yaanah*, translated here as “the ostrich.” However, the words mean “daughter (of) the vociferation” because of the clamorous noise they make. This is obviously a picture of those who are boastful and who want to draw attention to themselves, hoping everyone will hear them. Such are described in Romans 1. As are those of the next category...

The *takhmas* or “short eared owl,” comes from the word *khamas*, which indicates treating violently, being violent, and the like. Romans 1 gives a long list of the perverse people in this world, among whom are the backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, etc.

The third category in this verse is *ha'shakhaph*, or “the sea gull.” This comes from an unused root meaning “to peel,” and thus emaciate. This bird pictures those who are caught up in asceticism. Paul speaks of such people in Colossians 2 who command others to not eat certain foods, and he also mentions them in 1 Timothy 4 where he notes those who command others “to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth” (vs. 3).

The final bird of this verse is *ha'nets*, or “the hawk.” This comes from a word which means “to sparkle” or “glare.” Thus it signifies a bird which has swift, flashing speed. Paul, citing Isaiah, speaks in Romans 3 of those who are swift to shed blood. These are symbolically warned against all the way back here in Leviticus. And it notes of them, “after their kind.” All who have a like attitude as this are to be noted and kept away from.

¹⁷ the little owl, the fisher owl, and the screech owl;

The first of the three in this verse is *ha'kos*, or “the little owl.” The identification of this

bird is widely debated, but the word *cos* is the Hebrew word for “cup.” Some say it is an owl that looks like a cup when sitting, some say it is because of its cup like eyes, some say it is instead a pelican because of its cup like bill. What matters is not the bird, but what it pictures. *Cos* comes from *kis* which is a bag for money, like a purse. It is a person who is greedy to be filled with money. Paul warns against such an attitude several times, such as in 1 Timothy 6 –

“For the love of money is a root of all *kinds of* evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.” 1 Timothy 6:10

Next is *ha’shalak*, or “the fisher owl.” The name comes from a root meaning “to cast down,” and so it is a bird which comes down upon its prey, diving into the water to draw it out. As the word is equated with water, this is a person who attacks those who are immersed in the word in an attempt to pull them out of it, destroying their faith. Paul speaks of exactly such –

And their message will spread like cancer. Hymenaeus and Philetus are of this sort, ¹⁸ who have strayed concerning the truth, saying that the resurrection is already past; and they overthrow the faith of some. ¹⁹ Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: “The Lord knows those who are His,” and, “Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity.”

-2 Timothy 2:17-19

The third in this verse is *ha’yanshuph*, or “the screech owl.” This comes from *nesheph* meaning twilight or dawning, but it is from *nashaph* which means “to blow.” The reason is that the winds begin to move and prevail in the evening. Thus, this bird pictures those who are unsound in their doctrine. Paul says of them –

“...that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting...” Ephesians 4:14

What is quite clear here is that, knowingly or unknowingly, the writers of the New Testament described people which perfectly fit each category of bird and beast we are looking at. This is true with the next verse as well...

¹⁸ the white owl, the jackdaw, and the carrion vulture;

Ha'tinshemeth, or “the white owl,” is next. This comes from a root which means to pant, as in a hard breather, and hence to blow away or destroy. Paul speaks numerous times of those who would come in to destroy the faith of others, and certainly such people do it with such zeal that they pant heavily as they carry out their work.

Next is *ha'qaath*, or the jackdaw. This is from *qo*, or vomit. Peter speaks of those who return to their vomit like dogs because they return to the pollution from which they had come, becoming entangled in it once again. This is the symbolism of such a bird.

The third is *ha'rakham*, or “the carrion vulture.” This bird is very affectionate towards its young, hence the name *rakham* which is derived from mercy or to be compassionate. The amazing parallel of this to the New Testament is Paul's citing of the Lord from Exodus in the book of Romans where he uses the same word –

“I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion.” Exodus 33:19

He then goes on to cite Hosea, saying –

“I will call them My people, who were not My people,
And her beloved, who was not beloved.”

²⁶ “And it shall come to pass in the place where it was said to them,
'You *are* not My people,'
There they shall be called sons of the living God.” Romans 9:25

The very people who were not God's people are those who were given compassion. And the people who were given the warning to not eat this type of bird, signifying compassion, were to be denied it. It is a sad type of irony found in His word. Stay away from Judaizers; those who would reinsert the law, including dietary law.

¹⁹ the stork, the heron after its kind, the hoopoe, and the bat.

These are the last three birds of the list. The first is *ha'khasidah*, or “the stork.” This comes from the word *khasid*, or godly one. However, being an adjective, it can be

applied to an ungodly person when spoken in the negative, such as in Psalm 43:1. Obviously, such as this are described in the New Testament –

“...knowing this: that the law is not made for a righteous person, but for *the* lawless and insubordinate, for *the* ungodly and for sinners, for *the* unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers,”
-1 Timothy 1:9

Next is *ha’anaphah* or “the heron.” This comes from a root meaning, “to be angry” or “enraged” because of its irritable disposition. It is an attribute which Paul warns against in both Ephesians 4:31 and Colossians 3:8.

And the final bird of the list is *ha’dukiphath*, or the hoopoe. The name is so obscure that there is little agreement on what it is derived from. What is most probable is that it comes from *duk*, meaning “to beat.” Thus, it is a picture of a brawler, something also warned against by Paul in Ephesians 4:31.

After the birds, the final living flyer to be mentioned is *ha’atalleph*, or the bat. This comes from the word *alaph*, signifying darkness. It is creatures which live for the night. Paul shows us what the bat then symbolizes –

“You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. ⁶Therefore let us not sleep, as others *do*, but let us watch and be sober. ⁷For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night.” 1 Thessalonians 5:5-7

*I went out huntin’ my dear and I shot us up a bird
Can’t wait till we sit down and eat this baby up
I shot it just down the road, maybe the gun you heard
And then I set Rover after it. He’s an awful good pup*

*Honeeeey... We can’t eat this thing. It’s a raven, don’t you know?
Those are forbidden under the law, now toss it out the door
But my dear Christ is the end of the law; it was annulled long ago
And it ain’t coming back, no never evermore*

*We are free in Christ from the bondage of the law
And so tonight we're having bacon, lobster and raven
We need to stand fast on Christ alone and not withdraw
And in Him we can eat whatever our tummy's are a'cravin'*

IV. Unclean and Clean Creeping Things (verses 20-23)

²⁰ 'All flying insects that creep on *all* fours *shall be* an abomination to you.

The final four verses of today deal with creeping things. The word translated as “creep” simply means, “to go,” but it is correctly translated as “creep.” In particular here are insects that creep on all fours. This however doesn't refer to the exact number of feet, but rather it is a metaphor which denotes an insect that walks with its body in a horizontal position, or near the ground in contradistinction to two-legged birds of the previous verses.

Creeping things were to be rejected for several obvious reasons, especially because of how filthy they are, but again, in picture, they represent the really low and filthy breed of humans Paul warns against -

“For of this sort are those who creep into households and make captives of gullible women loaded down with sins, led away by various lusts,” 2 Timothy 3:6

²¹ Yet these you may eat of every flying insect that creeps on *all* fours: those which have jointed legs above their feet with which to leap on the earth.

There was, however, a class of creeping insect that was acceptable to be eaten. They are specifically identified as those with jointed legs above their feet, by which they can leap. The word “leap” here is a new one, *nathar*. It will be used just eight times, and it gives the sense of leaping, or letting loose. In the Psalms, it is used when speaking of setting prisoners free, and in Isaiah it speaks of undoing the bands of a yoke in order to let the oppressed go free. Their jointed legs were capable of making them leap about freely. One can see the grace of Christ all over the intent of this word.

²² These you may eat: the locust after its kind, the destroying locust after its kind, the cricket after its kind, and the grasshopper after its kind.

The *arbeh*, or locust is first mentioned. This comes from *ravah*, to bring in abundance or multiply. The next are *ha'saleam*, or "the destroying locusts." This comes from *sela*, or rock. The name gives the sense of crushing, as with a rock, and thus it is a destructive eater. This is the only time it is seen in the Bible.

After this is *ha'khargol*, or "the cricket." It comes from a root which means to be afraid, and thus it means to leap suddenly, as one would when afraid. Like the previous insect this is the only time it is mentioned in the Bible.

And finally is the *khagav* or "grasshopper." This insect is seen just five times in the Bible. It is believed that it is named from an Arabic word which means "to veil," because when they fly, it is often in swarms so large that they block out the sun.

The reason for allowing these four types of insects to be eaten is based on the word *nathar*, or "leap," from the previous verse. It forms a picture of multitudes being set free from bondage, and thus it pictures the work of Christ, freeing us from the law's bondage.

²³ But all *other* flying insects which have four feet *shall* be an abomination to you.

Apart from those insects specifically authorized by name, no other such flying insect which had four legs was to be eaten. It was to be considered as detestable to the people of Israel. It should be noted that the eating of locusts is actually mentioned in the New Testament, in Matthew –

"Now John himself was clothed in camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist; and his food was locusts and wild honey." Matthew 4:3

There we see John wearing a garment made from an animal unclean to eat – a camel; bound with belt from a clean animal; and eating locusts and wild honey. Locusts are an acceptable food from an otherwise unacceptable category of creatures, and honey is an acceptable food which is derived from an unacceptable creature.

In this almost confusing display of what is acceptable under the law, John was the herald of Christ, proclaiming that His kingdom was at hand and the time had come when the multitudes would be set free from bondage. Things which were once considered defiled

would be purified by Christ, and those people who thought they were pure would be shown as defiled.

There is an amazing flow of thought in these 23 verses concerning what is clean and what is unclean under the law, and what these things actually picture in regards to the New Testament. The root meaning of each of these words has, in fact, formed one spiritual picture after another of what it means to be in Christ, the One who embodies this law which Israel lived under.

Each word and each detail has been given by God to reveal Him, His work, or His expectations for those in Him. And in Him is the fulfillment of what has been presented. It will continue to be presented throughout all of the law and the prophets. In looking for Him, there He will be found. In the end, it is all about Him.

I would ask you today that if you have never called on Jesus to save you, or if you are still trying to put yourself under the constraints of this fulfilled law, you should make the call to Him, be saved by Him, and leave behind works which can not get you one step closer to God. If you don't eat certain foods because you don't like them, that is fine, but if you don't eat certain foods because the Law of Moses forbids it, you have fallen from grace, and you are not pleasing to God. Call on Christ, trust in Christ alone, and rest in Christ. In this you will be completely and perfectly pleasing to Him.

Closing Verse: *“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.” 2 Timothy 3:16, 17*

Next Week: Leviticus 11:24-47 *Nummy treats for me and you...* (Dietary Laws, Part II)
(17th Leviticus Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if you have a lifetime of sin heaped up behind you, He can wash it away and purify you completely and wholly. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

What's for Dinner?

Now the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying to them
“Speak to the children of Israel, saying without a haw or a hem
‘These are the animals which you may eat
Among all the animals that are on the earth, those tasty and sweet

Among the animals, whatever divides the hoof
Having cloven hooves and chewing the cud
—That you may eat
And if you wish, you can add in a tasty spud
Nevertheless these you shall not eat
Among those that chew the cud
Or those that have cloven hooves
Not even with sauce; each is to be to you a dud

The camel, because it chews the cud
But does not have cloven hooves, is unclean to you
The rock hyrax, because it chews the cud
But does not have cloven hooves, is unclean to you too
The hare, because it chews the cud
But does not have cloven hooves, is unclean to you
And the swine, though it divides the hoof, having cloven hooves
Yet does not chew the cud, is unclean to you
-----No bacon for you; boo hoo!

Their flesh you shall not eat
And their carcasses you shall not touch
They are unclean to you
No rabbit stew, or pork chops, or such
‘These you may eat of all that are in the water
Whatever in the water has fins and scales
Whether in the seas or in the rivers
—That you may eat; this does not include snails

But all in the seas or in the rivers that do not have fins and scales

All that move in the water, you must bid adieu
Or any living thing which is in the water
They are an abomination to you
They shall be an abomination to you
Yes, to the whole nation
You shall not eat their flesh
But you shall regard their carcasses as an abomination
Whatever in the water
Which does not have fins or scales
That shall be an abomination to you
This includes lobsters, clams, and whales

‘And these you shall regard as an abomination among the birds
They shall not be eaten, they are an abomination, as I have outlined
The eagle, the vulture, the buzzard
The kite, and the falcon after its kind

Every raven after its kind, the ostrich, the short-eared owl
The sea gull, and the hawk after its kind
The little owl, the fisher owl, and the screech owl
The white owl, the jackdaw, and the carrion vulture, as defined
The stork, the heron after its kind
The hoopoe, and the bat, please bear in mind

‘All flying insects that creep on all fours
Shall be an abomination to you
Yet these you may eat of every flying insect
That creeps on all fours, will be OK in some stew
Yes, those which have jointed legs above their feet
With which to leap on the earth
Those with some sauce, can be tasty and sweet
These you may eat: the locust after its kind
The destroying locust after its kind too
The cricket after its kind
And the grasshopper after its kind, these are ok for you

But all other flying insects which have four feet
Shall be an abomination to you
They shall not be for you a tasty treat

Lord God, thank you for having done what we could not do
You fulfilled the law, and now it is done for us
It is over, annulled, and through
Thank You O God, for the work of our Lord Jesus

And so through Him to You we give all of our praise
And we thank You for our freedoms in Christ, our matchless King
We shall rest in Him and His finished work for all of our days
And to You O God, we shall lift our voices and sing

Hallelujah and Amen...

LEVITICUS 11:24-47 (DIETARY LAWS, PART II)

What is it that makes things unclean? Are tomatoes unclean? Let me tell you a story about tomatoes. When I worked at the Siesta Key wastewater plant, they used to have surface aerators on top of the contact and reaeration tanks. Surface aerators have a motor with a shaft. At the bottom is a propeller, just like on a boat.

The propeller runs so that it pulls all the water up from the bottom and blasts it into the air. In order to keep the water in the tank, there is a large disk that the motor sits on. As the water pushes up, it hits the disk and fans out over the surface of the tank, thus aerating, or providing oxygen to, the wastewater.

Without a wind, there is still plenty of over spray. And with even a slight breeze, the spray gets pretty much everywhere. The whole plant has a nice brown tint to it. But there is more fun than that. Tomato seeds come into the plant by the jillions, as do all kinds of other fun stuff. But tomato seeds are small enough to pass through the screens and go right into the tanks.

From there, they blow right out of the tank and find a home somewhere on the plant grounds. And of course tomato seeds grow up into tomato plants. And with all the fertilizer blowing around, there are some pretty healthy tomato plants to be found. All kinds too – big ones, little ones, round ones. It's like a tomato farm.

And the plants are always covered in a nice brown tint. How many of you, if at the plant, would say, "I'm going out to get some tomatoes for lunch?" Just curious because that was a usual lunchtime experience at SKUA. Were they unclean? No. But if you knew where they were from, many people would say, "Yes."

Some things are medically unclean. Some things are culturally unclean. Some things are unclean because of a defiled conscience. And... some things can be unclean because the Lord says they are unclean...

Text Verse: *"I was in the city of Joppa praying; and in a trance I saw a vision, an object descending like a great sheet, let down from heaven by four corners; and it came to me. ⁶When I observed it intently and considered, I saw four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, creeping things, and birds of the air. ⁷And I heard a voice saying to me, 'Rise, Peter; kill and eat.' ⁸But I said, 'Not so, Lord! For nothing common or unclean has at any time entered my mouth.' ⁹But the voice answered me again from heaven, 'What God has*

cleansed you must not call common.’¹⁰ Now this was done three times, and all were drawn up again into heaven. Acts 11:5-10

What the Lord once said was unclean was suddenly called cleansed. How could that be? Is the Lord fickle? Did He change His mind? Or was it that the foods which were deemed unclean were actually never truly unclean, except to teach the people of Israel a lesson?

Folks at SKUA ate tomatoes that you might be a little leery over eating, but if nobody told you where they came from, or what type of fertilizer they were covered in from day to day, you would be oh so happy to have some of them nummy t’maters. And if nobody ever told you their history, you’d say, “Them’s was the nummiest t’maters I ever did eat.”

There are people all over the world that eat things we would think are crazy. And many of us will eat something today that a Law-observant Jew (or a severely confused Christian) might think was crazy. And yet, what God has cleansed through the work of Jesus Christ is wholly acceptable and is not to be shunned unless you just don’t have a taste for it.

The law served a purpose, and that purpose is finished, it is set aside, obsolete, and annulled. This is because it was nailed to the cross of Christ. It’s all to be found ----- Oh, by the way, I hate tomatoes. So stop looking at me like that.

Great stuff is to be found in His superior word. And so let’s turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. Carcasses and Creeping Things (verses 24-38)

²⁴ ‘By these you shall become unclean; whoever touches the carcass of any of them shall be unclean until evening;

This verse is referring to what lies ahead in verses 26 & 27, not that which was previously stated. However, it is a categorical expansion of what was said in verse 8. There is a precise logic to the progression of thought in how the chapter is laid out. Anyone who touches one of the carcasses that will be described “shall be unclean until evening.”

This term is now used in this way for the first time in Scripture. There was a state of defilement which existed, and it would continue until the evening. As Hebrew days go from evening until evening, it is indicating that the state of defilement lasted until the starting of the new day. Only when the old had passed away, could the new come in.

This then looks forward to the work of Christ in two ways. He died in the afternoon, but was buried as the evening approached. With His death and burial, all defilement of man was truly washed away. This is seen in Matthew 27 –

“Now when evening had come, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who himself had also become a disciple of Jesus. ⁵⁸This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be given to him. ⁵⁹When Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, ⁶⁰and laid it in his new tomb which he had hewn out of the rock; and he rolled a large stone against the door of the tomb, and departed. ⁶¹And Mary Magdalene was there, and the other Mary, sitting opposite the tomb.”

-Matthew 27:57-61

²⁵ whoever carries part of the carcass of any of them shall wash his clothes and be unclean until evening:

Carrying a carcass implies that the garments have become defiled, as it would be highly improbable that it did not touch the garments. The defilement of sin, represented by death had to be washed off. This then is actually the second way it looks forward to the work of Christ. Although speaking of the tribulation period, we see the concept of having washed one's garments in Revelation 7 –

“These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” Revelation 7:14

This occurs at the end of the age, represented by the evening time, when all things are made new. Whatever age one comes to Christ, it is for that person, the end of one age and an entering into another. This is seen in Hebrews 9 when speaking of the work of Christ –

“He then would have had to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now, once at the end of the ages, He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.” Hebrews 9:26

It is through Christ that all defilement is washed away. Though the dispensation of grace has lasted for 2000 years, it is still the end of the ages for each who comes to Him by faith. When this dispensation ends, there will be final 7 years of tribulation, and then the millennium will be ushered in.

As far as defilement for touching an unclean carcass, an offering was required for this, as is noted in Leviticus 5:2. However, what seems to be implied is that this offering was only required if this necessary purification was not accomplished through negligence or forgetfulness. If it was performed on the day in which the defilement occurred, then there would be no need for an offering.

²⁶ *The carcass of any animal which divides the foot, but is not cloven-hoofed or does not chew the cud, is unclean to you. Everyone who touches it shall be unclean.*

The words “the carcass” are inserted here, but rightly so. It is speaking not of any animal in the categories, but the carcass of such an animal. If this were not the case, then touching a horse, mule, or donkey would make someone unclean. However, it is obvious from Scripture that this is not the case. Even in the law itself, the touching of such animals is perfectly acceptable.

In verses 26 and 27, we will see animals which are specified by their characteristics. In verses 29 and 30, we will see them identified by specific names. The animal carcasses which do divide the foot, but which are not cloven hoofed, or which do not chew the cud are unclean.

As we saw, not having a cloven hoof is a person who doesn’t rightly divide the word. A person who does not chew the cud is typical of a person who may or may not know the word, but they do not apply it to their lives. The Lord is using real animals to make spiritual images of the various states of man.

The eating of the carcass of such animals was not allowed. But even further, simply touching them made a person unclean.

²⁷ *And whatever goes on its paws, among all kinds of animals that go on *all* fours, those *are* unclean to you. Whoever touches any such carcass shall be unclean until evening.*

The word translated as “paws” here is *kaph*. Literally, it is a hand, or the sole of the foot, just like yours or mine. This then is referring to animals whose feet resemble the hands and feet of a human, such as monkeys, apes, dogs, cats, frogs, bears, and the like.

²⁸ Whoever carries *any such* carcass shall wash his clothes and be unclean until evening. It *is* unclean to you.

This is a general repeat of verse 25, given for specificity concerning, this particular group of animals.

²⁹ These also *shall be* unclean to you among the creeping things that creep on the earth: the mole, the mouse, and the large lizard after its kind;

The *kholed*, or mole, is introduced here, and he will never be seen again. Say hello and goodbye to him. The word comes from *kheled*, meaning “world.” The idea here is that which is temporary and flies swiftly away, just as a mole glides swiftly. The work *kheled* is used in the 17th Psalm and it tells us who the mole pictures –

“With Your hand from men, O Lord,
From men **of the world** *who have* their portion in *this* life,
And whose belly You fill with Your hidden treasure.
They are satisfied with children,
And leave the rest of their *possession* for their babes.” Psalm 17:14

In picture, the person seen in this mole is noted in Philippians 3 –

“For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, *that they are* the enemies of the cross of Christ: ¹⁹ whose end *is* destruction, whose god *is* their belly, and *whose* glory *is* in their shame— who set their mind on earthly things.” Philippians 3:18, 19

The *akbar*, or mouse, will be seen 6 times. It is derived from the same word as spider, which is *akkavish*. This gives the sense of entangling, just as a mouse would weave together its nest. This is the type of person who is spoken of by both Paul in Galatians –

“Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage. ² Indeed I, Paul, say to you that if you become circumcised, Christ will profit you nothing.” Galatians 5:1

The mouse is the person who weaves the law into the grace of Christ, and thus rejects Him. And next is the *tsav*, or “large lizard.” It comes from a root meaning “to establish.” This leads to the idea of clinging fast, just as a lizard clings to whatever it is on. Paul tells us in Romans 12 to abhor what is evil and to cling to what is good. The lizard is emblematic of those who would do just the opposite. They cling to evil and they are unclean.

³⁰ the gecko, the monitor lizard, the sand reptile, the sand lizard, and the chameleon.

The gecko, or *anaqah*, is known for its crying out, or groaning. This animal is reflective of those who groan out against the truth as described by James in his epistle. The *koakh*, or monitor lizard, is also a very common word in the Bible which gives the sense of force or strength – in either a good or bad sense. This is reflective of the person who boasts in their own strength and not in that of Christ. He then is the opposite of what Paul says, “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me” (Philippians 4:13).

After that is the *letaah*, or lizard. You can greet this one as it comes in the door and goes back out. It is only seen this once in Scripture. It comes from a root which means “to hide.” The scholar Bochart says that it creeps close to the ground and is poisonous. It is emblematic of a person Paul and James speak of who have a tongue which is deceitful and full of deadly poison.

Next is the *khomet*, or sand reptile. You can also say hello and goodbye to this fellow as well. He is seen only here in Scripture. *Khomet* comes from an unused root meaning to lie low, and thus creep. Such a person represented here is seen in 2 Timothy 3:6 –

“For of this sort are those who **creep** into households and make captives of gullible women loaded down with sins, led away by various lusts...”

And finally is the *tinshemeth*, or chameleon. This is the same word used in verse 18 to describe the white owl. It is from a root which means to pant, as in a hard breather, and hence to blow away or destroy. As we saw, it speaks of those who would come in to destroy the faith of others.

³¹ These *are* unclean to you among all that creep. Whoever touches them when they are dead shall be unclean until evening.

Again, one is unclean until evening by touching any such carcass. As long as we can remember that each of these is showing us a spiritual picture of uncleanness in specific

people, we can more readily understand why this is included. Believers are to separate themselves from such types, except in the matter of continued evangelism.

³² Anything on which *any* of them falls, when they are dead shall be unclean, whether *it is* any item of wood or clothing or skin or sack, whatever item *it is*, in which *any* work is done, it must be put in water. And it shall be unclean until evening; then it shall be clean.

This verse specifically singles out items in which *melakah*, or work, is done. Nothing is said about such things that are not used for work. All of these items were non-absorbent, and therefore they simply needed to be washed and then they were unclean until evening. On the other hand...

³³ Any earthen vessel into which *any* of them falls you shall break; and whatever *is* in it shall be unclean:

An earthen vessel is absorbent, and therefore it was to be broken. In type, the clay jar is a picture of humanity. In Leviticus 6, a clay instrument which was used for the holy things was to be broken in order to not transfer holiness. Here it is for the exact opposite reason. When it is touched by something defiled, it was also to be broken. The person who has absorbed defilement must be destroyed. This will either happen at the cross of Calvary, or it will happen at the final judgment.

The holy is not to be mixed with the profane, and we, as earthen jars, are to be filled with that which is holy. After that, we are to keep ourselves from being mixed with that which is profane.

³⁴ in such a vessel, any edible food upon which water falls becomes unclean, and any drink that may be drunk from it becomes unclean.

“In such a vessel” is speaking of any vessel in verses 33 & 34. If they have food in them, and that food is moistened with water, or if there is any type of drink in such a vessel, and it has become unclean by one of these carcasses, then the food or drink becomes unclean; it is not to be eaten. In other words, the unclean vessel defiles the water, and the unclean water defiles the food.

³⁵ And everything on which *a part* of *any such* carcass falls shall be unclean; *whether it is* an oven or cooking stove, it shall be broken down; *for they are* unclean, and shall be unclean to you.

Here are mentioned the *tannur* and the *kir*. The *tannur* are small fire pots or even portable earthenware furnaces. The *tannur* represents divine judgment. The *kir*, or stove, is seen only here in the Bible. It is a cooking range consisting of two parallel stones, across which the boiler is set, and it comes from *kur* which is a furnace. It is a picture of divine testing and purification, as in Isaiah 48:10. The picture is clear, there is to be complete purification from, and judgment of, uncleanness from such defilement.

³⁶ Nevertheless a spring or a cistern, in which there is plenty of water, shall be clean, but whatever touches any such carcass becomes unclean.

The *mayan*, or spring hasn't been seen since Genesis 8 at the time when the great springs of the deep gushed forth. It is a spring which issues water from it. The *bowr*, or cistern, is similar. It is a well or a pit. These are then described by the word *mikveh mayim*, or gathering together of water. The idea is that they have water flowing in them underground.

Because of the large volume of water which they contained, and especially for such a pit which would continuously renourish itself, the water would not be considered defiled. However, someone would need to get the dead thing out, and such a person would become unclean in the process. In other words, the carcass remains a source of defilement. And yet, he could wash with the water from which it was pulled out of in order to cleanse himself.

One can see the word of God all over this. It is that which purifies us. It is a constant flow of purification, and will not become defiled, but the one who applies it to their life can still become defiled through mixing with the profane. Thus we need to watch our lives, and purge out that which is unclean.

³⁷ And if a part of any such carcass falls on any planting seed which is to be sown, it remains clean.

The word *zerua* is introduced here. It will only be seen now and in Isaiah 61:11. It indicates a seed which is sown.

A seed is a seed until something is done with it. In Masada, Israel, a collection of date palm seeds were preserved in an ancient jar dating back 2000 years. In 2005, they were planted and one of them sprouted and has grown since then, even going on to

reproduce. It is affectionately known as the Methuselah palm. Until its seed had something done to it, it simply remained a seed.

This is the idea that was understood even 3500 years ago. Seed that was to be planted did not pick up defilement. It remained impermeable to such impurity. If a lizard or some other unclean animal died in a pile of seed, it would not become impure.

³⁸ But if water is put on the seed, and if a part of any such carcass falls on it, it becomes unclean to you.

There are quite a few opinions on what this means, but it should be obvious. If seed becomes wet, and if a carcass falls on it, it becomes unclean. If seed has been sown, then a carcass wouldn't fall on it. Water is the main key to begin germination. Once water is applied to a seed, it begins the process. Therefore, if un-sown seed has had its shell weakened in this way, then the seed becomes defiled. It is not to be used for cooking or for sowing; it is defiled.

The picture is obvious, like seed which will produce after its kind, if a doctrine is defiled, it will produce only defiled doctrine. It cannot be made pure. All false doctrines are unclean and they are to be thrown out.

*Unclean until evening, what will I do?
Nobody saw me touch that thing, and yet this is right
To myself and to my God, I must be true
And it's only 10 more hours until comes the night*

*It's kind of hard for me to understand this
If I had touched it at 5pm, I would only be unclean an hour
What am I not getting, or from the law what did I miss?
That being unclean would carry such a varying power*

*What is it about the ending of the day?
What is it about the turning of that one hour?
That will my debt of uncleanness pay
What is it about that certain time, that carries cleansing power?*

*I know that in Messiah, all of this will be made known
And the revealing of every mystery will be shown*

II. You Shall be Holy For I am Holy (verses 39-47)

³⁹ ‘And if any animal which you may eat dies, he who touches its carcass shall be unclean until evening.

This is speaking of any animal which was considered acceptable as food. If it died, meaning naturally or by being killed by another animal or the like, but not in the proper manner where its blood was drained first, it was unclean and touching it would make the person unclean until evening.

What must be considered after hearing the term “unclean until evening” now for the seventh time is what that must mean. As I said earlier, this is picturing the work of Christ, as it must be. Nothing is said anywhere about the time of the defilement. It might have happened at 6 in the morning or 5:48 on a day when evening started at 6pm. The period of defilement ended at evening – the beginning of a new day.

No distinction is made between 12 hours and 12 minutes. The defilement ends with the new day. Thus, the defilement does not cling for a set time period. It also means that the defilement is one of conscience. More often than not, only God and the person would be aware of what occurred. If a person had a consciousness of their defilement, they were to let it go at evening time.

This is why it is so important to remember that all debts and all defilement, are forever removed in Christ, and the purification of the conscience in Him should therefore be permanent. This is why the good news of the book of Hebrews is such really good news. There we are told that “we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all” (Hebrews 10:10).

⁴⁰ He who eats of its carcass shall wash his clothes and be unclean until evening. He also who carries its carcass shall wash his clothes and be unclean until evening.

Eating the meat of a carcass was forbidden because the animal had not been properly bled. However, if someone did this unintentionally, or if they did it out of necessity, it could not be considered an intentional sin. It became a sin of ceremonial defilement. For such an infraction, the person had to both wash his clothes and remain unclean until evening.

The same is true with someone who carried such a carcass. In the previous verse, we saw that a person who simply touched such a carcass was unclean, but they did not

need to wash their garments. And in carrying the carcass of a clean animal, they became just as unclean as someone who carried the carcass of an unclean animal. In this, we see that it is the *death* which defiles, not the type of animal itself.

⁴¹ ‘And every creeping thing that creeps on the earth *shall be* an abomination. It shall not be eaten.

This is now given as an all-encompassing statement. Besides those eight creatures mentioned in verses 29 & 30 which are forbidden to touch their dead carcasses, and besides those acceptable insects of verses 21 & 22, all other creeping things that creep on the earth were forbidden to be eaten. They were to be considered detestable, putrid things.

⁴² Whatever crawls on its belly, whatever goes on *all* fours, or whatever has many feet among all creeping things that creep on the earth—these you shall not eat, for they *are* an abomination.

The general statement of the previous verse is now broken down into three specifics: 1) Whatever crawls on its belly, meaning serpents and the like; 2) whatever goes on all fours, would be things like scorpions, beetles, and the like; and 3) Whatever has many feet, which describes caterpillars, centipedes, millipedes, and the like. All such things were to be considered as detestable, putrid things to Israel.

Of a point of interest, the word *gakhon*, or belly is used for the last of only two times in the Bible. It was first used in Genesis 3:14 when the serpent was cursed by the Lord –

So the Lord God said to the serpent:
“Because you have done this,
You *are* cursed more than all cattle,
And more than every beast of the field;
On your **belly** you shall go,
And you shall eat dust
All the days of your life. Genesis 3:14

In the Hebrew manuscripts, the third letter of this word is a *vav*, and it is written much larger than other letters – a very rare occurrence in the Bible. The text then adds in a margin note which states that this is the center of the five books of Moses.

But don’t get too excited about that, depending on which text is used, this is not the

always the case. Other countings place it in Leviticus 8:28 or elsewhere. What is exciting about this large *vav*, is that in the first use of *gakhon* in Genesis 3:14, there was no *vav*. But in this final use, there is one, and it is much larger than normal.

As a letter, the *vav* is used as a hook or a transition in the Hebrew language. But, the *vav* isn't just a letter. It also a word, meaning hook. As a word, it is used 13 times in the Bible, all in Exodus in the building of the tabernacle. As a letter, it is the sixth letter of the aleph-bet, six being the number of man. In picture, the hooks of Exodus were clearly seen to be that of the divine Man, Christ Jesus.

It is He who is the hook or *transition* between the two realms – the finite and the infinite. Just as the *vav* is the connector of words and members within a sentence, Christ is the connector between the divine and the earthly. It is a reference to His incarnation. He is the God/Man.

Without stretching this too far, the *vav* of this word *gakhon*, appears to be enlarged to once again point us to Christ. *Gakhon* signifies the belly, as the source of the fetus. It then comes from the word *giakh*, meaning to burst forth. And sure enough, He is the one who burst forth from the belly of woman, being a Man, but who did not inherit the sin caused by the serpent, and who has destroyed that same serpent who moves along on his belly.

If this truly is the center of the Torah, then it is even more remarkable. It would then be one more confirmation that Christ Jesus is the very heart and embodiment of the Torah of God, He being the incarnate Word; the link between the earthly and the heavenly.

⁴³ You shall not make yourselves abominable with any creeping thing that creeps; nor shall you make yourselves unclean with them, lest you be defiled by them.

By eating the detestable things, they would in turn render themselves unclean. They were to be a holy people, and they were not to participate in any activity, including eating, which could then defile them. Here the word “yourselves” is literally “your souls.” The very being of who they were would be defiled by such actions. But once again, it is an action of the conscience. Nothing external can go in and defile a man. The life of Israel was to be one of proper conscience towards the Lord.

⁴⁴ For I *am* the Lord your God.

ki ani Yehovah elohekem. The last time the Lord declared his name was in Exodus 31:13 when He said, *ki ani Yehovah meqadishkem*, “For I am the Lord who sanctifies you.” Now He proclaims His name again, instructing them to sanctify themselves because He has sanctified them. This is seen in His next words...

^{44 (con't)} **You shall therefore consecrate yourselves,**

v'hitqadishthem. Using the same word which He used in Exodus 31:13 – “I am the Lord who sanctifies you,” He tells them to sanctify themselves. There is amazing symmetry in the Bible everywhere you turn. The Lord *has* sanctified his people in order that they *may* sanctify themselves, as is seen next...

^{44 (con't)} **and you shall be holy; for I am holy.**

These words are repeated by Peter in his first epistle, and they form what is truly the main theme of the entire book of Leviticus. But, instead of focusing on externals as in the Law of Moses, Peter's words implore the reader to focus on the internals. The Lord is holy, and therefore His people are to emulate Him and be holy. As always, it is the conscience which dictates this. A person could pick up a bug and nobody would ever know it except the person and the Lord.

Israel missed this important precept though. The rote observance of externals may lead to a holier than thou attitude, but it cannot lead to a holier person, unless it is accompanied by an internal desire to impel the actions forward because of a desire to emulate the Lord.

^{44 (con't)} **Neither shall you defile yourselves with any creeping thing that creeps on the earth.**

What is implied here, and which can be drawn out from the surrounding context, but which took Jesus to explicitly explain to Israel, is that the defilement which occurred here was a defilement of an agreement between the people and the Lord, and in their conscience. This has been explained in several ways, and it is exactly stated in Matthew 15 –

“Are you also still without understanding? ¹⁷ Do you not yet understand that whatever enters the mouth goes into the stomach and is eliminated? ¹⁸ But those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile a

man. ¹⁹ For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. ²⁰ These are *the things* which

defile a man, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile a man.”

-Matthew 15:16-20

⁴⁵ For I *am* the Lord who brings you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God.

This is the first time this expression is used in the book of Leviticus and it will be used eight more times in this book alone. He is tying the dietary laws into sanctification and holiness, and he is tying those things into His redemptive act of bringing them out of Egypt.

Egypt was a land defiled by animal worship – from the scarab beetle to the cobra, from the cat to the jackal, and from the ibis to the falcon – even to countless more. And so the Lord had set parameters around animal life in order to demonstrate His holiness. He had brought them out from that, and His intent with these rules was to show that He is above them all, and that He determined what would defile them and what would keep them holy.

In essence, this statement is intended to show them the obligations that He set forth for them, and it was to expose their ingratitude of His goodness when they rebelled and went against His word. He then succinctly sums up His overall requirements once again...

⁴⁵ (con't) You shall therefore be holy, for I *am* holy.

Their need for holiness is tied directly to His inherent holiness. Not possessing it on their part meant that they had no part in Him. This is a precept which seems entirely missed by them, even to this day. When they pray their feast blessings, Sabbath blessings, etc., they repeat the words “who has sanctified us with His commandments.” But one of His commandments is that they too are to be sanctified; they are to be holy. A partial, or selective observance of the Law is to make the law void and to nullify the sanctification needed on *their* part.

⁴⁶ ‘This *is* the law of the animals and the birds and every living creature that moves in the waters, and of every creature that creeps on the earth,

This is an overall summary of the law which has been given. However, it is interesting that in the chapter, they are listed as 1) the land animals, 2) the water animals, 3) the

birds of the air, and 4) the swarming animals. But the order of this summary is different. It is 1) the land animals, 2) the birds of the air, 3) the water animals, and 4) the swarming animals. This is the same thing that happened with the summary of the sacrificial law in chapters 1-7. The second two in the category are reversed.

⁴⁷ to distinguish between the unclean and the clean, and between the animal that may be eaten and the animal that may not be eaten.”

The parameters for Israel are set, and they were given for a specific purpose and for a set time frame. The people were to use the guidelines in order for them to actively distinguish what could be eaten and what could not be eaten, and between what was clean and what was to be considered unclean.

Now, in Christ, those things which were once deemed unclean are no longer so reckoned. There is a marvelous freedom in Christ which these types and shadows only looked forward to. If you are struggling with the many laws found in the law, and if you are attempting to be obedient to some or all of them in order to “make God happy,” knock it off. If you want to make Him happy, put your trust in Christ and put away deeds of the law. Rest in Christ, trust in Christ, and be freed from the bondage of the law through Christ.

Closing Verse: *“I know and am convinced by the Lord Jesus that there is nothing unclean of itself; but to him who considers anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean.”*

-Romans 14:14

Next Week: Leviticus 12:1-8 *We will milk these verses for all they’re worth...* (Purification After Childbirth) (18th Leviticus Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if you have a lifetime of sin heaped up behind you, He can wash it away and purify you completely and wholly. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

Dive In – Nothing is Unclean of Itself

‘By these you shall become unclean
Whoever touches the carcass of any of them, you see
Shall be unclean until evening
So shall it be

Whoever carries part of the carcass of any of them, a gruesome scene
Shall wash his clothes and until evening shall be unclean

The carcass of any animal which divides the foot
But is not cloven-hoofed or does not chew the cud
Is unclean to you
Everyone who touches it shall be unclean, whether sis or bud

And whatever goes on its paws
Among all kinds of animals that on all fours go
Those are unclean to you
Whoever touches any such carcass shall be unclean until evening
----- It shall be so

Whoever carries any such carcass
Shall wash his clothes and until evening be unclean
It is unclean to you
It is not to be considered proper hygiene

'These also shall be unclean to you
Among the creeping things that creep on the earth, yes every one
The mole, the mouse, and the large lizard after its kind; the gecko too
The monitor lizard, the sand reptile, the sand lizard, and the chameleon

These are unclean to you among all that creep
Whoever touches them when they are dead
Shall be unclean until evening
Pay heed to this word, just as I have said
Anything on which any of them falls
When they are dead shall be unclean
Whether it is any item of wood or clothing, or skin or sack
Whatever item it is, in which any work is done, it must be put in water
-----for proper hygiene

And it shall be unclean until evening; you see
Then it shall be clean, so shall it be

Any earthen vessel into which any of them falls you shall break

And whatever is in it shall be unclean, this distinction you shall make

In such a vessel, any edible food
Upon which water falls becomes unclean
And any drink that may be drunk from it becomes unclean
Even if it has something nummy like caffeine

And everything on which a part of any such carcass falls
Shall be unclean; whether it is an oven or cooking stove
It shall be broken down; for they are unclean
And shall be unclean to you, not a part of your treasure trove

Nevertheless a spring or a cistern
In which there is plenty of water, shall be clean
But whatever touches any such carcass becomes unclean
Pay heed to what my instructions mean

And if a part of any such carcass falls
On any planting seed which is to be sown, it remains clean
But if water is put on the seed, and if a part of any such carcass falls on it
It becomes unclean to you; yes, unclean is what I mean

‘And if any animal which you may eat dies
He who touches its carcass shall unclean until evening be
He who eats of its carcass shall wash his clothes
And be unclean until evening; this is My decree

He also who carries its carcass shall wash his clothes
And be unclean until evening, as to you I disclose
‘And every creeping thing that creeps
On the earth shall be an abomination
It shall not be eaten
This law is given to the whole Israelite nation

Whatever crawls on its belly
Whatever goes on all fours, even from its birth
Or whatever has many feet
Among all creeping things that creep on the earth

These you shall not eat, my holy nation
For they are an abomination
You shall not make yourselves abominable
With any creeping thing that creeps, you see
Nor shall you make yourselves unclean with them
Lest you be defiled by them, as you certainly will be

For I am the Lord your God
You shall therefore consecrate yourselves to Me
And you shall be holy
For I am holy
Neither shall you defile yourselves, diminishing your worth
With any creeping thing that creeps on the earth

For I am the Lord
Who brings you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God
You shall therefore be holy, for I am holy
Be circumspect in the path that you tread

'This *is* the law of the animals and the birds
And every living creature that moves in the waters too
And of every creature that creeps on the earth
To distinguish between the unclean and the clean, as I so instruct you

And between the animal that may be eaten, nummy and good
And the animal that may not be eaten, be sure you have understood
Lord God, thank you for having done what we could not do
You fulfilled the law, and now it is done for us
It is over, annulled and through
Thank You O God, for the work of our Lord Jesus

And so through Him to You we give all of our praise
And we thank You for our freedoms in Christ, our matchless King
We shall rest in Him and His finished work for all of our days
And to You O God, we shall lift our voices and sing

Hallelujah and Amen...

LEVITICUS 12:1-8

(PURIFICATION AFTER CHILDBIRTH)

Who does God favor? The book of Isaiah says that the Lord, who is the High and Lofty One who inhabits eternity, and whose name is Holy – whose throne is heaven and whose footstool is the earth – this great One will look upon the one who is poor and of a contrite spirit, and who trembles at His word.

There are lots of rich folk in the world. Some have millions, some hundreds of millions, and some billions. The world is working towards its first trillionaire, and it's a coin toss who it will be. But just ask the Lord about that. "Big deal" He will say. In fact, Jesus said "You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God" (Luke 16:15).

Fancy cars, lots of money, a big house with a great view... it is as temporary as the next market crash, or the sudden telephone pole that runs in front of your car. And more, if that is where you have put your hope, it truly is an abomination to God. He despises your priorities.

Nothing like those things lasts forever, but the favor of God does. And He favors the poor that has a contrite spirit far more than He favors an arrogant rich son of a nuther rich guy. The question is, just how poor can you get and yet still be in favor with Him? Well, we can go to the Bible and find out...

Text Verse: *"For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich."*

-2 Corinthians 8:9

The Bible says that Jesus Christ was rich – rich indeed was He! He possessed all of heaven's riches, power, and glory. And yet, He came and walked among us. He was so poor that we read in the book of Luke that certain women, whom Luke goes on to name, provided for Him from their substance.

In today's world, that might seem like a real bonus, to have a lady support you, but in Israel of old, that would have been a very humbling experience. It is not the kind of thing one would openly brag about. But the Bible actually highlights it so that we know His state among the people.

And more, it was pretty much always this way for Him. Take time to read through the New Testament, and you will get hints of it elsewhere. Maybe we'll bring it up again later in this sermon. Yes, I think we will. So stay awake, pay attention, and we'll get through these verses that you are shaking your head over and saying, "What on earth do I care about these eight verses Charlie just read to me?"

You will... you will care. Do you know why? Because it is a part of His magnificent and superior word. And you, like me, are the type who trembles at His word. It is perfect, it is holy, and it is a delight to the eyes and a joy to the heart. It is the wisdom of God, revealing His Son in each passage, on every page, and through every word. It is His superior word. And so let's turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. After the Birth of a Child (verses 1-8)

¹Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying,

Chapter 11 dealt with clean and unclean foods, all things which could be eaten, or which were forbidden to be eaten. It opened with the words, "Now the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying to them..." Chapter 12 begins an entirely new thought, one which is introduced in the normal way by stating the words, *v'dabber Yehovah el Mosheh lemor*, or "And spoke Yehovah unto Moses, saying..." Aaron is once again left out of the words of instruction. What will be spoken is a completely different thought than Chapter 11, but it still deals with what is clean and that which is unclean.

Interestingly, the pattern follows that of the Genesis creation account. The animals were first described as having been created, and only then were humans created. The animals which could render an Israelite unclean were first detailed, and then that which is from man and which caused impurity in man is then detailed.

As we saw, the named animals each gave a picture of something else. Therefore, that which is outside the body and physical, but which caused spiritual defilement was first named. Now, that which comes from within the body and which is spiritual (inherited sin), and which caused more spiritual defilement, is named.

This is a chapter which has caused consternation for some people. It is as if they feel the Lord is saying there is some type of wrongdoing in having children. For example, a general search on Leviticus 12 on Google came up with the question, "Is Leviticus 12 saying that giving birth to a child is sin?" This type of question, or one about why female

children bring about a longer duration of uncleanness than a male, are most common.

There certainly must be a valid reason for each thing instructed in this chapter, but the words certainly seem foreign to anything we consider in our normal day to day thoughts.

²“Speak to the children of Israel, saying:

The contents of this chapter were to be relayed to all of the people. This was not a set of instructions merely for the priests to receive and contemplate, but all of Israel was to be informed of the guidelines which are presented here. It was something to be ingrained in the national psyche so that when the issue came about, it would be adhered to.

² (con’t) ‘If a woman has conceived, and borne a male child,

ishah ki tazria v’yaledah zakar - “Woman if bring forth seed and bears male.” The word translated as “conceived” is the verb form of the word *zera*, or seed, commonly used in the Genesis creation account, and which was also used in Genesis 3:15 with the promise of the coming Redeemer. It is that by which life continues on. The woman here has conceived, *zara*, because she has received seed, or *zera*, in order for that to come about. In this case, the result is a male child.

² (con’t) then she shall be unclean seven days;

A state of defilement is noted because of the birth of the child. The uncleanness belonged to her, however, not to the child. Nothing is mentioned concerning premature birth, and so this indicates that whenever the child is born, the state of uncleanness exists. And so, even though the uncleanness belongs to her, it is the result of the beginning of the life. The life began, and at some point a child would be born, resulting in uncleanness for the mother.

² (con’t) as in the days of her customary impurity she shall be unclean.

The “days of her customary impurity” is speaking of the monthly period cycle. This is specifically recorded in Leviticus 15 with very detailed instructions. The first verse of that section says –

“If a woman has a discharge, *and* the discharge from her body is blood, she shall be set apart seven days; and whoever touches her shall be unclean until evening.”

-Leviticus 15:19

The word for “customary” is *niddah*. This is the first of 29 times it will be used, mostly in Leviticus and Numbers. It comes from the word *nadad*, meaning “to flow” or “depart.” Thus it is that which flows. The word for “impurity” is found only here in the Bible. It is *davah*. It gives the sense of being sick, as if in menstruation. The state of impurity for childbirth follows the same line of reasoning as for that of the menstrual cycle. There has been an issue of blood which then causes defilement to the woman.

The fact that the impurity of childbirth is to be the same as that for having a period, even before the law of the period has been given, shows that the custom was already known and practiced, even before it became a part of the law. This is evident from an account all the way back in Genesis –

“Now Rachel had taken the household idols, put them in the camel’s saddle, and sat on them. And Laban searched all about the tent but did not find *them*.³⁵ And she said to her father, “Let it not displease my lord that I cannot rise before you, for the manner of women *is* with me.” And he searched but did not find the household idols.” Genesis 31:34, 35

³ And on the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised.

Surprisingly, this is the only time that *mul*, or circumcision, is mentioned in all of Leviticus. Upon the ending of the time of the flow of her sickness, the child was then to be circumcised. This however, corresponds to what was originally prescribed for circumcision in the first place. That is recorded in Genesis 17 –

And God said to Abraham: “As for you, you shall keep My covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations.¹⁰ This *is* My covenant which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: Every male child among you shall be circumcised;¹¹ and you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and you.¹² He who is eight days old among you shall be circumcised, every male child in your generations, he who is born in your house or bought with money from any foreigner who is not your descendant.¹³ He who is born in your house and he who is bought with your money must be circumcised, and My covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant.¹⁴ And the uncircumcised male child, who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that person shall be cut off from his people; he has broken My covenant.” Genesis 17:9-14

The ending of the woman's customary impurity coincides with the time for the rite of circumcision. The importance of these two events coinciding in this way is because anything or anyone who touched a woman in such a time of impurity was considered unclean until evening. Thus, the child whom she nursed and held, would be considered as such.

Therefore, the circumcision of the child needed to be conducted after this time of defilement, and also in accord with what was prescribed to Abraham in Genesis 17. Everything fits perfectly in God's law to ensure all will come out as it is intended to for His people. Unlike laws in America today, nothing in the law will cause a person to break one law while being obedient to another.

⁴She shall then continue in the blood of *her* purification thirty-three days.

The noun *tahorah*, or purification, is introduced here. It will be seen 15 times, mostly in Leviticus, but a few other times throughout the Old Testament. It comes from the verb *taher* which means to make clean or pure. Thus, it is the state of purification, and in this case, the state of pure blood. The state was to continue for 33 days, making the total time of cleansing 40 days.

What needs to be understood is why these things are decreed. Leviticus 17:11 tells us that the life of the flesh is in the blood. When a woman has her period, it is blood that is no longer used for the purpose of life, thus death is associated with it. As death is the result of sin, it is considered unclean.

When a woman becomes pregnant, periods end and the blood is redirected for the purpose of advancing life. When that life finally comes forth, the blood is no longer needed for the child in the same way and the body begins to go back to the previous state, but she does produce milk for the child. During this transition phase, the blood is in its state of purification.

^{4 (con't)}She shall not touch any hallowed thing, nor come into the sanctuary until the days of her purification are fulfilled.

During these final 33 days, she was not considered as unclean except in regard to the holy things. She could not touch the first-tithes, the flesh of offerings, and so on. Further, she was forbidden from entering the sanctuary during this time. However, other than being kept separate from these holy things, she could live a normal life in any other

respect. Her blood was regarded as *tahorah*, or in a state of purification, and not *nidah*, or in an impure state.

⁵ ‘But if she bears a female child, then she shall be unclean two weeks, as in her customary impurity,

The period of impurity is doubled for that of a female child. Again, it is not the child who is deemed impure; it is the mother. And, instead of 7 days, it is 14. However, the child will remain with the mother during the time of impurity. She will be breastfed and tended to here constantly.

The only difference that is noted in the entire passage is that the boy is circumcised, and the girl is not. Thus, including circumcision, which would otherwise seem superfluous, must have bearing on the period of purification. It is showing us a theological reason for the doubling.

Although unknown to the Hebrew people why they circumcised, they knew they were to circumcise. We know now that it was a picture of the coming Christ in whom the sin nature would be cut. As sin transfers from father to child, the rite of circumcision, or cutting the male sex organ, symbolized a cutting away of the sin nature. In the coming of Christ, who had no human father, the transfer of sin was cut in reality. His Father being God, no sin was transmitted to the Son.

The picture being made is that in the circumcision of the child, the blood of sickness, that word *davah* of verse 2, which is found nowhere else in Scripture, is cut from the child. Only the mother had it, and her time of sickness had run its course. But with the female child, there was no circumcision, and so she would continue on the sickness in her own life. Thus a doubling of the time of uncleanness symbolizes this.

The boy was an Israelite, but not yet a Hebrew until he was circumcised. But the girl, though an Israelite, was not considered as such, and so a doubling of the time of impurity is mandated to rectify this.

^{5 (con't)} and she shall continue in the blood of *her* purification sixty-six days.

Fourteen days plus sixty-six days totals eighty days. This is the time of purification for a female child, not because there is anything wrong with being a female, or with having a female, but because of the typology which the Lord is presenting to us. The time of separation is doubled because the girl was not circumcised. Thus, in type, her positional

uncleanness as a female required its own forty-day period of separation. As John Lange notes –

“The totality of the forty days of purification at the birth of a boy corresponds to the former explanation of the forty days in the life of Moses and Elijah: it is the symbolical time of purification, of exclusion from the world, as it was extended for the whole people to forty years. And the doubling of the forty days in the case of the new-born girl explains itself, if forty days are reckoned for the girl and forty for the mother; a doubling which could not be applied to the circumcised boy.” John Lange

What is seen here is typology, not actual human uncleanness. The boy is circumcised, and is considered to have crossed over, or become a Hebrew – as the name implies. The girl has not, and must go through her own time of separation, and so the period is doubled in order to be inclusive of mother and child. The reason for that is, as I have already said, the mother and the child are always in contact with one another. Therefore, their state of uncleanness is shared between one another. In the case of a male, it is only in one direction. Thus, the ending of her forty days ends the time of separation for both.

⁶ ‘When the days of her purification are fulfilled, whether for a son or a daughter,

On the 41st day for a male, or on the 81st day for a female, the days of purification were considered fulfilled. It is at this time that...

^{6 (con’t)} she shall bring to the priest a lamb of the first year as a burnt offering, and a young pigeon or a turtledove as a sin offering, to the door of the tabernacle of meeting.

There is an equalizing of male and female here which completely discounts any notion of greater uncleanness being derived from a female as there is for a male. The entire argument is shown as absurd by these words. The same sacrifice is required for either a male or a female. The state of uncleanness is then theological and typological, not natural. The Lord is giving us insights into the coming Messiah and the process of redemption in these verses.

In the offering itself, the burnt offering is noted first, and it is the greater and more expensive offering. The sin-offering is then noted, and it is small in proportion to that of the burnt-offering. These come in the opposite for the normal order of offerings where the sin-offering was always presented first.

The burnt-offering is a demonstration of the consecration of dedicating new life to the Lord. The sin offering is for the ending of the extended period of uncleanness of the mother. This sin-offering is not for sin committed, but for the state of human sin which exists in her. It is a type of ceremonial defilement.

For these, a *kebes ben sh'nato* or "lamb son of his year" was to be presented for the burnt offering. This is a lamb still within its first year. Along with that, a dove or a turtledove was to be presented for a sin offering. Together, these were to be presented, as it says, at the door of the tent of meeting.

This actually means, as we have seen in multiple sermons, at the altar of burnt offering. However, the sacrifice at the altar is what symbolically allows access through the door of the tent of meeting. From there, the person would symbolically be brought into the Holy Place of the tabernacle.

Each of these offerings, typical of Christ – as previously seen, was made in anticipation of the truths which they picture in His coming. They were to be presented to the officiating priest.

⁷ Then he shall offer it before the Lord, and make atonement for her.

Here the stress is laid on the sin offering. It is that which makes a covering, or atonement, for the mother. It is typical of the atonement of Christ for all sin, both inherited and committed.

^{7 (con't)} And she shall be clean from the flow of her blood.

Upon the completion of the sin offering, the woman was atoned for, and she is considered clean from the flow of her blood. The word for flow here, *maqor*, is new to Scripture. It indicates a spring or a fountain which has been dug out, and thus it is euphemistically applied to the flow of menstruation. It will be used just 18 times, and only in Leviticus is it used in this way. It is elsewhere at times used when speaking of the Lord, as in Him being the fountain of living waters, or the fountain of cleansing, and so on.

The flow of her blood has made the woman unclean, and yet the blood which flowed within the woman to nurture Christ formed the most precious blood of all, even springing up to be the Fountain of living waters which can heal all people from all sin and uncleanness.

⁷ (con't) **This is the law for her who has borne a male or a female.**

It is this law, prescribed in the previous verses, which is to be fulfilled according to its words for a woman who has born a male or a female. There are no exceptions, and this verse, when taken in connection with Scripture found in the New Testament, disproves wholly and completely, the idea of Immaculate Conception. It is a false teaching which is heretical in what it states and implies. This will be explained while evaluating the final verse of the chapter...

⁸ ‘And if she is not able to bring a lamb, then she may bring two turtledoves or two young pigeons—one as a burnt offering and the other as a sin offering. So the priest shall make atonement for her, and she will be clean.’”

The way the Hebrew reads here is, “And if her hand is not able to reach what is sufficient for a lamb.” In other words, the hand is used to describe what the hand acquires. It would be like saying, “Charlie’s face could never make him a model.” The face is being used to describe the woeful appearance which no modeling agency would hire. In this verse, the words are intended to mean that the woman is too poor to be able to afford a lamb.

In such a case, an allowance was made that the family might bring two turtledoves or two young pigeons instead of a lamb and a pigeon or a turtledove. The burnt offering could be lessened from the lamb to the bird. This gracious act would probably have been very infrequently used.

First, in such a case of rejoicing, the family would surely have extended family who could help out with such a thing. Secondly, there was an extended time to prepare for it. From the time it was known a child was due, until the time of the days of purification were over, the family could prepare for such a wonderful offering to the Lord. To come with just two birds would thus show the magnitude of the poverty of the couple who so came forward.

And yet... this is what occurred at the temple in Jerusalem just after the time of the birth of Israel’s true King. The One who possessed all of heaven’s riches condescended to come to earth to dwell among men. But he didn’t do it in a king’s house, at least not the house of an earthly king. Instead, he came to the poorest of poor. In the Gospel of Luke, we read these words –

Now when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were completed, they brought Him to Jerusalem to present *Him* to the Lord ²³ (as it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every male who opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord”), ²⁴ and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the law of the Lord, “A pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.” Luke 2:22-24

In this case, the Child who was called “holy to the Lord,” was and is the Lord, and yet His parents were in such abject poverty that they could afford but a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons. With the presentation of these humble offerings of sacrifice, the priest would have thus declared Mary, the mother of the Lord, cleansed.

And so that brings us back to the concept of Immaculate Conception. If Mary was born sinless, if she remained sinless throughout her life, and if she was the receptacle for the sinless Son of God, then there would be no sin of any kind to be atoned for – imputed or committed. And thus the offering would not have to be made. But Mary did have to offer for herself, and thus the Bible bears witness that there is but One who is sinless, Christ the Lord.

It is heretical to say that she bore no sin, for several important reasons. First, if God could make a person sinless apart from Christ, then there would be no need for Christ. Secondly, if Mary was sinless, then she could be an acceptable redemptrix or mediatrix for man, but the Bible says otherwise of both. All typology, and all written Scripture demonstrates that Christ alone is sinless, and that we are to fix our eyes and thoughts on Christ alone. And we are to submit our prayers to God through Him alone.

*Soon I will be cleansed from all defilement
The time of purification is now complete
And so at the sanctuary I have an appointment
Yes, towards the sanctuary, I will move my feet*

*I will make an offering to my God
A burnt offering and a sin offering too
And so, with my sandals I am shod
To the sanctuary I go, and this I shall do*

*There for my impurity and my sin comes my atonement
The priest will perform the rite, and I will be clean
I will certainly not miss this appointment
And so the trek to the sanctuary I now convene*

*And with me will go this beautiful Child
The One whom God gave me, when upon me He smiled*

*What a marvel and a mystery, how will it all turn out?
Praise the Lord who has brought this thing about*

II. Pictures of Christ and His Work

Having looked at these verses, and seen the requirements of the law, we still need to ask ourselves, “If the defilement of the woman was typological, then what type is being presented to us?” We have seen shades of Christ, but just dabs here and there. What is the overall picture showing us?

Well, first of all we see the concept of inherited sin. Man is born of woman, and that very act, according to the law, brings about a state of uncleanness. Thus, it is something that is inherited in all people because all are born of woman, and all can potentially be the parent of a woman. As this state of uncleanness is a part of the biological processes of women, then it shows that the uncleanness is an inherited one.

As this is so, then there must have been an original sin from which it came. Sin cannot evolve into a being. Rather it occurred as an infraction against God, and it is then transmitted to those who follow after. As I said in verse 2, the uncleanness belongs to the mother. It is the result of the beginning of the life. The life began, and at some point a child would be born, resulting in uncleanness for the mother. The uncleanness is not acquired from the child, but from the childbearing process; it is already within her.

Further, the fact that this defiled state, which resulted from the issue of blood, was understood before the time of the giving of the law – as was seen in the account of Rachel and Laban – it shows that the law did not introduce the uncleanness. Instead, it simply defined it, and what was to be done with it.

The time periods, however, are introduced now. Seven days and thirty-three days, and fourteen days and sixty six days. The only remarkable distinction between the two which could justify the difference is the rite of circumcision. As we know, circumcision points directly and specifically to Christ.

And so the forty days and the eighty days must then point to what He has done as well. To understand the significance of what is being seen, we first must remind ourselves of what the number forty signifies in Scripture. EW Bullinger defines it for us. It...

“...has long been universally recognized as an important number, both on account of the frequency of its occurrence, and the uniformity of its association with a period of *probation, trial, and chastisement*—(not *judgment* ...). It is the product of 5 and 8, and points to the action of *grace* (5), leading to and ending in *revival* and *renewal* (8). This is certainly the case where *forty* relates to a period of evident *probation*.”

A time of probation, trial, and chastisement, but not punishment, is seen in picture by bearing of the male child. However, John Lange was right as to why it was doubled for the female when he said –

“And the doubling of the forty days in the case of the new-born girl explains itself, if forty days are reckoned for the girl and forty for the mother; a doubling which could not be applied to the circumcised boy.” John Lange

The mother with the circumcised child, picturing Christ, was cleansed by a period of forty days. However, the female required an additional forty days because there was no circumcision involved to purify the female. And so their time of uncleanness was served not concurrently, but sequentially, and in full for each. Here then we have a picture of the law and of grace. This was first seen in the account of Moses receiving the law.

He was on Mt. Sinai for forty days and forty nights, the same length of time as for the cleansing from giving birth to a male child. But Israel was down in the valley whipping up a golden calf, even after having agreed to accept the covenant. They broke the covenant and the covenant was broken, symbolized by Moses’ dashing the tablets to the ground. What we don’t see until Deuteronomy, is that Moses’ second ascent up the mountain was also for forty days and forty nights –

“And I fell down before the Lord, as at the first, forty days and forty nights; I neither ate bread nor drank water, because of all your sin which you committed in doing wickedly in the sight of the Lord, to provoke Him to anger.”

-Deuteronomy 9:18

He petitioned the Lord for mercy, and they received it. When he came down with the second set of tablets, they were placed inside of the Ark, which clearly pictures Christ. He is the embodiment of the law, pictured by them being placed inside the Ark and under the Mercy Seat. The two periods of forty days, in themselves, look forward then to the work of Christ which still lay ahead.

And so here we have a picture of Israel being born of woman, and being circumcised on the eighth day which in type ends the *nidah*, or impure state. From there she is in the state of *tahorah* or purification for thirty-three more days, or to the end of the full forty. However, this is only a picture. No Israelite could meet the demands of the law. And so they still needed grace.

This was until the coming of Christ, the true Israel and the fulfillment of the picture of circumcision. Sin was cut in Him. Literally, forty days after His birth from the womb of Mary, Christ – the second Adam – was presented to the temple in Human flesh.

After that, and during His life, He endured forty days of trial, carefully recorded in all three synoptic gospels. He defeated the devil then, and He continued to defeat him throughout his life, finally going to the cross, still sinless, and thus an acceptable offering to God for the sins of the people. This is the time of the law. Forty days of trial for the law.

From there, He rose again, offering grace to His people. But remember, the forty days of purification under the law was only typical of Christ, not Israel under the law. They were not cleansed by the law, because they had inherited sin. Only those under the law who looked forward to Christ in faith were truly saved, and that by faith, not by the law.

Like the mother who was awaiting the end of her forty days, they were progressing towards a state of cleanness, but only in picture. Those forty days are a period of probation leading to revival and renewal in Christ. This is the law, leading to grace.

The mother who bore a female, however, had to go through eighty days. This is symbolized by Christ's first forty days, and then his second forty days. These second forty days are recorded in Acts 1 –

“The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, ² until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen, ³ to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.” Acts 1:2, 3

There was the law; there was the fulfillment of the law in Christ, and then there was the pouring out of grace. After His resurrection, or what could be considered His birth from the grave – as is seen in Colossians 1:18 and Revelation 1:5 – He was again presented in

Human flesh, but this time it was at the Ascension and to the heavenly temple. There, we are presented in Him, cleansed and purified. This is the time of grace. Forty days for grace.

Throughout the years, it has been argued that the longer period of cleansing for a female represented a lower status of women within the society, but this is incorrect. Samuel Balentine explains –

The logic of this interpretation is faulty for at least two reasons. First Lev 27 assigns a higher value to males because of their ability to carry out the heavy labour associated with the sanctuary, not because of their inherent worth. Second, the rationale behind the priestly purity system would suggest that the potential for defilement is related to an object or a person's power, not weakness. Thus, if a female's impurities require more attention, it might well be argued that she must be accorded more regard, not less, than a male. (Samuel Balentine, *Leviticus. (Interpretation)*. John Knox Press, 2002).

And so it is. In the Bible, there is far more regard for those under grace than those under law. In fact, the law sets up a barrier between God and His people, except for that of the intervention of Christ Himself who is the fulfillment of these types and pictures. As He is perfect and without sin, the first forty days was for Him, proving that He is the true and circumcised male Child. For all in the body looking forward to Him, they are cleansed by His word.

The time after His resurrection from the grave was for those of us who come after as the fully cleansed female. This is why the terms "congregation" or *edah* in Hebrew, and church, or *ecclesia* in Greek, are both feminine words. Both are purified, completely and wholly, through the grace of Jesus Christ, and we will be presented as a called-out group and as a chaste virgin to one Husband, free from all defilement because of the work of Christ.

And so in this passage today, we see that everything points to Him. The circumcised Male child; the purification of the female through His grace, the time frames given to show us pictures of this, the burnt offering of the lamb – the perfect and acceptable fragrant offering to God – or the dove or turtledove! The sin offering – the dove and the turtle dove. The cleansing, the atonement, it is all about Jesus Christ. Every beautiful word of this almost completely ignored or misinterpreted passage of Scripture points to Christ.

And a point we should consider before we close concerns what Christ went through for

us in His earthly life. As I said earlier, the law states that anyone who touched a woman in the time of her customary impurity would be considered unclean until evening. This means that Jesus was in this state for the first seven days of His life. Think it through, the Lord of all creation, was considered ceremonially unclean according to His own law which He gave to Israel, for the first seven days of His life. On the last day of His life, He then took all of the uncleanness of man upon Himself, thus becoming an unclean thing for us before His Father. If this doesn't show to you the extent to which God was willing to go to reconcile us to Himself, I'm not sure what else would.

The amazing thing is that right in the middle of a book which causes eyes to glaze over and heads to nod, there is treasure – rich and abundant – if we will just look for it. Never stop asking yourself, “Lord, what are these verses here for?” With time and study, it will be revealed to you. But, there is a truth that you need to consider. You cannot tie in the rest of Scripture with passages like this if you DO NOT KNOW the rest of Scripture. Open it! Read it! Listen to it as you drive! Meditate on it! Contemplate it! Memorize it! Return to the well day and night. The more you are in it, the more it all comes together to make complete sense.

In the end, it is all about Jesus. Each section is intended to show us this. And with Jesus, there is a plan that is being worked out. It is a marvelous plan where life and purity is drawn out from death and impurity. If that life isn't drawn out, then we will remain forever unclean and impure. And so the fact is that we need Jesus. You need Jesus. Let me tell you about how you too can have JESUS.

Closing Verse: *“Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace,
According to Your word;*

³⁰ For my eyes have seen Your salvation

³¹ Which You have prepared before the face of all peoples,

³² A light to bring revelation to the Gentiles,

And the glory of Your people Israel.” Luke 2:29-32

Next Week: Leviticus 13:1-17 *Oh boy, oh boy, oh boy! Won't this be fun...* (The Law of Leprosy, Part I) (19th Leviticus Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if you have a lifetime of sin heaped up behind you, He can wash it away and purify you completely and wholly. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

Purification After Childbirth

Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying
These are the words He was then relaying

“Speak to the children of Israel, saying:
‘If a woman has conceived, and borne a male child
Then she shall be unclean seven days
So shall her state be, as one defiled

As in the days of her customary impurity
She shall be unclean, so shall she be

And on the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin
Shall be circumcised, so shall it be done to him

She shall then continue in the blood
Of her purification thirty-three days
She shall not touch any hallowed thing
Nor come into the sanctuary during this phase
Until the days of her purification are fulfilled
Thus shall it be as I have willed
‘But if she bears a female child
Then she shall for two weeks be unclean
As in her customary impurity
That totals days fourteen

And she shall continue in the blood of her purification
Sixty-six days according to this notification

‘When the days of her purification are fulfilled
Whether for a son or a daughter, remember this thing
She shall bring to the priest a lamb of the first year
As a burnt offering

And a young pigeon or a turtledove as a sin offering
To the door of the tabernacle of meeting

Then he shall offer it before the Lord

And make atonement for her, according to this detail
And she shall be clean from the flow of her blood
This is the law for her who has borne a male or a female

'And if she is not able to bring a lamb
Then she may two turtledoves or two young pigeons bring
One as a burnt offering
And the other as a sin offering

So the priest shall make atonement for her
And she will be clean; no longer impure

Lord, who can bring out purity from that which is impure
How can we be cleansed, when we are already found with sin?
It seemed like we were goners, a disease the law couldn't cure
Yes, surely it looked like we were done in

But from the woman came a Child, born without sin
And from Him came cleansing for us all
No longer are we fearful of being done in
When upon the name of JESUS, we do call
Hallelujah that purity can come to we who are impure
By calling on Jesus and being washed from all our sin
Now eternity is ours, His shed blood this does ensure
No longer are we fearful that we are done in

Thank You, O God, for our precious Lord Jesus
Thank You, O God, for all You have done for us
Hallelujah and Amen...

LEVITICUS 13:1-17 (THE LAW OF LEPROSY, PART I)

Chapters 13 & 14 go into great detail concerning the issue of the dreaded disease of leprosy. It is argued that the Hebrew word signifies various diseases or conditions which are all lumped under the one word which is translated as leprosy. For this reason, the NIV translates the word as “defiling skin disease.”

In English, the word comes from the Greek *leproa* which is from *lepis*, a scale. This is because with leprosy, the body would at times be covered with thin white scales. It would then give it the appearance of snow. There are many great commentaries on the actual afflictions, and how they affected the people and the society.

If you are into the medical aspects of these things, all you need to do is read the verses of these two chapters, and you will know a sufficient amount to determine what is being conveyed. For further details, you can go to any of those myriad commentaries and read all about the afflictions from a medical standpoint.

But... what is being relayed in these chapters is not just something that is found on the surface. It is also information which conveys pictures of other things. As always, the Bible needs to be looked at from the viewpoint of it being a manual about the redemption of man. If considered from that viewpoint, and with Jesus Christ as the One to bring this about, then what seems obscure and pointless becomes far more interesting.

Text Verse: *“It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.” John 6:63*

We will carefully evaluate these chapters and verses with a view to why God selected the particular words and things which surround that which brings uncleanness and that which brings about cleanness. In so doing, we will be able to see really exquisite pictures of His dealings with man. Physical afflictions made a person unclean under the law, but these things are not carried over in the New Testament. There is nothing which says, “A person with various skin afflictions is barred from the church.”

If these things could truly defile a person, then the Lord would have re-included them in the New Testament. But they don't. Jesus tells us that the flesh profits nothing. It is not the flesh that the Lord is at all concerned about. Therefore, it must be true that what is being conveyed here is more than just a set of rules and guidelines which were intended

to protect the Israelites from the spread of disease. If this were not so, then it would certainly give an indication that the Lord cared less about the church than He did about Israel. But this is not the case at all.

In fact, in understanding the spiritual meaning of what is being conveyed, and how it pictures other things, we can see that the Lord truly cares about the state of man – be he in Israel or in the church – in an absolutely pure way. The Lord’s words that He gives to His people are spirit, and they are life. These truths are to be found in His superior word. And so let’s turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. New Sores and Old Sores (verses 1-11)

¹And the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying:

The address is made, once again, to both Moses and Aaron. The last time this occurred was in verse 11:1. This addressing of both of them is rather uncommon. Mostly it is to Moses alone. What is ahead is a long discussion on ritual purification because of health issues. The issue of leprosy will take up all of Chapters 13 and 14, and this will be followed up in Chapter 15 with bodily discharges.

In these three chapters, the Lord will address both Moses and Aaron three times, and once he will address only Moses.

²“When a man has on the skin of his body

The word *adam*, or man, is used instead of *nephesh*, or soul. What will be described next is on his *or*, or skin, which covers his *besar*, or flesh. The word *or*, meaning skin, is used 99 times in the Bible, and yet 46 of them are mentioned in this one chapter. The *or* is the covering of the man. Having an affliction in the skin then is an outward sign of uncleanness. As you will see, it is an uncleanness which pictures sin in man; a plague of death.

The words show us that this is pertaining to physical afflictions of the body which arise in the course of this physical existence. However, there are spiritual meanings behind these physical conditions. In the identification process, there are three initial signs to be considered, the first is...

^{2 (con’t)} a swelling,

The *seeth*, or swelling, is an interesting word. It comes from the word *nasa*, which means “lifted” or “to rise.” Outside of Leviticus, it is translated as “acceptance,” “majesty,” “authority,” and the like. The idea is that when someone is favored, they are lifted up. However, in Leviticus, this lifting up is not a good thing. It indicates a swelling of the flesh. Such a swelling would be spiritually equated to the pride of life.

^{2 (con’t)} **a scab,**

Next is a *sapakhath*, or “scab.” It is introduced here and will only be seen one more time, in verse 14:56. It comes from *saphakh*, which gives the sense of attachment, or gathering. Thus a scab is where the skins gather at an eruption. It would picture gathering together with that which is vile; the lust of the flesh.

^{2 (con’t)} **or a bright spot,**

The *baheret*, or bright spot, is also introduced here. It will only be used in chapters 13 and 14 of Leviticus. It comes from the adjective *bahir* which means bright. It indicates then a whitish spot which is found on the flesh, or even a glossy pimple. It would indicate that which draws attention to itself; the lust of the eyes. And so we have here, three things which match that which John writes about –

“For all that *is* in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world.” 1 John 2:16

It is the three things which Adam was tested with in Genesis 3; it is the three things which Jesus was then tested with as is recorded in the gospels. And it is the same three things which we all face daily in our lives. Will we yield to the flesh? Or, will we be transformed by the renewing of our mind and pursue the Spirit? Instructions are given for us to evaluate these things and apply them to our lives.

^{2 (con’t)} **and it becomes on the skin of his body like a leprous sore, then he shall be brought to Aaron the priest or to one of his sons the priests.**

When one of these three instances occurs, and turns into a *nega tsaraat*, or wound of leprosy, the person was to be brought to Aaron or one of his sons who are priests. This word, *tsaraat*, will be used 35 times in the Bible and all but 6 of them will be in chapters 13 and 14.

It comes from the verb *tsara*, or leper, which has only been seen once. That was when Moses was told to put his hand into his coat and then pull it out. When he did, it was leprous. That was one of the signs to Israel of Moses' qualification to lead them. The word then comes from a primitive root which means to scourge.

Adam Clarke notes that "the root in Arabic signifies to cast down or prostrate, and in Ethiopian, to cause to cease, because,... 'it prostrates the strength of man, and obliges him to cease from all work and labor.'" The idea is that a person is struck with leprosy, as if a curse. In other words, it is the stroke of God. Miriam, Moses' sister will be struck with it as a curse in Numbers, as will Gahazi, the servant of Elisha in 2 Kings.

³The priest shall examine the sore on the skin of the body; and if the hair on the sore has turned white,

In Israel, the priest was also the dermatologist. It was his to evaluate what made a person clean and what made him unclean. It was his to pronounce. He was to examine the skin, but also the *sear* or hair. Hair in the Bible indicates an awareness of things; consciousness. In particular that of the awareness of sin.

The first time it was used in the Bible was to describe the hairy body of Esau, who was himself a picture of Adam, the one who fell and became conscious of sin. One can see how the hair, being checked in order to identify uncleanness, ties in with that. If it has turned *lavan*, or white, it is an indication of that which is unclean. The word for "turn" is *haphak*. It indicates to change, but in this case it would be a perversion of what is normal; thus "to pervert."

Going further, *lavan* (adj. white) comes from the verb *lavan* which indicates brick making. The idea is that when a brick is fired, it grows white. It is a picture of works in the Bible. For example, the making of bricks to build the tower of Babel was a picture of man's attempt to reach heaven through his own works.

^{3 (con't)} and the sore appears to *be* deeper than the skin of his body, it is a leprous sore.

The next thing to be evaluated was whether the sore was deeper than the skin of his flesh. The word for "deeper," *amoq*, is introduced into the Bible here. It is an adjective and signifies that which is deeper, thus it is a comparative word. It indicates a deep thing, and even something mysterious. If the sore has gone below the skin, it has thus gotten into the flesh. As I've said, the flesh is that which is opposed to the spirit.

We are being given an Old Testament lesson concerning a New Testament truth, the sins of the flesh, those things which go deeper than our outer covering, our skin, are those things which cause us to be unclean. It was garments of skin which the Lord gave Adam and his wife after the fall. That was to be a covering for them. Since that time, the flesh and the spirit have been at war.

³ (con't) **Then the priest shall examine him, and pronounce him unclean.**

If these things indicated leprosy, it would then *v'time oto*, "make him unclean." In this, he is said *to do* that which his office pronounces *as done*. It is an idiom which indicates a pronouncement of being in an unclean state.

Think it through. A person has the awareness of sin, pictured by the white hair. It is based on his works which identify him as unclean. What he is doing is a perversion of what is normal. And it has gone from the skin, deep into the flesh. The type, leprosy, pictures the anti-type, unclean works which are of the flesh.

⁴ **But if the bright spot is white on the skin of his body, and does not appear to be deeper than the skin, and its hair has not turned white, then the priest shall isolate *the one who has the sore* seven days.**

If an evaluation by the priest indicates that the bright spot is, at this time, not seemingly leprous because it lacks the two other identifying marks, then the person is to be shut up in a state of isolation for seven days. It should be noted that this verse actually says that "the priest shall isolate the sore seven days." The other words are inserted for clarity, but they are probably correct. It could be that only the sore is to be bandaged during the period, but more likely is that the person was to be shut up during this period because he had the sore.

The word for shut up is *sagar*. It is the shutting up of something. It can be for protecting someone against harm, such as Noah being shut up in the Ark. And it can also be to bring someone harm, such as when the Lord is said to shut up Israel for destruction.

Seven is the number of spiritual perfection. An evaluation of the flesh will be remade after this set interval. The seven days are to teach New Testament ministers not to be hasty in rendering a judgment which could be incorrect. We are asked to consider a spiritual state of others by these Old Testament physical examples.

⁵ **And the priest shall examine him on the seventh day;**

It is not after the seventh day, but on the seventh day that the person is examined. Eight in the Bible signifies new beginnings, and it is that which will occur based on the outcome of the inspection.

^{5 (con't)} **and indeed if the sore appears to be as it was,**

The Hebrew reads more strongly here. It says, “And behold! The plague stands in his eyes.” The idea of standing is that of not changing. In the New Testament, Paul tells us numerous times to stand when speaking of doctrine. It means to be fixed and unchanging. A classic example of standing as being unchanging in doctrine is given by Paul. Three times in Ephesians 6 he repeats the admonition –

“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. ¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to **stand** against the wiles of the devil. ¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*. ¹³ Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to **stand**.

¹⁴ **Stand** therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, ¹⁵ and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; ¹⁶ above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.” Ephesians 6:10-16

This is the idea of this possible plague. It has remained unchanging and has not spread. Further...

^{5 (con't)} **and the sore has not spread on the skin,**

The word *pasah*, or spread, is introduced here. It is a word which will be used 22 times in Scripture, and yet all 22 will be in chapters 13 & 14. It is obviously an important consideration to the Lord for it to be used so many times concerning that which is unclean and defiled, and which spiritually pictures sin. The sore stood firm and did not spread, and so...

^{5 (con't)} **then the priest shall isolate him another seven days.**

Not only are ministers to not be hasty in their judgments, but they are to be exactly the opposite. They are to refrain from quick judgments, but are to evaluate things very carefully. It is a precept which Paul explicitly states to his young protege Timothy -

“I charge *you* before God and the Lord Jesus Christ and the elect angels that you observe these things without prejudice, doing nothing with partiality. ²² Do not lay hands on anyone hastily, nor share in other people’s sins; keep yourself pure.”

-1 Timothy 5:21, 22

This wise precept finds its origins all the way back in the highly disregarded and ignored book of Leviticus. Aren’t you becoming more excited about this book with each passing verse!

⁶Then the priest shall examine him again on the seventh day; and indeed *if* the sore has faded, *and* the sore has not spread on the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him clean; it *is only* a scab, and he shall wash his clothes and be clean.

A second evaluation is made, again on the seventh day from the previous evaluation. On this day, if the sore has faded, it is good news for the person. The word for fade, *keheh*, is new. It essentially means, “to darken,” or “make obscure.” It is used when one’s eyes dim as he falls asleep, or when a wick fades as the oil burns down in a lamp. If this sore has faded, then the priest is to pronounce the person clean. The word is *taher*, or literally “pure.” He is considered free from defilement.

The conclusion that the priest is to derive is that what he sees is only a scab. This is not the same word as verse 2. Here the word is a new one, *mispakhath*. It will be used now and in verses 7 and 8, and then drop from the pages of the Bible. Enjoy it while it lasts.

Because he is deemed clean, he is to wash his clothes as a ceremonial act. He was detained fourteen days on suspicion, and was thus considered tainted by ceremonial pollution, and his clothes would need to be washed after such a time anyway. After washing his clothes he will be considered clean.

What was thought to possibly be sinful works was actually something entirely different. There is a spiritual picture here which Paul explains. A person was doing some works which were hidden, but which others may have deemed as sinful. Through a careful inspection, the person’s works are actually found out to be pure, and thus the person is pure. Here are Paul’s words showing this –

“Some men’s sins are clearly evident, preceding *them* to judgment, but those of some *men* follow later. ²⁵ Likewise, the good works *of some* are clearly evident, and those that are otherwise cannot be hidden.” 1 Timothy 5:24, 25

A real-life example of this is a person who was known to hire hookers and then spend his time speaking to them about Jesus. What he was doing had people supposing he was doing one thing, while in fact he was doing another.

⁷ But if the scab should at all spread over the skin, after he has been seen by the priest for his cleansing, he shall be seen by the priest again.

It is debated if this follows after verse 6 for the person who was declared clean, or if it goes back to verse 5 for the person who was unchanged after the first week. What seems likely is that it goes back to verse 5. In the end, it doesn’t really matter, because either way, the Hebrew reads *v’im pasoh tiphseh* – “and if spreading it has spread.” Instead of the scab having no change, or having not spread after it had darkened, it has now spread outwards from its original spot, and so the priest is directed to evaluate him again.

⁸ And if the priest sees that the scab has indeed spread on the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him unclean. It is leprosy.

Oh no! The scab has spread. In this case, the priest is now under obligation to pronounce the person unclean. What he has is leprosy. In picture, the sin of the man is an infectious sin, and he is deemed as unclean. And now, with verses 6-8 behind us, we can say goodbye to the word *mispakhath*, or scab. It will not be seen again.

⁹ “When the leprous sore is on a person, then he shall be brought to the priest.

We now enter into a new situation concerning leprosy. Verses 1-8 were something which had appeared on a man and it was unknown what the affliction was. It was previously not there and had to be carefully evaluated to see if it was uncleanness of some sort. Here, it is an old leprosy which is clearly and undoubtedly unclean. It is something which has been hidden, but which is insidious in nature. Verses 9 and 10 lead up to verse 11 as conditional clauses which lead to the main clause.

¹⁰ And the priest shall examine *him*; and indeed if the swelling on the skin is white, and it has turned the hair white, and *there is* a spot of raw flesh in the swelling,

Three things are needed to properly identify if what is being looked at is, in fact, leprosy. The first is a white swelling on the skin. This would be a very white swelling, like snow. This is what will be seen of Miriam when she is plagued with leprosy in Numbers 12 –

“And when the cloud departed from above the tabernacle, suddenly Miriam *became* leprous, as *white as snow*. Then Aaron turned toward Miriam, and there she was, a leper.” Numbers 12:10

Second, the hair in the swelling is turned white. Again, the word white in both cases is *lavan*. It points to the idea of works. The third is that there is a “spot of raw flesh in the swelling.” The Hebrew reads *u-mikhyat besar khai* – “and reviving flesh live.” Thus scholars term this “proud flesh.” The entire picture to be seen is someone who is swollen up with pride in his works, and who boasts in his flesh. This is the attitude Paul warns about with these words –

“Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the mutilation! ³ For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh, ⁴ though I also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so: ⁵ circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, *of* the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; ⁶ concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.”

-Philippians 3:2-6

Paul speaks of those of the circumcision, meaning the Jews, who put their confidence in the flesh by observing the Law of Moses, instead of putting their confidence in Christ, who is the end of the law for all who believe. This is the proud flesh and it is perfectly described by the next verse...

¹¹ it is an old leprosy on the skin of his body.

It is an old leprosy. The word is *yashen*. It means to sleep, but the words gives the sense of something inveterate. It is long- established and unlikely to change. It is a perfect description of those who seek to be justified by the law. It's rather odd, that the very law which identifies this old leprosy is actually describing those who adhere to it for their justification.

The infection is in the body, it is swelling, it is based on works, and those works reveal the prideful nature of the one to whom they belong. It is the Judiazers of Paul's time and

it is those of the Hebrew Roots movement of our time – perfectly described by the very law they cling to, and which identifies them as unclean. Because of this...

11 (con't) The priest shall pronounce him unclean, and shall not isolate him, for he is unclean.

There is no reason to evaluate if such a person's works are actually appropriate or not. The Bible clearly and unambiguously tells us that those who live by deeds of the law are unclean. They have not come to God through Christ, and their works can never please Him. Paul says of this –

“Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. ²⁰Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin.” Romans 3:19, 20

*Who is it that is unclean before the Lord?
It is the one who trusts in his own righteousness
He has ignored what is said about Jesus in the word
Who thinks he is secure, but is really a mess*

*Like leprosy, sin infects our lives, and we are done in
We attempt to work our way to heaven, displeasing God even more
Such is the depth of this body of sin
And unless we change, on us God will His great wrath pour*

*But there is hope for the soul who is unclean
Is found in God's Gift of our Lord Jesus
In the life of Jesus, the most marvelous grace is seen
And it is waiting there for each and every one of us*

II. Completely Covered in White (verses 12-17)

12 “And if leprosy breaks out all over the skin, and the leprosy covers all the skin of the one who has the sore, from his head to his foot, wherever the priest looks,

The word “breaks out” is *parakh*. It indicates a blossoming or an abundance. In this, the skin is totally covered with this leprous look. The Hebrew repeats itself with the words

paroakh tiphrahk, or “flowering, it flowers.” From the person’s head to the foot, he is literally covered in this outbreak.

It is actually unsure what condition is being relayed here. There is one black girl from Trinidad who got vitiligo so completely that she went from being totally black to completely white. It is happening to a black grandmother here in the US right now. But this is probably not what is being spoken of here. Whatever the condition is, it was one that causes the whole body to appear leprous, but it was so complete and without any other of the effects of normal leprosy, that it was treated in a unique way...

¹³ then the priest shall consider; and indeed *if* the leprosy has covered all his body, he shall pronounce *him* clean *who has* the sore. It has all turned white. He *is* clean.

Instead of being wholly unclean, the person who is so affected is considered completely clean and is pronounced as such. As this is not a normal medical condition which is identifiable, it is certainly a picture of something else, something unique and marvelous.

Sin is a leprous plague. When it infects a person, they are unclean because of it. Unclean is unclean – there are no true gradations of this state. One is either clean or they are unclean. But for those who think they can still merit God’s favor, they don’t think of themselves as wholly unclean. Thus, they fit those described previously. They have an infection and it causes them to be wholly unclean.

However, when a person realizes that they are wholly unclean, with no part of himself which is acceptable to God, they cannot boast in works of the flesh. When they come to the Priest, meaning Jesus, for His determination, He pronounces them clean. The reason is that His works fully, and completely, met the demands of the law. As Paul says to us –

“For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” 2 Corinthians 5:21

¹⁴ But when raw flesh appears on him, he shall be unclean.

This is the same “proud flesh” mentioned before. This is still certainly speaking of the same person who was pronounced clean in the previous verse. In picture, this is the person who has been cleansed by Christ and who has been saved by Him, but then falls back on deeds of the law, boasting in their works. Paul speaks of them in Galatians –

“O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified? ² This only I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? ³ Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh? ⁴ Have you suffered so many things in vain—if indeed *it was* in vain?” Galatians 3:1-4

They are those who are misdirected away from the gospel of Christ. Paul never calls their salvation into question, but he does tell them that they have become debtors to the entire law. They are unclean and they will be judged as such when they stand before the Lord at His bema seat of judgment. This is seen in the next verse...

¹⁵ And the priest shall examine the raw flesh and pronounce him to be unclean; for the raw flesh is unclean. It is leprosy.

The Priest, the Lord Jesus, examines our lives, He evaluates our deeds, and He looks into the motivations behind them. In this case, the person has been infected with *ha'basar ha'khai*, the flesh the proud, and he thus pronounces such people unclean. If you don't think this is possible, I can tell you of countless emails of people desperate for friends, family, loved ones... all who have been sucked into the Hebrew Roots movement, just as the Galatians had been sucked into the false gospel of the Judaizers.

They started in the Spirit and turned to deeds of the law, figuring they could do a better job than the Lord did. They have set aside the grace of Christ. For those who were saved, they are saved, but they are to be judged in the most severe manner for their failing. They are lepers; they are unclean; and the Lord will take away the many rewards they could have earned by simply exercising faith in what He has done.

However, there is hope for even folks in this sad state. They can turn, and they can be renewed again by the Spirit. Paul told the Galatians to turn and forget the deeds of the flesh, using Peter's falling back under the law as an example of such. Paul had to openly rebuke Peter, showing him his error. When he did, Peter was restored to right thinking. His proud flesh was cured...

¹⁶ Or if the raw flesh changes and turns white again, he shall come to the priest.

The one with proud flesh has once again realized the error of his way. Peter turned from his lack of trust in Christ, and he went on to his position as the Apostle to the Jews with his correction duly noted and responded to. So it can happen to anyone who has been

saved and purified by Christ. We all stumble, we all fall, we all come short. But when we put away our proud flesh, the Priest will see, and He will respond accordingly...

17 And the priest shall examine him; and indeed *if* the sore has turned white, then the priest shall pronounce *him* clean *who has* the sore.

Whoo hoo! Cleansed and in right standing with the Lord! What more could anyone ask? The One who cleanses is an ever-lasting Fount of cleansing. As many times as we fail, and as many times as we return to Him for healing, He will heal. If we fall back on works of the law, as grievous of an offense as that is, the Lord is willing to restore us to a full and right relationship once again.

But as long as we are trusting in our deeds to be justified before Him, we stand unclean and under His unhappy judgment. We are separated from the body, and we lack the harmony in our life that we desperately need; we lack the filling of the Spirit and the fellowship with our heavenly Father. Let us not go down that path, but let Christ consider us as the one whose sore has turned white...

17 ^(fin) He *is* clean.

tahor hu – Pure (is) he. The declaration stands for any and all who live by faith, and by faith alone, in Jesus Christ. When we trust in His works, then we are in a clean and right-standing with our Creator. Stand fast on the gospel of Christ, and God will look at you as pristine white, cleansed by the precious blood of Christ.

As an eloquent and flowery followup to our 17 verses today, allow me to cite Matthew Henry who caught the gist of today's passage quite well –

“The plague of leprosy was an uncleanness, rather than a disease. Christ is said to cleanse lepers, not to cure them. ... And it was a figure of the moral pollutions of men's minds by sin, which is the leprosy of the soul, defiling to the conscience, and from which Christ alone can cleanse. The priest could only convict the leper, (by the law is the knowledge of sin,) but Christ can cure the sinner, he can take away sin. It is a work of great importance, but of great difficulty, to judge of our spiritual state. We all have cause to suspect ourselves, being conscious of sores and spots; but whether clean or unclean is the question. As there were certain marks by which to know it was leprosy, so there are marks of such as are in the gall of bitterness. The priest must take time in making his judgment. This teaches all, both ministers and people, not to be hasty in censures, nor to judge anything before the time. If some men's sins go before unto judgment, the sins of

others follow after, and so do men's good works. If the person suspected were found to be clean, yet he must wash his clothes, because there had been ground for the suspicion. We have need to be washed in the blood of Christ from our spots, though not leprosy spots; for who can say, I am pure from sin?" Matthew Henry

The answer to his question is, "Any and all who call on Christ Jesus." Sin is a deep infection, and it is one that we cannot cure. Our attempts to do so only add to our sin, they do not help. When we attempt to buy God off through good works, it is an affront to Him. "I cannot look upon you! How can I look upon your futile gestures which only cause you to feel you merit My glory?"

But, when we trust in His offer, and the work of His Son Jesus Christ, He is satisfied with our faith. It is a small thing, and yet it is so very difficult. If you don't believe that, just look at the world around you, even once-saved believers at times have fallen back on their own deeds to satisfy God. It is proud flesh, and it will only lead to sadness. Let me very clearly explain to you how you can bring joy to God, and to your own troubled heart...

Closing Verse: *"For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find." ... "O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? ²⁵ I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!" Romans 7:18 & 24, 25*

Next Week: Leviticus 13:18-37 More infectious things to evaluate and to look through... (The Law of Leprosy, Part II) (20th Leviticus Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if you have a lifetime of sin heaped up behind you, He can wash it away and purify you completely and wholly. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Law of Leprosy

And the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying:
These are the words He was then relaying

"When a man has on the skin of his body
A swelling, a scab, or a bright spot
And it becomes on the skin of his body

Like a leprous sore; a kind of gross blot

Then he shall to Aaron the priest be brought
Or to one of his sons the priests who in the law has been taught

The priest shall examine the sore on the skin of the body
And if the hair on the sore has turned white
And the sore appears to be deeper than the skin of his body
It is a leprous sore; something with him is just not right

Then the priest shall examine him, so he shall be seen
And pronounce him unclean

But if the bright spot is white on the skin of his body
And does not appear to be deeper than the skin
And its hair has not turned white
Then the priest shall isolate the one who has the sore
-----Seven days he shall be shut in

And the priest shall examine him on the seventh day
And indeed if the sore appears to be as it was during this phase
And the sore has not spread on the skin
Then the priest shall isolate him another seven days

Then the priest shall examine him again on the seventh day
And indeed if the sore has faded
And the sore has not spread on the skin
Then the priest shall pronounce him clean, surely for this he waited

It is only a scab, this is what it does mean
And he shall wash his clothes and be clean

But if the scab should at all spread over the skin
After he has been seen for his cleansing by the priest
He shall be seen by the priest again
He is not yet to be released

And if the priest sees that the scab
Has indeed spread on the skin

Then the priest shall pronounce him unclean
It is leprosy; surely much to his chagrin

“When the leprous sore is on a person, from the greatest to the least
Then he shall be brought to the priest

And the priest shall examine him
And indeed if the swelling on the skin is white
And it has turned the hair white
And there is a spot of raw flesh in the swelling, something not right

It is an old leprosy on the skin of his body
The priest shall pronounce him unclean
And shall not isolate him, for he is unclean
This is what this thing does mean

“And if leprosy breaks out all over the skin
And the leprosy covers all the skin, for sure
Of the one who has the sore
From his head to his foot wherever the priest looks there is more
Then the priest shall consider
And indeed if the leprosy has covered all his body, this is seen
He shall pronounce him clean who has the sore
It has all turned white. He is clean

But when raw flesh appears on him
He shall be unclean; a situation quite grim

And the priest shall examine the raw flesh
And pronounce him to be unclean
For the raw flesh is unclean
It is leprosy; as the raw flesh does mean

Or if the raw flesh changes and turns white again
He shall come to the priest
And the priest shall examine him
And indeed if the sore has turned white, the raw flesh has ceased

Then the priest shall pronounce him clean who has the sore

He is clean; he ain't got the leprosy blues no more

Lord God, by Your goodness alone we are reconciled to You
You sent Jesus to cleanse us from all unrighteousness
And so help us to trust in Him alone; yes through and through
Our deeds can't satisfy, and they leave us in more of a mess

But what Christ has done is fully sufficient to save
In Him we are cleansed and made pure in Your sight
Help us to live by faith alone; this is how we are to behave
And through Him all things are made perfect and right

Thank You, O God, for Christ Jesus our Lord
And for what we know of Him through Your superior word

Hallelujah and Amen...

LEVITICUS 13:18-37 (THE LAW OF LEPROSY, PART II)

I explained last week that certain physical afflictions made a person unclean under the law, but nothing is said about these things in the New Testament. Nowhere in the New Testament is a person with any of these afflictions barred from attending the church.

As I said then, if these things really defiled a person, then there would, in fact, be the same requirements now. Also, if physical defilement was a concern, then it would appear that the Lord cared more about the people of Israel than those of the church. Such is not the case.

Even more, certain physical deformities and afflictions precluded a person from ever being in the priesthood. If this type of thing had more than a spiritual meaning, then no person who had those afflictions today would be allowed into the ministry. But the New Testament never speaks of such things. These, and many other clues tell us that the things we are looking at have much more than a physical meaning which was merely intended to keep the camp pure from disease.

Text Verse: *“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.” 2 Timothy 3:16, 17*

Another point to consider goes far beyond any notion that these leprosy verses are only speaking of purity within the nation for the physical well-being of the people. The word for leprosy covers a multitude of skin diseases. Some really will defile other people who come into contact with them. Others surely are not as contagious.

But, there are many other things which are highly contagious, and of which the Bible says nothing. Surely the Lord knows all about these things, and yet they are never mentioned in the purity laws of the Torah. If all that He was concerned about was health, why isn't there a law for anyone with the flu to be isolated? What about chickenpox, pneumonia, conjunctivitis, shingles, scarlet fever, impetigo, mumps, ringworm, tonsillitis, bronchitis, or charlie-itis?

These and a host of other contagious diseases are never even glanced at, and yet scholars would say that the leprosy and mold laws are simply given for the health and well-being of the society, as if this were the only few things that could affect it. We

overlook the obvious when we overlook the need to determine why the Lord selected these particular things to talk about.

When He did, He chose particular words which would then be transferable to spiritual truths found in the New Testament. They are truths which cover doctrine which is necessary for the spiritual health of the church. This... this is why these things are given, and so let's see if we can figure some of them out. It's all to be found in His superior word. And so let's turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. A Boil in the Skin (verses 18-23)

¹⁸ “If the body develops a boil in the skin, and it is healed,

The word of God now moves from laws concerning *tsaraat*, or leprosy, to the *shekhin*, or boil. Though this is the first time the boil is mentioned in Leviticus, it is not the first time it is found in Scripture. Going back to the ten plagues of Egypt we find its source. There in Exodus 9, they are mentioned four times.

Thus, they are, like leprosy, a striking of God as if in a curse. This becomes perfectly evident from Deuteronomy 28. In the curses upon Israel for disobedience, this is one of them -

“The Lord will strike you with the boils of Egypt, with tumors, with the scab, and with the itch, from which you cannot be healed.” Deuteronomy 28:27

Likewise, poor Job was afflicted with boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. And finally, King Hezekiah was afflicted with a boil that almost took his life, but it was cured by the application of a poultice of figs. These are the times that boils are mentioned in Scripture, and they each reflect a strike of God, either directly, or as in the case of Job, as an allowance by God.

The word *shekhin* comes from an unused root which means to burn, and thus it is an inflammation which produces a boil. The boil or inflammation which is described here was, at the time of Christ, defined as having risen from a wound from stone, wood, metal, pitch, hot water, etc. It is being set in contrast to the wound incurred by fire mentioned in verse 24.

¹⁹ and in the place of the boil there comes a white swelling or a bright spot, reddish-white,

If from this wound, one of two things arises, it had to be taken to the priest. The first is a *seeth levanah*, or a “swelling white.” This word for swelling was seen in verse 2. It comes from the word *nasa*, which means “lifted” or “to rise.” It indicates a swelling of the flesh. Such a swelling would be spiritually equated with the pride of life. The word *lavan*, or white, comes from *lavan* meaning brick. This takes us back to the thought of works as has been seen many times.

The second is a *bahereth*, or “bright spot.” It is also the same as in verse 2. As we saw, it comes from the adjective *bahir* which means bright. It indicates then a whitish spot which is found on the flesh, or even a glossy pimple. It would indicate that which draws attention to itself; the lust of the eyes.

This bright spot is then further identified as *levanah adamdamet*, or reddish white. The word *adamdam* is used here for the first of six times, all will be in chapters 13 & 14. It is simply a reduplication of the word *adom*, or red. Thus it gives the sense of reddish. The use of the word *adom* is explained in Isaiah -

"Come now, and let us reason together,'
Says the LORD,
'Though your sins are like scarlet,
They shall be as white as snow;
Though they are **red** like crimson,
They shall be as wool.'" Isaiah 1:18

In picture, we are being shown an example of works which have the appearance of being sinful. In order to determine if this is infectious, further action is needed...

¹⁹ (con't) then it shall be shown to the priest;

The priest will determine if the boil is unclean or if it requires further observance. As the high priest is the one who mediates for the people, he is typical of Christ who determines whether our deeds are acceptable or unacceptable; clean or unclean.

However, the lower priests were given authority to make these declarations concerning what is clean and what is unclean. Therefore, these pronouncements which we have

seen and will continue to see, explain Jesus' words of Matthew 16:19. There He said to the apostles -

“And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.” Matthew 16:19

In this statement, the keys are referring to a true knowledge of doctrine. Just as a priest could look at a wound, and with the word of the law to guide him, he could make a determination of distinguishing between what is clean and what is unclean, so could Jesus' disciples make similar determinations.

This then follows through, logically, with the church age as well. We have the word of God, and we are to use it in a priestly manner by inspecting what is sound doctrine and what is unsound; what consists of good works, and what sinful works look like; and so on. Adam Clarke explains it with the following words –

“The priest polluted or cleansed, i. e., declared the man clean or unclean, according to signs well known and infallible. The disciples or ministers of Christ bind or loose, declare to be fit or unfit for Church fellowship, according to unequivocal evidences of innocence or guilt. In the former case, the priest declared the person fit or unfit for civil society; in the latter, the ministers of Christ declare the person against whom the suspicion of guilt is laid, fit or unfit for continued association with the Church of God. The office was the same in both, a declaration of the truth, not from any power that they possessed of cleansing or polluting, of binding or of loosing, but by the knowledge they gained from the infallible signs and evidences produced on the respective cases.” Adam Clarke

What appears to be a passage about infectious diseases, which it is in literal history, is actually more fully and completely about discerning the word of God and applying its precepts properly in spiritual matters. Whether it is Israel of old, inspecting a boil on an arm, or the church of today looking at a person's conduct, both are gauged by what has already been given *in the word of God*.

²⁰ **and if, when the priest sees it, it indeed appears deeper than the skin, and its hair has turned white, the priest shall pronounce him unclean. It is a leprous sore which has broken out of the boil.**

This verse is a close repeat of verse 3, but instead of the word *amoq*, or “deeper” of verse 3, this verse includes a new word, *shaphal*, here also translated as “deeper.” It gives the sense of abased, lowered, or humbled.

This verse being similar to verse 3, carries much of the same meaning as it did there. This is an infection which is of the flesh, and which is displayed in unclean works. There is a turning, or a perversion of what should exist. But as we saw, the type of wound is derived from the sense of inflammation or burning, and the result is that of being abased. Thus, this is in type and picture, that of sexual sin. It is what Paul speaks of in Romans 1 –

“For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. ²⁷ Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due.” Romans 1:26, 27

Unfortunately, in much of the church today, such infections are not called out as unclean, but are rather hailed as right and proper. There is no adherence to the word of God, and there is no discernment by those who should be making judgments according to that same word.

²¹ But if the priest examines it, and indeed *there are* no white hairs in it, and it is not deeper than the skin, but has faded, then the priest shall isolate him seven days;

This verse corresponds closely to verse 4. If an evaluation by the priest indicates that the bright spot is, at this time, not seemingly leprous because it lacks the two identifying marks, then the person is to be shut up in a state of isolation for seven days. The same word used in verse 4, *sagar*, is used again here. It is the shutting up of something. It can be for protecting someone against harm, and it can also be to bring someone harm.

Seven is the number of spiritual perfection. An evaluation of the flesh is to be remade after this set interval. In picture, it is given to show that we are not to be hasty in rendering a judgment which could be incorrect. We are being asked to consider a spiritual state of others by these Old Testament physical examples.

²² and if it should at all spread over the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him unclean. It *is* a leprous sore.

The Hebrew says *v'im pasoh tiphseh* – “and if spreading it spreads.” This spreading of the infection is, in type and picture, an indication of a confirmation of sexual immorality within the church. In such a case, the book of 1 Corinthians explains what the judgment is to be –

“I wrote to you in my epistle not to keep company with sexually immoral people. ¹⁰ Yet I certainly *did* not *mean* with the sexually immoral people of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. ¹¹ But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner—not even to eat with such a person.

¹² For what *have I to do* with judging those also who are outside? Do you not judge those who are inside? ¹³ But those who are outside God judges. Therefore “put away from yourselves the evil person.” 1 Corinthians 5:9-13

The pronouncement is to be made – “Unclean. You are out of fellowship.” The person has, and is, a leprous sore.

²³ But if the bright spot stays in one place, *and* has not spread, it is the scar of the boil; and the priest shall pronounce him clean.

The words say, “And if in its place stands the bright spot.” To stand is to remain fixed and firm. One stands against the forces of evil. One stands firm in doctrine. One stands on the word of God. There was the basis for wrong doing, but the symptoms have not taken hold of the person.

This verse can be described by the sentiment, “Nothing to see here, move along.” There may have been a transgression which was considered a wound on the body, the church. It was inspected, and thankfully it has not spread. It was monitored, and no error is seen. The word *tsarebeth*, translated as “scar of the boil” is found only three times in the Bible. The second will be in verse 28, and the last will be in Proverbs 16:27 –

An ungodly man digs up evil,
And *it is* on his lips like a *burning* fire.

It comes from the word *tsaray*, which means to burn. Thus one can see that there was a burning, as if in a passion, but the passion was quenched. The church, therefore, determines that there is nothing to see in this matter. The declaration is “Clean.”

*I have transgressed and not done what was right
A wound stands as a testimony to my sinful act
But I will not let it take me over, against it I will fight
I will stand on God's word, and that is a fact*

*The burning took hold of me, and I failed my Lord
But there is a fountain of cleansing if I turn again to Him
This is what is said in His marvelous word
And in that precious pool of life, from now on will I swim*

*Thank You, O God, for second chances in Christ
Thank You that You have cleansed us through the blood of Jesus
For us was the Lamb of God sacrificed
God has done such a marvelous thing for us*

II. A Burn on the Skin By Fire (verses 24-28)

²⁴ “Or if the body receives a burn on its skin by fire,

Now a new type of wound will be detailed. This is from a new word in Scripture, *mikvah*. It will be seen five times through verse 28, and then it will not be seen again. Be sure to enjoy it while it lasts. *Mikvah* comes from *kavah*, scorched or seared. Both times *kavah* is used, it is speaking of walking on fire or coals –

“Can one walk on hot coals,
And his feet not be seared?

²⁹ So *is* he who goes in to his neighbor's wife;
Whoever touches her shall not be innocent.” Proverbs 6:28

“When you pass through the waters, I *will be* with you;
And through the rivers, they shall not overflow you.
When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned,
Nor shall the flame scorch you.” Isaiah 43:2

And so in this verse, we have a burning in the flesh which is the result of fire. If this occurs, then an evaluation needs to be made upon the coming of any infection...

²⁴ (con't) **and the raw *flesh* of the burn becomes a bright spot, reddish-white or white,**

This is similar to what was said in verse 19, but it also includes a word which was seen last week in verse 10, *mikhyah*, described by scholars as “proud flesh.” The Hebrew says *mikhyah ha’mikvah*, or “proud flesh that burns.” Again, like before, if from this wound, comes a *bahereth levanah adamdemet ow levanah*, or “a bright spot, reddish white, or white,” then it requires further investigation. As we have seen, this then would indicate sinful works which draw attention to themselves.

²⁵ then the priest shall examine it; and indeed if the hair of the bright spot has turned white, and it appears deeper than the skin,

The symbolism continues to be the same as before, but the word “deeper” here is not the same as verse 18. Rather, it is the same word, *amoq*, that was used in verses 3 & 4. It is deeper in a comparative sense, and it indicates a deep thing, or even something mysterious. This type of infection then is that which is described by Paul in 1 Timothy 4 –

“Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, ² speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron, ³ forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. ⁴ For every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving; ⁵ for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.” 1 Timothy 4:1-5

Here we have being described the mysterious doctrines of demons which sear the conscience of those who teach them and who follow them. They are self-serving works which are identified by the outwardly pious attitude, but which reflect only inner corruption because they reject the work of Christ and depend on self to obtain merit. Because of such deeds we see that...

²⁵ (con’t) it is leprosy broken out in the burn. Therefore the priest shall pronounce him unclean. It is a leprous sore.

The description for this leprosy goes back to a word used in verse 12, *parakh*. It indicates that which flourishes or blossoms. Thus it is a blossoming leprosy. The attitude of those described by Paul to Timothy perfectly reflect the sentiment. Their wound is one that multiplies and blossoms forth. The pronouncement for them is “Unclean!” They have, and they are, the plague of leprosy.

²⁶ But if the priest examines it, and indeed *there are* no white hairs in the bright spot, and it *is* not deeper than the skin, but has faded, then the priest shall isolate him seven days.

However, in the evaluation by the priest, if the bright spot doesn't have white hairs (sinful works), and it is not deeper than the skin, (proud flesh), then more is required. Interestingly, the word for "deeper" here goes back to the same word as verse 18. It is *shaphal*, not *amoq*, and so it isn't just not of depth, it is not even abased. The skin has not lowered at all, and instead it has faded. This fading is the word *keheh* from verse 6. It means to darken. The brightness of the wound has diminished. Should these things be the case, then he shall be isolated seven days.

²⁷ And the priest shall examine him on the seventh day. If it has at all spread over the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him unclean. It *is* a leprous sore.

Seven is the number of spiritual perfection. Seven days, then, is reflective of the proper time to spiritually discern this condition. In the examination, the same condition as was seen in verse 7 and 22 is used, *im pasoh tiphseh*, in spreading it has spread.

In this, the person has been burned by the doctrine of demons, and the infection has spread all over him. His doctrine is leprous, and he is a leper. He is unclean. But thank goodness not everyone who is so tainted remains that way...

²⁸ But if the bright spot stays in one place, *and* has not spread on the skin, but has faded, it *is* a swelling from the burn. The priest shall pronounce him clean, for it *is* the scar from the burn.

Again, the word *amad*, or stand, is used. There may have been the introduction of crummy doctrine, but the infection was caught, and the individual stands against it so that it doesn't spread, but rather dims, then the person is to be pronounced clean from their burn. As promised earlier, the word *mikvah*, or burn, is now used for the last time in Scripture. You can wave farewell to it.

Time and again, we are seeing pictures of doctrine and how to handle it. We are to keep from bad doctrine, we are to stay away from those who would infect us with it, and we are to stand on the truth of the word of God. However, there is the truth that the person who has the affliction has no idea if it is unclean or not. They have to go to the priest to have it identified.

The sad thing is that the infection normally comes from the priest they go to for an examination. In other words, if a person gets crummy doctrine at Church of Apostasy under Pastor Heretic, and he is told he has an infection by a friend, if he goes back to Pastor Heretic to examine him, he is going to be told he is clean. This is why knowing the Bible is so hugely important, and why it is so, so frustrating to see people trust leaders who are already as unclean as any festering, leprous boil imaginable. It is maddening.

*O God, open our eyes to the truth of Your word
There are countless views on what is wrong and what is right
Lead us in the correct path as is expected by the Lord
Keep us from bad doctrine, that terrible plight*

*Should we stray, lead us back to You by Your Spirit
Keep us from works which will never truly satisfy
Help us to stand on the work of Jesus; He our sure Merit
Yes, keep us, O Lord, from ever going awry*

*And Lord, for those whose doctrines are evil
Keep us from them, lead us to sound and proper teachers
May we never be seduced by the lies of the devil
Yes, keep us, O Lord, from nutty heretical preachers*

III. A Sore On the Head or Beard (verses 29-37)

²⁹ “If a man or woman has a sore on the head or the beard,

The wording here is correctly translated, *b’rosh o b’zaqan*, “the head or the beard.” However, it indicates “the place of the beard,” not just the beard itself, thus it is the chin. One might think that a sore on the head or chin would normally be the same type of thing that would affect anywhere else on the rest of the body, and so why would there be a distinction between the two? It is, again, to give us spiritual pictures of other things.

What is fun, at least to me, is that the *zaqan*, or beard, is now introduced into the Bible. Although only speculation, it is pretty certain that all the great men of God since creation itself, until the time of Moses had beards, and most of them since then have as well.

The *zaqan*, despite being so magnificent a display of manliness, is actually only seen 19 times in the Bible. It comes from the verb *zaqen*, which is to be or become old, and so it can be translated as “old man.” Let’s leave comments on that alone for now.

³⁰ then the priest shall examine the sore; and indeed if it appears deeper than the skin, and *there is* in it thin yellow hair, then the priest shall pronounce him unclean.

Once again, an inspection is needed. In this case, the word *amoq* is again used. It is a deep sore. In addition to that, it has a hair described with a new word, *tshov*, or “yellowish.” This will only be seen three times, through verse 36, and then it is biblical history. It comes from *tshhev*, an even rarer word which is translated as shiny. In Ezra 8, its only use, it describes shiny bronze as precious as gold. It thus signifies that which is gleaming and golden in color.

The word thin is *daq*. It comes from the word *daqaq* which indicates being pulverized or crushed. Thus, this is something small or thin. If such a deep sore with thin, shiny, yellowish or golden hair is in it, that fellow is unclean. His head or chin is leprous, and he is a leper...

³⁰ (con’t) It is a scaly leprosy of the head or beard.

The word “scaly” is new. It is *netheq*. It will be seen 14 times in chapters 13 & 14, and then it too will be gone. It comes from *nathaq* which indicates breaking off, plucking away, or rooting out. Thus, it is a scale than can be pulled away.

³¹ But if the priest examines the scaly sore, and indeed it does not appear deeper than the skin, and *there is* no black hair in it, then the priest shall isolate *the one who has* the scale seven days.

Again, a period of seven days is used to determine if what has arisen to the sight is something contagious and unclean, or if it is just something which looks bad, but has no uncleanness in and of itself. The requirements are 1) it does not appear deeper than the skin. The word is *amoq*, and it indicates that which is deep; and 2) there is no black hair in it.

Surprisingly, the word black, or *shakhor* is new to Scripture. For such a common adjective, one would think it would have been used a jillion times by now. But no. Even more surprising, is that it will be used just 6 times in the Bible. Other words do indicate black, but the specific adjective is rather rare. It comes from a root which is identical to

shakhar which means to seek, and which then comes from the dawning of the morning. It is a jet black.

The scholar Keil sees a problem with this. He says that there is an error in the text. The verse says, “no black hair.” But verse 37 will says that there is a black hair. And so he states that this verse either needs to drop the word no, or change black to yellow. Some other scholars appear to agree with him, but this is incorrect.

A black hair would indicate that things were OK at this point. Verse 37 indicates that the black hair had grown into it. This is the purpose of isolating the person. It would give time for things to either degrade or progress enough so that a final determination could be made. The two weeks of isolation would allow time for a black hair to become well evident. If there was already a black hair in it, then there would be no need to isolate the person at this time.

³² And on the seventh day the priest shall examine the sore; and indeed *if* the scale has not spread, and there is no yellow hair in it, and the scale does not appear deeper than the skin,

On the seventh day, three things are to be looked for: 1) no spreading of the scale; 2) no yellowish hair, and; 3) the scale isn't deeper than the skin. If these three are the case, then...

³³ he shall shave himself, but the scale he shall not shave.

By shaving, he will clear out any chance of the surrounding hair interfering with a proper evaluation, or irritating the scale. Only the area of the scale is not shaved. This then is to see if the scale grows outward, and it will allow the hairs in the scale area to grow at the same time as the non scale areas so that they can be compared. And finally, in not shaving the scale itself, it won't become inflamed and give a false reading if it wasn't leprosy in the first place.

³³ (con't) And the priest shall isolate *the one who has* the scale another seven days.

Seven days are again appointed. By this time, a hair will grow out of the area, or no hair will grow out of it, but it will remain unchanged. Either the hair, or the appearance, will make the determination possible.

³⁴ On the seventh day the priest shall examine the scale; and indeed *if* the scale has not spread over the skin, and does not appear deeper than the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him clean. He shall wash his clothes and be clean.

Only two things are needed for a declaration of being clean. The first is no spreading of the scale, and the second is that it is not deeper than the skin. If both of these are true, then he is to be declared clean. After the declaration, he was then do the same thing as was instructed back in verse 6, wash his clothes.

It is a ceremonial act. He was detained fourteen days on suspicion, and was thus considered tainted by ceremonial pollution. Plus, one's clothes would need to be washed after 14 days, or things could only go from bad to worse. After washing his clothes he will be considered clean.

³⁵ But if the scale should at all spread over the skin after his cleansing,

Unlike verse 7 from last week which was somewhat ambiguous, there is no doubt that this is speaking of happening after he has been declared clean and washed his clothes. What will next be described is after that point...

³⁶ then the priest shall examine him; and indeed *if* the scale has spread over the skin, the priest need not seek for yellow hair. He *is* unclean.

This is for a sore on the head. Other sores were seen to have spread, and yet it didn't necessarily mean there was uncleanness involved. But for a sore on the head, even without secondary evidences, the person was to be declared unclean. A spreading of this scaly leprosy on the head is sufficient for this.

³⁷ But if the scale appears to be at a standstill, and there is black hair grown up in it, the scale has healed. He *is* clean, and the priest shall pronounce him clean.

This verse at first seems superfluous. If it takes us back to verse 34 and the examination after the second week of isolation, then he has already been declared clean because of what it said there. However, if it follows logically after the previous verse, then he has been declared unclean because it has spread since he was declared clean.

But what appears to be the reason for this verse, is to show that it is the word of God as given to the priests which determines what makes a person clean or unclean. The priest is to give his rendering based on that, and nothing else.

With this final section, we see a leprosy somewhat different than the others. First, it is the first time it includes a woman. The others simply said man, person, or body, but this one specifies a woman. Secondly, it is a specific part of the body in that it affects the head or the beard.

For head, the word is *rosh*. It carries many meanings, first, leader, ruler, top, and on and on. Here it is the head which is the seat of knowledge, and biblically, the symbol of authority or preeminence. The beard is specifically a sign of manhood, and even more, a man of years and thus supposed discretion. In such a man, prudence and wisdom are what one would expect.

However, there is now a sore upon the head of such a person – male or female. It is deep, implied by the use of the word *amoq* four times in these few verses. The next time the word will be used will be in Job 11 when comparing the deep things of God. They are higher than heaven and deeper than hell according to the passage. After that, it will be used in Proverbs to speak of an adulteress as being a deep pit. Everything about this passage now is speaking of what is presented to the church of Thyatira in Revelation 2 –

“And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write,
‘These things says the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet like fine brass: ¹⁹ “I know your works, love, service, faith, and your patience; and *as* for your works, the last *are* more than the first. ²⁰ Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols. ²¹ And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent. ²² Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds. ²³ I will kill her children with death, and all the churches shall know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts. And I will give to each one of you according to your works.

²⁴ “Now to you I say, and to the rest in Thyatira, as many as do not have this doctrine, who have not known the depths of Satan, as they say, I will put on you no other burden.” Revelation 2:18-24

The sore upon the head is symbolic of the sore upon the leader of the congregation, here termed, the angel of the church at Thyatira. The sore, rather than of wisdom and prudence, is a cancer which has infected the head. It is deep, and it has *sear sahov dag*, thin yellow hair. The word used to describe the hair is being compared to the feet of fine brass of Christ.

It is that most unusual word concerning gleam as if gold, and which came from the word used to describe the fine bronze of Ezra's time which was as valuable as gold. The "fine brass" used to describe Jesus' feet is another very rare word, *khalkolbanan*, which carries the same meaning. Bronze, or brass, signifies judgment. Christ's feet are the seat of His judgment. This person has judgment in the sore of the head or beard. It is a thin, weak judgment, as the words imply.

The plague is Jezebel, who is described, just as the adulteress of Proverbs. She is a deep infection, and her doctrines are perverse. In fact, the Lord describes her doctrines as the depths of Satan. It is a perfect contrast to the wisdom of the Lord which was described in Job – higher than the heaven and deeper than hell. The Lord says that He will cast her into a bed, along with those who commit adultery with her, into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. This is the picture which we are seeing here.

In this, identified with thin yellow hair, there is an immediate pronouncement of being unclean. It is why a woman is specified for the first time. No woman is to be in such a position of authority in the church according to 1 Corinthians 14, and 1 Timothy 2. There is no need to look for any further sign. It is plague; it is unclean.

However, if there is a sore on the head which cannot be properly identified as wholly unclean, and there is no black hair in it, then the person is to be isolated. The black hair would indicate seeking proper doctrine, as the root of the word implies, "to seek."

But because that is not evident, there is a period of evaluation, just as it was in verses 4-6 from last week. If after a first evaluation, there is no sign of further corruption, then the evaluation is conducted for another seven days, at which time a verdict is to be rendered. If the plague has not spread, the infection is ended and the person is proclaimed clean. But if the bad doctrine returns at anytime after he is pronounced clean, there is no need to look for any further telltale signs, he is unclean and is to be expelled.

The final verse, verse 37, is given as a support for the leader who has corrected his error. It says, if the scale is at a standstill and he has a black hair grown up in it, he is healed. The standing still of the scale signifies that bad doctrine is no longer being spread, and the black hair signifies right doctrine is being sought out.

What is obvious in these verses, is that the truth of the matter, and not the determination by the priest, is what shows a person to be clean or not. If the priest pronounced an unclean person clean, or if he pronounced a clean person unclean, it

doesn't negate the truth of the state in relation to the word. Ultimately, it is the word which determines what is clean. The judgment of the priest must be in accord with it, or it is null and void.

This is what is seen here. Just because a church ordains a person, it does not mean that they are suitable to be ordained. Likewise, just because someone claims a leader is not suitable for the ministry, it does not mean he isn't. Instead, the qualifications are already laid out in the word of God. This is what is seen concerning a sore upon the head of a person in this otherwise difficult to understand set of verses from Leviticus.

As you can see, there is a surface meaning to what is given in the Bible, but there is also something that is being pictured for us to consider. As I said earlier, there are many other things which can bring about infections of one sort or another in a society, and the Lord knows all of them. But he chose these things which are detailed in Leviticus to teach us spiritual truths as well.

And the greatest spiritual truth of all is that we need Jesus. It is He who is on prominent display here. He is the one who ultimately determines if we are clean or if we are unclean, and if that condition is temporal or eternal. Let us be sure to come to Him for full purification, so that we will not be condemned on that great Day, and also so that we will be pleasing to Him even now if we have already been saved by Him.

Closing Verse: *But hold fast what you have till I come. ²⁶ And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations—*

²⁷ 'He shall rule them with a rod of iron;

They shall be dashed to pieces like the potter's vessels'—

as I also have received from My Father; ²⁸ and I will give him the morning star.

²⁹ "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.""

-Revelation: 2:25-29

Next Week: Leviticus 13:38-59 More interesting things for us to seek out and see... (The Law of Leprosy, Part III) (21st Leviticus Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if you have a lifetime of sin heaped up behind you, He can wash it away and purify you completely and wholly. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Law of Leprosy

“If the body develops a boil in the skin, and it is healed
And in the place of the boil there comes a white swelling
Or a bright spot, reddish-white
Then it shall be shown to the priest; for his decision-telling

And if, when the priest sees it
It indeed appears deeper than the skin
And its hair has turned white
The priest shall pronounce him unclean; Shoot! leprosy again

It is a leprous sore which has broken out of the boil
Something that will make everyone else recoil

But if the priest examines it
And indeed there are no white hairs in it, not in this phase
And it is not deeper than the skin but has faded
Then the priest shall isolate him seven days
And if it should at all spread over the skin
Then the priest shall pronounce him unclean
It is a leprous sore
That is what this does mean

But if the bright spot stays in one place, and has not spread
It is the scar of the boil
And the priest shall pronounce him clean
From him nobody will need to recoil

“Or if the body receives a burn
On its skin by fire
And the raw flesh of the burn becomes a bright spot
Reddish-white or white, as if on a white-wall tire

Then the priest shall examine it
And indeed if the hair of the bright spot has turned white
And it appears deeper than the skin
It is leprosy broken out in the burn, it is a leprous sight

Therefore the priest shall pronounce him unclean
It is a leprous sore; this is what that spot does mean

But if the priest examines it
And indeed there are no white hairs in the bright spot
And it is not deeper than the skin
But has faded, a little bit or even a lot

Then the priest shall isolate him seven days
And the priest shall examine him on the seventh day, for sure
If it has at all spread over the skin
Then the priest shall pronounce him unclean; It is a leprous sore

But if the bright spot stays in one place
And has not spread on the skin, but has faded, so do we learn
It is a swelling from the burn that is seen
The priest shall pronounce him clean, for it is the scar from the burn
“If a man or woman has a sore on the head or the beard
Then the priest shall examine the sore
And indeed if it appears deeper than the skin
And there is in it thin yellow hair; not like before

Then the priest shall pronounce him unclean
It is a scaly leprosy of the head or beard; this is what it does mean

But if the priest examines the scaly sore
And indeed it does not appear deeper than the skin, such are its ways
And there is no black hair in it
Then the priest shall isolate the one who has the scale seven days

And on the seventh day the priest shall examine the sore
And indeed if the scale has not spread; it stayed where it has been
And there is no yellow hair in it
And the scale does not appear deeper than the skin

He shall shave himself, but the scale he shall not shave
Yes, he shall follow in these ways
And the priest shall isolate the one who has the scale
Another seven days

On the seventh day the priest shall examine the scale
And indeed if the scale has not spread over the skin
And does not appear deeper than the skin
Then the priest shall pronounce him clean; this battle he did win

He shall wash his clothes and be clean
In response to what the priest has seen

But if the scale should at all spread over the skin after his cleansing
Then the priest shall examine him to see what can be seen
And indeed if the scale has spread over the skin
The priest need not seek for yellow hair; he is unclean

But if the scale appears to be at a standstill
And there is black hair grown up in it
The scale has healed; he is clean
And the priest shall pronounce him clean; so I do submit

Lord God, by Your goodness alone we are reconciled to You
You sent Jesus to cleanse us from all unrighteousness
And so help us to trust in Him alone; yes through and through
Our deeds can't satisfy, and they leave us in more of a mess

But what Christ has done is fully sufficient to save
In Him we are cleansed and made pure in Your sight
Help us to live by faith alone; this is how we are to behave
And through Him all things are made perfect and right

Thank You, O God, for Christ Jesus our Lord
And for what we know of Him through Your superior word

Hallelujah and Amen...

LEVITICUS 13:38-59 (THE LAW OF LEPROSY, PART III)

Once again, we come to a passage that is as clearly designed to show us spiritual truths as anything possibly could be. The first half finishes our verses on leprosy of the skin. It includes a couple verses about being bald. If a person's hair falls out and nothing more, he is bald but he is clean. That's a genuine relief for some of us. It would be a bit more than tragic if people were unclean simply because they were bald. Shine on men; all is well.

After that, there is the note about what a person who is declared unclean is required to do. It is, again, a really nice thing that these things only belonged to the law of Moses, and that being unclean in these ways was only a temporary part of what is seen in redemptive history. The poor lepers of Israel were excluded from society, they were to make it visibly and audibly known that this was the case, and unless they were cured of their affliction, they remained this way permanently.

And then, of course, there is the final major section of our verses, that of leprous garments. As you will see, there is no known parallel to what is described here in these verses. What is given applied only to Israel, and only during the time of the law. As there is nothing to match what is described here anywhere else in history, or at any other location, then it is a clear indication that these verses are given to show us spiritual truths. This is 100% certain.

Text Verse: *"And on some have compassion, making a distinction;²³ but others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh."*

-Jude 1:22, 23

Nowhere in the New Testament is there any hint of literal garments being defiled, and thus being considered unclean. This is good because when I finish my morning jobs, especially the one at 7-11, someone might otherwise want to send me to a priest for an evaluation. And even worse were the things I used to wear when I worked in the wastewater business. That might lead to a lifetime sentence against me. But such is not the case.

Verses in the New Testament, and even passages from the Old Testament, speak of garments as spiritual metaphors of either pure or unclean lives. To wash one's garments signifies having one's life purified. To have garments defiled by the flesh speaks of having one's life defiled by earthly lusts and pleasures.

Now that you know this, the seemingly irrelevant and even tedious final verses of Leviticus 13 should be considered neither irrelevant nor tedious. Instead, they should be a delightful banquet for you to sit down and consume as we continue our journey through this magnificent gift from God; His superior word. And so let's turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. Unclean! Unclean! (Verses 38-46)

³⁸ “If a man or a woman has bright spots on the skin of the body, *specifically white bright spots,*

We now have, once again, the specific identification which was first seen in verse 29 – “a man or a woman.” Here, the Hebrew states the affliction being considered – *beharoth beharoth levanoth*, or “bright spots, bright spots white. The same word for this condition, *bahereth*, was first used in verse 2. It is a bright spot which draws attention to itself. In this case, it is also specified as white, a color denoting works.

³⁹ then the priest shall look; and indeed *if the bright spots on the skin of the body are dull white, it is a white spot that grows on the skin. He is clean.*

The priest is to evaluate the bright spots to determine if they really are “bright.” If they are, it would be another matter entirely. But, if they are instead *kehot levanoth bohaq*, or darkish white eczema, then there is nothing to worry about. The word *bohaq*, is only found here in Scripture. It is a word that has continued to be used in the Middle East though. It corresponds to an Arabic word pronounced the same. It is a known affliction which does not render a person unclean, and therefore he is pronounced as such. The symbolism seems obvious. If a person's life is literally covered in works which are evident for all to see, it doesn't necessarily mean that they are prideful in their deeds, even though it may appear that way on the surface. This would be the person who literally gives himself away in doing good for others, so much so that they would wear the skin off their body in the process. God continues to use afflictions of the body to teach us spiritual lessons.

⁴⁰ “As for the man whose hair has fallen from his head, he *is bald, but he is clean.*

The words translated as “hair has fallen” is a new verb, *marat*, which is derived from a root meaning, “to polish.” Another new word is the adjective *qereakh*, translated as “bald.” This particular word signifies baldness on the back of the head. It is only used

here, and of the prophet Elisha in 2 Kings 2:23. As hair in the Bible signifies awareness, and in particular awareness of sin, being bald would signify being naive to sin, and a readiness to receive, or “discover,” Christ. Such a person is clean.

⁴¹ He whose hair has fallen from his forehead, he is bald on the forehead, but he is clean.

Now a different type of baldness is defined. It is where the hair falls *mi'peath panav*, or from the side toward his face. When the hair falls off the head in this manner then *gibeakh hu*, or “his forehead is bald.” This word, *gibeakh*, or bald forehead, is found only here in the Bible. The root it comes from signifies “to be high” as in the forehead.

In the Bible, the forehead is the place of conscience and identification. Therefore, this symbolizes a person who sets their mind on something. As there is no leprous outbreak, the person pictured here is described by Paul in Colossians which says –

“If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. ²Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.” Colossians 3:1, 2

This person is considered clean. However, in contrast to him...

⁴² And if there is on the bald head or bald forehead a reddish-white sore, it is leprosy breaking out on his bald head or his bald forehead.

Here are two nouns, *qarakhath*, and *gabakhath*, which will each be seen only four times, and all in this chapter. The first signifies to be bald or bare on the back part, the second signifies the same, but on the forehead. If a reddish-white sore appears on either location, it is an indication of leprosy. Inspection is needed...

⁴³ Then the priest shall examine it; and indeed if the swelling of the sore is reddish-white on his bald head or on his bald forehead, as the appearance of leprosy on the skin of the body,

The priest is to inspect the leprous sore and make a determination as if it has the appearance of any other leprous sore elsewhere on the body. If this is so, then he is to make his pronouncement...

⁴⁴ he is a leprous man. He *is* unclean. The priest shall surely pronounce him unclean; his sore *is* on his head.

In picture, the sore on the back of the head is a person who is not seeking Christ. The sore on the front of the head is a person seeking that which is carnal. Such people are unclean and are thus rendered unclean by the priest. As it says, *b'rosho nigo*, in his head is the plague. Paul describes such as these –

“For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, *that they are* the enemies of the cross of Christ: ¹⁹ whose end *is* destruction, whose god *is their* belly, and *whose* glory *is* in their shame—who set their mind on earthly things.” Philippians 3:18, 19

⁴⁵ “Now the leper on whom the sore *is*, his clothes shall be torn and his head bare; and he shall cover his mustache, and cry, ‘Unclean! Unclean!’

The torn clothes, the disheveled hair, and the covered upper lip are all seen elsewhere in the Bible as signs of mourning and/or shame. The cry of “Unclean! Unclean!” was a sign and a warning to others of the disgrace they bore. Albert Barnes rightly notes their state—

“The leper was a living parable in the world of the sin of which death was the wages; not the less so because his suffering might have been in no degree due to his own personal desserts: he bore about with him at once the deadly fruit and the symbol of the sin of his race. As his body slowly perished, first the skin, then the flesh, then the bone, fell to pieces while yet the animal life survived; he was a terrible picture of the gradual corruption of the spirit worked by sin.” Albert Barnes

Sin is a deep infection, and the varied kinds of sin which are reflected in these various skin maladies, render a person unclean. Such people will ultimately be separated forever from the people of God, unless they turn to Christ for healing. Such is seen next...

⁴⁶ He shall be unclean. All the days he has the sore he shall be unclean. He *is* unclean, and he shall dwell alone; his dwelling *shall be* outside the camp.

The sin which causes a person to be unclean keeps them defiled until they come to the Physician in order to be healed. Only Christ can do this. And so they are not to be considered a part of the community of the saints. The word translated as “alone” however, is not technically correct. It is *badad*, a verb which indicates alone, but as if in

isolation. In other words, if there are other lepers, they could, and were, isolated together. It is reflective of the division between those deemed as clean, and those deemed as unclean. All the days that a person was unclean, they were to dwell not among the clean, but among the unclean.

*Unclean! Unclean! My sin is an infectious wound
It has separated me from God's purified people
In a land of exile, I have been marooned
Kept from fellowship there beneath the church steeple*

*I have had my mind set on earthly things
My eyes have lusted after that which is not pure and good
Only sadness and pain this type of life brings
And of this truth I have finally understood*

*Heal me of my infectious wound O Lord
Cleanse me by the shed blood of the perfect Christ
And I will ever after turn my life toward
The One who on Calvary's cross was sacrificed*

*Purified, whole, and forever made clean
In garments of white, radiant, pure, and pristine*

II. Leprous Garments (verses 47-59)

⁴⁷ “Also, if a garment has a leprous plague in it, *whether it is* a woolen garment or a linen garment,

The word now turns to leprosy of a garment. Here, two types of fabric are named – *tsemer*, or wool, and *pesheth*, or flax linen. What seems curious is that a garment is said to have leprosy. Different theories about this have arisen to somehow explain that this isn't actually leprosy, but the wording and the symptoms of the plague warn against these introductions.

Charles Ellicott notes that administrators of the law during the second temple period believed that the “leprosy of garments and houses was not to be found in the world generally, but was a sign and miracle in Israel to guard them against an evil tongue.” In other words, this was a real, unique plague that was only found in Israel.

Both of these materials were used for garments as coverings. They were never to be mixed in the same garment though. That is forbidden in Deuteronomy 22:11.

⁴⁸ **whether *it is* in the warp or woof of linen or wool,**

The translation here is extremely hard to pin down as to its true meaning. First, two new words are again introduced. The *shethi*, translated as warp, will be seen 9 times in this chapter, and never again. They are the lengthwise yarns that are held in tension on a frame or loom to create cloth. This comes from a word which means “to set.” Next also is translated the *erev*, or woof. They are the threads which are drawn through, inserted over-and-under, the lengthwise warp. *Erev* signifies mix or mingle. Elsewhere it is translated as “foreigner.” Together, these form a fabric.

But, because it seems more than improbable that a material would have an infection in threads going in one direction, but not in another, I don’t think this is what is being relayed here. One scholar says, “the inside, or the outside.” Others say it is the yarn to be used for the warp or woof, but not yet sewn. But once they are sewn, it would still be impossible to tear one out and not the other.

There are two likely possibilities. The first is what is seen in several modern translations. They separate the two by saying “woven or knitted material.” In that, they distinguish between the types of fabric which have been made, not based on cloth for the material, but how the material is made. That is actually ingenious after eons of translations saying “warp and woof.”

The other possibility is that it is speaking of the two materials, the wool and the linen, being sewn into two different types of cloth. It is the material which is being described. This is what I would go with. The roots of the words seem to give us the answer.

The *shethi* is the linen. It indicates that which is set. Thus it is an Israelite. The *erev* is the wool. It signifies mixture or mingling, and is also translated “foreigner.” Thus it is a foreigner, just as the Zemarites of Genesis 10:18 are foreigners, having descended from Noah’s grandson Canaan. This would then perfectly explain the spiritual meaning of why wool and linen were forbidden to be mixed in Deuteronomy 22:11.

⁴⁸ (con’t) **whether in leather or in anything made of leather,**

Here it also mentions *or*, or “skin,” and thus it is a leprous plague in a hide, or in anything made of a hide. This is a third category. There are those of Israel, and there are

those of the Gentiles, but what does the *or*, or “skin,” signify? The word signifies to be exposed, or bare. I would suggest that it speaks of the universality of man – Jew and Gentile. One could make a distinction between the two by the first two terms, but the third term unites the two where there is now no distinction between Jew and Gentile. All must come to Christ in the same way.

⁴⁹ and if the plague is greenish or reddish in the garment or in the leather, whether in the warp or in the woof, or in anything made of leather, it *is* a leprous plague and shall be shown to the priest.

The word *yeraqraq* or “greenish” is introduced here. It is believed to give the sense of having a yellowish tone to it rather than being fully green. Although it is such a rare word that there is disagreement on this. It is used only three times. The third is in Psalm 68 when describing gold, and so it probably means either yellowish or glistening. If the material or garment or any other thing made of skins, such as a wineskin, etc, is greenish or reddish, it is to be considered leprous and requiring the priest to examine it.

⁵⁰ The priest shall examine the plague and isolate *that which has* the plague seven days.

Like the leprosy on a person who is then to be isolated seven days, so it is with the item made of one of these materials. Seven, being the number of spiritual perfection, are the number of days required in order to provide a sufficient time for an evaluation to be made, and see if any positive or negative changes occur during that time.

⁵¹ And he shall examine the plague on the seventh day. If the plague has spread in the garment, either in the warp or in the woof, in the leather *or* in anything made of leather, the plague *is* an active leprosy. It *is* unclean.

The word *maar*, or malignant, is brought in here. It will be seen three times in Leviticus, and once in Ezekiel. It indicates a prick, as if from a brier, but it comes from a root which means bitter, or causatively, to embitter. If the plague spreads during that seven days of isolation, the leprosy is considered active, and thus the garment is unclean. Bad news for the garment...

⁵² He shall therefore burn that garment in which is the plague, whether warp or woof, in wool or in linen, or anything of leather, for it *is* an active leprosy; *the garment* shall be burned in the fire.

Unlike today, where we go shopping for clothes on any given day, and wear them until we tire of them and then toss them out, in Israel, a garment had much greater value. The same is true with any thing made of leather. Things were kept as long as possible because they cost a much larger percentage of a person's budget than now. However, if there was a spreading leprosy in the item, it was toast. One would speculate that it would be the priest himself who would guarantee the garment was burned in order to ensure that the plague was destroyed.

⁵³ “But if the priest examines *it*, and indeed the plague has not spread in the garment, either in the warp or in the woof, or in anything made of leather,

If, in the determination of the priest, the leprosy has not spread, then it may not be malignant at all. Despite it being a leprosy, it may just be one which is stalled and can be taken care of in another way. If this is the case...

⁵⁴ then the priest shall command that they wash *the thing* in which *is* the plague; and he shall isolate it another seven days.

If after seven days, there was no change in the garment, then it is to be washed and then isolated once again. The word for wash, *kabas*, is used 51 times in the Bible, almost every instance of which it is speaking of garments. Of the few exceptions to this, the most notable is found in Psalm 51 where it is used twice –

Have mercy upon me, O God,
According to Your lovingkindness;
According to the multitude of Your tender mercies,
Blot out my transgressions.
² **Wash** me thoroughly from my iniquity,
And cleanse me from my sin.
³ For I acknowledge my transgressions,
And my sin *is* always before me.
⁴ Against You, You only, have I sinned,
And done *this* evil in Your sight—
That You may be found just when You speak,
And blameless when You judge.
⁵ Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity,
And in sin my mother conceived me.
⁶ Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts,
And in the hidden *part* You will make me to know wisdom.

⁷ Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;
Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.
⁸ Make me hear joy and gladness,
That the bones You have broken may rejoice.
⁹ Hide Your face from my sins,
And blot out all my iniquities. Psalm 51:1-9

One other time it doesn't specifically refer to garments being washed is in Jeremiah 2 –

“For though you **wash** yourself with lye, and use much soap,
Yet your iniquity is marked before Me,” says the Lord God.” Jeremiah 2:22

Subtle hints of other things are certainly being seen in these choicely selected words.

⁵⁵ Then the priest shall examine the plague after it has been washed; and indeed *if* the plague has not changed its color, though the plague has not spread, it *is* unclean, and you shall burn it in the fire; it continues eating away, *whether* the damage *is* outside or inside.

What might seem surprising at first, but which isn't at all when considered, is that if there is no change in the leprous plague, the garment was to be destroyed. One might at first have thought that its not spreading was a good thing. But it is the plague, not its spreading, which is unclean. Unless the plague retreated, signifying that it was in complete remission, it was just as much a plague as it was when it was identified.

The translation here says, “has not changed its color.” However, the Hebrew says, “not changed the plague its eye.” In other words, “its appearance.” The word “color” lacks the whole aspect of the intent of the word. As the eye perceives, so is its “eye” or “appearance.” If the plague remains after being washed, it is described by a word used just this once in the Bible; it is a *pekhetheth* – an eating. The word thus means “a pit.”

And what actually is surprising is that in this verse are the two nouns, *qarakhath*, and *gabakhath*, which were first seen in verse 42, there translated as “bald head” and “bald forehead.” Here, they are translated as “outside” and “inside.” Regardless as to whether the plague is on the side which is seen, or the inside which is not seen, it is still a leprous plague, and it is to be burnt in the fire. With this verse, we can now say goodbye to the words *qarakhath* and *gabakhath*.

⁵⁶ If the priest examines *it*, and indeed the plague has faded after washing it, then he shall tear it out of the garment, whether out of the warp or out of the woof, or out of the leather.

The verse is pretty much self-explanatory. The word faded means to darken. Instead of being a glistening plague, it has now dulled. If this occurs, then the part which contains it is to be torn out of it. Whatever material it is made of, that portion which is defiled is to be torn from it.

⁵⁷ But if it appears again in the garment, either in the warp or in the woof, or in anything made of leather, it *is* a spreading *plague*; you shall burn with fire that in which is the plague.

Bad news again. If at any time the plague reappears in any garment as described, the plague is to be considered a malignant one, and the entire garment is to be burnt.

⁵⁸ And if you wash the garment, either warp or woof, or whatever is made of leather, if the plague has disappeared from it, then it shall be washed a second time, and shall be clean.

If the first washing was fully successful in cleaning the garment, then there is no need to tear anything out of it. Instead, it is to be given a second washing, and wahlah, it is considered clean.

⁵⁹ “This *is* the law of the leprous plague in a garment of wool or linen, either in the warp or woof, or in anything made of leather, to pronounce it clean or to pronounce it unclean.”

As we saw already, the garment or utensil itself was infected with the scourge. It didn't merely transmit a disease as we would think of something communicable today. Rather, the garment itself bore the disease, and thus it was a sign and it was a miraculous curse for Israel to learn from. And as Israel was to learn from this, so we too are to learn from it. What literally happened in Israel, is something which carries spiritual meaning for us today.

The leprous article has essentially the same spiritual application as that of leprosy on a person. Further, as I showed above, the words translated as “warp” and “woof” actually look to the materials of which the garments are made. One was from linen, picturing

Israelites; the other was from wool, picturing Gentiles. The third category, leather, or literally “skin,” signifies any without distinction.

If a plague of leprosy is found, as it is with all people bearing original sin, it is an indication of grievous sin, just as it was in the skin of people in the early verses of this chapter. It must be dealt with – through purification of healing, or through purification in destruction by fire.

When a garment bears the curse of sin it is to be isolated for seven days. This is the time allotted for any person during the course of their life. It is emblematic of the time deemed by God as their pre-appointed span. If they are shown to be unregenerate, and if their leprosy spreads during that span, they have had their chance. Without purification, for them it is off to the Lake of Fire for what is truly divine purification – eternal and final.

If however, there is no change after the first evaluation, meaning there is still original sin, but there is no further spreading of the leprous plague, it is to be isolated another seven days. If there is no change in the garment after that, meaning whatever time of grace the person is given to be purified, the person is still sent off to be eternally burned.

As I said in that verse (55), it is the plague itself which is unclean, not whether it has spread or not. As we bear original sin, we stand unclean. Even if we live a life full of good works, and our original sin never spreads, we are still tainted with the plague. It must be purified. In this case it wasn't, and so it is off to the Lake for purification through fire.

In the next example, the plague has gone into remission and the plague has faded (56), that portion of the garment is to be torn out. The plague has been excised, but there is a warning that if it returns again, the garment is to be burnt with fire. The instructions for this situation never proclaim the garment clean. It simply leaves the note that if the plague appears again, it will be burned. A garment which is not declared clean, is by default unclean. A person who purifies their life, and removes every vestige of sin, is no closer to being declared clean than the most vile sinner. There is only the sense that spreading sin could return at any time and reinfect the poor soul.

The final example is the garment which was washed, and the plague has disappeared, that garment shall be washed a second time, and it will be declared clean. The first time, the priest commanded the owner to wash the garment. This is then the person who is attentive to the word and who takes it to heart. When the conversion is seen, the

second washing, that of cleansing and purification through the blood of Christ, is what truly cleanses. The declaration is, “Clean!”

In the end, the passage concerning the leprous garment only has one way to be declared clean, and that is through the second washing, picturing the work of Christ. There are some who are obviously defiled. Their garments are stained, and they continue to stain them. Their plague is active, and it will end in destruction.

There are those who hear the word and who do nothing with it. They may rely on their own washing, but their plague remains. They are the ones spoken of by Jeremiah. They wash themselves with lye, but their iniquity is still there before the Lord. It is an open sore which is not healed. Their end is also destruction.

There are those who hear the word and who clean themselves up in accord with the word, even to the point where their sin is no longer evident. But they are never declared clean. It is only a hopeful signal of future good. It is one which is left unanswered as to what they will finally do with their lives.

Unless they receive the second birth through the washing of water through the word, taking the message of Christ in and having no trace of the plague of defilement, they are simply garments with holes torn out of them, unable to serve the purpose for which they were originally intended.

And then there are those who come to the great Physician, who have their garments purified by Him, and who are saved from the eternal fire which awaits any and all who fail to do likewise. The lesson here is that of grace. The infection is already in the garment, and it must be removed. The Priest could just say, “This is infected, burn it.” And He would be well within His rights to do so. But when grace is offered, and when it is received, He can take that which was defiled and purify it wholly and completely.

If you are still awaiting your declaration of purity – your guarantee of eternal life because of the removal of that which separates you from God – call on Christ Jesus, be washed in the blood of the Lamb, and be purified whiter than snow itself.

Closing Verse: *“To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood,⁶ and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.” Revelation 1:5, 6*

Next Week: Leviticus 14:1-9 *What will these nine verses yield?* (Set Free in an Open Field) (22nd Leviticus Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if you have a lifetime of sin heaped up behind you, He can wash it away and purify you completely and wholly. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Law of Leprosy

“If a man or a woman has bright spots
On the skin of the body, specifically white bright spots
-----such is the sight
Then the priest shall look; and indeed
If the bright spots on the skin of the body are dull white

It is a white spot that grows on the skin
He is clean; surely this is worthy of a super happy grin

“As for the man whose hair has fallen from his head
He is bald, but he is clean
Don’t worry Charlie
This is all that it does mean
He whose hair has fallen from his forehead; only forehead is seen
He is bald on the forehead, but he is clean

And if there is on the bald head or bald forehead
A reddish-white sore
It is leprosy breaking out on his bald head
Or his bald forehead; it is leprosy for sure

Then the priest shall examine it
And indeed if the swelling of the sore is reddish-white
On his bald head or on his bald forehead
As the appearance of leprosy on the skin of the body is the sight
He is a leprous man. He is unclean
The priest shall surely pronounce him unclean
His sore is on his head
This is what that sore does mean

“Now the leper on whom the sore is
His clothes shall be torn and his head bare
And he shall cover his mustache, and cry
‘Unclean! Unclean!’ A most distressing affair

He shall be unclean
All the days he has the sore he shall be unclean; it is so
He is unclean, and he shall dwell alone
His dwelling shall be outside the camp; out there he shall go

“Also, if a garment has a leprous plague in it
Whether it is a woolen garment or a linen garment, whichever
Whether it is in the warp or woof of linen or wool
Whether in leather or in anything made of leather

And if the plague is greenish or reddish
In the garment or in the leather
Whether in the warp or in the woof
Or in anything made of leather, yes anything whatsoever

It is a leprous plague and shall be shown to the priest
This applies to everyone, from the greatest to the least

The priest shall examine the plague
And isolate that which has the plague seven days
And he shall examine the plague on the seventh day
If the plague has spread in the garment, in any of these ways

Either in the warp or in the woof
In the leather or in anything made of leather it is seen
The plague is an active leprosy
It is unclean; this is what that does mean
He shall therefore burn that garment in which is the plague
Whether warp or woof, in wool or in linen; ready the burning pyre
Or anything of leather, for it is an active leprosy
The garment shall be burned in the fire

“But if the priest examines it
And indeed the plague in the garment has not spread

Either in the warp or in the woof
Or in anything made of leather, as I have said

Then the priest shall command that they wash the thing
In which is the plague, they shall do this as I say
And he shall isolate it another seven days
Thus shall it be this way

Then the priest shall examine the plague after it has been washed
And indeed if the plague has not changed its color at all
Though the plague has not spread, it is unclean
And you shall burn it in the fire, this is My judgment call

It continues eating away, it is unclean
Whether the damage is outside or inside; this is what it does mean

If the priest examines it
And indeed the plague has faded after washing it
Then he shall tear it out of the garment
Whether out of the warp or out of the woof, or out of the leather
----- so to you I do submit

But if it appears again in the garment
Either in the warp or in the woof, or in anything made of leather
It is a spreading plague; you shall burn with fire
That in which is the plague, yes in anything whatsoever
And if you wash the garment, either warp or woof
Or whatever is made of leather, whatever material is seen
If the plague has disappeared from it
Then it shall be washed a second time, and shall be clean

“This is the law of the leprous plague
In a garment of wool or linen, either in the warp or woof as is seen
Or in anything made of leather
To pronounce it clean or to pronounce it unclean

Lord God, we were all unclean before Your eyes
Each of us deserved to be cast into the eternal Lake of Fire
But You treated us like a marvelous prize

And rescued our souls from that terrible burning pyre

What value is man that You would do such for us?
What do You see in us that this thing has been done?
You took our uncleanness and placed it upon Jesus
There on Calvary's cross; laid upon Your Son

Though it is beyond our ability to understand
We receive the Gift and now call out in praise to You
For what You have done; so marvelous and grand
Thank You for Christ our Lord; who is ever faithful and true

Praises, yes praises we call out now and forevermore
Whether here on earth, or upon that heavenly shore

Hallelujah and Amen...

LEVITICUS 14:1-9 9 (SET FREE IN AND OPEN FIELD)

When you think of the movie The Sound of Music, surely what must come to mind before anything else is the moment where Julie Andrews spreads out her arms on the open field of the mountaintop. There is a feeling of freedom when you're in an open space like that. No matter how far you stretch your arms, there is always more room to do so. The heart can feel a sense of satisfaction like no other in such a spot.

David wrote about that several times, noting that the Lord delivered him and brought him out into a broad place. Although the verses today might seem curious, and we might feel a tweak of sadness as we see one bird killed and another dipped into the blood of the dead bird, we still must certainly get a feeling of relief when we read about the remaining bird being set free.

I know I do. Every time that I have read that verse, I get a happy sensation. There is freedom and there is the chance to live anew in that freedom. What a blessed little bird! But the question is, what does all of this mean? It does seem rather odd, but the Lord decided these things, and all things, as we know, look forward to the Person and work of Christ. So all we need to do is take things slowly and carefully, and all will be revealed. There is a leper who is healed, and there is a need for cleansing. This much we know just from a cursory reading of the verses.

Text Verse: *Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. 2 Corinthians 7:1*

There is a person who is healed, there is a priest who inspects, and who then performs a ritual, and then there is the cleansed person who is asked to do certain things after he is pronounced clean. Sounds like a fun study, does it not? I don't know about you, but I was as excited as a Mexican jumping bean to get into these verses and study them as I had never done before. At the end of the day (which was a long day of study and contemplation), I was both tired and yet perfectly happy with the hours spent looking into what is presented here. Even the part about shaving the beard.

It's not something I would personally look forward to, and so I'm glad these things are fulfilled in Christ. Unless I get the thing caught in a hammer drill again, I plan on keeping this one a long, long time. Oh, have I never told you about that? Well, I will do so and then we will get into this marvelous set of verses. Great stuff is to be found in His

superior word. And so let's turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. When the Leprosy is Healed in the Leper (verses 1-9)

¹ Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying,

Despite Aaron being the high priest, and having been addressed along with Moses at the beginning of the last major section, which comprised all of Chapter 13, the Lord now speaks only to Moses. Unlike the last section which dealt with identifying leprous outbreaks, this section deals with the purification rituals. They are words of law, and thus Moses, the lawgiver receives them. This is seen in the next words...

² "This shall be the law of the leper for the day of his cleansing:

A couple things need to be seen here. First, this is referring to a person who is unclean because of leprosy, which as we saw is a picture of defilement from sin. He was unclean, and thus was separated from the Lord's people. The leprous plagues, as we have seen, picture various types of people caught in various types of sin.

Secondly, from the outset the priest had nothing to do with the cleansing of the leper. He was unclean with leprosy, and now his condition has apparently changed. He was outside of fellowship, and now he is hopefully to be accepted into it. He had a plague which pictured sin and separation, and now he seems to be healed. This was all apart from the priest's ability to cleanse.

As I explained in chapter 13, the word *or*, meaning skin, is used 99 times in the Bible, and yet 46 of them were mentioned in that one chapter. The *or* is the covering of the man. Having an affliction in the skin then was an outward sign of uncleanness. As you saw, it signified an uncleanness which pictures sin in man; a plague of death. Now, the word "skin" is never mentioned in chapter 14. There is life and health, leading to spiritual restoration.

^{2 (con't)} He shall be brought to the priest.

The healing precedes the inspection. The priest is not the healer, but rather the Lord is. It is the priest's job to determine if the person is actually healed and then to perform the purification rites. The Lord, in fact, healed the man, but he was then sent to the priest according to the law.

³ And the priest shall go out of the camp,

Verse 2 said that he was to be brought to the priest, but this only means in the sense of inspection, not in the sense of the leper's previous locality. The leper would be brought from his place of seclusion, as defined in verse 13:46, to a place near the camp.

It is to this place that the priest would go to outside of the camp in order to meet the leper, not the other way around. Until the leper is declared clean, he is not only separate from the priest, meaning the sanctuary as well, but he has been kept from the entire assembly, outside of the camp and outside of fellowship.

^{3 (con't)} and the priest shall examine *him*;

In the decided location, the priest is to inspect the leper. It is an inspection of the eye. He is to look over the person, and to make his evaluation based on what he sees, as the word *raah* implies.

^{3 (con't)} and indeed, *if* the leprosy is healed in the leper,

The word says, *v'hinneh nirpa nega ha'tsaraat min ha'tsarua* – "And behold! (If) be healed the plague the leprosy from the leper." The words are excited and sure. The priest has looked, and his eyes have beheld the work of the Lord. The word for healing is *rapha*. It is the word used when the Lord claimed a special title for Himself in Exodus 15. There He said –

"If you diligently heed the voice of the Lord your God and do what is right in His sight, give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have brought on the Egyptians. For I *am* the Lord who heals you." Exodus 15:26

This is seen now. The priest has gone forth not to heal, but to determine if healing has taken place. Yehovah Rapha, or the Lord who Heals, is the One who accomplishes the healing. If the leper is so healed, a particular ritual is to be conducted. It is a ritual which is actually a parable being expressed through action.

⁴ then the priest shall command to take for him who is to be cleansed two living *and* clean birds,

It must be noted that this ritual by the priest is conducted outside of the camp, before the man is allowed to come in. Though healed, he is not yet cleansed. The cleansing of the once-leprous person takes on two distinct parts. The first is cleansing to come into the camp. This is seen in verses 4-8. Only after that will he then be purified to come to the sanctuary where he will perform his own sacrifices for complete restoration.

The priest now commands to bring *shete tsiporim khayot tehorot*, or “two birds living (and) clean.” However, no particular bird is described. The word for bird, *tsippor*, is the basis for the name of Moses’ wife, Tziporah. The *tsippor* is used elsewhere as a picture of those who are joined as the people of God, and thus those in the church – be it Old or New Testament. The 84th psalm shows that the bird can find a home where the Lord dwells –

"Even the **sparrow** has found a home,
And the swallow a nest for herself,
Where she may lay her young—
Even Your altars, O LORD of hosts,
My King and my God." Psalm 84:3

Jesus gives the same basic idea in the New Testament –

"Then He said, “What is the kingdom of God like? And to what shall I compare it?
¹⁹ It is like a mustard seed, which a man took and put in his garden; and it grew
and became a large tree, and the birds of the air nested in its branches.”

-Luke 13:18, 19

The use of the bird for cleansing then is to signify acceptance into the people of the Lord.

⁴ (con’t) **cedar wood,**

Along with the two clean birds, he is to bring *ets eretz*, or wood cedar. The cedar is introduced into the Bible here. The word is derived from a root which means to be firm, or strong. It is the same word used to describe the cedars of Lebanon and even the cedars of God in Psalm 80. Thus they are large, magnificent, firmly fixed trees.

⁴ (con’t) **scarlet,**

u-sh'ni tolaat, or “and scarlet (of the) crimson grub worm,” is to be brought. The implication is scarlet yarn. Two words here are used to describe the color. The first is *shani*, which means “scarlet.” The second is *tola*. This is actually a worm known as the crimson-grub. However, it is used only in this manner concerning the color from it, and cloths dyed with it.

Taken together, they are translated as "scarlet," but implying the scarlet which comes from the *tola* or grub worm. The double words "implies that to strike this color the wool or cloth was twice dipped" (Clarke). The scarlet, or red, in the Bible pictures and symbolizes war, blood, and/or judgment. In this case, it is judgment, as in judgment on sin.

⁴ (con't) **and hyssop.**

And finally, *ezov*, or hyssop, is to accompany these things. The word hyssop that we use today comes from the Hebrew through the Greek. In Greek, it is *hussopos*, and this is a transliteration from the Hebrew *ezov*. You can hear the similarity *ezov/hyssopos/hyssop*. It is an herb native to the Middle East and elsewhere. It has antiseptic, cough relieving, and expectorant properties.

Because of this, it is used as an aromatic herb and for medicine. It is a brightly colored shrub with dark green leaves. During the summer, it produces bunches of pink, blue, or, more rarely, white fragrant flowers. It is contrasted to the cedar in 1 Kings 4, showing its diminutive size –

“He spoke three thousand proverbs, and his songs were one thousand and five. ³³ Also he spoke of trees, from the cedar tree of Lebanon even to the hyssop that springs out of the wall; he spoke also of animals, of birds, of creeping things, and of fish.” 1 Kings 4:32, 33

⁵ **And the priest shall command that one of the birds be killed**

“And shall command the priest and slaughter the bird the one.” As has been seen, and as will be seen throughout Scripture, there is no cleansing without the shedding of blood. Likewise, there is no atonement without the shedding of blood. In order for there to be purification, something must die. In this case, one of the birds is slaughtered for the once-leprous man to be cleansed. This first bird is to be slaughtered...

⁵ (con't) **in an earthen vessel**

el keli kherets, or “to a vessel earthen.” This is the only acceptable vessel for the rite. It cannot be gold, it cannot be silver, it cannot be bronze. It must be in an earthen vessel alone.

⁵ (con’t) **over running water.**

al mayim khayim – “over water living.” The English translation is a bit misleading. The water wasn’t running as the bird was killed. Rather, living water signifies water from a spring as it comes forth from the ground. Thus the water in the bowl is to be living water, and into it, the blood of the bird was to drip and mix. The symbolic meaning is that the water was pure, having come up from the earth, and without having gathered any impurities.

⁶ **As for the living bird, he shall take it, the cedar wood and the scarlet and the hyssop, and dip them and the living bird in the blood of the bird *that was* killed over the running water.**

Ancient sources state that the wings and the tail of the living bird were extended. And then, while in this position, it was tied together lengthwise with the bundle of hyssop and the cedar wood, and then dipped into the blood and water in the earthen dish. The word for dip is *tabal*. It means to dip or plunge. It comes from a primitive root meaning to immerse. It is, for example, used of Naaman the Syrian going into the Jordan seven times in order to be purified of his leprosy. Thus, it is an immersion. The entire handful of contents was dipped into the earthen vessel of living water.

⁷ **And he shall sprinkle it seven times on him who is to be cleansed from the leprosy,**

There are several traditions concerning this sprinkling. One says it was on the covering over the face of the leper, one says it was on his forehead, and one says it was on the back of his hand. The Bible doesn’t say, and so that is completely irrelevant. All the Bible is concerned with is that he is to be sprinkled seven times. Seven is, as we have seen many times, the number of spiritual perfection. The sprinkling is something that it referred to and explained in the book of Hebrews –

For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water, scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, ²⁰ saying, “This *is* the blood of the covenant which God has commanded you.” ²¹ Then likewise he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry. ²² And according to

the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission. Hebrews 9:19-22

7 (con't) and shall pronounce him clean,

Once the rite of sprinkling is accomplished, the leper is then pronounced clean. The word *taher* signifies that which is purified. Once this is accomplished, then a marvelous rite of freedom is conducted...

7 (con't) and shall let the living bird loose in the open field.

The living bird which went through something that was certainly traumatic in the extreme for it, is set free in the *sadeh*, or open field. This word comes from an unused root which means "to spread out," and thus it is an open space.

8 He who is to be cleansed shall wash his clothes,

The word for wash is *kebes*. It means to trample, and thus to wash by stamping with the feet, as in the fulling process. This was the first step of his own personal preparedness for returning to life within the camp.

8 (con't) shave off all his hair,

The next step is to shave off all his hair. Hair in the Bible, as we have seen many times, signifies awareness, but especially an awareness of sin. Every bit of his hair is to be shaven, and this is given in greater detail in verse 9. After this...

8 (con't) and wash himself in water,

A bath for the body is in order...

8 (con't) that he may be clean.

v'taher – "and pure." Each step is in preparation for the wondrous moment of rejoining the people of God. He is to do these things and then...

8 (con't) After that he shall come into the camp, and shall stay outside his tent seven days.

The reason for this isn't stated, but it seems obvious that it was to keep him from any type of defilement which could occur and thus interrupt his own purification process.

⁹ But on the seventh day he shall shave all the hair

On the seventh day, after a week in his purification, the person is to shave again. This time it is defined first as all the hair...

⁹ (con't) off his head

The word for head is *rosh*. It comes from a root meaning "to shake," as the head is that part which is most easily shaken.

⁹ (con't) and his beard

As we saw in the previous chapter, the *zaqan*, or beard comes from the verb *zaqen*, which means to be or become old, and so it can be translated as "old man."

⁹ (con't) and his eyebrows

The *gav*, or eyebrow, is introduced here, and this is the only time it is used to describe the brow of the eye. It simply means "rim." It comes from a root which means "to hollow" or "to curve." Thus it is the curves of the eyes. As this is the only instance where this is used to speak of the brow of the eye, it is actually the eyes which are the subject here. One doesn't actually shave their eye, but they will shave the brow of the eye.

⁹ (con't) —all his hair he shall shave off.

Again, hair indicates an awareness, specifically that of sin. All of the evident hair is to be shaven.

⁹ (con't) He shall wash his clothes and wash his body in water,

After the shaving, the clothes and the body are washed, and then...

⁹ (fin) and he shall be clean.

The man plagued with leprosy is now clean. He is not yet through with the requirements he is expected to deal with, but he is now considered fully accepted into the community, and he can now proceed to the sanctuary as any other Israelite could do.

*Healed from leprosy, clean and pure
I am ready to enter into a new life with my Lord
I have been cleansed, and that is sure
No longer alienated; so says the word*

*Freed from sin, I am whole once again
Cleansed by God and granted new life in my Lord
I have been justified and sanctified among the sons of men
Cleansed by the washing of water through the word*

*It is all by the grace of God that this has come about
I am free from what once confined me
Through the death of Another, I am purified, no doubt
Thank God for Christ Jesus who has set me free*

II. Pictures of Christ

Here we have a passage which seems so odd, and so obscure to our modern senses, that it is actually completely foreign to anything we would consider as necessary after getting over a skin disease. But if we just remember what those skin diseases pictured in the previous chapter, then we can again look at these verses and know that we are being given more pictures.

If the leprosy was a picture of sin and death, then this must be picturing purification from that. First, we need to remember that the healing of the leprosy comes from the Lord. It did not come from a doctor or a priest. As the priest is the mediator for the people on behalf of God, and as our true Mediator is Christ, then we can make the obvious connection that the Lord is filling several roles at once.

Thus, this means that what is happening here is a process which, even though it is occurring in a set order, actually may have many aspects occurring simultaneously. Just as when a person believes in Christ, they are saved, they are justified, they are sanctified, and they are sealed with the Holy Spirit all at one time. So it is with what is occurring in these verses. A process is taking place which pictures another process in us; one that occurs instantaneously.

It needs to be noted that the killing of the live bird here does not actually denote a true sacrifice. That will be detailed in the following verses next week. However, at the same time, it pictures the same things as a true sacrifice. And so in this case, there is a representation of the state in which the leper had legally been, and it signifies what would have happened to him if there was no remedy for his affliction to be found.

But a cure was found and, as I said, it is represented by the same things which marks a true sacrifice under the law. There is the truth that one takes the place of another. This will become evident as we go on.

The person who has the leprous plague is healed; the person who is plagued with sin is healed. It is the Lord who heals. This is the person who comes to Christ by faith in His finished work. The priest, Christ, examines him, and indeed, the Lord has healed him. Christ is Yehovah Rapha, the Lord who heals. The malady of the skin which was seen 46 times in the previous chapter is no longer mentioned. There is life and health, signifying spiritual renewal.

We are told that the priest went outside the camp to meet the leper, the sinner, and all of the rites of purification by the priest are done outside of the camp. Christ left heaven in order to meet with sinners. He assumed a human nature, and came forth from His Father, going into the world to save them. Likewise, Hebrews 13:11 says that Christ suffered outside the camp, meaning Jerusalem, in order to sanctify the people with His own blood.

It is there that the priest meets with the one who is to be cleansed of leprosy; it is there where Christ meets the one who is to be purified from sin. Such is the Lord who is ready to meet with sinners. There, in his still-defiled state, the leper and the sinner are inspected. As the priest inspects the leper, Christ so reads the hearts and minds of he who calls out to Him.

And so there, at the inspection it says, "And behold! (If) be healed the plague the leprosy from the leper." That is equated directly to, "And behold! He is cured from his sin." He has believed in Christ. Christ has inspected, and Christ has determined.

In acknowledgment of the clean state, a ritual is now conducted which pictures the work of Christ, and it is a work of Christ which is now realized in the believer. As I said, though these are done in an order here in Leviticus, they are symbolic of that which happens at once in the believer.

Two living birds, cedar wood, scarlet and hyssop are brought at the priest's command. The two living birds both picture Christ. The cedar wood pictures Christ, and the hyssop pictures... Christ. The pictures, however, like all such things, picture Christ on behalf of His people, and thus it is a process which includes those "in Christ."

As I said, the bird elsewhere in the Bible symbolizes those who are joined as the people of God. The two birds are described as living and clean. It is an obvious picture of Christ who is alone without sin. He is Life, and he is Purity. Why there are two birds will be seen as we progress.

Along with the two birds is *ets eretz*, or wood cedar. The word signifies firm or strong. What is occurring in this rite is something permanent. It carries the strength of the process. It is symbolic of Christ who is the strength of God for salvation. As Paul says in Romans 5 –

"For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly."
-Romans 5:6

The *sh'ni tolaat*, or scarlet of the crimson grub worm, pictures Christ who is described by the same word, *tola*, in the 22nd Psalm, a psalm about the cross of Christ –

"But I *am* a worm, and no man;
A reproach of men, and despised by the people." Psalm 22:6

As we have seen throughout Exodus, the scarlet color signifies judgment. In this case, it is judgment on sin. This is what happened at the cross of Christ, and this is what the scarlet signifies here. A description of this crimson dye, which is obtained from the *tola* is given to us by Henry Morris –

"When the female of the scarlet worm species was ready to give birth to her young, she would attach her body to the trunk of a tree, fixing herself so firmly and permanently that she would never leave again. The eggs deposited beneath her body were thus protected until the larvae were hatched and able to enter their own life cycle. As the mother died, the crimson fluid stained her body and the surrounding wood. From the dead bodies of such female scarlet worms, the commercial scarlet dyes of antiquity were extracted. What a picture this gives of Christ, dying on the tree, shedding his precious blood that he might 'bring many sons unto glory.' He died for us, that we might live through him!" Henry Morris

The hyssop, as I noted earlier, was contrasted to the cedar by Solomon to show its humble size and nature. Where cedar denoted firmness and strength, the hyssop denotes humility. Other than the one instance given by Solomon, it is always used in the Bible in conjunction with purification. Paul shows us how this humble plant, used in purification, looks forward to Christ -

“Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, ⁷ but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, *and* coming in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to *the point of* death, even the death of the cross.” Philippians 2:5-8

After calling for these things, each of which pictures Christ, it says that the priest is to kill the first bird over living water in an earthen vessel. The earthen vessel and the living water picture Christ. He came in the likeness of man; man whom Paul describes as an earthen vessel –

“But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us.” 2 Corinthians 4:7

As I said earlier, only an earthen vessel would suffice for this purification. The reason is that only Christ’s incarnation, coming as a Man in an earthen vessel, could purify the lost sinner. The living water is described by Christ Himself as that which flows from Him. It is He who is the pure and undefiled Water pictured here -

“If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. ³⁸ He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.” John 7:37, 38

The slaughtering of the first bird over the earthen jar, and then mingling its blood into the living water symbolizes Christ’s death. It is this act which allows the fountain of purification and cleansing from sin.

Once that is accomplished, then the other bird is immersed into the mixture, along with the cedar wood, the scarlet, and the hyssop. It is symbolic of the burial of Christ. His strength, his judgment on sin, and his humility in coming as a human were all buried. But that isn’t the end of the story. It is this mixture which is then sprinkled seven times on the one to be cleansed. The mixture of the blood of the bird and the living water, along with the cedar, scarlet, and hyssop, is seen in John’s words of his first epistle –

“This is He who came by water and blood—Jesus Christ; not only by water, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit who bears witness, because the Spirit is truth.” 1 John 5:6

Seven is the number of spiritual perfection, and so the seven-fold sprinkling is symbolic of the perfect sprinkling of the seven-fold Spirit of the Lord which is cited in Isaiah 11 –

“There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse,
And a Branch shall grow out of his roots.
²The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him,
The Spirit of wisdom and understanding,
The Spirit of counsel and might,
The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.” Isaiah 11:1, 2

This Spirit of the Lord, which rests upon Christ, is sprinkled on all who believe. It is the sealing of the Spirit which Paul mentions in Ephesians 1:13, 14.

Once the person is so sprinkled, he is then pronounced clean. He is considered purified by this act. And so it is with the Spirit. Paul, writing to those in Rome, tells them what they once were, and what they now are in Christ. It is a perfect picture of the defiled person of Chapter 13, and the now cleansed person of Chapter 14 –

Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, ¹⁰ nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹ And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.” Romans 6:9-11

The Spirit sanctifies the believer, just as the water and blood mixture was sprinkled on the leper in order to cleanse him. And after that occurs, it says that the living bird is to be loosed in an open field. It is typical of the resurrection of Christ. The bird had been immersed into death, and it was raised out of it. That death is what purified the sinner, and the resurrection is what justified him. Paul explains it to us in Romans 4 –

“Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him, ²⁴ but also for us. It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, ²⁵ who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification.” Romans 4:23-25

As I said, these things are typical of Christ, but what Christ did is then applied to all who are in Christ. The leper has gone from his place of confinement because of being unclean, to a place of freedom because of his cleansing. The bird too was confined, but it was then released in an open field. But, it was released still covered in the water/blood mixture.

It is typical of Christ who was confined in the pit for judgment on our sin, but who was released and who now fills the heavens. It is also now emblematic of the sinner who was trapped in sin and destined for the narrow confines of hell, but who has been brought out to the open expanses of heaven. He is covered in the work of Christ; the water of life, and the blood of atonement. Because of Christ, so it is also of the justified, purified, and sanctified sinner.

The believer is immersed with Christ in His death, and the sins which he bore for us die with Him. In His resurrection, man stands justified before God, just as Paul says in Romans 4:25.

After these things, the person was told to wash his clothes. It is the first active thing that he is instructed to do. As I said, the word implies to wash by trampling. It is symbolic of purifying one's life through trampling out the sin in our lives. Jude's words which speak of the garments defiled by the flesh explain the symbolism. In coming to Christ, we are to trample out the defilement.

It then next says that the cleansed leper is to shave off all his hair. It is symbolic of removing anything which reminds us of sin. We are to remove any awareness of sin from our lives and so bring on an awareness and knowledge of God. Paul explains it in these words –

“Awake to righteousness, and do not sin; for some do not have the knowledge of God.” 1 Corinthians 15:34

After this comes the washing of the body. It is symbolic of purifying oneself after having the knowledge of God. This is explained in the New Testament with these words –

“Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, ²⁶ that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, ²⁷ that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.”

-Ephesians 5:25-27

After these things have been done, the cleansed leper can then enter the camp. He has joined to the people of God, and he is no longer an unclean outsider. But it then notes that he is not to go into his tent for seven days. It is not until the 8th day that another process needs to be conducted.

This is to be considered the time when sinners are cleansed by the Lord, but they need to not get distracted by the things of the world. There needs to be a time of being among the people of God and separate from anything distracting, thus causing them to become defiled again.

As I said, many of these things occur simultaneously in the believer, but the verses ahead, which we will look at next week, go through an elaborate process of offerings which are to be presented to the Lord. Like the previous offerings which we looked at, they will point to the work of Christ.

After they are complete, in verse 20, it will say, “And the priest shall offer the burnt offering and the grain offering on the altar. So the priest shall make atonement for him, and he shall be clean.” He has already been declared clean, and yet there is still the need for atonement, something provided through the work of Christ, in order to be considered clean. Each step is a necessary part of the process of going from being a defiled sinner, to a cleansed member of the congregation. These Old Testament types and shadows, which really took place in Israel, typify marvelous spiritual truths which occur in each person brought into the church today.

It all points to the finished work of Christ, but each step is a process which is accomplished in the believer because of his faith in what has already been done. The last thing we saw in our nine verses today was basically an expansion of verse 8. On the seventh day, the cleansed leper was to shave off all the hair on his head, his eyebrows, and his beard.

As we have seen, hair indicates an awareness of sin. He is to again purge himself of any new hair, thus any new awareness of sin. This is to be done before the sacrifice for his atonement is made. I detailed these three body parts for you, but will remind you of them now, showing why the Lord specifically named them in verse 9.

First was the *rosh*, or head. It comes from a root meaning “to shake,” as the head is that part which is most easily shaken. It speaks of the attitude that the believer is to have, removing sin and holding fast to Christ, even through afflictions –

“Therefore, when we could no longer endure it, we thought it good to be left in Athens alone, ² and sent Timothy, our brother and minister of God, and our fellow laborer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you and encourage you concerning your faith, ³ that no one should be shaken by these afflictions; for you yourselves know that we are appointed to this. ⁴ For, in fact, we told you before when we were with you that we would suffer tribulation, just as it happened, and you know.” 1 Thessalonians 3:1-4

We are to remain firm and fixed in Christ, and not to have our faith shaken by what occurs around us.

Next is the *zaqan*, or beard which comes from the verb *zaqen*, meaning to be or become old, and so it can be translated as “old man.” Paul tells us to leave behind the old man –

“But you have not so learned Christ, ²¹ if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: ²² that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, ²³ and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, ²⁴ and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.”

-Ephesians 4:20-24

And then are the eyebrows. As I noted, as this is the only instance where the word is used to speak of the brow of the eye, it is actually the eyes which are the subject here. One doesn't actually shave their eye, but they will shave the brow of the eye. Paul shows us how this precept is to be applied to our lives –

“...that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, ¹⁸ the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹ and what *is* the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power ²⁰ which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated *Him* at His right hand in the heavenly *places*, ²¹ far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. Ephesians 1:17-21

Each of these is a positive precept from Paul, just as they are positive commands for the healed leper in the Old Testament. Don't be shaken, put off the old man, and have the eyes of your understanding enlightened. This is what we are asked to do. In the end, the

healed leper is me or you. It is any person who has come to God and been cleansed by the work of Christ. A New Testament example of this is found in the book of Matthew.

When He had come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed Him. ² And behold, a leper came and worshiped Him, saying, "Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean."

³ Then Jesus put out *His* hand and touched him, saying, "I am willing; be cleansed." Immediately his leprosy was cleansed.

⁴ And Jesus said to him, "See that you tell no one; but go your way, show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them."

-Matthew 8:1-4

As you can see, there is the leper, there is the Lord, Jesus, who heals – and who alone can heal – and then, only then is the person instructed to go to the priest. Although this passage we have looked at today is not the offering that the leper is to offer, this rite had to be accomplished first as an acknowledgment that the Lord had accomplished this cleansing on his behalf. Only after that will the leper then make his offering.

The priest was to see and avow that the Lord had healed. But the priest was also only a picture of the Lord as the Mediator between God and man. And so it is the Lord who heals, and it is the Lord who accepts that healing. In the end, it is all about the work of the Lord. It is He who frees us from our sin.

Instead of the confining pit of hell, we have been granted the wide open spaces of heaven's vast expanse. It was a gift for us, and it is a gift to anyone who will simply reach out and receive it. If you have never been one who is cleansed by the atoning death of Christ, please make today the day. You are a leper headed on a one-way path to destruction, but through Him, you will be a pure and spotless child of God on the way to an eternal place of glorious wonder and delight. Be wise, be discerning, call on Christ today.

Closing Verse: *For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, ¹² teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, ¹³ looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, ¹⁴ who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works."* Titus 2:11-14

Next Week: Leviticus 14:10-32 *Something required for every Ma'am and every Gent...*
(Purified From All Defilement) (23rd Leviticus Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if you have a lifetime of sin heaped up behind you, He can wash it away and purify you completely and wholly. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

Set Free in an Open Field

Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying
These are the words He was then relaying

“This shall be the law of the leper
For the day of his cleansing; yes on that day
He shall be brought to the priest
As to you I now say

And the priest shall go out of the camp
And the priest shall examine him
And indeed, if the leprosy is healed in the leper
No longer is his future leprosy-filled and grim

Then the priest shall command to take
For him who is to be cleansed two living and clean birds
Cedar wood, scarlet, and hyssop
According to these words

And the priest shall command that one of the birds
Be killed in an earthen vessel over running water
According to these words

As for the living bird, he shall take it
The cedar wood and the scarlet and the hyssop too
And dip them and the living bird in the blood
Of the bird that was killed over the running water
-----So shall he do

And he shall sprinkle it seven times

On him who is to be cleansed from the leprosy
And shall pronounce him clean
And shall let the living bird loose in the open field
-----So shall it be

He who is to be cleansed shall wash his clothes
Shave off all his hair, and wash himself in water
----- that he may be clean
After that he shall come into the camp
And shall stay outside his tent seven days; so it shall be seen

But on the seventh day he shall shave all the hair
Off his head and his beard and his eyebrows, so this shall be seen
All his hair he shall shave off; he shall wash his clothes
And wash his body in water, and he shall be clean

Lord God Almighty, how marvelous is the story
Of what Christ has done for lepers like us
We have gone from defilement unto glory
All because of the wonderful work of Jesus

How can it be that You would care for fallen man
Stepping out of eternity to walk with us
Wondrous are Your ways, glorious is Your plan
Thank You, O God, for the wonderful work of Jesus

Hallelujah and Amen...

LEVITICUS 14:10-32

(PURIFIED FROM ALL DEFILEMENT)

The thought of having leprosy must have been one of the worst thoughts of all for the Israelite of old. It would have to be comparable to receiving news nowadays that you had somehow contacted AIDs or something similar. There would be expulsion from the camp of God's people, there would be a shunning by almost everyone who saw you, and there would be an existence which was dirty and festering.

People wouldn't care how you got it, they would just see you as a person who had become an outcast. Nothing pleasant about such an existence could be truly realized. But if you stop and look at the typology which we drew out from it, the leprosy is just a state of the vile sinner in need of a Savior. It could be, and it was, any one of us before we came to Christ.

The subject of leprosy has been discussed now for all of Chapter 13, which included leprosy of garments, and it has continued on into chapter 14. Today, we will conclude the rites required for atonement to be complete for the healed leper.

What is important to understand, as I noted last week and as I will note again this week, is that everything in the cleansing process is immediate. When we come to Christ, every type and picture that we have seen, and will see, is realized in Him.

The Lord has logically broken down these things into a sequence of events which actually take place in us at once, but which are noted in a set order so that we can see all of them occurring and what they mean to us. The New Testament explains them as well, but before the Antitype and the explanation of His work, we have the foreshadowing type. By presenting it this way, we can be absolutely sure that what we read about in Christ's fulfillment of them is complete, and it is totally satisfactory to meet every requirement set down by the Law of Moses. This is the beauty of what God has done for us.

What is even niftier is that when He walked among His people Israel, they had a chance to see this Old Testament symbolism come to life. That way, it would be fresh on their minds when He fulfilled the typology. Unfortunately, so many of them missed it, either willingly or by not paying heed. One such example was read last week. It is repeated today as our text verse...

Text Verse: *When He had come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed Him. ² And behold, a leper came and worshiped Him, saying, "Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean."*

³ *Then Jesus put out His hand and touched him, saying, "I am willing; be cleansed." Immediately his leprosy was cleansed.*

⁴ *And Jesus said to him, "See that you tell no one; but go your way, show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them."*

-Matthew 8:1-4

As we saw last week, it is the Lord who heals, not the priest. Instead, the priest was simply to determine if healing had really taken place, and then to conduct the rites for that healing. Here we have that same pattern taking place. The Lord Yehovah – our Lord Jesus – did the healing. From there, the leper was told to go to the priest, who himself pictured Christ, and to offer the gift that Moses commanded, which also pictures Christ.

If you can see it, the entire law is being fulfilled before their eyes. They were without excuse when Christ rose from the grave. The details of their ancient law which had been shown to them through the work of Jesus was a proof of His messiah-ship. As a whole, they failed to recognize it. Now it is they who are outside the camp, suffering as lepers, and it is we, the redeemed of the Lord from both Jew and Gentile who have been healed, cleansed, and brought into eternal fellowship with our heavenly Father. Amazing, simply amazing. It's all to be found in His superior word. And so let's turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. Atonement Before the Lord (verses 10-20)

The time has come! The cleansed leper has gone through his time of personal purification, and now he is ready to be fully reincorporated into the fellowship by making his offerings at the sanctuary. Until this time, he has been allowed in the camp, but he remained outside of his tent. He has also been kept from the sanctuary. But now that his time of purification is past, to the sanctuary he shall go.

¹⁰ **"And on the eighth day he shall take two male lambs without blemish, one ewe lamb of the first year without blemish, three-tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering, and one log of oil.**

It is the eighth day, the number of new beginnings in Scripture. As a leper, he was excluded not just from the sanctuary, but also from the camp. The first ceremony was

performed outside the camp, and it allowed the leper to come in among the brethren. The second ceremony, which will now be detailed, would restore him to all of the privileges of a covenant relationship with Yehovah.

As I said, these things happen at one time when we receive Christ, but they are divided into different rites, with different offerings, to show us an entire broad picture of all that Christ has done for each one of us. On this day of new beginnings, the healed-leper is to bring as offerings four things which will comprise three types of offerings. The first consists of *sh'nai kebasim*, or two male lambs, or more correctly “rams.” *Kebes* comes from a root which means “to dominate.” It thus pictures Christ’s domination over sin, something which has been pictured in his cleansing. These are to be, *tamim*, or “without blemish.” Thus they picture Christ in whom no defect was found.

Next, he is to bring *kabsah akhat*, or one ewe lamb. This is the feminine of the word just used, *kebes*. This is to be of the first year and also without blemish. This female ewe lamb is rarely seen in the Bible – eight times, in Genesis 21, here, Numbers 6, and 2 Samuel 12.

Thirdly, he is to bring a grain offering of 3/10th of an *ephah*, or three omers, of fine flour mixed with oil. It is believed that the three omers of flour were brought in connection with the three animal offerings, a tenth for each.

And lastly he is to bring something new to Scripture, a *log* of oil. This is the first of five times the *log* will be seen, all in this chapter. It comes from a root meaning to deepen. The word is cognate to the Arabic word meaning be deep, depth, and abyss. The *log* is a set measure for liquids. Tradition says the measure of the *log* was equal to six hen’s eggs.

¹¹ Then the priest who makes *him* clean shall present the man who is to be made clean, and those things, before the Lord, at the door of the tabernacle of meeting.

The words, “The priest who makes him clean” obviously mean, “The priest who performs the ritual.” It is the Lord who cleansed, and it is the Lord who accepts the ritual of atonement. However, the priest here is typical of Christ our Priest in that it is He who presents us to the Father in purification through Himself. In the ancient type, the healed-leper is presented with his offerings before the face of Yehovah at the door of the tent (not tabernacle) of meeting. Every detail points to Christ – the Offering, the Lord, the Door, even the tent itself, as we saw in Exodus.

The term “at the door of the tent of meeting” signifies the place of the brazen altar. As we have seen many times, it is the offerings at the altar which symbolically allows access through the door.

¹² And the priest shall take one male lamb and offer it as a trespass offering, and the log of oil, and wave them as a wave offering before the Lord.

Something different occurs here with this *asham*, or trespass offering than any other such in Scripture. The entire live animal, along with the *log* of oil, is waved before the Lord. To understand the significance of this, we can take a departure to Numbers 8 –

And you shall bring the Levites before the tabernacle of meeting, and you shall gather together the whole congregation of the children of Israel. ¹⁰ So you shall bring the Levites before the Lord, and the children of Israel shall lay their hands on the Levites; ¹¹ and Aaron shall offer the Levites before the Lord *like* a wave offering from the children of Israel, that they may perform the work of the Lord. ¹² Then the Levites shall lay their hands on the heads of the young bulls, and you shall offer one as a sin offering and the other as a burnt offering to the Lord, to make atonement for the Levites.

¹³ “And you shall stand the Levites before Aaron and his sons, and then offer them *like* a wave offering to the Lord. ¹⁴ Thus you shall separate the Levites from among the children of Israel, and the Levites shall be Mine. ¹⁵ After that the Levites shall go in to service the tabernacle of meeting. So you shall cleanse them and offer them *like* a wave offering. Numbers 8:9-15

As you can see from that account, the Levites were waved, setting them apart to the Lord and for His service. Thus, it is showing us that, in picture, the lamb (which is the substitute for the healed leper) pictures him being set apart for the service of the Lord, being dedicated to Him. The *log* of oil being waved is more than just representing the Spirit. As I said, the word *log* indicates deepen or depth. Paul explains the Spirit’s work, indicated by the *log*, in 1 Corinthians 2 –

“But God has revealed *them* to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. ¹¹ For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. ¹² Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.” 1 Corinthians 2:10-12

The live animal, signifying the power of Christ for cleansing, the *log*, signifying the Spirit of God who has searched the spirit of the man, and the waving, signifying the omnipresence of God, are made a substitute *asham*, or trespass offering, for the healed leper.

¹³ Then he shall kill the lamb in the place where he kills the sin offering and the burnt offering, in a holy place; for as the sin offering is the priest's, so is the trespass offering. It is most holy.

The place where the sin and burnt offerings are killed is on the north side of the brazen altar. This is the same location where this trespass offering, which has already been waved before the Lord, is killed. As this offering is considered most holy, it belongs to the officiating priest. He and the male members of his family could eat it within the court of the sanctuary. As already stated, this *asham*, or trespass offering, pictures Christ. In Isaiah 53, He is specifically called our *asham*, or guilt offering –

But the LORD was pleased
To crush Him, putting *Him* to grief;
If He would render Himself **as a guilt offering**, Isaiah 53:10 (NASB)

¹⁴ The priest shall take *some* of the blood of the trespass offering, and the priest shall put *it* on the tip of the right ear of him who is to be cleansed, on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot.

This rite is similar to that of the consecration of Aaron and his sons in Chapter 8. The application of the blood to the healed leper signifies the acceptance of the substitute. Blood symbolizes life. Shed blood thus symbolizes death. In the leper's consecration, he has now symbolically *died to self* and henceforward is to *live for God*.

That each point of application is on the right side has meaning in and of itself. The right is the side of strength, blessing, authority, honor, judgment (in salvation), wisdom, cleansing, etc. Applying the blood to the right includes in some measure, each of these.

First, blood is applied to the *tenuk*, or lobe of the ear. This signifies obedience in the sense of spiritual hearing. He was to heed the Divine voice which would speak to him either through the law or the prophets. He was to be consecrated to this hearing of the word, in the sense of applying it to his life.

Next, it was to be applied to the *bohen*, or thumb, of the right hand. The fingers symbolize human activity. Here, the thumb represents the whole hand. His hand, thus meaning his spiritual activity, was to be set apart to God, to holiness, and to only that which was sanctified. He was to be a member of the congregation to not only hear the Divine voice, but to respond to it through daily life.

Lastly, the blood was to be applied to the *bohen*, or big toe, of his foot. This symbolized that he was to walk only in paths of holiness, directing his steps toward God in the race set before him. This verse, with the three principle points of application, is explained by Paul in Colossians 1 –

“For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; **(ear)** ¹⁰ that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing *Him*, **(toe)** being fruitful in every good work **(thumb)** and increasing in the knowledge of God; ¹¹ strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy; ¹² giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light.”

-Colossians 1:9-12

In the application of the blood to these three extremities, there is the sense that his entire life was to be enclosed in the service of God. From head to toe and from hand to foot, he was sanctified as as acceptable. The leper, as we saw, pictured the man in sin. He once did not hear the word of God, his works were defiled by sin, and his walk was down a contrary and evil path. But now, he is sanctified and set apart for the service of God. It is you, and it is me, cleansed by Christ.

¹⁵ And the priest shall take *some* of the log of oil, and pour *it* into the palm of his own left hand.

The blood was given to signify the shedding of Christ’s blood by which sins are atoned for. The oil signifies the Spirit by which the person is renewed. This is poured by the priest into the priest's left hand. The word “priest” is noted twice in the Hebrew to ensure that it is understood to be into his own left hand into which it is poured, but not into the hand of the one being cleansed. Christ our High Priest is the One from whom the Spirit issues.

¹⁶ Then the priest shall dip his right finger in the oil that *is* in his left hand, and shall sprinkle some of the oil with his finger seven times before the Lord.

Here the priest is said to dip his finger in the oil. It is the same word used in verse 6 when the bird was plunged into the water/blood mixture. He turned toward the tent of meeting, and then he would dip and sprinkle, dip and sprinkle, repeating this seven times. It is symbolic of the seven-fold Spirit of the Lord noted in Isaiah and in Revelation.

¹⁷ And of the rest of the oil in his hand, the priest shall put *some* on the tip of the right ear of him who is to be cleansed, on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot, on the blood of the trespass offering.

The blood symbolized *dying to self* and henceforward *living for God*. It was given as a token of forgiveness of the trespass. The oil is now emblematic of healing. Thus we see Christ's blood that *justifies*, and Christ's Spirit that *sanctifies*. The oil is applied to the same points of the body as before. In type, it is the person prepared for service to the Lord; and is now enabled for service to the Lord.

¹⁸ The rest of the oil that is in the priest's hand he shall put on the head of him who is to be cleansed.

Any remaining oil in the priest's hand, after the sprinkling and the application to the body, was to be put on top of the cleansed-leper's head. It was not to simply be wiped off of the hand or drained onto the ground. As the oil is emblematic of the Spirit, it is to be given without measure to the healed leper. In other words, the remaining amount is an unspecified amount. Thus it is applied to the head symbolizing the abundance of the Spirit as determined by the Spirit alone for head knowledge which is sanctified knowledge. As Paul says in Ephesians 4 –

“But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift.”
-Ephesians 4:7

¹⁸ (con't) So the priest shall make atonement for him before the Lord.

These words are speaking of the process which has been accomplished, but it is not specifically atonement as in propitiation for sin. That is coming in the next verse. Rather, there has been a gulf which separated the leper from the Lord. This trespass offering has been given to cover this and to make an AT-ONE-MENT relationship once again. From there, the specific sins will next be atoned for...

¹⁹ “Then the priest shall offer the sin offering, and make atonement for him who is to be cleansed from his uncleanness.

This sin offering would be the ewe lamb mentioned in verse 10. It is typical of Christ who was made sin and also a sin offering for His people. This sacrificial lamb was prophesied in Isaiah 53:7 –

“He was oppressed and He was afflicted,
Yet He opened not His mouth;
He was led as a lamb to the slaughter,” Isaiah 53:7

It is again noted in a prophecy spoken by John the Baptist –

The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” John 1:29

There is first the trespass offering, then there is the sin offering. Each is typical of the coming work of Christ. And then...

¹⁹ (con’t) **Afterward he shall kill the burnt offering.**

The *olah*, or burnt offering is last. The burnt offering is emblematic of one’s life given wholly to God. For the healed leper, he gives his burnt offering, typical of Christ who gave His life wholly to God. The healed leper is saying that he will emulate the offering with his own life. As Christ died to self, so the burnt offering is killed, emblematic of the healed leper dying to self as a burnt offering.

²⁰ **And the priest shall offer the burnt offering and the grain offering on the altar. So the priest shall make atonement for him, and he shall be clean.**

A burnt offering is one described as a sweet smelling savor. In this, it is emblematic of Paul’s words concerning Christ –

“Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. ² And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.” Ephesians 5:1, 2

The grain offering as verse 10 noted, was to be fine flour mixed with oil. The fine flour as seen in Chapter 2, reflects Christ, the finest grain which comprises the Bread of Life. It is then mixed with oil, symbolic of His life being completely permeated with the Spirit of God. Only a portion of this would have been burnt up on the altar after having frankincense added into it.

This memorial portion pictured Christ and His work being offered up to God as a fragrant offering. The rest of the grain offering would then belong to the priests. Once this final offering was made, full atonement was made and the healed leper was now deemed clean. He had the same full rights and access of any other member of the congregation. As I said, all of these offerings are only types of things which occur instantaneously in the believer. Christ's work is immediate, and it is all-sufficient to restore the plagued soul once and for all.

*This spotless lamb, so innocent and pure
Has to die for me to be fully purified
In its shed blood is to be found the cure
I shall be healed after it has died*

*I have been a poor leper, my wounds open and sore
My sin has kept me far from the people of God
This affliction I don't want anymore
Now I hope for a new path to trod*

*My heart is open, to the spotless Lamb, innocent and pure
Who died for me to be cleansed and purified
In His shed blood I have found the cure
I can be healed because for me He died*

*Hallelujah to the Lamb of God, our Christ Jesus!
Hallelujah to the One who has done such things for us!*

II. Provision for the Poor (verses 21-32)

²¹ “But if he is poor and cannot afford it, then he shall take one male lamb as a trespass offering to be waved, to make atonement for him, one-tenth of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering, a log of oil,

Provision is mercifully made for the poor to bring a lesser sacrifice, but without some sacrifice there could be no cleansing. As the New Testament shows, there is no remission without the shedding of blood. And so even a poor person was required to bring at least one male lamb. Likewise, it is true that anyone who comes to God must bring with him the Lamb of God, Christ Jesus. The requirement is set here because the typology must be maintained. Without Christ, there is no cleansing; no healing; no redemption.

One can see here that the typology of Christ the Lamb as our *asham*, or guilt offering, is extremely important in God's mind. To not require this lamb for our guilt would then violate the typology for the New Testament. One could say, "See, I can come to God apart from the Lamb." Such however is not the case. It is only Christ the Lamb through whom we are reconciled to God. Rich or poor, all must come through Him.

In the case of the poor person, the adjective used is *dal*. It signifies to dangle, and so by implication it means weak or thin, as a poor person certainly is. Such a person would be hard-pressed to provide the previous offerings. The Hebrew reads *v'ain yadow maseget* – "and no his hand can reach." In other words, he is so poor that his hand cannot reach out for a sufficient amount to purchase the previous offerings.

And so one male lamb is required for the trespass, or guilt, offering, to be waved. Along with that would be one-tenth of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil instead of three tenths. Also, as before, a *log* of oil. Requiring the same *log* of oil shows us that there is one Spirit, and only He can search out the deep things of God. The rich man cannot buy more of the Spirit, and the poor man is not acceptable with less, if that were possible. The same Spirit is equally necessary to each, one as to the other.

²² and two turtledoves or two young pigeons, such as he is able to afford: one shall be a sin offering and the other a burnt offering.

In the case of the poor person, instead of a second male lamb, and a ewe lamb, he could bring two turtledoves or two doves. As it says, *asher tasig yadow* – "which can reach his hand." In this case, one is for the sin offering, and the other for the burnt offering. It is the same allowance which was made for the poor woman who conducted her ritual of purification after childbirth which was recorded in Leviticus 12.

As it says in Acts 10:34, "In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality." Such is the case here. God accepts the rich and the poor alike, and He is willing to give great mercy to the poor when necessary. As long as he first comes through the Lamb, there is full redemption.

These birds picture Christ in their simplicity, purity, and humility. Further, the affection of the dove for its mate makes it a splendid picture of Christ who is so affectionate for His people that He came to dwell among them and give Himself for them. Both of these thoughts fit so perfectly with a poor person who has come to Him. They are humble and yet so very loved by their Lord.

²³ He shall bring them to the priest on the eighth day for his cleansing, to the door of the tabernacle of meeting, before the Lord.

This verse combines thoughts from verse 10 and verse 11 which surround the named offerings, but it is the exact same thought. It is on the eighth day of his cleansing when he brings his offerings to the priest at the door of the tent of meeting before the Lord.

²⁴ And the priest shall take the lamb of the trespass offering and the log of oil, and the priest shall wave them *as* a wave offering before the Lord.

The wording here closely resembles that of verse 12. However, instead of it being one of the males lambs, it is the only male lamb. Other than that, it is the same procedure with the same meaning. This verse now has the fifth and last use of the word *log* in the Bible. You can say goodbye to the *log* now.

²⁵ Then he shall kill the lamb of the trespass offering, and the priest shall take *some* of the blood of the trespass offering and put *it* on the tip of the right ear of him who is to be cleansed, on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot.

This verse closely resembles verses 13 and 14, but in a more brief form. But the requirements are just the same as before.

²⁶ And the priest shall pour some of the oil into the palm of his own left hand.

With just a few words of difference, this is identical in thought to verse 15.

²⁷ Then the priest shall sprinkle with his right finger *some* of the oil that *is* in his left hand seven times before the Lord.

Again, with a few words of difference, the thought here is identical to verse 16. The intent is wholly the same.

²⁸ And the priest shall put *some* of the oil that *is* in his hand on the tip of the right ear of him who is to be cleansed, on the thumb of the right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot, on the place of the blood of the trespass offering.

And again, the procedures are the same as before. For rich man and for poor, the same rites and the same purifications are conducted.

29 The rest of the oil that *is* in the priest's hand he shall put on the head of him who is to be cleansed, to make atonement for him before the Lord.

The remaining oil in the priest's hand is once again put on the head of the poor healed leper. The same procedures with the same full cleansing are given to him as to the richest noble. In Christ, there is no partiality, but rather there is the same love and grace poured out on all. The Spirit is given to both poor and rich without measure.

30 And he shall offer one of the turtledoves or young pigeons, such as he can afford—

Now the changes to the rite become evident. In this it says that one of the birds is to be selected *me'asher tasig yado*, or "of which can reach his hand." His poor state is highlighted here, indicating that the Lord is granting an additional mercy to him because of his plight. And again, this state is noted with the next verse...

31 such as he is able to afford,

The words are repeated specifically to show his diminished state, but it is not to show it and highlight it, as if he is somehow of less value to the Lord. Instead, it is to show and even highlight that he has found the same favor as a rich man before the Lord. There is no consideration of his impoverished state, except in that the Lord is magnified through His goodness to him because of it.

31 (con't) the one *as* a sin offering and the other *as* a burnt offering, with the grain offering. So the priest shall make atonement for him who is to be cleansed before the Lord.

These words substantially repeat the thought of verses 19 & 20. One of the birds replaces the ewe lamb, and the second bird replaces the second male lamb. The small grain offering is accepted in place of the larger one, and atonement is made for the poor healed leper, there *liphne Yehovah* or, before the Lord.

32 This *is* the law for one who had a leprous sore, who cannot afford the usual cleansing."

One final time, the words "Which not can reach his hand" are given. Considering what the plague of leprosy pictured over these past many verses, it is a marked and wonderful note to end them on. The Lord has extended His hand to even the poorest of all of the

poor beggar sinners of the world, and none are exempt from His kindness, if they will just come to Him for cleansing.

As a great summary of the parts of Chapters 13 & 14 which pertain to leprosy in people, John Gill provides us the following words to consider and take to heart –

“...it may be observed that a great deal of notice is taken of a leper, and strict inquiry made into the nature of leprosy, and the various signs of it given; and a great deal to do about the cleansing and expiation of him; all which shows what notice God takes of leprous sinners, and what a diligent scrutiny should be made into the evil nature of sin, and what a provision God has made for the cleansing and atonement of sinners by the blood and sacrifice of his Son; which is here typified by all sorts of offerings, the sin offering, the trespass offering, the burnt offering, and the meat offering.” John Gill

What is more to add onto his words is that God has made provision not just for sinners, but all sinners. The refuse of the world, its very off-scouring, can be purified through a humble act of petition and by a verbal act of confession. Paul, who mostly explains these ancient types and shadows, tells us exactly what we need to do in order to receive this marvelous Fount of cleansing. In the 10th Chapter of the book of Romans, he says –

“The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart” (that is, the word of faith which we preach): ⁹ that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. ¹¹ For the Scripture says, “Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame.” ¹² For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him. ¹³ For “whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.” Romans 10:8-13

Vile sinner... come to Christ and be healed of your plague. Come into God’s camp and be counted among the cleansed, the purified, the redeemed and sanctified people of the Lord.

Closing Verse: *For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. ²⁷ But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; ²⁸ and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, ²⁹ that no flesh should glory in His presence. ³⁰ But of*

Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption—³¹ that, as it is written, “He who glories, let him glory in the Lord.” 1 Corinthians 1:26-31

Next Week: Leviticus 14:33-57 *Be sure to be here, but please leave behind your pet mouse...* (Leprosy in the House) (24th Leviticus Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if you have a lifetime of sin heaped up behind you, He can wash it away and purify you completely and wholly. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

Purified From All Defilement

“And on the eighth day he shall take two male lambs without blemish
One ewe lamb of the first year without blemish too
Three-tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil
As a grain offering, and one log of oil; so he shall do

Then the priest who makes him clean
Shall present the man who is to be made clean; this he shall be completing
And those things, before the Lord
At the door of the tabernacle of meeting

And the priest shall take one male lamb
And offer it as a trespass offering, according to this word
And the log of oil, and wave them
As a wave offering before the Lord

Then he shall kill the lamb
In the place where he kills the sin offering, there it shall be
And the burnt offering, in a holy place
For as the sin offering is the priest’s, so is the trespass offering
-----It is most holy

The priest shall take some of the blood
Of the trespass offering
And the priest shall put it on the tip of the right ear
Of him who is to be cleansed; he shall do this thing

On the thumb of his right hand as well
And on the big toe of his right foot, as to you I now tell

And the priest shall take some of the log of oil, please understand
And pour it into the palm of his own left hand

Then the priest shall dip his right finger
In the oil that is in his left hand, according to this word
And shall sprinkle some of the oil with his finger
Seven times before the Lord

And of the rest of the oil in his hand
The priest shall put some on the tip of the right ear
Of him who is to be cleansed
On the thumb of his right hand, as you now hear

And on the big toe of his right foot, so he shall do this thing
On the blood of the trespass offering

The rest of the oil that is in the priest's hand
He shall put on the head of him who is to be cleansed, so do
So the priest shall make atonement for him before the Lord
This is what I am instructing you
“Then the priest shall offer the sin offering
And make atonement for him; a covering it shall bring
Who is to be cleansed from his uncleanness
Afterward he shall kill the burnt offering

And the priest shall offer the burnt offering
And the grain offering on the altar
So the priest shall make atonement for him, and he shall be clean
In these things, the priest shall not falter

“But if he is poor and cannot afford it
Then he shall take one male lamb; this he shall do
As a trespass offering to be waved
To make atonement for him, as I am telling you

One-tenth of an ephah of fine flour

Mixed with oil as a grain offering
A log of oil, and two turtledoves or two young pigeons
Such as he is able to afford: surely he can do this thing

One shall be a sin offering and the other a burnt offering
So shall be his proffering

He shall bring them to the priest
According to this word
On the eighth day for his cleansing
To the door of the tabernacle of meeting before the Lord

And the priest shall take the lamb
Of the trespass offering and the log of oil, do heed the word
And the priest shall wave them
As a wave offering before the Lord

Then he shall kill the lamb of the trespass offering
And the priest some of the blood shall take
Of the trespass offering
For the cleansed man's sake

And put it on the tip of the right ear of him
Who is to be cleansed, as I to you tell
On the thumb of his right hand
And on the big toe of his right foot as well

And the priest shall pour some of the oil, please understand
Into the palm of his own left hand

Then the priest shall sprinkle with his right finger
According to this word
Some of the oil that is in his left hand
Seven times before the Lord

And the priest shall put some of the oil
That is in his hand on the tip of the right ear
Of him who is to be cleansed
As you now hear

On the thumb of the right hand
There he shall do this thing
And on the big toe of his right foot
On the place of the blood of the trespass offering

The rest of the oil that is in the priest's hand
Pay careful heed to this word
He shall put on the head of him who is to be cleansed
To make atonement for him before the Lord

And he shall offer one of the turtledoves or young pigeons
Such as he can afford— such as he is able to afford
The one as a sin offering and the other as a burnt offering
With the grain offering, there before the Lord

So the priest shall make atonement for him
Who is to be cleansed before the Lord
This is the law for one who had a leprous sore
Who cannot the usual cleansing afford

Lord God Almighty, how marvelous is the story
Of what Christ has done for lepers like us
We have gone from defilement unto glory
All because of the wonderful work of Jesus

How can it be that You would care for fallen man
Stepping out of eternity to walk with us
Wondrous are Your ways, glorious is Your plan
Thank You, O God, for the wonderful work of Jesus

Hallelujah and Amen...

LEVITICUS 14:33-57 (LEPROSY IN THE HOUSE)

Eons ago, I was in a church down the road which I was attending. A guy who also attended there was a mildew specialist. While talking with him about his job, I suddenly remembered this particular passage from Leviticus and the symbolism of it flooded over me in a moment. Right then, I thought, "Now I know exactly what that passage is telling us."

It's funny how something like that works. When I got home, I typed up a commentary and posted it on my old website. This was a long time ago, and I never went back and read it until the day I typed this sermon. Lots of stuff on that old site that I have no idea about anymore. But, for the most part, my thoughts, even back then were correct about what we are being shown. Unfortunately, the symbolism was shoddy at best, and so after finishing the study for this sermon, I went back to the old site and deleted the page.

It would be fine for a general understanding of the passage, but with some incorrect pictures, I couldn't let the thing remain. Studying a passage word by word and verse by verse brings out much more exacting pictures of what the Lord is trying to tell us.

But as I said, the major idea of the passage was correct. It is symbolic of other things that are going on in redemptive history, and all which point to Christ, and our relationship with Him.

Text Verse: *Then he said to me, "This is the curse that goes out over the face of the whole earth: 'Every thief shall be expelled,' according to this side of the scroll; and, 'Every perjurer shall be expelled,' according to that side of it."*

⁴ *"I will send out the curse," says the Lord of hosts;*

"It shall enter the house of the thief

And the house of the one who swears falsely by My name.

It shall remain in the midst of his house

And consume it, with its timber and stones." Zechariah 5:3, 4

In this passage from Zechariah, it speaks of consuming a house, with its timbers and its stones. The same terminology is used back here in Leviticus. The Lord there shows us that sin, in that case thievery and perjury, are what brought about the curse, and that curse results in the destruction of the house. Knowing this gives us a general idea of what is being relayed back here in Leviticus.

The word of the Lord is consistent, and one passage will often lead us to a fuller understanding of other passages. However, we still need to be careful with our evaluations of what is going on, and – as I learned from my old website page on this passage – we need to be sure to not trust everything we read. Something may sound convincing, but it can also have error in it, just like my old page about this very passage.

Everything needs to be checked and verified, and everything needs to be carefully evaluated from time to time, lest our doctrine gets off course. I don't regret posting that old page. There is a time where we simply need to write about what we know. Even the older Genesis sermons are like this. I can go back and see how quickly I went through them and how much I missed. If I could do the book all over again, I would.

But the evaluation is done and the Lord will judge it with His perfect knowledge of my submissions. What is correct will be worth a reward, and what is incorrect will be burned up and gone. He is the Judge, and so to Him we need to give our very best in all things. But we are His children through faith in Him, and so where we are wrong, He will graciously correct us as a Father would to His own children. I'm glad about that because James 3:1 says that teachers will be held to a stricter judgment. I pray that each thing I submit henceforth is worthy of a thumbs up on that Day.

His word is precious, and its truths are wonderful. Let us cherish it always and hide it deep in our hearts. Great things are to be found in His superior word. And so let's turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. The Leprous House (verse 33-47)

³³ And the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying:

Like verse 13:1, the address is now again made to both Moses and Aaron. What is ahead discusses defilement and ritual purification of houses. It is a law coming from the Lord, and therefore it is given through the lawgiver, Moses, but it deals with a new section under the leprosy law, including priestly purification, and so Aaron is also addressed. As one can see, Moses and Aaron are jointly addressed at the giving of the laws which concern overall defilement. First of people and of garments, and then of houses.

³⁴ “When you have come into the land of Canaan, which I give you as a possession,

This is the first time that *eretz kenaan*, or “the land of Canaan” is mentioned in Leviticus. The Lord had promised to bring them to this land in Exodus, and that was based on a previous promise to the patriarchs that their descendants would be returned there. Several times in Exodus, the promise was that the Lord would drive out the inhabitants there. This verse in Leviticus now confirms that this will surely be the case. It is taken as a given that they will enter, they will disposes, and they will dwell there. There is no “if” involved.

The entire passage is based wholly on this future idea then. It is something that will only come to pass in Canaan, and it is one reason why it is listed last in the order of leprosy, but it is not the only reason. The Lord started with leprosy in a person. Then to leprosy in a garment. Now he moves out to leprosy in a household. Each is an expansion of the former thought as is next seen...

³⁴ (con't) **and I put the leprous plague in a house in the land of your possession,**

v'natati nega tsaraat - “and I put plague leprosy.” The Lord specifically says that He is the one to put a plague upon the house. Here the Lord claims authority not only over the people, but over their possessions, which extends even to their houses. They were to sanctify themselves, they were to have their garments undefiled, and they were to have their houses kept pure and undefiled as well.

Having said that, throughout Scripture, the Lord often represents as having done things which, through the events of life, He merely permits to be done. In other words, if the symbolism of what is presented is something which the Lord allows, thus He can say, “I have put the leprous plague in a house.”

And then, having said that, it is claimed by ancient Jewish writers that, like the leprosy in the garments, that this is a unique leprosy not found anywhere else. Thus it is a type of divine judgment upon the people of the land for various infractions against the moral code. Whether that is true or not can not be known today. What the leprosy here pictures, however, is clearly symbolic in nature, as will be seen with the verses to come.

³⁵ **and he who owns the house comes and tells the priest, saying, ‘It seems to me that *there is* some plague in the house,’**

What is evident here is that even if the person is certain that he has leprosy in his house, as is described by the law, it is not for him to make the determination. I can know that someone in my house has the flu, but we still take him to the doctor who gets out that

annoying nasal swab, and does his swipe. After that, a confirmation is made, and the appropriate remedy is prescribed. This is the law because only some have the authority to prescribe medicines. In Israel, only the priest had the authority to confirm the plague and prescribe the cure.

In type, we can see that our sick condition of sin may be known to us, but it is the Lord who confirms that state, and it is He who determines the cure. It is not up to us, but to the Lord, to select the healing remedy or the judgment to be imposed.

³⁶ then the priest shall command that they empty the house, before the priest goes *into it* to examine the plague, that all that *is* in the house may not be made unclean; and afterward the priest shall go in to examine the house.

This verse actually takes a bit of consideration. There is leprosy in the house, but the priest has not yet proclaimed the house as such. And so before going in to do so, he gives the command that the entire house be emptied. Anything left in there, after the house is declared unclean, will also be declared unclean.

Therefore, the law, as such, did not consider the leprosy as infectious in and of itself. This kindness of having the goods removed, was to keep from there being unnecessary loss, which would otherwise be the case. However, we can see that because the leprosy was declared as such when the priest says so, this is obviously a symbolic type of plague. In picture, we already know that leprosy indicates sin. Therefore, we can see presented here sins which are open, obvious, and can spread.

³⁷ And he shall examine the plague; and indeed *if* the plague *is* on the walls of the house with ingrained streaks, greenish or reddish, which appear to be deep in the wall,

With the house emptied, the priest alone was to examine the plague. In this, he was to look for certain specific signs of infection. The first is ingrained streaks. The word is *sheqaarurah*, a word found here and nowhere else. Hello and goodbye to it.

There are two possible roots for the word. The first is *qara*, meaning to tear. Thus it indicates a look as if streaks have been torn from the wall. The second is *shaqa*, meaning to sink. Thus it would indicate depressions in the wall.

This affliction of the wall then corresponds to the affliction of the leper in verse 13:3, where the leprosy was deeper than the skin. And so either way, these depressions will

be greenish or reddish. The word “greenish” is *yeraqraq*. It was first seen in verse 13:49. It is believed to give the sense of having a yellowish tone to it rather than being fully green. Although it is such a rare word that there is disagreement on this. The last use of it is in Psalm 68 when describing gold, and so it probably means either yellowish or glistening.

The word “reddish” is *adamdam*. It has been seen five times so far in the Bible, since verse 13:19. This is now the sixth and last time it will be seen. You can bid this word adieu. Finally, it says that the streaks appear to be deep in the wall. The word is *shaphal*, and it was first seen in 13:20. In all, this matches the infection of leprosy in man. It is symbolic of an infection which is displayed in unclean works. There is a turning, or a perversion of what should exist.

³⁸ then the priest shall go out of the house, to the door of the house, and shut up the house seven days.

This corresponds to shutting up the leper or the leprous garment. An interval is given to determine if any change has taken place.

³⁹ And the priest shall come again on the seventh day and look; and indeed *if* the plague has spread on the walls of the house,

In the case of it having spread, the same thing is noted as for the leper or the leprous garment...

⁴⁰ then the priest shall command that they take away the stones in which *is* the plague, and they shall cast them into an unclean place outside the city.

There is a pronouncement of uncleanness. However, it is not total. Rather, there is a hoped-for remedy to the situation, which is to merely remove any plagued stones, and cast them to a place set apart as unclean, and which is outside the city.

The word for “take away,” as in taking away the stones, is a new word, *khalats*. It gives the sense of pulling off, but it is normally used in the Bible as being armed, or prepared for battle. The reason is that a person is being pulled off regular life when being counted among the ranks of the army. In the case of these stones, they are being pulled off from what they were purposed for – a home which was to be a clean place – and they are to be cast into a place which is unclean. Being in an unclean place, they would never again be of use for any purpose.

41 And he shall cause the house to be scraped inside, all around, and the dust that they scrape off they shall pour out in an unclean place outside the city.

Here we have another new word, *qatsa*, or scrape. It will only be seen here and in Ezekiel 46:22 where it is translated as corner. Like this, a second new word, *qatsah*, is also used. It is very similar to the other word, with a meaning to cut off or scrape off.

What is to happen here is that the entire inside of the house was to be scraped. The house has had a leprous plague, and thus the inside is unclean, just as the furniture would have been if it was still inside. By removing the infected rocks first, no other rocks would be deemed unclean. Such would not be the case if the house was scraped first. If that was the case, then all the rock walls would be considered unclean.

So, 1) remove the infection, and then, 2) remove that which had been defiled by it. Everything is scraped, and then, 3) even the *aphar* or dust had to then be taken outside the city to an unclean place and poured out. The word *aphar*, or dust is the same as that used in Genesis 2:7 when man was formed from the *aphar*, or dust of the earth. The words of this verse can be tasted in Jesus' words to His disciples –

“But whatever city you enter, and they do not receive you, go out into its streets and say, ¹¹ ‘The very dust of your city which clings to us we wipe off against you. Nevertheless know this, that the kingdom of God has come near you.’ ¹² But I say to you that it will be more tolerable in that Day for Sodom than for that city.”

-Luke 10:10-12

The very dust from which man was taken which is defiled by sin will be scraped off as unclean, and it will be cast into an unclean place where there is only destruction.

42 Then they shall take other stones and put *them* in the place of *those* stones, and he shall take other mortar and plaster the house.

The Hebrew reads, “And they shall take stones other and put them in the place the stones, and dust other he shall take and overlay the house.” The word for “plaster” is a new one, *tuakh*. It means to overlay, overspread, besmear, and so forth.

What needs to be seen here is that the term brick has not been used at any time. A brick is something made by man. But *abanim*, or stones, and *aphar*, or dust, are both made by God. Certainly a picture is being made here, or it would have surely said, the stones or the bricks.

What is also necessary to highlight is that there are eight verbs used in this process in verses 40-42. Six are plural – “they shall take & they shall cast” of verse 40; “they shall scrape & they shall pour” of verse 41; “they shall take & they shall put” of verse 42. Two are singular – “he shall take & he shall plaster” in verse 42.

⁴³ “Now if the plague comes back and breaks out in the house, after he has taken away the stones, after he has scraped the house, and after it is plastered,

Here the word *parakh* or blossom is used as it was several times in Chapter 13. If the plague blossoms again after the remedial actions were taken...

⁴⁴ then the priest shall come and look; and indeed *if* the plague has spread in the house, it *is* an active leprosy in the house. It *is* unclean.

No time-frame is given here, but verse 48 implies that the house was again shut up after the re-plastering for a set time, after which another inspection was to be made. This would be the end of the third period of seven days. If at this time the plague returned, just like in a garment, the leprosy was considered *maar* or active. It is the same word used in verses 13:51 & 52 concerning the malignant leprosy of the garments. If this was the case, the house was to be declared unclean. And if unclean...

⁴⁵ And he shall break down the house, its stones, its timber, and all the plaster of the house, and he shall carry *them* outside the city to an unclean place.

The action here is the same as condemning a leper as unclean and thus being excluded from the camp, or for a garment where the plague reappears and which is then to be destroyed.

⁴⁶ Moreover he who goes into the house at all while it is shut up shall be unclean until evening.

This corresponds to verse 11:39 where a person who touches a dead animal is unclean until evening. A house which had been declared leprous conveyed its unclean state to any who entered it, but it was an uncleanness of such a slight nature that it ceased in the evening.

As we have seen, if someone went in at 7am or 5pm, the same uncleanness lasted only until the evening. As we saw before, this term, “until the evening,” looks forward to the work of Christ in the believer. At the end of the age, all defilement will cease, whether a

person came to Him on the day of Firstfruits after His resurrection, or 1 second before the rapture. There is a set time where all will be declared fully cleansed actually, just as we are now in Christ positionally.

⁴⁷ And he who lies down in the house shall wash his clothes, and he who eats in the house shall wash his clothes.

The same defilement for eating the carcass of an animal that dies naturally, or carrying such a carcass (11:40) is seen here. What verses 46 & 47 show us is that there is no consideration of infection, but rather there is merely symbolic uncleanness which results from these actions.

And in reality, it is the law itself which makes the people unclean through their actions. If the law did not say this, then there would be nothing to declare them unclean. Once the law was introduced though, uncleanness for such a thing caused the defilement to be considered. Thus, this is showing us, as it has continuously, that the law itself, and all of its precepts, are merely pointing to spiritual truths about moral uncleanness in the world around us.

*There is leprosy in the house, a cancer is seen
It is one which must be made known and then treated
It has streaked the walls reddish and green
If it isn't taken care of, we will all become unseated*

*Let us remove the stones which carry the infection
And send them off to an unclean place
They have been identified through a process of detection
And we need to remove every leprous trace*

*And then let us fill in the void with stones that are new
And cover them with that which is holy and sound
In this, we will be acting in a manner true
And in our home, purity will again be found*

II. The Leprous House Explained

A house is something in which people dwell. For Israel of old, the house was a place for home and family, meals and memories, sleeping and swapping stories. If a leprous sore was found in it, the actions required by the law were taken. These were, like everything

we have seen, simply pictures of spiritual things.

In the New Covenant of Christ, a house represents on a smaller scale, the local church. Quite a few times, Paul mentions in his letters to greet the saints who meet in this house or that. Thus the house was the place of meeting. On a larger scale, the house of God speaks of the church as a whole. It is the smaller houses to which these pictures are directed. Even today, we often hear people say, “We’re off to the house of God” when speaking of the Superior Word, Sarasota’s precious local church.

The land of Canaan symbolizes the land possessed by the Lord. It is where the people of God live. This then is any place where the people of God now congregate as a church. In such a place, churches take root and meet. But it is certain that everywhere they meet, a plague of sin is bound to appear.

This type of sin is obvious, it is marked by certain traits which cannot be hidden, and it is a deep infection, all indicated by the words describing it. It is one that tears at the church and causes it to sink into a state of unholiness rather than purity.

Reading the seven letters to the seven churches of Revelation shows us this quite clearly. The infection sets in, and the Lord warns that it needs to be excised. When such an infection then arises, it needs to be isolated. In 1 Corinthians 5, Paul instructed the church about a member who was engaged in sexual immorality.

When such a plague is identified, it is to be shut up and evaluated. In Israel, the priest using the law as his guide would do his evaluation. In the church, the Lord, through His word identifies that which is plagued.

The fact is that a person in Israel could simply ignore the plague and let it fester, and nobody else would be any the wiser. This doesn’t negate the plague’s existence, it simply means that the person refuses to acknowledge what is obvious. This would be most of the mainstream churches of this day. They will eventually be dealt with. They will be destroyed entirely, to their last stone and timber. All will be cast into the burning Lake of Fire. It’s a sad commentary on what will be the fate of many churches which have ignored the word of the Lord.

But for the church that identifies and isolates such a plague, it is to be evaluated. If there is repentance, reflected in the non-spreading of the plague, then the house is clean. If there is not, then the stones are to be removed – back to 1 Corinthians 5:12, 13 –

“For what *have I to do* with judging those also who are outside? Do you not judge those who are inside? ¹³ But those who are outside God judges. Therefore “put away from yourselves the evil person.”

How do know this is correct? Because in the New Testament, stones are equated with people, such as in 1 Peter 2:4, 5 –

“Coming to Him *as to* a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God *and* precious, ⁵ you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.” 1 Peter 2:4, 5

A church is a house; people are stones from which it is made. When the stones have a plague, they are to be removed. As I said, only the word *abanim*, or “stones,” and the word *aphar*, or “dust” are used here. These are created by God. They are His, and thus there is symbolically no works involved in the process of building His house. Christ determines what His house is constructed of.

When people are filled with unrepentant sin, they are to be excised from the church. After that, the church is to be given instructions in what necessitated the removal of the offenders, symbolized by the removal of the defiled plaster. After that, the church can add its replacement stones and be re-covered with sound doctrine.

However, there is the obvious possibility that the problem is systemic. The doctrine is unsound, the infection is too deep. Such a church is of no value to the Lord. It will have its lampstand removed, it will be destroyed, it along with all who are in it. They will be sent to an unclean place. This is true with the church that doesn’t reveal it’s leprous plague as well.

As I said, a person could have such a plague in his house and ignore it. That doesn’t negate the unclean state of it, nor does it negate the Lord’s judgment. Hiding unrepentant sin in a church is no different than exposing it openly for all to see. In the end, the infection will be destroyed.

This process explains the use of the plural and singular verbs in verses 40-42. The church as a whole removes the stones, or expels the offenders. They together remove any offending doctrine and begin again with a clean slate, even bringing in new members. This is reflected by the use of the plural in 1 Corinthians 5, for example. As a church, they

are to do these things. It also fits with Jesus speaking to the church as a whole in the letters to the seven churches.

However, the elder of the church is responsible for ensuring that the new direction is sound, symbolized by the taking of the mortar and the plastering of the house. This is reflected in the pastoral epistles where the words of doctrine and instruction are provided for the one responsible for these matters. In the end, the one responsible for the working of the church will have his church destroyed if he does not take care of the lingering infections in it.

*Lord, our house has a cancer, sin infects this place
We know what we need to do, so help us as we do what is right
If we fail, from us You shall surely turn Your face
And upon us will come a pall, like the blackness of the night*

*Help us to be strong and stand against this sin
No matter what the world says, this is what is right
Against the evil infection, we are sure to win
If we hold fast to Your word; our guiding light*

*And when we have taken care of what needs to be done
May our doctrine be pure and never fail us
May we proclaim the grace of the giving of Your Son
And hold to the holiness found in the Lord Jesus*

III. The Ritual of Purification (verses 48-57)

⁴⁸ “But if the priest comes in and examines *it*, and indeed the plague has not spread in the house after the house was plastered, then the priest shall pronounce the house clean, because the plague is healed.

Hallelujah! The period for inspection has passed, and no indication of a spreading plague is found. Instead it is healed. This is now the last time that the word *pasah*, or spread, is found in Scripture. It was introduced in verse 13:5, and astonishingly, it has been seen 22 times since. But now we say *sayonara* to it. The house is healed, and so it is declared clean by the priest. With this good news, comes the same ritual which was seen for the cleansed leper...

⁴⁹ And he shall take, to cleanse the house, two birds, cedar wood, scarlet, and hyssop.

This verse is very similar to verse 14:4. The only major difference is the birds there are described as alive and clean. This however is now understood, and thus unnecessary. The same pictures for the same things, and having the same meanings are seen in these items.

⁵⁰ Then he shall kill one of the birds in an earthen vessel over running water;

This verse corresponds directly to verse 14:5.

⁵¹ and he shall take the cedar wood, the hyssop, the scarlet, and the living bird, and dip them in the blood of the slain bird and in the running water, and sprinkle the house seven times.

Though not in the same order of items mentioned in verse 6, the same procedures are followed here that were followed then. Everything here carries the same marvelous symbolism of the cleansing ritual we looked at then, and which encompassed verses 1-9. If you didn't see that sermon, your instructions for this afternoon should be clear... go catch up.

⁵² And he shall cleanse the house with the blood of the bird and the running water and the living bird, with the cedar wood, the hyssop, and the scarlet.

In verse 7, the leper was sprinkled seven times. Here the house is sprinkled seven times. But the same symbolism carries through for the cleansed leper as is now seen for the cleansed house.

⁵³ Then he shall let the living bird loose outside the city in the open field, and make atonement for the house, and it shall be clean.

The wonderful letting loose of the second bird, and all the marvel it pictures, is seen for the house as well as for the leper. The bird is loosed in the open, atonement is made for the house, and it is declared clean. The infection is healed, the doctrine of the church is sound, its members are pure, and the Lord accepts them, having died for them and carried their sins away.

In this, there is truly the sense of at-one-ment which is implied by the term atonement. There was a rift, the rift is healed, and a sense of unity between the Lord and His church is realized. It is symbolized in this purification ritual which was explained in detail in the sermon on verses 1-9.

⁵⁴ **“This *is* the law for any leprous sore and scale,**

This and the next three verses are a summary of everything which has been seen in chapters 13 & 14. The sore is noted all the way through verses 13:2-46, but the scale is noted solely between verses 13:31-37 where it is mentioned 13 times in just those few verses.

⁵⁵ **for the leprosy of a garment and of a house,**

The leprosy of a garment is found in verses 13:47-59, and that of a house comprises most of our verses here in this sermon.

⁵⁶ **for a swelling and a scab and a bright spot,**

These symptoms are a repeat of verse 13:2.

⁵⁷ **to teach when *it is* unclean and when *it is* clean. This *is* the law of leprosy.”**

This final verse is given as a note of closing over a matter which is obviously very on the mind of the Lord. A total of 116 verses have been dedicated to these two chapters to teach Israel a lesson concerning obedience to strict rules of maintaining holiness in the congregation, separating that which is pure from that which is defiled. But as we have seen, these things are mere shadows and types of real, spiritual infections which come up among people as individuals and as groups.

The obvious thing that we see here in these two chapters is that the Lord has no tolerance of sin. He calls it a leprosy, He calls one infected with it a leper, He gives instructions on what to do to excise it, and if those instructions are not followed, He tells what the final remedy is – banishment from the people of God if a saved person; destruction if an unsaved person.

The pictures have been exact, the wording has been precise, and the consequences for our disobedience are sure to come. My heart goes out to you today. If you are engaged in sin; if your life is being lived contrary to the word of God; and if you think that you have hidden it well enough to fool the Lord, you are mistaken. You are a leper and you are unclean. The Lord will search you out, and He will expose your infection.

I plead with you now to take heed to these past two chapters and to come to the Lord for healing. If you have been saved, return to Him. If you have never called on Him, do so

today. He truly loves you, and He truly desires the best for you – and your sin is not what He desires. Come to the cross and be restored through the blood of Christ.

Closing Verse: *The curse of the Lord is on the house of the wicked,
But He blesses the home of the just.*

³⁴ *Surely He scorns the scornful,
But gives grace to the humble.*

³⁵ *The wise shall inherit glory,
But shame shall be the legacy of fools. Proverbs 3:33-35*

Next Week: Leviticus 15:1-18 *You just gotta know these verses will be a whole heap of fun...* (Discharging Discharges, Part 1) (25th Leviticus Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if you have a lifetime of sin heaped up behind you, He can wash it away and purify you completely and wholly. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

Leprosy in the House

And the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying:
These are the words to them he was relaying

“When you have come into the land of Canaan
Which I give you as a possession, so I say
And I put the leprous plague in a house
In the land of your possession, a plague arises some given day

And he who owns the house comes
And tells the priest, saying
‘It seems to me that there is some plague in the house
Yes, to him is this thought he is relaying

Then the priest shall command that the house they empty
Before the priest goes into it to examine the plague
-----even the pet mouse
That all that is in the house may not be made unclean
And afterward the priest shall go in to examine the house
And he shall examine the plague

And indeed if the plague is on the walls of the house, this is his call
With ingrained streaks, greenish or reddish
Which appear to be deep in the wall

Then the priest shall go out of the house; inside no one stays
To the door of the house, and shut up the house seven days

And the priest shall come again
On the seventh day and look
And indeed if the plague has spread
On the walls of the house according to his book

Then the priest shall command that they take away
The stones in which is the plague, on those stones having no pity
And they shall cast them into an unclean place
Outside the city
And he shall cause the house to be scraped inside all around
And the dust that they scrape off, every little bitty
They shall pour out in an unclean place
Outside the city

Then they shall take other stones
And put them in the place of those stones as well
And he shall take other mortar and plaster the house
So to you, I now these instructions tell

“Now if the plague comes back and breaks out in the house
After he has taken away the stones, as instructed to do
After he has scraped the house
And after it is plastered too

Then the priest shall come and look
And indeed if the plague has spread in the house,
-----Oh! What does it mean?
It is an active leprosy in the house
It is unclean

And he shall break down the house
Its stones, its timber, and such in this case

And all the plaster of the house
And he shall carry them outside the city to an unclean place

Moreover he who goes into the house, yes inside he is seen
At all while it is shut up shall be until evening unclean

And he who lies down in the house shall wash his clothes
So he shall do
And he who eats in the house shall wash his clothes
He shall do as I am instructing you

“But if the priest comes in and examines it
And indeed the plague has not spread in the house; so it is revealed
After the house was plastered
Then the priest shall pronounce the house clean
-----because the plague is healed

And he shall take, to cleanse the house; so he shall do
Two birds, cedar wood, scarlet, and hyssop too

Then he shall kill one of the birds in an earthen vessel
-----over running water
And he shall take the cedar wood, the hyssop, the scarlet
-----and the living bird
And dip them in the blood of the slain bird
And in the running water, and sprinkle the house seven times
-----According to this word

And he shall cleanse the house
With the blood of the bird, as to you I tell
And the running water and the living bird
With the cedar wood, the hyssop, and the scarlet as well

Then he shall let the living bird loose
Outside the city in the open field
And make atonement for the house
And it shall be clean; yes it is healed

“This is the law for any leprous sore and scale

For the leprosy of a garment and of a house, when it is seen
For a swelling and a scab and a bright spot
To teach when it is unclean and when it is clean

This is the law of leprosy
This is how it is to be

Lord God, help us to keep our house holy and pure
Keep defilement away through doctrine sound and true
Please guide us as we take the path which is sure
And stay obedient to Your word, and to You

Should sin come and defile our house
Should an infection arise in this sacred place
Help us to be sure the infection to douse
So that You will again turn to us Your face

We are prone to wander, it is true
But through Your word we have a light shining bright
May we cherish this guide lovingly given by You
And to its precepts which direct us aright

Glory to You in the highest our great and precious Lord
Hallelujah to You for Your superior word

Hallelujah and Amen...

LEVITICUS 15:1-18 (DISCHARGING DISCHARGES, PART 1)

You've heard the verses read. I bet you're all excited to get into them. Discharges and emissions and... oh boy.

The word "discharge" has several meanings depending on the context. It can be a noun, as in the act of discharging someone from the hospital or from the military. Donald Trump is famous for that. As a noun, it can also be the action of discharging something like a liquid. "Look out! The pressure in that wastewater tank might lead to an explosive discharge." If that ever happens – I speak from experience – get ready for a long, long shower.

It can be a verb, where you take the action of expelling someone – "I am discharging you from your job as chief operator of the wastewater plant." It can also be a verb which means to allow something to flow out when it was confined. You allowed a discharge to discharge." See, were getting good at this.

There are noun and verb discharges in today's verses. In the whole chapter, there are 24 total. Add in emissions, and there are 26 total. It's obviously something that is important to the Lord, or it wouldn't be in His word, but as always, we need to contemplate why this is so.

These things were told to those under the law. And lots of those people were in favor with the Lord. It doesn't apply to us now, and yet we know we are loved because of Christ. And as we know, the law only points to Christ, to His work, and to the fallen state of man in relation to that. If we can just remember this, then it will all begin to make sense as we evaluate the verses.

Text Verse: *"I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. ¹⁷ For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish."*

-Galatians 5:16, 17

Paul implores us to walk in the Spirit. The flesh is what is opposed to the Spirit, and so he says to not fulfill the lust of the flesh. The word *basar*, or flesh, is used quite a few times in Leviticus 15. In the NKJV, it is translated as "body." Discharges from the body, or discharges from the flesh, are what we are looking at today.

They result in a state of uncleanness. In order to remove the uncleanness, we need to end what the discharges are picturing. If that can happen, then we will be clean. In other words, we need to discharge the discharges. How, I ask, can we do that? The answer is found in His superior word. And so let's turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. Unnatural Discharges (verses 1-12)

¹ And the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying,

Like verse 14:33 the address is once again made to both Moses and Aaron. What is ahead discusses defilement and ritual purification due to bodily discharges. It is a law coming from the Lord, and therefore it is given through the lawgiver, Moses, but it also deals with priestly purification, and so Aaron is addressed as well. As we continue to see, Moses and Aaron are jointly addressed at the giving of the laws which concern overall defilement.

The chapter itself is going to be divided up first, into defilement of men. This will go from verses 2-18. Next it will cover defilement found in women from verses 19-30. After this, a final summary is made in verses 31-33, highlighting the reason for the contents of the chapter.

² “Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them:

As we have seen on several important occasions, the Lord is speaking through Moses and Aaron, but His audience is specifically the children of Israel. What is being conveyed is not simply for the priests to have rolled up in a scroll and secreted away for times of need, but it is to be regular instruction for the people at all times.

It was to be as commonly held knowledge to them as driving on the right side of the road is for us today. That is of course, unless you're in a country where they drive on the left side of the road, which would then be the right side of the road for you to drive on, even though it's really the left side.

^{2 (con't)} ‘When any man has a discharge from his body, his discharge *is* unclean.

As I said, the first section, which now begins in verse 2, is directed to uncleanness in men. The word for “discharge” is *zuv*. It indicates that which flows or gushes. It is the

word used first in Exodus 3:8 to describe the land of Canaan which flows with milk and honey.

The word for “body” is *basar*, or literally, “flesh.” It speaks of the body itself, but it is also used euphemistically of the organ of generation, as when a male is circumcised in the foreskin of his flesh. It can also mean blood relations, such as when saying, “You are my brother in the flesh.”

And again, it can be used to indicate man over against God in his fallen state as in, “Sam walks in the flesh and not in the Spirit.” And finally, it can speak of all living creatures, as in “All flesh is known to God.” Both testaments give these to some extent.

Understanding these various connotations of the word will help us to understand what the Lord is showing us in this chapter. The term “body,” or “flesh,” in this chapter is used in a couple ways. The first is that of the private parts of a person. The Greek translation of the OT translates *ha'zav*, or “the discharge,” as “the gonorrhoea.” However, in some verses, such as verse 16, it is probably speaking of the whole body.

Because it speaks of the private parts concerning the discharge, some scholars immediately jump on it as resulting from the sin of illicit sex. However, this may or may not be the case. It could indicate that, or any other type of discharge that a person gets – whether through illicit sex or simply catching an infection in some other way. However, for a New Testament picture, it indicates something which causes spiritual uncleanness.

³And this shall be his uncleanness in regard to his discharge—whether his body runs with his discharge, or his body is stopped up by his discharge, it is his uncleanness.

Here we have a word found only once in Scripture. It is the verb *rur*, or run. It actually means to drool, and so by implication, it is something which runs out of his body. The other word meaning “stopped up” is new to Scripture, *khatham*. It indicates to seal, as a king would seal a document. Thus, by implication, it indicates the discharge is stopped up. In either case – running discharge, or one which is stopped up, the person is considered unclean.

In type, both picture sins of the flesh. One is active, one is passive. The running discharge is a sin of the flesh that is seen and noticed by all. A person engaged in making porn films might be such a person. On the other hand, the stopped up discharge would be a person who looks at pornography. One is outwardly evident, the other is inwardly

so. This same concept can be seen in multiple types of sins of the flesh. In such, the person is defiled and unclean.

⁴ Every bed is unclean on which he who has the discharge lies, and everything on which he sits shall be unclean.

As we have seen elsewhere, defilement is not limited to people alone, but to the things a person comes in contact with. In this case, it extends to any bed upon which a person lies, or anything on which he sits. The word “everything” here is a word which indicates a utensil. Thus it extends to saddles, chairs, something as an improvised chair, a blanket, or whatever else.

The bed and the chair are both places one occupies. The bed is where one rests; the seating is where one engages in fellowship and discourse. The place that a person who is engaged in sins of the flesh lies or sits is considered as unclean because the person who occupies it is unclean. For a clean person to go to their place of rest or fellowship, is then to indicate that they have accepted their unclean state in order to participate in it. As Paul says –

Do not be deceived: “Evil company corrupts good habits.” ³⁴ Awake to righteousness, and do not sin; for some do not have the knowledge of God. I speak *this* to your shame. 1 Corinthians 15:33, 34

That is then pictured in the next verses...

⁵ And whoever touches his bed shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening.

This corresponds to the first half of verse 4. From the uncleanness which has spread from the infected person to the bed, their place of leisure, so the uncleanness transfers also to another person who would then touch that infected article. In Numbers 5:2, such a discharge was sufficient to put anyone so infected outside the camp, just as a person with leprosy was to be. Sin is an infectious disease, and it renders all who come in contact with it unclean.

To be expelled from the camp means that one is out of fellowship with the congregation. As long as the sins of the flesh are running and evident in the person, they are to be treated as one entirely out of fellowship. For such a person in the church, Paul explains what is their punishment –

“In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together, along with my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, ⁵ deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.” 1 Corinthians 5:4, 5

He explains what that means in verse 13 of the same chapter –

“Therefore ‘put away from yourselves the evil person.’” 1 Corinthians 5:13

For someone who is not running with such a sin of the flesh, but who comes in contact with them, they also become defiled through that contact. This is why we are told to not have fellowship with deeds of darkness, but we are to put on holiness like a garment and keep ourselves from participating in these things. We are to separate ourselves from such evil.

⁶ He who sits on anything on which he who has the discharge sat shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening.

This corresponds to the second half of verse 4. Like the bed of the first half, the same is true with anything which is sat on in the second, anyone who sits on whatever the person with the discharge sits is likewise unclean. As I said, the place where one sits is their place of discourse and fellowship. For a person to hang around and fellowship with someone who is engaging in sin would then defile that person. During the time of his defilement, he is excluded from the benefits of the sanctuary. He has touched the place which is occupied by a person engaged in a discharge of the flesh, and he has acquired his defilement as well.

⁷ And he who touches the body of him who has the discharge shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening.

Here, the same word is used which has already been seen, *basar*, or flesh. This may or may not be taken in the general sense of the word, indicating his body. Or, it may still be speaking euphemistically about his private parts in particular.

The many uses of the word often make it necessary to deduce exactly what is being referred to. In this instance it is probably touching the euphemistically noted part of the body which renders another unclean, and requiring to go through the same rituals as the other circumstances.

This will be explained in greater detail in verse 13. For the Israelite, this verse doesn't give any exceptions, and so it would seem that even a priest or physician who touched the unclean person would be defiled by the touch.

To touch a person engaged in a spiritual discharge of the flesh is symbolic of actively participating in that sin with them. One could use as an example a person who is caught up in drugs. It is an open and running discharge in their life. A person in the church might slip and join together with the drug addict. This would be comparable to what is seen here.

He isn't a drug addict, but he touched, or joined, with the person who is an addict during a moment of weakness. This is what is seen in this verse. This could go with any such sin of the flesh. They have made themselves unclean by joining with the person who is actively engaged in such things.

⁸ If he who has the discharge spits on him who is clean, then he shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening.

Now is seen a verb used only here in Scripture, *raqaq*, or spit. From it comes the noun *roq*, which is the spit in one's mouth. That is used several times, including Isaiah 50:6 which is a prophecy of Christ being spat upon by others –

“I gave My back to those who struck *Me*,
And My cheeks to those who plucked out the beard;
I did not hide My face from shame and spitting.” Isaiah 50:6

That is then fulfilled in Jesus' words in the New Testament –

“Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death and deliver Him to the Gentiles; ³⁴ and they will mock Him, and scourge Him, and spit on Him, and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again.” Mark 10:33, 34

As Gentiles were considered unclean, then this would be considered a source of defilement just as being spat upon by an unclean person would cause another to become unclean. What is not explicit, but which could be assumed, is that this is speaking of both purposeful and accidental spitting. It is the spit which defiles the next person, regardless as to the intent of how it got on him.

If we were to look for what this is picturing, it is that which proceeds out of the mouth, and thus unclean communication. It could be immoral, perverse, lewd, or vulgar speech. This defiles a person, but it also defiles those who hear it. In the end, just as evil company corrupts good habits, so evil communication corrupts good discourse and manners between men.

⁹ Any saddle on which he who has the discharge rides shall be unclean.

The *merkav*, or saddle, is introduced here and will be seen three times. It comes from the word *rakav*, or to ride, and so it is more than just a saddle, but the seat of any conveyance. It is elsewhere translated as a chariot, and as a seat in a palanquin. The word then is tied also to *merkavah* or chariot, which is now today's modern tank in Israel. Anything upon which an unclean person sat which is intended for transportation was likewise deemed unclean.

Above, we saw where the place where one lays or sits is tied to their place of rest and their place of fellowship or discourse. The mode of conveyance would be a symbol of position. A rider on a donkey would be perceived as humble, a rider on a horse might be an officer. A rider on a white horse might be a general or a king. One who sits in a chariot likewise signifies a certain position as does one who rides in a palanquin.

A person who runs with sins of the flesh defiles such a position with their discharge of sin. This follows through to those who would touch what they have sat on. The position of doctrine which is pictured here is explained by Paul in Ephesians 4 –

“..that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting.” Ephesians 4:14

¹⁰ Whoever touches anything that was under him shall be unclean until evening.

This corresponds to what occurred in the leprosy verses. For example, a person who went into a leprous house would be unclean until evening, but if someone lay down in that house, they would not only be unclean, but would have to also wash their clothes.

If someone touched the thing that was under such a person, they would be unclean. To actively touch is to participate in, but only in a limited way. A person may go to a church where the pastor is preaching a false message. They have touched, or passively

participated, in that. They have incurred defilement from it. Touching the thing defiled by a person with a discharge causes uncleanness until evening, but...

10 (con't) He who carries *any of those things* shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening.

An additional requirement is levied upon anyone who carried such an unclean thing. They needed to wash their clothes, bathe, and remain unclean until evening. Here we can see that an incidental engagement with sin is treated differently than a purposeful one.

One might be in a room where a TV is playing and the person on the TV is cursing. That would defile a person's mind, even if they were not able to avoid that. But a person who sits down to watch a TV show with cursing requires a greater amount of cleansing to be purified from their defilement.

As the seat of the conveyance signifies a type of authority, it would be more suitable to the picture to go back to the church with the pastor who is preaching a false message. Someone who actively supports that, such as giving donations, helping out in the church, and so on, would incur a greater guilt than the one who simply came in and listened. This is what is seen here.

11 And whomever the one who has the discharge touches, and has not rinsed his hands in water, he shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening.

There are actually two ways of interpreting this verse. Who is it that is to wash his hands? First, it could be that there is an unclean person because of a discharge. If he touches another person, it could be that it is acceptable if he first washes his hands. In this case, no defilement is transferred. But if he touches someone else without having washed his hands, then the other person becomes unclean and must then wash his clothes, bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. This, on the surface, seems right.

However and secondly, it could be that the person who is touched by the unclean person immediately washes his hands, and is thus symbolically purified. If he doesn't do this, then he needs to wash his clothes, bathe, and remain unclean until evening.

Either way, problems arise, because only the hands are mentioned, even if a different part of the body actually touched the other person. And so either way, the transfer of defilement is *symbolic*. Because of this, I would go with the second possibility. If a

defiled person touches a clean person, that clean person could wash his hands, symbolizing purification, and not be considered unclean.

This is the more likely in picture, because washing one's hands elsewhere pictures innocence. The unclean person is already unclean, but the one he touches is not necessarily so. And so in order to proclaim their innocence and in an immediate rejection of the sin which has been thrust upon them, they wash their hands in acknowledgment of that. Three examples of this from Scripture will show the symbolism—

“If *anyone* is found slain, lying in the field in the land which the Lord your God is giving you to possess, *and* it is not known who killed him, ² then your elders and your judges shall go out and measure *the distance* from the slain man to the surrounding cities. ³ And it shall be *that* the elders of the city nearest to the slain man will take a heifer which has not been worked *and* which has not pulled with a yoke. ⁴ The elders of that city shall bring the heifer down to a valley with flowing water, which is neither plowed nor sown, and they shall break the heifer's neck there in the valley. ⁵ Then the priests, the sons of Levi, shall come near, for the Lord your God has chosen them to minister to Him and to bless in the name of the Lord; by their word every controversy and every assault shall be *settled*. ⁶ And all the elders of that city nearest to the slain *man* shall wash their hands over the heifer whose neck was broken in the valley. ⁷ Then they shall answer and say, ‘Our hands have not shed this blood, nor have our eyes seen *it*. ⁸ Provide atonement, O Lord, for Your people Israel, whom You have redeemed, and do not lay innocent blood to the charge of Your people Israel.’ And atonement shall be provided on their behalf for the blood. ⁹ So you shall put away the *guilt of* innocent blood from among you when you do *what is* right in the sight of the Lord.”

-Deuteronomy 21:1-9

A declaration of innocence is made, and it is accompanied by the elders, meaning the city's representatives, washing their hands over the dead substitute. “We proclaim our innocence.”

“I will wash my hands in innocence;
So I will go about Your altar, O Lord,
⁷ That I may proclaim with the voice of thanksgiving,
And tell of all Your wondrous works.
⁸ Lord, I have loved the habitation of Your house,
And the place where Your glory dwells.” Psalm 21:6-8

In the Psalm David clearly ties the washing of his hands in with his innocence. He then says this allows him to go about the Lord's altar. This is something he could not have done if he were unclean until evening. And finally, the most notable occurrence of washing one's hands in all of Scripture is seen in Matthew 27 –

But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitudes that they should ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus. ²¹ The governor answered and said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release to you?"

They said, "Barabbas!"

²² Pilate said to them, "What then shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?"

They all said to him, "Let Him be crucified!"

²³ Then the governor said, "Why, what evil has He done?"

But they cried out all the more, saying, "Let Him be crucified!"

²⁴ When Pilate saw that he could not prevail at all, but rather *that* a tumult was rising, he took water and washed *his* hands before the multitude, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this just Person. You see *to it*."

²⁵ And all the people answered and said, "His blood *be* on us and on our children."

²⁶ Then he released Barabbas to them; and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered *Him* to be crucified. Matthew 27:20-26

As unlikely as it seems at first, it appears that the washing of hands is actually a symbolic proclamation of innocence by the one who has been touched, rather than being a preemptive washing by the one who has the discharge in order to touch others. In all of the verses we have so far seen, there is the implied warning to those who are in Christ that they are to abstain from close relations and conversations with those who are impure in life and in doctrine. Such defilement will certainly transfer from one to another, and none are immune from becoming defiled.

¹² The vessel of earth that he who has the discharge touches shall be broken, and every vessel of wood shall be rinsed in water.

Here we have two different vessels, the first is *kheres*, or earthenware. It is that which is common, porous, and absorbent. It is from the earth, and it has never been alive. The second is *ets*, or wood. It is more valuable, considered non-porous, and thus non absorbent. It was made from something with life in it.

It is a picture of two states of man. The first is an unregenerate person who has never been spiritually alive. They absorb into themselves the unclean sin of another, they are reprobate, and they are to be destroyed. The other is a person who is from that which is

alive. Even if touched by a person who is unclean, they can be rinsed and cleansed. It is a picture of being penitent, being made alive in Christ, and being immersed through baptism.

This is certainly what is seen here, or otherwise, it would have mentioned vessels of copper, brass, and so on. But the wood is used to make a picture for us. It would then stand as representative of any non-porous vessel for the Israelite, but the picture for us is maintained by only mentioning the wood. This practice actually is noted in the New Testament in Mark 7. The Pharisees and scribes had designed an elaborate system of such washings based on this passage. What they had missed was the spirit and intent of what the passage is conveying to us. Like earthen vessels, they were set for destruction because they failed to pay heed.

*I wash my hands in my innocence before You, O God
I do not know about this thing which has come about
I have been careful to walk circumspectly on this path I trod
And in this matter I am guiltless, no doubt*

*But who can be pure in Your eyes? Can such a thing be?
In one matter we are innocent, but in ten thousand others, guilty*

*Lord, how can we be freed from the guilt and be cleansed before You?
Can such a thing ever come about?
Surely You have prepared a way; it is certainly true
Of this, O God, there isn't a doubt*

*Lead us to the Fount from where all cleansing does flow
Show us the way, and to there we shall go*

II. Cleansing from Discharges (verses 13-15)

¹³ 'And when he who has a discharge is cleansed of his discharge, then he shall count for himself seven days for his cleansing,

For the cleansing of his discharge, a set time period of seven days is given to confirm that the discharge had certainly ended. This is the set time for purification where the person continues in their defilement, just as we have seen elsewhere.

¹³ (con't) **wash his clothes,**

The washing of the clothes, as we have seen several times, is symbolic of the outward reflection of the inward change in the person. The garments go from defiled to purified. It is the purification which symbolizes the work of Christ in us.

13 (con't) and bathe his body

The words here say, “and bathe his flesh.” Six times so far, it says, “and bathe.” Now only it adds in the words, “his flesh.” For this reason, this is certainly referring to the euphemistic use of the word “flesh,” meaning private parts. This seems more sure because in verse 16, it will add in the words *eth kol*, or “all.” That verse then is set in contrast to this where only a part of the body is washed.

13 (con't) in running water;

The Hebrew here says, *b'mayim khayim*, or “in living water.” The private parts of the person are where life issues from. The living water is a picture of Christ as is specifically noted in John 4 and John 7. It is from Christ where the Living Waters come. And so, a person who so washes himself is a symbolic picture of new life cleansed in Christ's Living Water. Though it isn't the kind of thing one would naturally teach openly in Sunday school, it is something that the Lord has placed in His word to show us the marvel of what happens to a person who is cleansed by Christ.

13 (con't) then he shall be clean.

As we have seen in other passages, everything in verses like this occurs simultaneously. We call on the Lord, we are made spotless, we are made spiritually alive, and we receive the Living Waters of eternal life. At that moment, we are considered justified, sanctified, and purified. We are clean. The same is true with what is pictured in the next two verses...

14 On the eighth day he shall take for himself two turtledoves or two young pigeons,

On the eighth day, the day of new beginnings, the healed soul is granted the right to come before the Lord, into the sanctuary, in order to receive final atonement. With him, he is to bring two turtledoves or two young pigeons. As we have seen, these birds picture Christ in their simplicity, purity, and humility. Further, the affection of the dove for its mate makes it a splendid picture of Christ who is so affectionate for His people that He came to dwell among them and give Himself for them in order to purify them.

14 (con't) and come before the Lord, to the door of the tabernacle of meeting, and give them to the priest.

The door of the tent of meeting means the altar of burnt offering. It is that altar which symbolically allows access for the atoned sinner into the Holy Place. There at the altar, which is before, or in the face of the Lord, the person is to give the birds to the priest.

15 Then the priest shall offer them, the one as a sin offering and the other as a burnt offering.

Both birds picture the work of Christ. One is as a sin-offering for forgiveness of the sins of life. He found the life acceptable, and therefore He then accepts His sin offering in our place. That is seen in several places in Scripture, such as in Hebrews 9:28. The other as a burnt offering as a life wholly offered to God as an acceptable and sweet smelling aroma to Him. That is seen in Ephesians 5:2.

15 (con't) So the priest shall make atonement for him before the Lord because of his discharge.

The life of sin, pictured by the discharge, is atoned for and covered over. The penalty for that life of sin is transferred to the innocent animal. In picture, the atonement and vicarious death are made by Christ on our behalf. Reconciliation has come; new life has begun.

*Cleansed! Cleansed from the defilement I bore
My garments are clean, yes radiant white
I have been purified, cleansed to the core
By the merciful hand of the Lord, all is now right*

*The sin offering has been made; I am free from guilt
The whole burnt offering has been accepted as well
Christ's life was offered, and His precious blood was spilt
I am saved and free, no longer condemned to hell*

*The Lord is gracious; He has done it all for us
He has freed us from our unclean discharge forevermore
All hail the glorious name of Christ Jesus
Now eternally cleansed, and eternally pure*

III. Natural Discharges (verses 16-18)

A few things about verse 16, and those to come. First, most commentators say verse 16 is an involuntary emission. Nothing here says that. One commentator I read goes so far as to say –

“...which, though involuntary, might arise from some lustful dream or imagination. But if it was voluntary, and by a man’s own procurement when awake, it was esteemed abominable, and a degree of murder. See Genesis 38:9.” Matthew Poole

That is a complete abuse of what is being relayed in Genesis 38. If you want to know what those verses are saying, watch the sermon. The issue of whether this is voluntary or involuntary is completely irrelevant to what is being conveyed, and why it is being said.

Secondly, these verses are a part of the Law of Moses. They are done. Done means done. What they pictured is now fulfilled. The last thing Christianity needs is a whole bunch more neurotic people than we already have. Legalism has so many people, in so many churches, bound up in its claws that there is a heavy weight of guilt upon people’s shoulders that simply doesn’t need to be there. Understanding that, let’s look at these verses with a view to seeing why this is being mentioned at all.

¹⁶ ‘If any man has an emission of semen, then he shall wash all his body in water, and be unclean until evening.

In this verse, it mentions an emission of semen. The *shekavah*, or emission, has only been seen in one other account, Exodus 16. It was referring to the layer of dew which evaporated and left behind the manna for the children of Israel. If you want to know what that is about, go watch the sermon.

Now it is used to indicate a *shikvat zara*, or emission of seed. If someone had one of these, it would render them unclean. They would remain in that state until evening at the time of the new day. That terminology was carefully explained in Leviticus 11 as pointing to the work of Christ. If you missed that sermon, or if you forgot this, go watch the sermon. On a day that ended at 6pm, it didn’t matter if it happened at 8pm and thus it would go on for 22 hours, or if it happened at 5:59 pm and thus last for 1 minute. If evening on that day was 6pm, the uncleanness ended.

But why would an emission of semen render a person unclean? Before answering, this is

something that is known to exist in many religions. Ancient Egypt knew this. Islam practices it. Babylonians, Hindus, and so on all knew this. Judaism obviously follows this precept if they adhere to the law. Other religions as well understand this defilement. It is something ingrained in the religious psyche. But it does not carry on to Christianity. Why?

The answer is Christ. The seed of man is how sin travels to the next generation of humans. All people are born of man's seed, and thus all inherit Adam's sin through the male. All of these other religions intuitively know there is inherent sin, even if they don't understand why it is so. This is why circumcision was given to Abraham.

In cutting the male member, it pictured cutting the transfer of sin in humanity. But it was only a picture, a picture of Christ. Christ came born of a woman, but with no human father. Thus He cut the line of sin because no human seed from a father was transmitted to Him. The picture is fulfilled, the requirement in the law is ended. The neurosis can end. We are cleansed when we come to Christ, pictured by the coming of the new day at evening.

For the law-abiding Israelite, he was told to wash all his body in water. This is in contrast to verse 14 which left off the word "all," showing us that it was speaking of his private parts only there. After washing, he remained unclean until evening. As we saw before, this then is a ceremonial defilement of the conscience. Now, in Christ, our consciences are to be cleansed. We are free from the consciousness of sin, because we are freed from all sin through the work of Christ.

¹⁷ And any garment and any leather on which there is semen, it shall be washed with water, and be unclean until evening.

The Hebrew says, "And all garments and all skin." The garments are representative of the external appearance of a person, as we saw just a few verses back, as are items of skin. As coverings, they were considered unclean until evening because of the transfer of the seed bearing Adam's sin. Jude understood this, and was certainly thinking of this verse when he wrote –

"And on some have compassion, making a distinction; ²³ but others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh."

-Jude -22, 23

In type, our coverings are cleansed and purified through the work of Christ, pictured by the evening, or the start of the new day.

¹⁸ Also, when a woman lies with a man, and *there is* an emission of semen, they shall bathe in water, and be unclean until evening.

A verse for neurotics if not properly understood. First point. This was not the case at the creation. Nothing is said about this in Genesis 1:28. All it says is, “Then God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it.’” Further, nothing is said of this until this time in history. It is a precept of the law intending to look forward to Christ.

Second point, which so many scholars seem to overlook – it is the emission of semen, and not the act which led to it, that is unclean. The act between the man and his wife (which it must be according to the Bible, in all dispensations and in all circumstances), is never considered either sinful nor to be abstained from, except when mandated by the Lord, under the law, and for specific reasons. The New Testament not only says that the law is done away with, but it further clarifies the truth that the uncleanness from the emission is no longer unclean as well –

“Marriage *is* honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge.” Hebrews 13:4

The marriage bed is undefiled. No defilement results from the marriage bed. But the law says it does. Thus, we have another implicit reference (of the hundreds elsewhere) to the ending of the the law. The man and wife of Israel who had sex resulting in an emission became unclean until sundown in order to teach them of their need for freedom from the law, freedom from uncleanness, and freedom from sin. As there were lots and lots of Israelites, there were lots and lots of folks unclean until evening. They obviously didn’t mind the state of being unclean that much. It was a normal part of their daily lives. So much so, that it was talked about openly. When King Saul was looking for a good time to kill David, a hint of this law is evident at the table he sat at –

Then David hid in the field. And when the New Moon had come, the king sat down to eat the feast. ²⁵ Now the king sat on his seat, as at other times, on a seat by the wall. And Jonathan arose, and Abner sat by Saul’s side, but David’s place was empty. ²⁶ Nevertheless Saul did not say anything that day, for he thought, “Something has happened to him; he *is* unclean, surely he *is* unclean.”

-1 Samuel 20:24-26

It didn't matter what reason he thought David was unclean, he simply thought it was so. It was a regular part of the life of an Israelite to be unclean and unable to interact with others at various times. These things had a purpose, and they have served their purpose well if... if we learn what that purpose was. It was to lead us to the knowledge that the law couldn't save anyone, that it simply showed us how sinful sin really is, and it showed us that we need something else, something better. We need Christ. In Him, all defilement is washed away. In Him, all ills are healed. In Him, there is complete restoration and full redemption. Nothing is lacking, and all is made right.

When we read the law, we are looking at the life of Christ, because He is the fulfillment of the Law. Therefore, let us look to Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of our faith. Let us run the race that is set before us with our eyes on Christ.

Closing Verse: *Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.*

-2 Corinthians 7:1

Next Week: Leviticus 15:19-33 *Some more discharge verses to get through...*
(Discharging Discharges, Part II) (26th Leviticus Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if you have a lifetime of sin heaped up behind you, He can wash it away and purify you completely and wholly. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

Discharging Discharges

And the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying
These are the words to them He was relaying

“Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them:
'When any man has a discharge from his body
His discharge is unclean
This is how it shall be

And this shall be his uncleanness in regard to his discharge—
Whether his body runs with his discharge, as I address
Or his body is stopped up by his discharge
It is his uncleanness

Every bed is unclean on which he who has the discharge lies
And everything on which he sits shall be unclean
-----as to you I apprise

And whoever touches his bed shall
Wash his clothes and bathe in water, as I say
And be unclean until evening
At the turn of the new day

He who sits on anything
On which he who has the discharge sat
Shall wash his clothes and bathe in water
And be unclean until evening, yes because of that

And he who touches the body
Of him who has the discharge shall, as I say
Wash his clothes and bathe in water
And be unclean until evening time of day

If he who has the discharge spits on him who is clean
Then he shall wash his clothes and bathe in water too
And be unclean until evening
Such as I am instructing you

Any saddle on which he who has the discharge rides
Shall be unclean, and nothing else besides

Whoever touches anything that was under him, as I say
Shall be unclean until evening; the turning of the day

He who carries any of those things
Shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, as well
And be unclean until evening
As to you I now clearly tell

And whomever the one who has the discharge touches
And has not rinsed his hands in water, as you know
He shall wash his clothes and bathe in water
And be unclean until evening; certainly it shall be so

The vessel of earth
That he who has the discharge touches, this is not good
[It] shall be broken
And shall be rinsed in water every vessel of wood

'And when he who has a discharge is cleansed of his discharge
Then he shall count for himself for his cleansing seven days
Wash his clothes, and bathe his body in running water
Then he shall be clean; He has entered a clean phase

On the eighth day he shall take for himself
Two turtledoves or two young pigeons; so he shall obey
And come before the Lord, to the door of the tabernacle of meeting
And give them to the priest, as to you I now say

Then the priest shall offer them
The one as a sin offering and the other as a burnt offering
So the priest shall make atonement for him
Before the Lord because of his discharge; this his proffering

'If any man has an emission of semen
Then he shall wash in water all his body
And be unclean until evening
So shall it certainly be

And any garment and any leather
On which there is semen evident
It shall be washed with water
And be unclean until evening; until the day is spent

Also, when a woman lies with a man
And there is an emission of semen, such is seen
They shall bathe in water
And until evening be unclean

Lord God, it is we who have been unclean
It is we who had walked away from You
Our sins defiled us, only stained garments were seen
Our iniquities stained us through and through

But in Your amazing love, and in your magnificent mercy
You made a way for us to be brought back to You
Through the blood of Christ, ended the great controversy
We have been reconciled! Wonderful things You did do
Hallelujah to Christ our Lord!
Hallelujah to the Purifier of our souls
For each person cleansed by His precious blood
Who have been recorded there in heaven's rolls

We praise You, our matchless King
We praise You now and for all of our days
To you forever will the saints break forth and sing
And to You, O God, we give all of our praise

Hallelujah and Amen...

LEVITICUS 15:19-33 **(DISCHARGING DISCHARGES, PART II)**

Several times while going through Leviticus, I've brought up the obvious point that the things we look at in this book are almost completely spiritual in nature. It must be so because what was forbidden under the Law of Moses is not even mentioned in the New Covenant.

Our verses today are a classic example of this. What is considered unclean and impure in a woman under the law is not only not mentioned by the New Testament writers, it is not even hinted at. If these things could truly make us unclean, then they would have certainly been repeated in order to keep people out of the church during the times when they are occurring.

Further, the ending verses of today tie being cleansed from them into the holiness of the Lord, and the very life of the people who are considered unclean by them. If these truly defiled a person, the Holy Spirit would never have come to dwell among the people. Men with discharges or emissions would cause the Spirit to depart. Women with periods would as well. But the Bible says we are sealed with the Spirit as a guarantee. It is a one-time-for-all-time thing.

Further, there is no distinction between males and females in this regard. All are sealed when one comes to Christ. This then shows us the stupidity of adhering to only chosen and carefully selected parts of the Law of Moses.

No church, even the most legalistic of them all, abides by what is given in these passages. If they did, it would prove to them that the Spirit was not among them, and could not be among them. But the same people act as if pork would defile them and keep the Spirit at bay. Likewise, they think that not observing a Sabbath would do the same. If you can see the idiocy of picking and choosing one's path to salvation, instead of simply relying on Christ who is the fulfillment of all of these types and pictures, then you are in the sweet spot. Legalism of all types is as poisonous to the body as is an attitude that we have full license to sin because of Christ.

Both are wrong, and both will lead to the same sad end, separation from God and an eternal swim in the Lake of Fire. What we need is grace; what God offers is grace; and when we receive what God gives, we are to demonstrate our thanks in living lives which are given over to Him as living sacrifices of holiness and sanctity.

Text Verse: *“As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, ⁷ rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving.*

⁸ Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ. ⁹ For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; ¹⁰ and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.” Colossians 2:6-10

The Law of Moses had some rather restrictive requirements which were levied on the women of Israel when they were having their monthly period, or at other times that they were facing similar things. But just to show you that the law was actually a restraint on legalism as pertaining to the lives of the ladies, let me read you Charles Ellicott’s commentary on today’s passage –

“To fully appreciate the merciful provisions of the laws here enacted, it is necessary to bear in mind not only the gross superstitions which obtained among the ancients about women in this condition, but the cruel treatment to which wives and daughters were subjected, and in some countries both in the Old and New Worlds still are subjected. It was believed that if a woman in this condition sat under a tree, all its fruit fell off; at her approach the edge of a tool became blunted, and copper utensils contracted a fetid smell, and meat got sour, and a thousand other things. Hence the Parsees not only isolated her from the rest of the family, but forbade her speaking to any one, and those who took food to her in her seclusion had to put it at some distance from her. The Zabii purified with fire every place which she trod. Even if the wind which came from the quarter where she was blew upon any one, he became polluted. To this day the in Issing, the Calmucks, and many others, have special houses for them outside each town and village; and at the River La Plata they are sewn into hammocks, with only a small aperture for the mouth, till they are well again. To restrain the Jews from sharing these superstitions, and from resorting to any of these inhuman acts, as well as for sanitary purposes, the Lawgiver ordained these benign and necessary rules.” Charles Ellicott

As you can see, the people of Israel were actually kept in check by having been given these laws. And in Christ, even these laws are annulled and taken away. What is left then is that the Christian woman has a freedom that would have been unheard of in the ancient world, and which is still very burden-free in comparison to much of the world, even today.

The restrictions that are placed upon women are because they are the decision of the Lord for order and propriety within the church and the family, but even those

restrictions are no more demanding than those levied upon men. They are just of a different sort to meet the Lord's guidelines for His people.

Let's look at these verses today in their proper light though. They have been given to us to show us spiritual truths which point to Christ. If we keep this in mind, then what is otherwise a bit personal in nature comes out in a most respectable and proper way. Yes, it's all to be found in His superior word. And so let's turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. Natural Discharges (verses 19-24)

¹⁹ 'If a woman has a discharge,

The *zov*, or discharge, which was seen in verse 15:2, and which pertained to men right up until verse 18, is now used to refer to discharges among women. Verses 19-24 concern a natural discharge, and they correspond in general to the natural discharges of man found in verses 16-18.

What is seen of such a discharge here not only pictures spiritual things such as has been the case with male discharges, but it also is relevant to an actual occurrence found in the New Testament which matches the next words, as well as words of the verses to come...

¹⁹ (con't) *and the discharge from her body is blood,*

This is specifically speaking of a discharge of blood, inclusive of, but not limited to, the blood of a woman's monthly period. This discharge is further identified as being in her *basar*, or flesh. In chapter 12, it was explained that according to the Bible, the life is in the blood, and thus when there is an issue of blood, it is no longer used for life, and thus it pictures death. As death is the result of sin, such an issue is a picture of sin.

Understand, this is a spiritual picture, and there is nothing truly sinful in a woman having a period. Rather, this is showing us typological truths. If a woman has such a discharge of blood, then...

¹⁹ (con't) *she shall be set apart seven days;*

A period for women is normally three to five days, but a period of two to seven days is not considered abnormal. Seven days is given for this time of purification, regardless of

the actual length of the period. As seven is the number of spiritual perfection, it is given to cover any such flow of blood that is considered normal, and within this time-frame.

For her, she is to be set apart, meaning considered unclean. The wording here recalls those of chapter 12. It says *tihyeh b'nidatah* – she shall be in her menstrual impurity. The word *niddah*, or ceremonial impurity due to menstruation, was introduced in chapter 12, and it was used twice. That passage dealt with an issue of blood due to childbirth.

As a woman was set apart due to an issue of blood then, so it is the case with the regular period cycle. These words thus exclude a bloody nose or any other such things. It is speaking of that which issues from the private parts.

As this seven days is given, rather than the actual time of the period which could be as short as two days, we are obviously seeing types and pictures. If it were not so, then the time of uncleanness would end when the period ended. This setting apart, and the terms of the state of uncleanness, will be further explained in the passage. The setting apart which is referred to involves not engaging in intimacy with her husband, socializing closely with friends, and not going to the house of God or touching any of the holy things.

^{19 (con't)} **and whoever touches her shall be unclean until evening.**

One must question if touching a woman who is having a period actually makes that person unclean. The answer must be, “No.” Nothing is said of this under the New Covenant, and the Old Covenant is annulled in Christ. Therefore, this is a precept, and an uncleanness, which occurs because of the law itself. As Paul says, “...for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin” (Romans 3:20). Without the law, there would not be the knowledge that touching a woman is sin, and thus sin could not be imputed for doing so.

If this blood discharge pictures sin leading to death, then it is emblematic of the words of Paul, again from Romans -

“Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one’s slaves whom you obey, whether of sin *leading* to death, or of obedience *leading* to righteousness?” Romans 6:16

This is a spiritual, not a physical death. All sin results in a spiritual disconnect from God. Physical death is merely a result of this spiritually dead state.

²⁰ Everything that she lies on during her impurity shall be unclean; also everything that she sits on shall be unclean.

This verse matches verse 4 of this chapter for the man. As seen, defilement is not limited to people alone, but to the things a person comes in contact with. In this case, it extends to where the woman lies, or anything on which she sits.

The bed and the chair are both places one occupies. The bed is where one rests; the seating is where one engages in fellowship and discourse. The place that a person who is engaged in sins of the flesh lies or sits is considered as unclean because the person who occupies it is unclean.

For a clean person to go to their place of rest or fellowship, is then to indicate that they have accepted another's unclean state in order to participate in it. As Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15 –

Do not be deceived: “Evil company corrupts good habits.” ³⁴ Awake to righteousness, and do not sin; for some do not have the knowledge of God. I speak *this* to your shame. 1 Corinthians 15:33, 34

That is then pictured in the next verses...

²¹ Whoever touches her bed shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening.

This corresponds to the first half of verse 20. From the uncleanness which has spread from the infected person to the bed, their place of leisure, so the uncleanness transfers also to another person who would then touch that infected article.

In Numbers 5:2, such a discharge was sufficient to put anyone so infected outside the camp, just as a person with leprosy was to be. The same word for discharge is used both here and there. The Lord dwelt among the people, and so they were to be outside the camp during their time of impurity. Sin is an infectious disease, and it renders all who come in contact with it unclean.

To be expelled from the camp means that one is out of fellowship with the congregation. As long as such a person has sin in their life which is chronic, they are to be treated as one entirely out of fellowship. For such a person in the church, Paul explains what is their punishment –

“In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together, along with my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, ⁵ deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.” 1 Corinthians 5:4, 5

He explains what that means in verse 13 of the same chapter –

“Therefore ‘put away from yourselves the evil person.’” 1 Corinthians 5:13

For someone who doesn’t have such sin in their life, but who comes in contact with them, they also become defiled through that contact. This is why we are told to not have fellowship with deeds of darkness. We are to put on holiness like a garment, and we are to keep ourselves from participating in these things. We are to separate ourselves from sin which leads to death.

²² And whoever touches anything that she sat on shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening.

This verse corresponds to the second half of verse 20. Like the bed of the first half, the same is true with anything which is sat on in the second, anyone who touches what she sits on becomes defiled. They must wash their garments and bathe. Further, they remain in a state of defilement until evening.

The place where one sits is their place of discourse and fellowship. For a person to come into contact with such a sin pictured here would then defile that person. During the time of his defilement, he is excluded from the benefits of the sanctuary. He has touched the place which is occupied by a person engaged in a discharge of the flesh, and he has acquired such defilement as well.

²³ If *anything* is on *her* bed or on anything on which she sits, when he touches it, he shall be unclean until evening.

This verse seems superfluous at first, as if it is repeating the thought of verses 21 and 22, but it isn’t. Those were primary causes of defilement, this is a secondary cause. To touch the bed or place of sitting directly brings defilement where washing is necessary. What this verse is saying is that if there is something on one of those spots, and a person touches it, that thing, being unclean, transmits a secondary defilement. No washing is necessary. Instead they simply remain unclean until evening.

An example of what this is picturing might be a person who goes out to a restaurant with a person who is in active sin. The person's character will inevitably be corrupted to some extent by the bad company. However, another person might be at the next table. Though he isn't actively corrupted by the bad character, he picks up the defilement of the conversation. It is a secondary defilement which still is bound to render the person unclean.

²⁴ And if any man lies with her at all, so that her impurity is on him, he shall be unclean seven days; and every bed on which he lies shall be unclean.

Two other verses from Leviticus need to be cited in connection with this one -

“Also you shall not approach a woman to uncover her nakedness as long as she is in her *customary* impurity.” Leviticus 18:19

“If a man lies with a woman during her sickness and uncovers her nakedness, he has exposed her flow, and she has uncovered the flow of her blood. Both of them shall be cut off from their people.” Leviticus 20:18

The first is a direct command. The second gives the penalty for violating the command. Both seem to not fit with the words of this verse, and so there are two possible meanings of this. The first view is that this verse is referring to being intimate, but ignorant of the flow of blood. Whereas, it is then assumed that the other two verses are speaking of purposeful intimacy. It is true that the word “lies” is euphemistically used elsewhere to indicate sex. This is the most favored explanation among scholars.

Another option is that this is speaking only of lying down together, but not being intimate, and while lying down her impurity is thus on him. It is more than a mere touch of the bed or seat, or a touch of an article on one of them, but an immersion of oneself through the act of lying down.

I prefer this because the wording of this verse is not nearly as explicit as the other two. It only speaks of lying with her, not of uncovering her nakedness or the flow of her blood. But what would be the reason for a man doing this? We could think of a handful if we just put our minds to it. For example, it is winter, the family is poor, and there is one blanket. Or, the two are on a journey, and they need to sleep together at night. Nothing here suggests that there is willful or accidental intimacy. It simply says they have lain together.

If this occurs, the man is considered defiled, just as the woman is. Remember, her period may only last three days, but she remains unclean for seven. If the man defiles himself by lying with her, then he also is considered defiled for the full seven days.

I prefer this, because the person has done something to make himself unclean, and though it was intentional, the participation came out of necessity. The issue here is that of a person defiled by another's impurity, not that they were ignorant of it or not. If someone joins with another to steal because they are starving, they are still guilty of stealing. This thought is explained in Proverbs 6 –

*“People do not despise a thief
If he steals to satisfy himself when he is starving.
³¹ Yet when he is found, he must restore sevenfold;
He may have to give up all the substance of his house.”* Proverbs 6:30, 31

In Ephesians 4, Paul gives a list of things to not do, because in doing them we will grieve the Holy Spirit. He doesn't say that we can't do them, nor does he say that we will lose our salvation over it. He never even hints at that. Rather, he asks us to not do these things because they are no longer in accord with the life we have been called to.

*What is it that makes a soul unclean?
What is it that makes us defiled before our God?
Is it something that is visibly seen?
Or is it rather something about our earthly tread?*

*Certainly it is something from within us
It is that which springs forth from deep within the heart
And there is no cure for it apart from Jesus
Only through Him can we make a brand new start*

*Our lives are not our own, and only one master can we serve
It is either the devil, and our working a life of sin
Or it is Jesus Christ who can our soul preserve
Without Him in our lives, we are certainly done in*

*Thank God for what He has done through Christ Jesus
Thank God for what He has done for each one of us*

II. Unnatural Discharges (verses 25-33)

²⁵ 'If a woman has a discharge of blood for many days, other than at the time of her *customary* impurity,

These verses here now correspond to the unnatural male discharges seen in verses 2-15. This is still speaking of an issue of blood from the private parts. However, it is an issue distinct from the regular menstruation cycle. In this case, it is a discharge which lasts an extended period of time, and it is not a part of the woman's regular cycle. There is also another type of discharge which is unnatural...

^{25 (con't)} or if it runs beyond her *usual time of* impurity, all the days of her unclean discharge shall be as the days of her *customary* impurity. She *shall be* unclean.

This would be a period which simply failed to end. In this case, if the period were to go beyond the maximum seven days allotted for purification, the woman would be considered unclean during the entire time the discharge continued. Like the discharge for the male, this in type pictures active sin in one's life.

²⁶ Every bed on which she lies all the days of her discharge shall be to her as the bed of her impurity; and whatever she sits on shall be unclean, as the uncleanness of her impurity.

This verse, like verse 20, and verse 4, shows that there is a state of defilement which transfers to inanimate objects. The difference here from verse 20 is that the state is an unnatural one. As long as she is in this state of defilement, anything she lies on or sits on will be unclean, even as she is unclean.

²⁷ Whoever touches those things shall be unclean; he shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening.

This corresponds, once again, to verses 21 & 22. The same pictures are being repeated as before. The difference here is that this is a lingering sin which is pictured. It is on-going, and there is no specific time-frame by which cleansing can be gauged. However, this does not mean that is no cure for the sin. All sin can be cleansed because there is a Physician who can cleanse it.

²⁸ 'But if she is cleansed of her discharge, then she shall count for herself seven days, and after that she shall be clean.

This corresponds to verse 13 for the cleansing of a man from his discharge. But, he was first required to wash his clothes and bathe his body in running water. Here the mere passage of seven days is sufficient for the cleansing. No reason is given for the change. But the absence of the requirement necessitates our asking, "Why?"

When the man was cleansed, he had to do two things. The first was to wash his clothes, and the second was to wash his flesh, meaning his private parts, in living water. As sin transfers from the male, that pictured the part of man where life transfers. In this, he was washed with the new life of Christ's living water.

However, for the woman, there is no transfer of original sin from her to the child. She is simply a receptacle for bearing the child. Therefore, the symbolic washing which the man was required to accomplish was not needed for the woman. Her complete purification and atonement will come from the sacrifices she brings, just as the man also brought for his atonement...

²⁹ And on the eighth day she shall take for herself two turtledoves or two young pigeons, and bring them to the priest,

This verse corresponds to the same rites as for the man in verse 14. The only major difference is that in verse 14 it added the words "and come before the Lord." This is implied here, as the tent of meeting is where the Lord dwells, and also because it is specifically stated in the next verse.

On this, the eighth day, the day of new beginnings, the healed woman is granted the right to come before the Lord, into the sanctuary, in order to receive final atonement. With her, she is to bring two turtledoves or two young pigeons. As before, these picture Christ in His simplicity, purity, and humility. And more, the dove's affectionate nature pictures Christ's affection for His people. So much so, that He came to dwell among them and give Himself for them in order to purify them.

²⁹ (con't) to the door of the tabernacle of meeting.

The door of the tent of meeting means the altar of burnt offering. It is that altar which symbolically allows access for the atoned-for sinner into the Holy Place. There at the altar, which is before, or in the face of the Lord, the person is to give the birds to the priest.

³⁰ Then the priest shall offer the one as a sin offering and the other as a burnt offering,

This verse corresponds to verse 15 for the man, the wording being extremely similar. As each time we have seen this, the birds both picture the work of Christ. One is as a sin-offering for the life given over wholly to God. He found the life acceptable, and therefore He then accepts His sin offering in our place. That is seen in several places in Scripture, such as in Hebrews 9:28. The other as a burnt offering as a life wholly offered to God as an acceptable and sweet smelling aroma to Him. That is seen in Ephesians 5:2. The same typology seen for the purification of the man in these corresponding verses, pertains to the woman here as well.

^{30 (con't)} and the priest shall make atonement for her before the Lord for the discharge of her uncleanness.

Just as with the man, the life of sin in the woman, pictured by the discharge, is atoned for and covered over. The penalty for that life of sin, is transferred to the innocent bird. In picture, the atonement and vicarious death are made by Christ on our behalf. Reconciliation has come; new life has begun.

In the New Testament, there is an account which is recorded in all three synoptic gospels to which this passage corresponds. Jesus had just crossed over the Sea of Galilee and was surrounded by a great multitude who was waiting for Him. At this time, He performed two miracles. All three place the one account in the middle of the other, and so it is right to read them both together, even though only one of them pertains to this passage of Leviticus –

Now when Jesus had crossed over again by boat to the other side, a great multitude gathered to Him; and He was by the sea. ²² And behold, one of the rulers of the synagogue came, Jairus by name. And when he saw Him, he fell at His feet ²³ and begged Him earnestly, saying, “My little daughter lies at the point of death. Come and lay Your hands on her, that she may be healed, and she will live.” ²⁴ So *Jesus* went with him, and a great multitude followed Him and thronged Him.

²⁵ Now a certain woman had a flow of blood for twelve years, ²⁶ and had suffered many things from many physicians. She had spent all that she had and was no better, but rather grew worse. ²⁷ When she heard about Jesus, she came behind *Him* in the crowd and touched His garment. ²⁸ For she said, “If only I may touch His clothes, I shall be made well.”

²⁹ Immediately the fountain of her blood was dried up, and she felt in *her* body that she was healed of the affliction. ³⁰ And Jesus, immediately knowing in Himself

that power had gone out of Him, turned around in the crowd and said, “Who touched My clothes?”

³¹ But His disciples said to Him, “You see the multitude thronging You, and You say, ‘Who touched Me?’”

³² And He looked around to see her who had done this thing. ³³ But the woman, fearing and trembling, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell down before Him and told Him the whole truth. ³⁴ And He said to her, “Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace, and be healed of your affliction.”

³⁵ While He was still speaking, *some* came from the ruler of the synagogue’s *house* who said, “Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the Teacher any further?”

³⁶ As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, He said to the ruler of the synagogue, “Do not be afraid; only believe.” ³⁷ And He permitted no one to follow Him except Peter, James, and John the brother of James. ³⁸ Then He came to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and saw a tumult and those who wept and wailed loudly. ³⁹ When He came in, He said to them, “Why make this commotion and weep? The child is not dead, but sleeping.”

⁴⁰ And they ridiculed Him. But when He had put them all outside, He took the father and the mother of the child, and those *who were* with Him, and entered where the child was lying. ⁴¹ Then He took the child by the hand, and said to her, “Talitha, cumi,” which is translated, “Little girl, I say to you, arise.” ⁴² Immediately the girl arose and walked, for she was twelve years *of age*. And they were overcome with great amazement. ⁴³ But He commanded them strictly that no one should know it, and said that *something* should be given her to eat. Mark 5:21-43

In this account, the woman was certainly fearful and trembling not only because she was cured, but because by touching Jesus, the law would deem Him as unclean. The same is true with Him touching the dead girl. Anyone who touched a dead body would be considered unclean according to the Law.

But this is what it means when Isaiah writes that “He took our infirmities, and He bore our sicknesses.” A little girl of twelve years of age was brought back to physical life by the Lord. Likewise an adult female of Israel was restored to wholeness by the Lord after twelve years of sickness. But as we have seen, her physical sickness pictures the spiritual death which exists in humanity. Thus He is the Healer and Bestower of physical life, and He is the Healer and Bestower of spiritual life as well.

And so in this one account we see that there was twelve years of physical life which ended first in death, and then in renewed life. And there was also a picture of twelve years of spiritual death which resulted in renewed life. Each account is given, based on the Law of Moses, to show us the superiority of what would come in Christ the Lord.

The reason why the Lord selected the number twelve for both of these people who were cured is seen in the meaning of the number 12 in Scripture. EW Bullinger defines its meaning –

“Twelve is a perfect number, signifying perfection of government, or of governmental perfection. It is found as a multiple in all that has to do with rule. Twelve is the product of 3 (the perfectly Divine and heavenly number) and 4 (the earthly, the number of what is material and organic). ... twelve is 3 multiplied by 4, and hence denotes that which can scarcely be explained in words, but which the spiritual perception can at once appreciate...”

In curing these two women, Christ was confirming His governmental perfection over both the natural and the spiritual worlds. The natural in curing the woman with the issue of blood; the spiritual in restoring life to the dead girl. And yet both hold the opposite truth. The woman with the issue, was symbolically spiritually restored; the dead girl was made naturally alive again.

As Bullinger noted, the use of the number 12 here can scarcely be explained in words, but our spiritual perception of what occurred can at once be appreciated. He is the Ruler of that which is Divine and heavenly; He is the Ruler of that which is material and organic; He is the God/Man.

³¹ ‘Thus you shall separate the children of Israel from their uncleanness, lest they die in their uncleanness when they defile My tabernacle that *is* among them.

These words here are speaking of the rites of purification from uncleanness, not specifically keeping unclean people away from the tabernacle. Those who were defiled by discharges were to be kept away. But those who touched them or something unclean which was defiled by them, or those who were cleansed of their discharges, still had to be cleansed themselves. This was through certain time-frames, certain washings, or certain rites at the altar of incense.

All of these picture the work of Christ – unclean until evening, washing one’s body, making the required sacrifices – all of them point to the true cleansing found in Christ.

With these, they were to separate themselves from their uncleanness. And the reason is specifically given – “Lest they die in their uncleanness when they defile my tabernacle that *is* among them.”

The word “tabernacle” here is *mishkan*. It is only the second time it has been used in Leviticus thus far. It speaks of the tabernacle, or dwelling place, which is found beneath the tent of meeting, and which comprises the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place. It, and everything in it, points to Christ and His work. It is translated by the Greek OT as *skene*. That is the root of the word which John uses to state that Jesus came and “dwelt” among us in John 1:14.

In Leviticus 11:44, the Lord told the people that they were to be holy just as He is holy. The only way this can actually come about is by transferring our unholiness to Him. This is what all of this is pointing to. Every type of cleansing is to tell us that we are defiled, and that we need Jesus and His work to cleanse us. Without this, we remain defiled. This is what Jesus showed the people when He healed the two ladies – one of physical affliction, and one of physical death. It is Christ alone who rules over both.

³² This is the law for one who has a discharge, and for him who emits semen and is unclean thereby,

This verse simply summarizes what was said about the man who was unclean with a discharge, or who has a seminal emission which is found in verses 1 thru 18.

³³ and for her who is indisposed because of her *customary* impurity, and for one who has a discharge, either man or woman, and for him who lies with her who is unclean.”

And this concluding verse of the chapter is given as a summary for the monthly impurity of a woman, for both the man and the woman with a discharge, and for a man who lies with a woman who is unclean.

As with other such passages, like for that of leprosy, the final verses of the chapter appear to end on a rather anti-climatic note, and yet, they are there to call to memory that which has been submitted to the people by the Lord. In the end, they polish off the passages with a strong note of completion and finality that would otherwise be lacking.

With but one more chapter, the first half of the book of Leviticus, that of laws for sacrifice and purification, will be complete. From there, a new direction in the book will

take place. Each section has, and each section will continue to, develop a theme for the people of Israel. It is that of the sanctification of the people, leading to holiness.

And this is exactly what is expected for us as well. We are saved unto holiness, not because we already were holy. As the Lord said, "You shall therefore consecrate yourselves, and you shall be holy; for I *am* holy." It is true that we will possess that state in its fullness some day when Christ comes to glorify us, but God asks us to work towards it now, emulating Him, and glorifying Him for what He has done for us in Christ Jesus.

Let us not fall short and be found displeasing to Him, but rather let us live out our lives pursuing Him, applying the words of the New Testament epistles to our lives, and bringing others along with us on this marvelous journey to which we have been granted the right to go on. And if by chance there is someone who has not yet started that journey by calling on Jesus. I tell you that now is the accepted time, and now is the day of salvation.

Closing Verse: *"Come out from among them
And be separate, says the Lord.
Do not touch what is unclean,
And I will receive you."
¹⁸ "I will be a Father to you,
And you shall be My sons and daughters,
Says the Lord Almighty." 2 Corinthians 6:17, 18*

Next Week: *Leviticus 16:1-10 Amazing stuff for sure, for every ma'am and every gent,
and pictures of Christ by the ton... (Yom Kippur, The Day of Atonement, Part I) (27th
Leviticus Sermon)*

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if you have a lifetime of sin heaped up behind you, He can wash it away and purify you completely and wholly. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

Discharging Discharges

'If a woman has a discharge
And the discharge from her body is blood; if this is seen
She shall be set apart seven days
And whoever touches her shall until evening be unclean

Everything that she lies on during her impurity shall be unclean
Also everything that she sits on shall be unclean
-----this is what I mean

Whoever touches her bed
Shall wash his clothes and bathe in water
And be unclean until evening, so I have said

And whoever touches anything
That she sat on shall wash his clothes also
And bathe in water
And be unclean until evening, as you certainly know

If anything is on her bed
Or on anything on which she sits as well
When he touches it
He shall be unclean until evening, as to you I tell

And if any man lies with her at all
So that her impurity is on him, yes it is now on him seen
He shall be unclean seven days
And every bed on which he lies shall be unclean
'If a woman has a discharge of blood for many days
Other than at the time of her customary impurity
Or if it runs beyond her usual time of impurity
In her is some type of health insecurity

All the days of her unclean discharge
Shall be as the days of her customary impurity
She shall be unclean
Know this with all surety

Every bed on which she lies
All the days of her discharge shall be to her
As the bed of her impurity
She shall be deemed as impure

And whatever she sits on shall be unclean, so you see
As the uncleanness of her impurity

Whoever touches those things shall be unclean
He shall wash his clothes and bathe in water
And be unclean until evening when the new day is seen

'But if she is cleansed of her discharge
Then she shall count for herself seven days
And after that she shall be clean
Certainly an event worthy of praise

And on the eighth day she shall take for herself
Two turtledoves or two young pigeons, still alive and tweeting
And bring them to the priest
To the door of the tabernacle of meeting

Then the priest shall offer the one as a sin offering
And the other as a burnt offering
And the priest shall make atonement for her before the Lord
For the discharge of her uncleanness as a proffering
'Thus you shall separate the children of Israel
From their uncleanness, lest they die in their uncleanness
When they defile My tabernacle that is among them
So to you I make this address

This is the law for one who has a discharge
And for him who emits semen and is thereby unclean
And for her who is indisposed
Because of her customary impurity, so it shall be seen

And for one who has a discharge
Any discharge as is here seen
Either man or woman
And for him who lies with her who is unclean

Lord God, it is we who have been unclean
It is we who had walked away from You
Our sins defiled us, only stained garments were seen
Our iniquities stained us through and through

But in Your amazing love, and in your magnificent mercy

You made a way for us to be brought back to You
Through the blood of Christ, ended the great controversy
We have been reconciled! Wonderful things You did do

Hallelujah to Christ our Lord!
Hallelujah to the Purifier of our souls
For each person cleansed by His precious blood
Who have been recorded there in heaven's rolls

We praise You, our matchless King
We praise You now and for all of our days
To you forever will the saints break forth and sing
And to You, O God, we give all of our praise

Hallelujah and Amen...

LEVITICUS 16:1-10

(YOM KIPPUR, THE DAY OF ATONEMENT PART I)

There is a heresy which has been brought into the church in a large way in recent years. It is one based on a mistaken belief that the three fall feasts of the Lord – Yom Teruah, or the Day of Trumpets, Yom Kippur, or the Day of Atonement, and Sukkoth, or the Feast of Tabernacles, are yet to be fulfilled by Christ Jesus.

The logic is that the four Spring feasts – Passover, Unleavened Bread, Firstfruits, and Weeks (along with the Sabbath) – were fulfilled in His first Advent, and the second three will only be fulfilled in His second Advent.

The reason this is a heresy is because it then means that the law is not fulfilled in Christ, something which is in direct opposition to the last utterance of Christ on the cross, the writings of Paul, and many statements made in the book of Hebrews. If the law is not fulfilled, then Christ's work was not in fulfillment of the law, and He is not the Messiah spoken of in Scripture.

The feasts which are described in Leviticus 23, one of which is the Day of Atonement, are called "My feasts" by the Lord. They are not the Feasts of Israel, except in that they were observed by Israel to the Lord. They are the Lord's feasts, and none other. In order to justify that these feasts are not yet fulfilled, scholars who hold this position will then equivocate on the naming of the feasts, saying they still apply to Israel of the future; they are Feasts of Israel.

When talking about them at first, they will say, "These are the feasts of the Lord." But when they arrive at the fall feasts, they suddenly equivocate on the terminology and call them, "Feasts of Israel." This is a sleight of hand which is 1) not authorized terminology from Scripture, and 2) makes Israel, not the Lord, the focus of the feasts.

Our study of Leviticus 16 will show, clearly and precisely, that this feast is perfectly and wholly fulfilled by Christ Jesus. The Day of Atonement is a feast of the Lord. And so that brings us to proper terminology concerning application of a fulfilled feast.

A distinction must be made between a fulfilled feast and a continued application of that feast. A person is born one time, but the application of that birth never ceases. Each day of our life, and each birthday celebration, is a continued application of our original birth. Such is true with our second birth in Christ. We are only reborn once, but the application of that birth continues on.

And so it is true with the work of Jesus. He died one time for sinners of all time. When Israel returns to the Lord, their true Day of Atonement will be in Christ, just as it was for each individual since His atoning sacrifice. This is a Feast of the Lord, not a feast of Israel. Israel as a nation, like each Jew and Gentile atoned for during the church age, is merely a recipient of the work of the Lord. We cannot equivocate on the meaning of words and sentences and have sound theology.

To substantiate this, it must be noted that Leviticus 16:1 forms a new Parashah of the Law according to the divisions of readings by the Jews in synagogue. This Parashah extends through Leviticus 18. Its corresponding passage from the Prophets is Amos 9:7-15.

James then cites that passage in Acts 15. This shows that this passage in Leviticus displays in type and figure, Jesus Christ and His work. It is He who is our High Priest, who alone entered the Holy of Holies, and who has reconciled the Gentiles to God by His own blood. That same effectual work, which was accomplished by Him, will be realized in national Israel in the future. However, the day itself is fulfilled. To state that this is a feast of Israel looking forward to Israel's atonement of the future is to say that the law has not yet been fulfilled by Christ. It has. Israel is just late in catching up to that fact. Understanding this, our text verse for today is James' words to the church in Acts 15.

Text Verse: *"Men and brethren, listen to me: ¹⁴ Simon has declared how God at the first visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name. ¹⁵ And with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written: 'After this I will return And will rebuild the tabernacle of David, which has fallen down; I will rebuild its ruins, And I will set it up; ¹⁷ So that the rest of mankind may seek the Lord, Even all the Gentiles who are called by My name, Says the Lord who does all these things.'* Acts 15:16, 17

James notes that the Gentiles were first visited by God, meaning in Christ, in order to take out of them a people for His name. This is the Gentile-led church age. It is the time in which we now live, and it is based on the completed atoning work of Jesus Christ for us, not on some future event which must take place.

Only after this, will national Israel then be brought into this same saving grace, after the church age. The atonement provided by Jesus Christ is a one-time-for-all-time event. If this is not the case, then there is no church age; there is no rapture at the end of the

church age; and there is no millennial reign of Christ. Either Christ died for our atonement or we are not a body; we will not be admitted into heaven; and Israel will never be accepted by Christ again. It is either finished or we – meaning all people at all times – have absolutely no hope at all.

Having said this, it will become perfectly evident, completely clear, and without argument that this is so when we have finished the verses of this chapter. When the typology presented is shown to be reflected accurately and completely in Christ's work which is recorded in the New Testament, anyone who sees it will also agree that this is so.

How unfortunate it is that people run ahead, presenting commentaries which state these things are yet to be fulfilled. Christ is the end of the law for all who believe. In order to be the end of it, He must be the fulfillment of it, and He is. Praise God, He is! It's all to be found in His superior word. And so let's turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. A Body You Have Prepared For Me (verses 1-6)

¹Now the Lord spoke to Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they offered *profane fire* before the Lord, and died;

These words are considerably different than the introductory words of most major sections. Instead of saying, "Now the Lord spoke to Moses saying," which is then followed up with the words He says, this introduction gives a full explanation of when the words are spoken. They take us back to the events of Chapter 10 when Aaron's two oldest sons died before the Lord.

They then explain exactly what that means with the words, *b'qarebatam liphne Yehovah va'yamutu* – "when they approached the face of Yehovah and died." Exactly what this means will be defined for us in verse 2.

Numerous scholars state that because this introduction is tied back to the events of Chapter 10, it was originally placed there but then later it was moved to where it is now. This is entirely wrong, and it defies logic that the Lord would speak out His words, have them placed in one spot, and then decide to have them moved later. The word of God is fixed and unchanging. Therefore there is a reason why they are placed where they are. It is true that the words themselves may have been spoken before the instructions of the

intervening chapters, but the issue of where they would then be placed was carefully and methodically made by the Lord, and it has never changed since.

What needs to be considered first is why have we gone through all of the subsequent passages in detail first before coming back to the statement tying it to the death of Aaron's sons. Immediately after their death came the failure of Aaron and his remaining sons to properly handle the sin offering of the people.

This was followed up with the dietary laws of Israel. After this, was a passage on the requirements for purification after childbirth. Next came the lengthy laws concerning leprosy and bodily discharges. All of these dealt in some way with purification and sacrifices of some sort for any infractions which occurred, or for the evidence of impurity.

What becomes manifest immediately is that there would be instances where the people failed to meet the requirements which had been set out before them. For the priests, it was perfectly seen that the ordination process itself had not perfected them.

If the priests of the law were tainted with sin, as was fully evident, then their mediation would be tainted as well. Thus, there would be the need for grace. By the law is the knowledge of sin, but the law can never take away sin. And thus, an atonement, or covering, of the sins of the people was still needed.

The Day of Atonement is this day. It is a day of grace upon a tainted and undeserving people. They had agreed to the covenant, but in their imperfection, the laws of the covenant demonstrated to them that they were unable to meet the very demands it contained.

Because of this, the Day of Atonement instructions are a necessary follow-up to the laws of purification and sacrifice of the preceding 15 chapters. It is given us as an all-encompassing annual addition to them to provide atonement, expiation, and reconciliation which was obviously needed based on the fallen state of the priests and people. The scholars at Cambridge rightly state concerning this most holy day –

“Annually there gathered over the camp, and over the sanctuary as situated in the midst of the camp, a mass of defilement, arising in part from sins whose guilt had not been removed by the punishment of the offenders, and in part from uncleannesses which had not been cleansed by sacrifices and the prescribed ceremonial rites. Annually this defilement had to be atoned for or covered away from the sight of God.” Cambridge

As I said in the introduction, the Day of Atonement is also a Feast of the Lord. Not mentioned in this chapter, but which is detailed in Leviticus 23, is that it is mandated to be held on the 10th day of the 7th month of the year, which is in the fall time. It preceded the Feast of Sukkoth or Tabernacles which began on the 15th day of the 7th month. Sukkoth makes its own picture, that of God dwelling with man; residing with them in a Tabernacle. This was not possible unless the people were first atoned for. And so this solemn feast was held annually to prepare them for the time of that joyous pilgrim feast of Sukkoth.

² and the Lord said to Moses: “Tell Aaron your brother not to come at *just* any time into the Holy Place

The words here tie directly back to those of verse 1. The verse noted that Aaron’s two sons had died when they offered profane fire before the Lord. Now Aaron is being warned against making the same error as his sons. This hints to us, just as the warning against drinking wine when going into the tent of meeting, that this is one of the errors of the sons.

They went where they were not authorized, with fire which was profane, in a condition which was inappropriate, and they died because of it. The warning to Aaron is given to ensure that none of these offenses will occur again. I need to remind you that in type and picture, Aaron prefigures Christ as the true High Priest, Jesus. The term, *ha’qodesh*, or “the Holy” here is referring to the Most Holy place. This is seen with the next words...

^{2 (con’t)} inside the veil,

mi’beyit la’paroketh - “within the veil.” The veil is that which separated the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place. It was adorned with cherubim warning any and all that access was denied. Just as cherubim were placed at the entrance to the Garden of Eden where man once dwelt with the Lord in order to prohibit entrance there, so these were sewn into the veil to warn against entering into the presence of the Lord.

The word *paroketh*, or veil, comes from the word *perek* which means “cruelty” or “rigor.” That then comes from an unused root meaning to “break apart” or “fracture.” There is a fracture between God and man which is seen in this veil. Access through this veil into the presence of the Lord is not authorized for any, even Israel’s high priest, except as will be specified by the Lord.

Before we go on, however, there is one noted exception – Moses. He was allowed unrestricted access in order to receive the law of the Lord directly from the Lord. This does not change with the institution of the Aaronic priesthood, as can be inferred from Numbers 7 –

“Now when Moses went into the tabernacle of meeting to speak with Him, he heard the voice of One speaking to him from above the mercy seat that *was* on the ark of the Testimony, from between the two cherubim; thus He spoke to him.”
-Numbers 7:89

As Aaron is typical of Christ, so we saw in the Exodus sermons that the Veil is also a type of Christ. It pictures His body as is explicitly stated in the book of Hebrews –

“Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus,²⁰ by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh.” Hebrews 10:19, 20

² (con't) **before the mercy seat**

el pene ha'kaporet – “before the face of the mercy seat.” The *kaporeth* or Mercy Seat, is identical in meaning to *kopher*, which means “a cover” but in this case it indicates “a satisfaction.” This comes from the word *kaphar*, which in this situation means “to appease” or “to satisfy.” John Lange describes its purpose -

“...the mercy-seat (*kapporeth*), as a symbol of God’s gracious willingness to accept expiation as such a fulfilment of His general will as covers and removes the demands imposed by the law, or the special will, on account of guilt.” John Lange

As an interesting note, the word for veil, and the word for mercy seat are *paroketh* and *kaporeth*. They are spelled with the same letters, but the letter *kaph*, meaning “to open” or “allow,” moves from the being the third letter to being the first letter. In Hebrew, it is represented by an open palm. There is the veil which divides man from the presence of God, and then there is the mercy seat which reconciles man to God as He opens His hand and allows His mercy to be extended.

This Mercy Seat is the place where sins of the people are to be dealt with during the these rituals. An important point to state now, and to remember later concerning this *kaporeth* is that the Greek translation of the Old Testament translates this word as

hilastérion. As we saw in the Exodus sermons, the Mercy Seat, pictures Christ, the place of propitiation for our sins. Paul explicitly states this in Romans 3 –

“...being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵ whom God set forth *as* a **propitiation** by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed.” Romans 3:25

There Paul uses the same word, *hilastérion*, which the Greek translation of the Old Testament uses for this Mercy Seat. He states that Christ is our Mercy Seat.

² (con't) **which is on the ark,**

asher al ha'aron – “which (is) on the ark.” As we saw in Exodus 25, every single detail of the ark points to Christ. It pictures His body, His divine/human nature, the presentation of Him in the gospels, and throughout both testaments of the Bible, etc. In all ways, and in every minute detail, it pictures Christ who is the embodiment of the law which was carefully placed inside the ark and then covered with the mercy seat.

² (con't) **lest he die;**

The warning here is given to Aaron directly. Though a type of Christ, He is not Christ. In his sinful humanity, he could not enter the presence of the Lord without carefully following the set rituals which prefigure the very work of Christ.

² (con't) **for I will appear in the cloud above the mercy seat.**

There are two views as to what these words mean. The first is that the Lord would appear in the cloud of incense which is noted in verse 13. The second is that the Lord would appear in the cloud above the mercy seat just as He appeared in the cloud elsewhere several times already, such as above the tent of meeting, or on Mount Sinai. It is hard to be dogmatic either way, but the verse from Numbers that I cited earlier concerning Moses hearing the voice of the Lord from above the mercy seat says nothing about a cloud. One way or another, Aaron was required to obscure the scene with his own cloud of incense.

³ **“Thus Aaron shall come into the Holy Place:**

Some of the sacrifices, offerings, garments, and washings that will be mentioned here will actually be detailed later. The reason why they are mentioned now is because of the words, “Thus Aaron shall come into the Holy *Place*.” He had just been told he could not come at anytime he wished. Now he is being instructed on what he needed to do in order to come in when required.

^{3 (con't)} **with *the blood of a young bull as a sin offering,***

The Hebrew here actually reads, with a bull, son of the herd, for a sin offering. Verse 14 shows that only the blood of the bull is brought in, thus it forms a synecdoche. The blood stands for the bull. As the life is in the blood, and as the blood has been drained and presented before the Lord, it is proof of death.

The bull is for his sin. This means that Aaron is a man who bears sin. Thus, the bull is typical of Christ to whom his sin, as the high priest, will be transferred. The sacrifice stands for the man. The ritual for this bull will be detailed in verses 11-14, and in 27 & 28. Verse 11 tells us that the sacrifice of the bull, however, is not only for Aaron, but for himself and his house.

The word *par*, or bull, comes from *parar* which carries the meaning of defeat, or make void. As the bull is the substitute, it is typical of Christ who defeated the devil, making void that which the devil had wrought, meaning sin in man. Aaron had sin, the sin is transferred to an innocent, and then it is disposed of. This is reflected in the words of 2 Corinthians –

“For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” 2 Corinthians 5:21

^{3 (con't)} **and *of a ram as a burnt offering.***

The ram sacrifice of the priestly burnt offering will be conducted at the same time with that of the burnt offering for the people noted in verse 5. This will occur in verse 24. The burnt offering, as we have seen from the minute detail for the burnt offering in Chapter 1, is as a life devoted wholly to God. These burnt offerings are typical of Christ whose life was lived perfectly before God, fulfilling God’s will, meaning the law, on our behalf –

Therefore, when He came into the world, He said:

“Sacrifice and offering You did not desire,
But a body You have prepared for Me.

⁶In **burnt offerings** and *sacrifices* for sin
You had no pleasure.

⁷Then I said, ‘Behold, I have come—
In the volume of the book it is written of Me—
To do Your will, O God.’”

⁸Previously saying, “Sacrifice and offering, burnt offerings, and *offerings* for sin
You did not desire, nor had pleasure *in them*” (which are offered according to the
law), ⁹then He said, “Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God.” He takes away
the first that He may establish the second. ¹⁰By that will we have been sanctified
through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all*.” Hebrews 10:5-10

⁴He shall put the holy linen tunic and the linen trousers on his body; he shall be girded with a linen sash, and with the linen turban he shall be attired.

The high priest has four articles of clothing that he is to wear. These are not the regular garments of the priesthood. Rather, they are special, plain white garments, for this most holy day. He was to not be elevated above the others by wearing his usually gold-adorned garments, but was to wear simple priestly garments as if in a state of humiliation.

The first is a *ketonet bad qodesh*, or “garment linen holy.” This would be a plain white garment, just like any other priest who, as we have seen, picture the saints who are clothed in fine linen, clean and white. It is reflective then of a sinless state – humble, holy, and pure. It then notes *u-miknese bad yihyu al besarow*, or “and undergarments linen he shall have next to his flesh.”

The *miknas*, or undergarments are only noted five times, and always in regards to the priests. The final time will be in the book of Ezekiel. It comes from a word which gives the sense of “hiding.” They are specifically noted as for the covering of his *basar*, or “flesh.” The nakedness was covered in order to reflect purity and holiness instead of indecency. This word, *miknas*, comes from *kanas*, indicating to gather or collect.

Next it says, *u-b’avnet bad yakh-gor*, or “and the sash linen shall be girded.” This sash is completely plain, unlike the sash of the regular priests which was woven with fine linen, blue, purple, and scarlet (Exodus 39:29). Instead, he is girded in pure white.

And finally it says, *u-b’mitsnepheth bad yitsnoph*, or “and in turban linen shall he be attired.” The turban would also be different than the hats of the regular priests, although it would be pure white as theirs was, it is a distinctive turban reserved for the

high priest. We see this in the word translated as “attired,” a word new to Scripture. It is also the word which “turban” is derived from. It is the word *tsanaph*. It is to be seen only here, and twice in Isaiah 22:18. It means to wrap or wind up, thus “attired.” In essence, the words say something like, “in the wrappings of linen he shall be wrapped.”

⁴ (con't) **These *are* holy garments.**

This statement is given to show that what was just described is what has been decided upon specifically for the Day of Atonement rituals. They have been preselected, they have been prepared for this purpose, and they reflect what the Lord has determined is appropriate. They are termed holy. Thus they are set apart specifically for the high priest to perform his duties. They are pure white picturing purity. They are without spot, indicating innocence and separate from sin. They are ordinary rather than exalted indicating humility. And there are four pieces; four being the number of creation. Each of these reflects Christ in His humanity.

These garments, each and all, are typical of the coming Christ. The holy tunic reflects the human, sinless garment of Christ's righteousness. The linen trousers signify that Christ hid his divine nature, coming in the likeness of sinful flesh, and yet was without sin. The pure white sash is realized in Isaiah's words about Christ –

“Righteousness shall be the belt of His loins,
And faithfulness the belt of His waist.” Isaiah 11:5

And finally, the wrapped turban signifies that Christ is literally wrapped in righteousness. It being a part of His very being. In these simple, unadorned white garments, we see Christ's first advent. He set aside His heavenly garments, came to earth in the likeness of a man (Philippians 2:7). He came in a body specifically prepared for Him to conduct His priestly duties (Hebrews 10:5). He was found without spot, indicating His sinless nature (1 Peter 1:19), and His appearance was otherwise ordinary, indicating humility (Philippians 2:8).

⁴ (con't) **Therefore he shall wash his body in water, and put them on.**

Only now, after detailing what the high priest would be adorned in, do the actual instructions for his Day of Atonement duties begin. He is to first wash his flesh in water, and only then put on his garments. Scholars who understand that what we are looking at in this passage points to Christ, have various ideas about what the water signifies.

One view is that it speaks of his baptism which started His earthly ministry. Another is "...his being cleared, acquitted, and justified from all sin, upon his resurrection from the dead after he had made atonement for it, and before his entrance into heaven" (John Gill). But neither of these fits the typology. Rather, this is what John wrote about in his first epistle -

"This is He who came by water and blood—Jesus Christ; not only by water, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit who bears witness, because the Spirit is truth." 1 John 5:6

Jesus came by water and by blood. It is the water of the womb, having not received a sin nature from His Father as all other humans have, He is washed in the water of the womb of life as the Holy Spirit came upon Mary, and the power of the Highest overshadowed her. He also came by blood, demonstrating His humanity. As the life is in the blood, it therefore makes an apt description of the proof that He was and is fully human.

Therefore, the evidence of his birth into the stream of humanity is treated in the conception and natal period signified by the washing in the water. His physical life and human characteristics are evidenced by His blood. And, His deity is evidenced by the work of the Holy Spirit as proclaimed in the gospel accounts. He is thus the perfect, pure, innocent, and yet humble Human who came to perform the Father's will in order to be our one, true, and final atoning Sacrifice.

The Pulpit Commentary defines the high priest's movements during the coming rites, beginning with the bathing. This is an appropriate time to list them as those duties are only now beginning in earnest in the account. As I read them, think of the Person and work of Christ, and how what He did fulfills these ancient types –

1. He bathed.
2. He dressed himself in his white holy garments.
3. He offered or presented at the door of the tabernacle a bullock for a sin offering for himself and his house.
4. He presented at the same place two goats for a sin offering for the congregation.
5. He cast lots on the two goats, one of which was to be sacrificed, the other to be let go into the wilderness.
6. He sacrificed the bullock.
7. He passed from the court through the holy place into the holy of holies with a censer and incense, and filled the space beyond the veil with a cloud of smoke from the incense.

8. He returned to the court, and, taking some of the blood of the bullock, passed again within the vail, and there sprinkled the blood once on the front of the mercy-seat and seven times before it.
9. He came out again into the court, and killed the goat on which the lot for sacrifice had fallen.
10. For the third time he entered the holy of holies, and went through the same process with the goat's blood as with the bullock's blood.
11. He purified the other part of the tabernacle, as he had purified the holy of holies, by sprinkling with the atoning blood, as before, and placing some of it on the horns of the altar of incense (Exodus 30:10).
12. He returned to the court, and placed the blood of the bullock and goat upon the horns of the altar of burnt sacrifice, and sprinkled it seven times.
13. He offered to God the remaining goat, laying his hands upon it, confessing and laying the sins of the people upon its head.
14. He consigned the goat to a man, whose business it was to conduct it to the border of the wilderness, and there release it.
15. He bathed and changed his linen vestments for his commonly worn high priest's dress.
16. He sacrificed, one after the other, the two rams as burnt offerings for himself and for the people.
17. He burnt the fat of the sin offerings upon the altar.

As you can see, the first two things he did was to bathe and then to dress in the holy garments. After that, it goes from that picture of Christ coming in His humanity, directly to the sacrificial aspect of His work. His *entire life* is summed up in the acceptable sacrifices which were presented before the Lord. This then is the Day of Atonement. It is the culmination of the life of Jesus Christ. It was then made into a parable for Israel to see and hopefully understand. Their eyes beheld the most incredible scene which has ever been viewed by the eyes of man, and they failed to recognize it.

⁵ And he shall take from the congregation of the children of Israel two kids of the goats as a sin offering,

Instead of the ordinary sin offering for the sin of the people, a bull, which was seen in Leviticus 4, the sin offering on the Day of Atonement is now changed to two shaggy he-goats to meet the atoning and expiatory requirements of this most holy day. These goats and the ram were, as it specifically says, to be "from the congregation of Israel."

The specificity here demands that we pay attention. A heavenly scene will be worked out in an earthly setting. The *sayir izzim* or hairy goat is chosen because, as we have seen numerous times, hair in the Bible denotes awareness, especially an awareness of sin. The word *sayir* means hairy. The word *izzim* means goat, coming from the word *azaz*, or prevail.

The first time this word, *sayir*, or “hairy” was used was when speaking of Esau who is called a hairy man. He pictured fallen Adam who became aware of sin through his disobedience of the Lord’s command. Paul says in Romans 8:3 that “Christ came in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin.” In doing this, “he condemned sin in the flesh.” He prevailed over it. This is the purpose of designating hairy goats. They picture Christ who came in the likeness of sinful flesh, but who prevailed over it. The reason for there being two of them is yet to be revealed.

⁵ (con’t) **and one ram as a burnt offering.**

In this, the burnt offering is elevated to the same status as for that of the high priest. It is an *ayil*, or ram. The word indicates “strength.” As it is the same animal for the high priest as for the congregation, it carries the same connotation. Christ is the strength of God over the power of sin. After the sacrifice for sin, the burnt offering is as a life dedicated wholly to God.

In type, the ram symbolizes Christ as a life having been lived wholly to God. The ram also then pictures a life to be lived wholly to God in Christ. In both, it is Christ and His work which is pictured.

*A burnt offering, a bull is presented at the altar
It has value and it could be used for other things
But in presenting this bull, I shall not falter
For in giving it to the Lord, my heart rejoices and sings*

*For to Him it is a sweet smelling aroma, pleasant and nice
And my heart delights in offering such as this
It is a perfect bull, and thus an acceptable sacrifice
It is as if sending to heaven an aromatic kiss*

*Bless the Lord who has accepted my offering
Bless the Lord who has received me because of it*

*He has accepted from my hand this proffering
To Him through the bull my soul I do submit*

II. The Sin Offering (verses 6-10)

⁶“Aaron shall offer the bull as a sin offering, which is for himself, and make atonement for himself and for his house.

This actually says, *v' hiqriv aharon eth par ha'khatat*, “and Aaron shall bring near bull the sin offering.” It is not actually offered yet. This will not take place until verse 11. As I noted earlier, the bull receives the sin of the high priest. As Christ is a High Priest without sin, then the bull pictures Him. It is He who became sin so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. Aaron and his house needed atonement just as did all of Israel. Only One without sin could remove it.

As the administrators of the Law of Moses, and as they were sin-filled people, they could not atone for their own sin. Thus Christ had to be brought near to be their atoning sacrifice in order for them to be accepted into the New Covenant. Thus in Him is a changing of the priesthood. The old is annulled and the new is instituted. This is seen in the memorable words of Hebrews 7 –

“For the priesthood being changed, of necessity there is also a change of the law. ¹³ For He of whom these things are spoken belongs to another tribe, from which no man has officiated at the altar.” Hebrews 7:12, 13

Unlike the goats of the sin offering, it doesn't say where the bull comes from. It simply says that it is a sin offering for himself. Regardless of Jewish tradition, the Bible leaves this detail out. Likewise, Christ said this to the people of Israel –

“Jesus answered and said to them, “Even if I bear witness of Myself, My witness is true, for I know where I came from and where I am going; but you do not know where I come from and where I am going.” John 8:14

Christ came from God, and He was returning to God. But He had a date of destiny with the cross of Calvary first. The concept of the bull and the cross finds its source in the first sentence of the Bible. Each Hebrew letter has its own meaning, and makes its own picture. The seven words which open the Bible are *b'reshit bara elohim eth ha'shemayim v'eth ha'erez*. The middle word, *eth*, is not a word we translate in English, but it is formed from the letters *aleph* and *tav*. The picture of the *aleph* is a bull, and it

signifies strength, power, and leader. The picture of the *tav* is actually a cross, and it signifies a mark, signal, and monument. The high priest's atoning sacrifice is seen in this word, a bull and a cross; power reflected in this sign.

The thought of this verse is perfectly reflected in the words of Hebrews 7. Aaron had to sacrifice for himself, but that sacrifice was ultimately only looking forward to Christ –

“For such a High Priest was fitting for us, *who is* holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens; ²⁷ who does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the people's, for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself. ²⁸ For the law appoints as high priests men who have weakness, but the word of the oath, which came after the law, *appoints* the Son who has been perfected forever.” Hebrews 7:26-28

⁷ He shall take the two goats and present them before the Lord *at* the door of the tabernacle of meeting.

Two goats which came from the congregation of Israel are brought forward next and presented before the Lord at the door of the tent of meeting, meaning at the altar of burnt sacrifice. The word for “present” is different than the words used in both verses 6 & 9. Here the word *amad*, or stand is used. It literally says, “and have them stand before the Lord.”

What this means then is that the two goats would be facing to the west, towards the Tent of Meeting where the Lord's presence was. Whatever difference there was between the animals, even if nobody else could tell, it could be discerned by the Lord.

The two goats were, according to Jewish tradition, to be of the same size, color, and value, and as nearly alike in every way as possible. Despite being tradition, it is correct that they are identical as can be inferred from the next words...

⁸ Then Aaron shall cast lots for the two goats:

v'nathan aharon al shene ha'se-irim goralot - “and shall give Aaron on the two goats lots.” The two goats, identical in nature, character, and looks, have lots cast over them. What must be said right here is that there is no mistake in the lots. The Bible says elsewhere –

“The lot is cast into the lap,
But its every decision *is* from the Lord.” Proverbs 16:33

This is important because of what these two goats picture. There is no possible mistake in the selection process...

⁸ (con't) **one lot for the Lord and the other lot for the scapegoat.**

goral ekhad la'Yehovah v'goral ekhad la'Azazel - “lot one for Yehovah and lot one for Azazel.” There are a multitude of commentaries on what these words mean. The first half is plain and simple to understand. One lot is *la'Yehovah*, or “for Yehovah.” It is an animal which will be made as an offering to the Lord on behalf of the sin of the people. It is the second half of the clause which is a bit more than complicated as one sorts through opinions. It says, *la'Azazel*, or literally “for Azazel.” The question is, “What is Azazel?”

It is a word used only four times in Scripture, and all four are found in this chapter. Further, all four are formed with the prefix *la*, or “for.” As one goat is for Yehovah, it implies that the other goat is also for a personal being, “for Azazel,” just as the Lord is a personal being.

As this is a divine scene which is played out in human history, and which points to the work of Christ, this is correct. There is a personal being to whom the sin is transferred, but it cannot be Christ as Christ is the Lord, Yehovah. But the goat itself is a picture of Christ who bears the sin which is “for Azazel.” This goat will have the sins of the people confessed over it, and that goat was be sent into an uninhabited land, bearing all the iniquities of the people, carrying those sins to Azazel. There is only one acceptable meaning of Azazel. It is a being placed in direct opposition to the Lord in this verse, and thus it is Satan. The goat pictures Christ, but the goat is bearing sins for Azazel. It is the goat of complete removal. This will be explained further later.

⁹ **And Aaron shall bring the goat on which the Lord's lot fell, and offer it *as* a sin offering.**

The goat which is for the Lord is to be offered as a sin offering. This is confirmed throughout the rest of Scripture where Christ is noted as our sin-offering. He bore our sin upon Himself, and the sin was purged from us through Him. That is obvious and without controversy. This goat shall die for the sins of the people.

¹⁰ But the goat on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat shall be presented alive before the Lord, to make atonement upon it, *and* to let it go as the scapegoat into the wilderness.

This final verse of the day says that the goat which is for Azazel is to be, *ya'omad khai liphne Yehovah*, or "stood alive before the Lord." He is not presented to the Lord, he is stood alive before Him. It then next says *l'kaphar alav*, "to make atonement for it." The Hebrew here is very obscure, but what it is saying is that it has been placed before the Lord in order that it might be "fitted for the sacred purposes it was destined to fulfill" (John Lange).

Finally, it then says *l'salah otow la'Azazel ha'midbarah*, "to send it for Azazel [into] the wilderness." The Hebrew wording makes no sense if Azazel is translated as scapegoat in this verse. It would then literally say "to send the goat for the scapegoat into the wilderness." For this reason, the translators amend the wording to say "as the scapegoat." But this would then not match what it says in verse 8. It is the same term used four times, and all have the same meaning, "for Azazel."

Though not popular as a meaning for Azazel among many, the pictures which are being developed demand that though this goat pictures Christ, He is carrying away the sins of man, *la'Azazel*, or "for Azazel," meaning Satan. This will become evident in the verses ahead as the pictures are explained. For now, simply tuck the information away, and when the chapter is done, you can make your final determination if you feel this is correct or not.

One thing to consider is that Christ has fulfilled each and every picture thus far in this chapter. In Scripture, He is called our sin-Offering, our Propitiation, our Mercy Seat, our guilt Offering, and so on. But he is never called our Azazel, nor is He called our scapegoat. That has to be inserted into our thoughts, and it does not fit the pictures which are being developed. He is our sin-Bearer.

Until we get through with this chapter, let us just keep looking for Christ and His fulfillment of what is happening. In the end, the Bible is revealing to us a picture of the redemption of man, and how that comes about. If you have never called on Jesus as Savior, you are not redeemed. Your life still belongs to the devil, and your sins have not been carried away. They remain with you still.

Only Christ can atone for them by being your sin-Offering & your sin-Bearer. I would appeal to you today to call out to Him, and allow Him to cleanse you from all

unrighteousness through the work He accomplished so long ago. The time is short, and His return is near. Don't wait and be left behind, but call on Christ, be reconciled to God, and be assured that there is a marvelous heavenly home prepared for you if you do so.

Closing Verse: *“For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect. ² For then would they not have ceased to be offered? For the worshipers, once purified, would have had no more consciousness of sins. ³ But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. ⁴ For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins.”*

-Hebrews 10:1-3

Next Week: Leviticus 16:11-22 *It is sure, a firm pronouncement, you will say whoo hoo!* (Yom Kippur, The Day of Atonement, Part II) (28th Leviticus Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if you have a lifetime of sin heaped up behind you, He can wash it away and purify you completely and wholly. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement

Now the Lord spoke to Moses
After the death of Aaron's two sons
When they offered profane fire before the Lord and died
Yes Nadab and Abihu were these ones

And the Lord said to Moses:
“Tell Aaron your brother not to come, by and by
At just any time into the Holy Place inside the veil
Before the mercy seat which is on the ark, lest he die

For I will appear above the mercy seat in the cloud
Therefore he shall only enter when I say he is allowed

“Thus Aaron shall come into the Holy Place:
With the blood of a young bull as a sin offering
And of a ram as a burnt offering
Such shall be the suitable proffering

He shall put the holy linen tunic
And the linen trousers on his body
He shall be girded with a linen sash
And with the linen turban, attired he shall be

These are holy garments he is to don
Therefore he shall wash his body in water
And put them on

And he shall take from the congregation
Of the children of Israel
Two kids of the goats as a sin offering
And one ram as a burnt offering, as to you I tell

“Aaron shall offer the bull as a sin offering
Which is for himself, only he
And make atonement for himself and for his house
Thus is such as it it shall be

He shall take the two goats and present them before the Lord
At the door of the tabernacle of meeting, according to this word

Then Aaron shall cast lots for the two goats: take note!
One lot for the Lord and the other lot for the scapegoat

And Aaron shall bring the goat
On which the Lord's lot fell
And offer it as a sin offering
As to you I do now tell

But the goat on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat
Shall be presented alive before the Lord
-----to make atonement upon it
And to let it go as the scapegoat into the wilderness
So these instructions I now to you submit
Lord God, You have sent Jesus to atone for sin
We thank You for doing what we could not do
Through Him new life can begin
And so, O God, we call out through Him to You

Hear our cry for mercy, upon sinners such as us
Know that we trust in Your word, and Your power to save
We are freed from sin's bondage through Jesus
It was for us that His precious life You gave

Hallelujah! To You, O God our voices we raise
Hallelujah! To You, O God, we give all of our praise

Hallelujah and Amen...

LEVITICUS 16:11-22

(YOM KIPPUR, THE DAY OF ATONEMENT PART II)

Like part I of the Day of Atonement sermons, for the second week in a row, I spent about 14 hours working on the content of this one. It was a long and tiring Monday, and I didn't really feel any further along at the end of the day than I was when I started concerning much of the substance behind the verses.

The content from the Hebrew is complicated, it is very hard to properly piece together, and there are several possibilities for the meaning of many of these 12 verses. So much so, in fact, that I spent about an hour talking to my friends Sergio and Rhoda in Israel trying to figure out a correct meaning of just two of them.

This doesn't mean that all is lost. In fact, at the end of the day the opposite was true. I was twelve verses farther along in understanding everything that is being relayed and the pictures were coming out slowly but surely. One of the problems with evaluating these verses, is that most commentaries, if not all, rely heavily on later Jewish commentaries which add in many things to the rituals of this chapter which are completely irrelevant to what the Lord is saying. Because of this, tradition has taken over much of the basic words of instruction.

In the evaluation of these Leviticus 16 verses, I am purposefully refraining from any extra-biblical content, such as those Jewish writings which detail the rituals, in order to keep the original intent of what is said here. The only time I have or will introduce anything written later, is when it won't interfere with a proper evaluation of these verses.

This is important, because in using the descriptions of what occurred at temple times, and of what the later writings of the Talmud state, the symbolism of what is being pictured is actually confused. Error is then introduced into what should otherwise be fully understood from these verses alone. It is the constant mistake of those who evaluate such passages, and it has led to many misunderstandings of what is being presented for us to learn.

This is not to say that all such writings are bad, but there is a basic instruction given in Scripture which gives us the necessary details to find Christ. Quite often, the later writings seem to purposefully hide what we should see. What we are to find in Scripture is Jesus, and that which is recorded in the Old is only given to lead us to the New. We

have to keep remembering this. Everything points to Christ and His completion of these things.

Text Verse: *“For on the one hand there is an annulling of the former commandment because of its weakness and unprofitableness, ¹⁹ for the law made nothing perfect; on the other hand, there is the bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God.” Hebrews 7:18, 19*

In Christ, the “former commandment,” meaning the Law of Moses, is annulled. This is, as the author of Hebrews notes, because of its “weakness and unprofitableness.” That sounds very stern, but he then explains it by saying that “the law made nothing perfect.”

Only Christ could do that. The Law was given to lead us to Him. That includes the Leviticus 16, Day of Atonement, rituals. We just need to keep looking for Him. In so doing, we will be fully informed on what we are seeing now. This is the beauty of studying the law. In doing so, we will not only find Christ, but the things of the New Testament make all the more sense.

Things in the New which seem hard to understand find their source in the Old. In understanding the Old, we can then understand the New. This is how it is. Marvelous things are revealed when we study His superior word. And so let’s turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. A Bull For a Sin Offering (verses 11-14)

¹¹ “And Aaron shall bring the bull of the sin offering, which is for himself, and make atonement for himself and for his house, and shall kill the bull as the sin offering which *is* for himself.

Following the specific order of the ritual, the high priest is now instructed to bring forward the bull of his sin offering. The order so far is that he 1) bathed; 2) dressed in white holy garments; 3) presented at the door of the tent a bull for a sin offering; 4) presented at the door of the tent two goats for a sin offering for the congregation; 5) cast lots on the two goats – one for Yehovah, and the other for Azazel. Now, comes his sixth act of the day.

Here it notes that this bull which is brought near, “is for himself and for his house” in order to make atonement for them. This is the bull which was introduced in general in

verse 6. The *par*, or bull, comes from the word *parar* which carries the meaning of defeat, or make void. The idea of Christ is seen clearly in this. It is He who defeated the devil, making void that which the devil had wrought, through the sacrifice of Himself.

As we have seen from the earlier sacrifices noted in Leviticus, the high priest must sacrifice first for himself, and only then can he sacrifice for the sins of the people. This is stated by the author of Hebrews to make certain a theological point in verses 5:1-3—

“For every high priest taken from among men is appointed for men in things *pertaining* to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins. ² He can have compassion on those who are ignorant and going astray, since he himself is also subject to weakness. ³ Because of this he is required as for the people, so also for himself, to offer *sacrifices* for sins.”

Aaron bore his own sin, a truth highlighted by the New Testament in order to demonstrate, perfectly and completely, the fallible nature of the Aaronic priesthood. If Israel’s high priest bore sin, and if he continued to bear sin year after year, then he was never made perfect, nor could he make anyone else perfect.

Further, none of his house was exempt. If he conceived a child just after the Day of Atonement, that child would still be born in sin and under sin’s power. The truth is inescapable. Thus, though the high priest is a type of Christ in his duties and garments, the bull being presented is also.

Without the bull, there is no transfer of sin, and without Christ, there is no true atonement. As this is so, the high priest personally kills the bull. In type and picture, all — including Israel’s high priest — are responsible for the death of Christ. None can come to God apart from Him.

¹² Then he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from the altar before the Lord,

After sacrificing the bull, the next thing he is to do is to take *ha’makhtah* or “**the** censer,” full of burning coals. The definite article is not superfluous at all. In verse 10:1, the two sons of Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, committed several violations before the Lord, causing them to die. One was that they took censers that were not authorized for this purpose. *Makhtah*, or censer, comes from *khathah*, “to take.”

Aaron is to take “**the** censer” which was specifically ordained for this task, and to then fill it with *gakhale*, or burning coals. This is the first time that *gekhel* or burning coal is

used in Scripture. It is from an unused root meaning "to glow" or "kindle," thus it is a burning ember. These were to be obtained *me'al ha'mizbeakh miliphne Yehovah*, or from off the altar before the Lord.

Pretty much every commentary and scholar says that these coals are to come from the altar of burnt sacrifice outside. That is the perpetually burning fire which was sanctified by the fire of the Lord at the end of Chapter 9. But, it is more likely that these were taken from the altar of incense which stands before the veil.

The incense and the censer would both have been kept inside the Holy Place. The incense was always to be burning on the coals of the fire in this golden altar according to Exodus 30:8. Therefore, the fire was already sanctified to be used for incense before the Lord. Further, the same term is used again in verse 18. In both cases, it is called "the altar that is before the Lord."

¹² (con't) **with his hands full of sweet incense beaten fine,**

The words, *qetoreth*, or "incense," and *sam*, or "fragrant," are stated together. This is the special incense which was mandated for this specific purpose back in Exodus 30. It is the holy incense which was composed of exacting ingredients and proportions which were reserved to the Lord alone. The Lord specifically stated, "Whoever makes *any* like it, to smell it, he shall be cut off from his people" (Exodus 30:38).

Every detail of the composition of that incense pointed to the Person and work of Christ. If you missed that sermon, go back and watch it. The symbolism of Leviticus 16 will come more fully alive by seeing the meaning of that which is now to be burnt before the Lord. The Bible explicitly explains what incense pictures and therefore we need go no further than what it says –

"Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints." Revelation 5:8

Incense pictures prayer. This is seen in both testaments. As it is prayers of the saints, and as the ingredients picture Christ and His work, it is reflective of those who are in Christ and whose prayers are made acceptable to God only because of Him.

In the case of the high priest now, he is instructed to have both hands filled with sweet incense beaten fine. It is not yet placed on the coals, but rather it will be after entering

the Most Holy Place. As it is beaten fine, when it is placed on the embers, it will make an immense amount of smoke. That, combined with the fact that it is in a small and completely closed room, it will literally envelope the room in smoke.

¹² (con't) **and bring it inside the veil.**

v'hevi mi'beit la'paroketh - "and bring from house for veil." As I noted last week, and will repeat again, the *paroketh*, or veil, is the dividing line between the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place. Cherubim were woven into it, symbolizing the fracture between God and Man which resulted at the fall. When man was removed from the presence of the Lord, cherubim were placed at the east of the garden to guard the way to the tree of life.

The cherubim on the veil likewise faced east. Access has been cut off for man to dwell with the Lord, or to even temporarily enter His presence. Only the high priest, and only once a year, could go behind this veil in order to make atonement for the people. The veil pictures Christ, the One and only means of gaining access to God. It is through Him alone that this can come about. That the veil is Christ is seen in Hebrews –

“Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, ²⁰ by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh.” Hebrews 10:19, 20

¹³ **And he shall put the incense on the fire before the Lord, that the cloud of incense may cover the mercy seat that is on the Testimony, lest he die.**

Once behind the veil, the high priest was then to put the incense on the fire before the Lord. Almost all commentators state that this was then to prevent him from seeing the holy items and the place where the Lord dwelt, or else he would die. This is not correct. The ark was seen as it was made; it was seen by the priests as the tabernacle was taken down and raised during its time of movement, and the high priest could obviously see the Ark and the Mercy Seat as he walked in, prior to putting the incense on the coals.

The reason for the incense is stated right here, *v'kisah anan ha'qetoreth eth ha'kapporeth asher al ha'edut w'lo yamut* - "and cover cloud the incense the mercy seat which (is) over the testimony that not he die." It is the mercy seat that is over the testimony which is singled out here.

In other words, the tablets of the Testimony are inside the ark. The mercy seat is above the ark. Incense is a symbol of prayer. The Ten Commandments are representative of the

entire law, a law which condemns. Only wrath can come from a violation of the law, and only a satisfaction of the law through the shedding of blood of an innocent Substitute can appease the wrath.

The incense then is covering the mercy seat which covers the law; a law which brings death. In the death of the Substitute, life is granted. But when Aaron came back into the Most Holy place with the blood, without the incense, he would be visible. As the atonement is for him, he would die before the Lord, having been seen by the Lord. The incense, picturing prayer, is for *him* to be covered from the Lord, not for the Lord to be covered from him. It is the same as at the Passover. The people were to remain inside, only the blood was to be seen outside. As the Lord said then, “And when I see the blood, I will pass over you” (Exodus 12:13).

At the time of atonement, there must be only that which provides atonement visible. The picture of Christ is obvious. The prayers of the people who call on Christ will be saved through His death. The Lord does not see the sinner, but He hears their prayers because of Christ, and because of Christ alone – symbolized by the ingredients of the incense, all of which picture Him.

¹⁴ He shall take some of the blood of the bull and sprinkle *it* with his finger on the mercy seat on the east *side*; and before the mercy seat he shall sprinkle some of the blood with his finger seven times.

What is implied, but what is not specifically stated, is that he would then exit the Most Holy Place to get the blood of the bull in order to sprinkle it before the Lord. As his hands were full of the incense, and as he was also carrying the censer with the coals, he could not have also held the bowl full of blood.

With the blood now in his possession, he is instructed to sprinkle it with his finger. Due to the obscurity of the Hebrew, there are different views on what the words say. Some take the two clauses as two different sprinklings. One is with his finger either on, or before, the mercy seat once, and then he is to sprinkle before the mercy seat, meaning on the ground, or at least in the direction of the mercy seat, seven times. Thus, eight sprinklings.

Some unite the two clauses, the second explaining the first. This would mean that he sprinkled only seven times at the front of the mercy seat. A third view is that he is to sprinkle it on the mercy seat seven times, and also before the mercy seat seven times,

thus fourteen total. This would mean that the mercy seat is considered an altar. Atonement is made for it.

It is hard to be dogmatic about which is correct. At the time of the second temple, there was no ark. And therefore, the priest went in and sprinkled once in the air, and seven times on the ground in a line to the place where the ark would have been.

I propose that the blood of atonement is made upon the Mercy Seat, and atonement for the Holy place is made with the seven sprinklings before it. First it is sprinkled on the east side of the mercy seat. In the Bible, the east side is the place of exile, and enmity with God. Sprinkling it there is intended to appease His wrath upon those who are in this place of exile and enmity.

In other words, it is a picture of Christ, coming to our land of exile and shedding His blood in this place of exile to reconcile us to God once again. After that, atonement is next made for the tent of meeting by sprinkling the blood before the mercy seat seven times.

Seven is the number of spiritual perfection in Scripture. The high priest would sprinkle the blood before the mercy seat to atone for the Holy Place. This seems correct based on verse 16. One way or another, blood was specifically sprinkled on the mercy seat. This was proof of death, and it was also intended that the Lord would see the blood, and atonement would be provided.

As a side note, the reason for the seven sprinklings has met with fanciful interpretation by some who claim that this is the number of times that Christ shed His blood during His time leading up to the cross. However, no such analysis is born out by the writers of the gospels. That has to be forced in order to arrive at the number.

He shed blood when He wept, He was pierced in His hands and His feet – do we count that as 1 cumulatively, 2 for the hands and 2 for the feet, or 4 for the 4 appendages? He certainly bled when He was whipped, but the record does not say this. He probably bled when the crown of thorns was placed on His head, but the record doesn't say that. He bled internally through bruising, but that doesn't qualify for shed blood. In the end, we can only use what is explicit, and doing so leaves nothing which matches what is called for here.

Simply, seven is the number of spiritual perfection. There is no reason to go beyond this basic and full explanation. As Christ Jesus is the embodiment of spiritual perfection, the

seven sprinklings is emblematic of this innate perfection which was given for the sins of His people. They are done to petition the Lord's mercy and to acknowledge the death of the innocent substitute.

*An offering for sin to restore the peace
I come to petition my God at the burnt altar
Until I do, the enmity will never cease
But knowing He will forgive, in this I will not falter*

*At the altar, and by the door of the tent
The animal is slain, its life ebbs away
In that exchange, God's wrath is spent
Harmony is restored, and has come a new day*

*Innocent and pure, no fault of its own
The death truly touches my heart
But in this exchange, I am clearly shown
That only through death, can there be a new start*

*Thank God that Another can die in my place
In His death I can again look upon God's face*

II. The Sin Offering for the People (verses 15-19)

¹⁵ "Then he shall kill the goat of the sin offering, which *is* for the people, bring its blood inside the veil, do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bull, and sprinkle it on the mercy seat and before the mercy seat.

Once the high priest's sin was atoned for, the sins of the people could then be atoned for. The priest would retreat to the altar of burnt offering and there kill the people's goat offering. Once bled out, he would reenter inside the veil to sprinkle the blood as before.

Remember the typology is important. The high priest pictures Christ our High Priest. The goat is Christ our Substitute. The shed blood is the life of Christ poured out for His people. The veil is Christ's body which was, according to Matthew 27:51, torn asunder at the moment Christ died, thus allowing access for man into the presence of the Lord once again. For those in Christ, the guarding cherubim at the Garden of Eden, guard no more.

The incense reflects Christ's nature and qualities. For those in Christ, our prayers are made acceptable to God, through Him, once again. The Ark is Christ who embodies the law. The Mercy Seat is Christ our place of propitiation. On an on, we need to remember that all detail is pointing to Christ.

Here, the Hebrew says that the blood is sprinkled both on and before the Ark, not only on. However, the Greek translation of the Old Testament leaves the word "and" out, and so once again, it is hard to be dogmatic about the sprinklings.

¹⁶ So he shall make atonement for the Holy *Place*, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions, for all their sins; and so he shall do for the tabernacle of meeting which remains among them in the midst of their uncleanness.

As with several other verses, this is variously translated and commented on. A large number of translations and scholars say that the two major clauses detail two separate actions. The first is that the rite has made atonement for the Most Holy place, and then the second clause is that he is then next to do so for the tent of meeting. If this were so, it would be a very imprecise order. No specifics about what he is to do to the tabernacle are given. Rather, the second clause seems explanatory. The ISV translates it in this manner –

“Then he is to make atonement on the sacred place on account of the uncleanness of the Israelis, their transgressions, and all their sins. This is how he is to act in the Tent of Meeting, which will remain with them in the middle of their uncleanness.” ISV

The sprinkling of the blood is what makes atonement first for the people's sins when it is on the Mercy Seat. It is then for the Holy Place, and thus for the Tent of meeting as a whole. That is represented by the seven sprinklings before the mercy seat. The people are unclean, and they require atonement because the Lord resides in the tent of meeting which is among them. Further, the very utensils and dwelling place became defiled because of the sins of the people. Annually, this uncleanness needed to be atoned for.

¹⁷ There shall be no man in the tabernacle of meeting when he goes in to make atonement in the Holy *Place*, until he comes out, that he may make atonement for himself, for his household, and for all the assembly of Israel.

The reasons for this should be obvious. First, only the priests could enter into the tent of meeting, but even they were considered defiled, and so only one representative for them could go in and out with the required sacrifices. Their impure presence would nullify the rite which was being accomplished.

Secondly, as the high priest went in and out of the Most Holy Place, anyone in the Holy Place could look behind the veil as he went in and out. This was absolutely forbidden. And thirdly, it is typical of the work of Christ being the only acceptable work for atonement and mediation before God. No works of any person, nor any mediation by anyone else, is acceptable for bringing us near to God once again. So much for prayers to Mary and Peter!

On any day, even on this most holy Day of Atonement, this place where the Lord resided, which is in type heaven itself, was shut up from the eyes and physical access of man. This is explained in Hebrews –

“...the Holy Spirit indicating this, that the way into the Holiest of All was not yet made manifest while the first tabernacle was still standing.” Hebrews 9:8

Only in Christ could entrance into the true place where the Lord resides be made manifest. It is through Him that access for His people is made possible.

¹⁸ And he shall go out to the altar that *is* before the Lord, and make atonement for it, and shall take some of the blood of the bull and some of the blood of the goat, and put it on the horns of the altar all around.

Scholars are 50/50 divided on whether this is speaking of the Golden Altar of Incense, or the Altar of Burnt Offering. Each gives convincing reasons for one or the other based on the chronology of events which take place in the account. But only one is correct. I would go with the Golden Altar. First, it was specifically stated that this altar was to be atoned for once a year on the Day of Atonement. That is recorded in Exodus 30:10 –

“And Aaron shall make atonement upon its horns once a year with the blood of the sin offering of atonement; once a year he shall make atonement upon it throughout your generations. It *is* most holy to the Lord.”

Secondly, no such required atonement was specified for the Altar of Burnt Offering except during the ordination process, and so the general atonement made for the tent of meeting also atoned for it. Thirdly, it is because of what the Golden Altar of incense

does that this was necessary. It is the one channel between the Lord and His people each day as the incense, reflecting prayers, would waft through the veil and into the Most Holy Place. And fourthly, the Altar of Burnt Offering was for the sacrifices of the people at all times, but no burnt, grain, or drink offering was ever to be made upon the Golden Altar. Thus atonement from the sin offering was required.

There is the inescapable truth that both the blood of the bull, and the blood of the goat, were mixed together in one application. For atonement before the Lord, Aaron had to sacrifice for himself. Then for the people, another sacrifice was made. But in the mingling of the blood of both, we see that each individual sacrifice actually points to One true sacrifice.

Both priest and commoner require Christ. The sacrifices are made in a sequence in type and picture, but in reality, they are one sacrifice made one time in the death of Christ.

This acknowledgment of the death of Christ, the blood of these two animals, was on the horns of the altar, thus making atonement for it. The prayers of the people were considered acceptable only because of the death of Christ. It is His death which allows our prayers, sinful as they may be, to be accepted by God. It is an astonishing thing to consider that even the prayers of man are deemed so sinful that God cannot hear them apart from Jesus.

¹⁹ Then he shall sprinkle some of the blood on it with his finger seven times, cleanse it, and consecrate it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel.

The seven-fold sprinkling is, like all other times, that which signifies spiritual perfection. It is emblematic of the spiritually full and complete atonement which Christ's shed blood provides. What is most notable here is that just after the death of the bull, the bringing in of incense was the first thing accomplished in order to begin the atonement process.

Now atoning for the altar of incense with the blood of the bull is again the last part of the process. As incense signifies prayer, it is a remarkable attestation to the importance of prayer to God. Prayers in Christ cover us, and at the same time they reveal us. In type as we saw in Exodus 30, the altar of incense is tied directly to both the ark of the covenant and the mercy seat. In fact, they are so intimately connected, that the author of Hebrews says that this altar is actually on the other side of the veil. Here is what he says –

“For a tabernacle was prepared: the first *part*, in which *was* the lampstand, the table, and the showbread, which is called the sanctuary; ³ and behind the second veil, the part of the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of All, ⁴ which had the golden censer and the ark of the covenant overlaid on all sides with gold, in which *were* the golden pot that had the manna, Aaron’s rod that budded, and the tablets of the covenant; ⁵ and above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat.” Hebrews 9:2-5

This description by the author of Hebrews is not in error. Rather John Lange explains what is intended –

“For this reason we would rather find a theological idea than an archæological error in that passage of the Epistle to the Hebrews (9:4) which puts it in the Holy of holies. For this is the altar which by its incense symbolizes the prayer of the high-priest (Rev. 5:8; Heb. 5:7).” John Lange

As I mentioned in the last sermon, there is a play on words occurring which is provided to give insights into the work of Christ. The veil, or *paroketh*, comes from the word *perek* which means "cruelty" or "rigor." That then comes from an unused root meaning to “break apart” or “fracture.” In this, we can see where cruelty or rigor then comes into play.

On the other side of the veil is the mercy seat, or *kapporeth*, which indicates “a satisfaction.” This comes from the word *kaphar*, which in this situation means “to appease” or “to satisfy.” The two words, *paroketh* and *kapporeth*, are spelled with the same letters, but the letter *kaph* is simply moves forward. *Kaph* is represented by an open hand and signifies “to open, allow, or tame.”

On one side there is cruelty and rigor; on the other side, there is mercy, or satisfaction. The only thing that would pass through this veil each day would be the *smell of the incense* as it wafted into the air. As Christ is the veil, that is our one means of access to God at this time. It is our prayers mediated by Christ, rising to Him.

As a pictorial lesson for us concerning the blood of these animals, both picturing Christ, being applied to the mercy seat, which also pictures Christ, we can go to the Gospel of John to see the fulfillment of what is pictured here in Leviticus. On the Day of Atonement, the blood was applied on the mercy seat. That was fashioned so that there was a cherubim on each end of it, and the blood would be applied in the middle. In John 20, we read this –

But Mary stood outside by the tomb weeping, and as she wept she stooped down *and looked* into the tomb. ¹² And she saw two angels in white sitting, one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. ¹³ Then they said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping?”

She said to them, “Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him.”

¹⁴ Now when she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing *there*, and did not know that it was Jesus. ¹⁵ Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?”

She, supposing Him to be the gardener, said to Him, “Sir, if You have carried Him away, tell me where You have laid Him, and I will take Him away.”

¹⁶ Jesus said to her, “Mary!”

She turned and said to Him, “Rabboni!” (which is to say, Teacher).

¹⁷ Jesus said to her, “Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, ‘I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and *to My God and your God.*’” John 20:11-17

Mary looked into the tomb. And what did she see? “...two angels in white sitting, one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain.” A picture was being made of the true Mercy Seat where the blood of Christ sprinkled the Seat of God’s Mercy, cleansing those of the earth who come to Him through it.

The two angels were there, fulfilling the picture given to Moses about 1500 years earlier. It is in Christ where we are designated, or appointed, to meet with God. Christ is no random meeting place as if He could be there or somewhere else. Nor in Christ is there some random time of meeting, as if He may be in or He may not be in. Rather, He *is* the designated place of meeting.

As I said in our first sermon, the Greek translation of the word “mercy seat” is *hilastérion*. It is the same word used in the New Testament for the term “mercy seat” in Hebrews 9:5, and “propitiation” in Romans 3:25. Christ *is* our Mercy Seat, and He *is* our place of propitiation. His atoning death is the fulfillment of this ancient rite described now in Leviticus. Feast fulfilled.

*We have sinned and now we realize what we have done
We rejected God’s offer, the Gift he sent to us
We have crucified our Lord, God’s perfect Son
Together we have rejected the Lord Jesus*

*But we did it in ignorance and so there is hope
For us there is an offering for sin
It is through His blood, atonement unlimited in scope
Through Him peace is restored, and there can be fellowship again*

*Thank God for His tender mercies upon us
Thank God for this marvelous thing He has done
Through the cross of Calvary and the death of Jesus
We are whole once again, and the victory is won*

III. To an Uninhabited Land (verses 20-22)

²⁰ “And when he has made an end of atoning for the Holy *Place*, the tabernacle of meeting, and the altar, he shall bring the live goat.

With the atonement for the priests and the people, as well as the other specific items now accomplished, the attention is now brought back to the living goat. What will happen to it? The words now say that it shall be brought near to serve its intended purpose.

²¹ Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat, confess over it all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions, concerning all their sins, putting them on the head of the goat, and shall send *it* away into the wilderness by the hand of a suitable man.

Here the term “both hands” instead of “hand” is used. It is unique in all of the sacrifices. This is indicating, in the most poignant manner possible, that the confession is for both the house of the priesthood, and for the common people. He stands as the mediator to confess for all.

In this confession are all of the *avonot*, or iniquities, and all the *pisheham*, or transgressions, concerning their *khatotam*, or sins. This is the full range of sins, from the smallest to the greatest which violate divine law. These were to be placed on the head of this goat. The sins have already been atoned for by the death of the other animals – the bull and the goat for the Lord. But this goat is now considered guilt-laden, and so it is going to be sent away into the wilderness, the abode of Azazel, by the had of a suitable man.

The word used to describe this man is *itti*. It is found only this once in Scripture, and it signifies a man who stands in readiness. The word comes from *eth*, meaning time, and thus he is a timely man, or a man of years and discretion suitable to the task. This man also pictures Christ who “when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons” (Galatians 4:4).

The sins are to be carried back to Azazel who had enticed them to sin in the first place. This goat bore guilt. This is not at all like the bird of purification from leprosy where the live bird was released. Nothing there hints that the live bird bore guilt. Rather it was dunked into the blood of the live bird, symbolizing death, and then set free in an open field, symbolizing the resurrection.

Here the first goat which was slain represents the sacrifice for sin; Christ’s atoning death. The second represents the effect of that sacrifice. They are two sides of the same coin. The sin is completely removed from the people. As the first goat was for the Lord, the second is for Azazel. What the first goat cannot picture because it is now dead, the second goat is now used to show that the sin is removed – both of which are accomplished by Christ.

This is a truth which is seen in salvation. Christ died for all sins of all people potentially; Christ died only for those who acknowledge Him as their sin-Bearer actually. As long as we fail to come to Him, the death has no effect. But when we come to Him, our sins are removed completely and wholly, *la’Azazel*.

²²The goat shall bear on itself all their iniquities to an uninhabited land; and he shall release the goat in the wilderness.

This goat, after having the iniquities of the people confessed over it, was then the one to bear all of those iniquities into what the Hebrew calls *eretz gezerah*, or a land cut off. The word is only used this one time in Scripture, but it comes from the word *gazar* which is used in Isaiah 53:8 saying -

“He was taken from prison and from judgment,
And who will declare His generation?
For **He was cut off** from the land of the living.” Isaiah 53:8

This goat was to be taken to a place completely uninhabited, and which was totally severed from the place of the Lord. There were to be no roads or any other identifying

ways that would cause this goat to return to the camp of God's people. This is, as the Bible shows quite a few times elsewhere, the haunt of evil spirits.

Here we have now an understanding that this goat is being sent to Azazel. This means that Azazel can do no harm to Israel because their sins are forgiven. Instead, he must be content with the goat which has taken Israel's place. A natural translation of Azazel is either "one who has separated himself from God," or "he who has separated himself." It is to Azazel that the goat is sent.

The symbolism we are to see is that any and all who have confessed their sin over this goat have their sins carried away to a barren place with no hope of them ever returning. You talk about eternal salvation! You talk about once-saved-always-saved! It is right here in the Bible, in the Old Testament. The sins are forgiven and gone – forever.

However, those who do not confess over this goat of removal do not have their sins removed. For them, there is only one possible place to go. Their sins remain, and they are for Azazel. Thus, there is a time when they, with their sins, will be cast to that barren place from which there is no return. But at that time, it will no longer be barren. The sin of history, along with all unredeemed humanity will be there. It is a place of eternal corruption from which no soul shall ever escape. Such is the cost of being set apart *la'Azazel*. It is either your sin alone, or you with your sin, which is heading there.

The parting question for us today is, "Have we received Christ Jesus as our atoning Sacrifice?" It is He alone who fulfills these many pictures of what we are looking at. And He alone can bring us back home to our heavenly Father. This will become evident enough in the final verses of the passage, and with an evaluation of what everything we have looked at in this chapter means.

But maybe we won't make it until then. There is always that chance that our next day won't come. It isn't the kind of thing we think about often, but it is something we should consider. This is especially so unless we are right with God. And there is only one way that it can happen. We need to have our sins taken care of, and that can only come about through what these verses picture – Christ Jesus. If you have never called on Him and asked Him to bear your sin-guilt away, it is high time you do.

Closing Verse: *But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation. ¹² Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. Hebrews 9:11, 12*

Next Week: Leviticus 16:23-34 *For sure, when these verses are spent, we shall say marvelous things we did see...* (Yom Kippur, The Day of Atonement, Part III) (29th Leviticus Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if you have a lifetime of sin heaped up behind you, He can wash it away and purify you completely and wholly. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

Yom Kippur, The Day of Atonement

“And Aaron shall bring the bull of the sin offering
Which is for himself, and make atonement for himself
-----so shall he do
And for his house, and shall kill the bull as the sin offering
Which is for himself, as I instruct now to you

Then he shall take a censer full
Of burning coals of fire from the altar before the Lord
With his hands full of sweet incense beaten fine
And bring it inside the veil, according to this word

And he shall put the incense
On the fire before the Lord
That the cloud of incense may cover the mercy seat
-----that is on the Testimony
Lest he die. Pay careful heed to this word

He shall take some of the blood of the bull
And sprinkle it with his finger on the mercy seat on the east side
And before the mercy seat he shall sprinkle some of the blood
With his finger seven times; to this instruction he shall abide

“Then he shall kill the goat of the sin offering
Which is for the people, bring its blood inside the veil
-----so shall he complete
Do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bull
And sprinkle it on the mercy seat and before the mercy seat

So he shall make atonement for the Holy Place
Because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel
And because of their transgressions
For all their sins; of which I am aware of very well

And so he shall do for the tabernacle of meeting
-----as to you I address
Which remains among them in the midst of their uncleanness

There shall be no man in the tabernacle of meeting
When he goes in to make atonement in the Holy Place, so do I tell
Until he comes out, that he may make atonement for himself
For his household, and for all the assembly of Israel

And he shall go out to the altar that is before the Lord
And make atonement for it, in this he shall not falter
And shall take some of the blood of the bull
-----and some of the blood of the goat
And put it all around on the horns of the altar

Then he shall sprinkle some of the blood
On it with his finger seven times, so to you I tell
Cleanse it, and consecrate it
From the uncleanness of the children of Israel

“And when he has made an end of atoning for the Holy Place
Please do take careful note
The tabernacle of meeting, and the altar
He shall bring the live goat

Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat
Confess over it all the iniquities of the children of Israel
And all their transgressions, concerning all their sins
Putting them on the head of the goat as to you I now tell

And shall send it away into the wilderness
By the hand of a suitable man; pay heed to this address

The goat shall bear on itself all their iniquities

To an uninhabited land
And he shall release the goat in the wilderness
This is something for you to carefully understand

Lord God, You have sent Jesus to atone for sin
We thank You for doing what we could not do
Through Him new life can begin
And so, O God, we call out through Him to You

Hear our cry for mercy, upon sinners such as us
Know that we trust in Your word, and Your power to save
We are freed from sin's bondage through Jesus
It was for us that His precious life You gave

Hallelujah! To You, O God, our voices we raise
Hallelujah! To You, O God, we give all of our praise

Hallelujah and Amen...

LEVITICUS 16:23-34 (YOM KIPPUR, THE DAY OF ATONEMENT PART III)

Of the book of Leviticus, Matthew Easton says the following –

“No book contains more of the very words of God. He is almost throughout the whole of it the direct speaker. This book is a prophecy of things to come, a shadow whereof the substance is Christ and his kingdom. The principles on which this book is to be interpreted are laid down in the Epistle to the Hebrews. It contains in its complicated ceremonial the gospel of the grace of God.” Matthew Easton

He is right, and in the book of Leviticus, there is one chapter that stands out above the others. It is this chapter which we have been in for two weeks already. You might say at this point, “Charlie, the things we’ve seen are simply more types and pictures like we’ve already seen a thousand times since we started the book.”

This is true, but there is more. Not only do these things point to Christ, as we have seen and will continue to see today, but they also are presented in such a way that when they were fulfilled, Israel should have seen it a mile away. But they missed it. Right in human history, recorded there in the pages of the New Testament, is a parallel event which occurred to help us fully process the marvel of what Jesus Christ did for us. May we all, Jew and Gentile, unstop our ears and open our eyes...

Text Verse: *“Hear, you deaf;
And look, you blind, that you may see.
¹⁹ Who is blind but My servant,
Or deaf as My messenger whom I send?
Who is blind as he who is perfect,
And blind as the Lord’s servant?
²⁰ Seeing many things, but you do not observe;
Opening the ears, but he does not hear.” Isaiah 42:18-20*

Concerning the Day of Atonement, there is the type. That is found in Leviticus 16. Then, there is the Anti-type. That is found in Christ’s atoning death. And then, there is also a parallel account to show us what the ramifications of rejecting Christ will lead to. That is found in the gospels, the epistles, and from the words of the Lord in the book of Revelation.

Rejecting Christ isn't a minor issue. The premise of the Bible is that all people have but one master. We are either slaves of sin, bound under Satan, or we are slaves of righteousness, bound to Christ. There is no other position, and apart from Christ, there is no other way to be reconciled to God.

Even the Law of Moses itself, given to Israel under a set covenant with the Lord, only pointed to Christ Jesus. It never saved anyone, and it cannot do so now. Only Christ can do this. As you will see today, Israel's attempts to fulfill the law on their own were futile.

And, in their supposed attempt of finding Jesus at fault under the law, and doing away with Him because of it, they actually violated that same law. As happens in Scripture, there is a sad irony in the outcome of things when we attempt to usurp God's plans.

May we never attempt to do so. Instead, let us cherish what He has done, revel in the grace of Christ, and accept that grace for the saving of our souls. It's all to be found in His superior word. And so let's turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. Washed in Water (verses 23-34)

²³ "Then Aaron shall come into the tabernacle of meeting, shall take off the linen garments which he put on when he went into the Holy *Place*, and shall leave them there.

For the Day of Atonement sin offering sacrifices, all picturing Christ, the high priest wore his special white garments which were detailed in verse 4. With those sacrifices accomplished, he now takes them off. It notes here the words, "which he put on when he went into the Holy *Place*." These special garments are tied into his entrance into the Holy *Place*. With these duties conducted there complete, they are now removed.

The word used for "take off" is *pashat*. It is a word used only twice so far, one in the stripping of Joseph of his coat of many colors, and then in the skinning of the burnt offering of Leviticus 1:6. The word is used in the sense of raiding, as in raiding enemy cities. This isn't a simple removal of clothes, but an active, vibrant stripping of them.

There, within the tent of meeting, the garments are so removed, and they are left there. The root of the word "leave" means "to rest." They are laid up, or rested in the tabernacle, they will not be used again. What we are seeing here is symbolically revealed in the gospel of John –

Peter therefore went out, and the other disciple, and were going to the tomb. ⁴So they both ran together, and the other disciple outran Peter and came to the tomb first. ⁵ And he, stooping down and looking in, saw the linen cloths lying *there*; yet he did not go in. ⁶Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb; and he saw the linen cloths lying *there*, ⁷ and the handkerchief that had been around His head, not lying with the linen cloths, but folded together in a place by itself. ⁸Then the other disciple, who came to the tomb first, went in also; and he saw and believed. ⁹For as yet they did not know the Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead.” John 20:3-9

Like the high priest’s garments, the grave clothes of Christ were worn once, never to be worn again. They were stripped off and rested up as a witness to the resurrection. But these in type were only given as a greater parable of the true clothes of Christ, His humanity, which had defeated death, and the body transforming to its eternal glory. Here we see that the annual Day of Atonement putting up of these white garments is seen as a one-time event.

²⁴ And he shall wash his body with water in a holy place,

This is the second and final washing to be accomplished by the high priest. The first was in verse 4 which occurred prior to his putting on the white holy garments. With them now taken off, he again washes his body. As seen in verse 4, donning these was a picture of Christ’s coming at His first advent. The washing at that time was explained as His birth in a pure and sinless state. He was at that time, robed in pure white garments of righteousness.

Now that His advent is complete through His sacrifice, He washes again. It is emblematic of His second birth through the resurrection where he was cleared of any wrongdoing, acquitted of any guilt, and justified before the Lord, having performed His earthly duties without fault. The iniquities He bore for us are symbolically washed away in this picture, a picture fulfilled in His resurrection. The washing signifies acceptance for His entrance into heaven itself. That this is so, is stated twice in the New Testament. In Colossians 1:18, Paul calls Jesus, “the firstborn from the dead.” Jesus then repeats this exact same terminology in Revelation 1:5.

²⁴ (con’t) put on his garments,

This is referring to Aaron’s customary high priestly garments, every detail of which points to Christ and His ministry on our behalf. If you missed that sermon, you can go

back and watch or read it to see the amazing details. The advent is complete, and now Christ, pictured by Aaron in these garments, retakes His heavenly position as the true High Priest and Mediator.

24 (con't) come out and offer his burnt offering and the burnt offering of the people, and make atonement for himself and for the people.

The burnt offering follows the sin offering because only after sin is atoned for can such an offering be considered acceptable to God. This burnt offering consists of the ram of verse 3 which was for Aaron, and the ram of verse 5 which was for the people. In type, both picture Christ.

To understand the detailed meaning of every aspect of the burnt offering, you would need to go back and watch the earlier Leviticus sermons. In short, these rams picture a complete surrender of the will to God. This follows with Paul's words of Romans 6:7-11 –

“For he who has died has been freed from sin. ⁸ Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, ⁹ knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. ¹⁰ For *the death* that He died, He died to sin once for all; but *the life* that He lives, He lives to God. ¹¹ Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

These rams then symbolize what Paul calls in Romans a “living sacrifice” to God. As contradictory as a “living sacrifice” may sound, it is pictured here in the death of these rams. The ram, or *ayil*, denotes strength. The rams as a burnt-offering reflect the total commitment of the High Priest and the people. Their natural strength is symbolically being offered to God as a living sacrifice. In picture, it looks to Christ who offered all of His natural strength to His Father in His more perfect ministry, and it looks to those who follow Christ who are to do likewise.

25 The fat of the sin offering he shall burn on the altar.

v'eth khelev ha'khatat yaqtir ha'mizbeakh – “and the fat the sin-offering, burn like incense on the altar.” Only the fat of the sin offering is burned on the altar. This is the fat of the bull of verse 11, and the fat of the goat of verse 15. The pieces of fat of the animals, and what they symbolize, was recorded in in earlier sermons.

Every detail of it points to Christ. In short, they represent the abundance of the very deepest parts of Christ the Man. Fat is the abundance and health of life. The fat on the entrails represents the inner purity of Christ. The fatty lobe on the liver represents His emotions and feelings, and the two kidneys with their fat signify His mind and reasoning.

These are offered to the Lord by fire, burning as if incense as the word *qatar* here denotes, because they symbolize Christ's most intimate aspects. They are the very substance of who He is, and are thus returned to the Lord by fire. His earthly work was complete, it was executed perfectly, and the substance of who He is now returns to God as a sweet fragrance to Him.

²⁶ And he who released the goat as the scapegoat shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water, and afterward he may come into the camp.

This is now the last time in Scripture that *la'azazel* or "for Azazel" is mentioned. The person who conducted the goat for Azazel was noted with a unique word, used just once in the Bible, *itti*. It is a man who stands in readiness. The word comes from *eth*, meaning time, and thus he is a timely man, or a man of years and discretion suitable to the task. He pictures Christ as we saw last week.

This man had to wash both his garments and his body in water, and then he was allowed to come again into the camp. This person is typical of Christ who alone carried away the sins of man, and who then was purified in His flesh, which bore our sin, at the resurrection before He again entered heaven.

²⁷ The bull for the sin offering and the goat for the sin offering, whose blood was brought in to make atonement in the Holy Place, shall be carried outside the camp. And they shall burn in the fire their skins, their flesh, and their offal.

The fat, symbolizing the most intimate aspects of Christ, and the blood of the atonement, are taken from the animals. The disposal of the rest of the animal is determined by the use of the blood. Because their blood was brought into the most holy place, the animal must be burned and not consumed. They are taken outside of the camp to a clean place and burned.

The acceptance of these animal's deaths as substitutes highlights the extremely merciful act of forgiveness granted to the people. In their cleansing, the animal's bodies now bear the sin of the mediator and the people. Because of this, they were required to be purged from the camp entirely.

And not only were they purged from the camp, but they were completely burned up. The word used for “burn” here is *saraph*. It is the word used, for example, when burning a leprous garment. It is never used in the sense of an offering. Rather, it more reflects the rejection of a thing, and a divine purification through incineration. It is a picture of the consequences of sin, the Lake of Fire. And so what a picture of Christ. In Hebrews 13, we see why these requirements were given here and what they prefigure -

The high priest carries the blood of animals into the Most Holy Place as a sin offering, but the bodies are burned outside the camp. ¹² And so Jesus also suffered outside the city gate to make the people holy through his own blood. ¹³ Let us, then, go to him outside the camp, bearing the disgrace he bore.

-Hebrews 13:11-13

What was given to Israel in type and shadow is realized in its fullness in Christ. There is a problem which infects man, and its source is that of the devil himself. The only way to defeat what he did was for Christ to take it away from us. We are told that He was made to be sin for us so that we could then become the righteousness of God in Him. What a bargain God has offered us!

²⁸ Then he who burns them shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water, and afterward he may come into the camp.

This is the fourth and final washing mentioned in the passage. It again pictures Christ, just as the washing of the one who led the goat into the wilderness. Both are typical of Christ who alone carried away the sins of those who receive Him. This is certain, because in both verse 26 & 28, the verb for wash is singular.

Tradition says that the animals were carried on poles by four people. But that isn't what the Lord wants us to see. The wording points to One alone who does this work. We are to see Christ alone who was purified in His flesh which bore our sin in His earthly body before again entering the presence of His heavenly Father.

²⁹ “This shall be a statute forever for you:

The words here are *l'khuqat olam* – “for a statute forever.” The word *olam* means, “to the vanishing point.” As long as the Law of Moses was in effect, this rite was to be conducted, exactly as prescribed. As the law is fulfilled in Christ, this is no longer a statute for God's people. Christ is our Atonement, full and forever.

²⁹ (con't) **In the seventh month, on the tenth *day* of the month,**

The seventh month was originally known as Ethanim. This is found in 1 Kings 8:2. After the Babylonian exile, the Aramaic name, Tishri, is now used. On the first day of the month was Yom Teruah, the Day of Trumpets, a day which looks forward to the birth of Israel's true King, Jesus. On the 10th day was Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, a day which looks forward to the crucifixion and atoning death of Jesus. And beginning on the 15th day commenced Sukkoth, or the Feast of Tabernacles, a day fulfilled in the coming of Christ – God residing with man, something verified by the resurrection.

The year of Jubilee found in Leviticus 25 was also proclaimed on this 10th day of the month, the Day of Atonement, every 50th year. It is this year of Jubilee, or liberty, that Isaiah wrote about concerning the future work of the coming Christ. The first few lines of that proclamation were read by Christ Jesus at the start of His ministry, and which anticipated the fulfillment of the Day of Atonement –

So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. ¹⁷ And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written:

¹⁸ “The Spirit of the Lord *is* upon Me,
Because He has anointed Me
To preach the gospel to *the* poor;
He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted,
To proclaim liberty to *the* captives
And recovery of sight to *the* blind,
To set at liberty those who are oppressed;
¹⁹ To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.”

²⁰ Then He closed the book, and gave *it* back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him. ²¹ And He began to say to them, “Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.” Luke 4:16-20

²⁹ (con't) **you shall afflict your souls, and do no work at all, *whether* a native of your own country or a stranger who dwells among you.**

It is generally accepted that “afflict your souls” means to fast. The people were to deny themselves food. However, it certainly also included refraining from any other pleasures, and also an active affliction of remembering the sins of the past year and mourning over

them. But the word has a greater meaning in Christ where the word *anah*, or afflict, is used twice concerning this exact scene –

“Surely He has borne our griefs
And carried our sorrows;
Yet we esteemed Him stricken,
Smitten by God, and **afflicted**.

⁵ But He *was* wounded for our transgressions,
He was bruised for our iniquities;
The chastisement for our peace *was* upon Him,
And by His stripes we are healed.

⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray;
We have turned, every one, to his own way;
And the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

⁷ He was oppressed and He was **afflicted**,
Yet He opened not His mouth;
He was led as a lamb to the slaughter,
And as a sheep before its shearers is silent,
So He opened not His mouth.

⁸ He was taken from prison and from judgment,
And who will declare His generation?
For He was cut off from the land of the living;
For the transgressions of My people He was stricken.” Isaiah 53:4-8

As Christ was so afflicted, the people were to anticipate this day with the afflicting of their own souls. They were not to do any work of any kind as well, acknowledging that they were in a state of affliction. Nothing regular was to be done, but rather this was to be a high Sabbath. But this goes further than just Israelites. It also says *v’hager ha’gar b’tok-kem* – “the foreigner dwelling among you” was also to afflict his own soul. As they received the blessings and protections provided by the law, they were likewise bound to observe this day.

³⁰ **For on that day *the priest* shall make atonement for you, to cleanse you, *that you may be clean from all your sins before the Lord.***

The words, “the priest,” are inserted here, and they are probably incorrect. The priest also needed atonement for himself. It is the Lord who provides the atonement. The priest merely accomplishes the ritual. Atonement is solely a gracious granting by the Lord. Aaron is specifically named nine times in this chapter, the last being in verse 23.

But he, whose name means “Very High,” is only a type of Christ to come. In the end, it is all about the Lord, either in the granting of the grace, or in the typology fulfilled in these many pictures. In the fulfillment of these things, the Lord’s people are atoned for, and are pronounced clean from all their sins. The words of this verse are reflected in Paul’s words of Colossians 1:21, 22 -

“And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled ²² in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight.”

³¹ It is a sabbath of solemn rest for you, and you shall afflict your souls. It is a statute forever.

shabath shabbathon - “(a) resting day of solemn resting.” This specific term is only used six times in Scripture. Four times it speaks of the weekly Sabbath, once for the Day of Atonement, and once concerning the year of Jubilee. The people are to rest, and to contemplate God and His works on behalf of the people. And again, it says, *khuqat olam*, or “a statute forever.” This was to be observed without fail until its fulfillment was realized in Christ.

³² And the priest, who is anointed and consecrated to minister as priest in his father’s place, shall make atonement, and put on the linen clothes, the holy garments;

The verbs are third person, masculine, singular. They could be translated as here, “And the priest, who is anointed and consecrated,” but the intent is surely, “And the priest, whom He shall anoint, and whom He shall consecrate.” It is God who ultimately anoints and consecrates. And in type, it is God who anointed and consecrated Christ in fulfillment of these pictures. It is He who came without sin, donning garments of untainted righteousness, termed here in Leviticus 16, “the holy garments.” His garments, undefiled by sin, are truly “holy garments.”

³³ then he shall make atonement for the Holy Sanctuary, and he shall make atonement for the tabernacle of meeting and for the altar, and he shall make atonement for the priests and for all the people of the assembly.

This verse summarizes the duties outlined in the chapter, and they acknowledge that this was to be done by the subsequent high priest, just as Aaron was specifically noted above. The Day of Atonement is an expansion of the meaning of the sin and burnt offerings given on that day, just as our Resurrection Day celebration is an expansion of

the regular Sundays which we meet on in honor of the Lord's resurrection. All of what has been noted, to the finest detail, has been a picture of Christ's work.

³⁴ This shall be an everlasting statute for you,

This is the third time in four verses that *khuqat olam*, or statute forever, is repeated. This is highlighted to show the extreme importance of the law, to take note of it, and to not miss the moment when it would be fulfilled.

^{34 (con't)} to make atonement for the children of Israel, for all their sins, once a year."

Year by year, atonement was to be made for the children of Israel until they reached their maturity in Christ, and who are then not just children, but sons of God through adoption. The rights and rituals were carefully recorded, and they were to be exactly followed, so that when they were fulfilled, it would be evident to even the blind, if the blind would but open their eyes and see.

^{34 (fin)} And he did as the Lord commanded Moses.

Is this speaking of the first time it was conducted? If so, then these words were written at least six months later. It is now only the first month of the year. Or, it could be that the words are anticipatory, stated as an accomplished fact, of that which still lay ahead. A third view is that this is speaking of Aaron assuming the official duties in obedience to the command given by God to Moses. No. Rather these words are speaking not of Aaron, but of Moses. In verse 2, it said "Tell Aaron your brother..." Since then, it has said "Aaron" eight more times in instructions given to Moses to relay to him. Moses did as commanded, and passed on the instructions as noted.

*A day on which atonement is made
A day when our sins are covered and taken away
What a glorious, marvelous trade
When by faith we were cleansed. Oh what a day!*

*The goat is sacrificed for our atonement
Another goat has taken our sins far, far away
We accept that this is true, God's wrath is spent
We are free from our sin. Oh what a day!*

Thank You, O God, for Jesus Christ our Lord

*Who fulfills what occurred, our sin debt He did pay
Thank You for what we have learned from Your word
Thank You, O God, for this marvelous, glorious day!*

II. Fulfilled in Christ

We've read the instructions given by the Lord to Moses. We have analyzed them verse by verse, and even at times word by word. We have seen the prophetic fulfillment of them in Christ. "This is a type of Christ..." "This pictures Christ..." "This points to Christ..." But what we have seen is not the end of the pictures.

Our text verse today spoke of those who are deaf and blind. The Lord called Israel "His servant," and said they were blind. He said they failed to observe as well. Those verses came from a chapter dealing with the Servant of the Lord, meaning Christ, who is set in contrast to the servant of the Lord, meaning Israel. In opening the passage, He spoke of the true Servant, Christ, with these words –

"Behold! My Servant whom I uphold,
My Elect One *in whom* My soul delights!
I have put My Spirit upon Him;
He will bring forth justice to the Gentiles.
² He will not cry out, nor raise *His voice*,
Nor cause His voice to be heard in the street.
³ A bruised reed He will not break,
And smoking flax He will not quench;
He will bring forth justice for truth.
⁴ He will not fail nor be discouraged,
Till He has established justice in the earth;
And the coastlands shall wait for His law." Isaiah 42:1-3

This sets up both the contrast between, and the call made to, Israel and the Gentiles, and how each would respond. Reading the New Testament, we see that Christ is truly the fulfillment of all of these things. The patterns are deep, they are exact, and they are rich. But we only can receive them by faith, not by sight. Jesus cited the substance of the words from Isaiah concerning the deaf and blind in the New Testament –

And Jesus said, "For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may be made blind."

⁴⁰ Then *some* of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these words, and said to Him, “Are we blind also?”

⁴¹ Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you say, ‘We see.’ Therefore your sin remains. John 9:39-41

In Leviticus 16, Aaron, or “Very High,” was to bathe and then put on the special, holy, linen garments. That was Christ’s incarnation, coming in human flesh. It is He who is Very High, and our true High Priest. The garments, as we carefully detailed, point to Christ and His earthly body – pure, unsullied, perfect, and yet coming in the likeness of sinful human flesh.

Immediately the account goes from donning the holy garments into mentioning the offerings of the Israelites, two kid goats as a sin offering, and a ram as a burnt offering. They were specifically stated to be “from the congregation of the children of Israel.” Thus in type, they are Christ, descended from Israel, coming from them.

The entirety of Christ’s life is summed up in these two events – His coming, and His offering. Everything between those is implied in the offering – holy perfection. This shows us that even though the Day of Atonement was a set day for Israel, it is not a set day for its fulfillment. Rather, it is the span of the life of Christ, culminating in His Sacrifice, on whatever day that would occur.

After this, a bull for Aaron’s sin offering was mandated. As we saw, the bull is Christ. It was required for Aaron and his household; Christ gave of Himself for them. Following this, it notes bringing the two goats before the Lord, both picturing Christ’s work. But this is where Israel turns from the Lord. Instead of recognizing His Person, His nature, and His work, as a nation, they rejected Him. To demonstrate how blind they had become, He gave them an object lesson to consider. They missed it in its totality.

What the Gentiles accepted by faith, the Jews rejected by sight, literally. In all four gospels, Christ’s work is carefully recorded. Just prior to His crucifixion, we read the following –

“Now at the feast the governor was accustomed to releasing to the multitude one prisoner whom they wished. ¹⁶ And at that time they had a notorious prisoner called Barabbas. ¹⁷ Therefore, when they had gathered together, Pilate said to them, “Whom do you want me to release to you? Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?” ¹⁸ For he knew that they had handed Him over because of envy.

¹⁹ While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent to him, saying, "Have nothing to do with that just Man, for I have suffered many things today in a dream because of Him."

²⁰ But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitudes that they should ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus. ²¹ The governor answered and said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release to you?"

They said, "Barabbas!"

²² Pilate said to them, "What then shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?"
They all said to him, "Let Him be crucified!"

²³ Then the governor said, "Why, what evil has He done?"

But they cried out all the more, saying, "Let Him be crucified!"

²⁴ When Pilate saw that he could not prevail at all, but rather *that* a tumult was rising, he took water and washed *his* hands before the multitude, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this just Person. You see *to it*."

²⁵ And all the people answered and said, "His blood *be* on us and on our children."

²⁶ Then he released Barabbas to them; and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered *Him* to be crucified." Matthew 27:15-26

Why is this recorded? Christ is the fulfillment of all of the types and shadows given. Israel should have seen this and believed. The Gentiles did and they still do. What we have here is an object lesson for Israel, not an actual enactment of the Day of Atonement rituals, but a contrast to them, showing what Israel did accept instead of what they should have accepted.

Two men who are probably very close in age, stand before Pilate and the congregation of Israel. Both are named Yeshua, Jesus. Although not all Bibles record the full name Jesus Barabbas, some do, but most reliable Bibles do footnote it. This was his true name. Thus, both have the same title – Barabbas is Aramaic for "Son of Abba." One of Jesus' titles is the Son of God – whom He called Abba. Therefore, you have two men, like named – Jesus, (S)son of (A)abba, standing and awaiting a decision from Pilate.

Christ came to be both our atoning Sacrifice *la'Yehovah*, or "for the Lord," and the bearer of our sins *la'Azazel*, or "for Azazel." But Israel rejected this. It was determined before creation that Christ would come and fulfill these pictures. It was also known to God that Israel would reject Him when He came. And so, to show them their rejection of Christ's completed work, this account is recorded to stand as a witness against them.

Christ did, in fact, die for our sins. And Christ did, in fact, bear our sins away. But both of these actions were rejected by Israel. After the bull of the high priest, the goat for the

people which was selected *la'Yehovah*, or "for the Lord," was brought forth and slaughtered. Christ died for the people of Israel, but they rejected His offering, explicitly and from their own mouths. In defiance of the Lord, and in contempt of Christ who came to show them the Father, they called out, "His blood *be* on us and on our children." The sin offering was rejected.

The blood of bulls and goats, according to the book of Hebrews, can never take away sin. Only Christ, Israel's Messiah could do so. But collectively, they rejected their only means of salvation, calling down upon themselves a curse rather than a blessing. They subconsciously know this is true. When Mel Gibson filmed the Passion of the Christ, the one line that the Jews demanded he remove from the movie is that very line they spoke in defiance of the Lord, "His blood *be* on us and on our children." Until they retract this, there can be no atonement for national Israel. Each Jew must come to Christ individually, just as with all people.

Again, the goat is Christ, the blood is Christ's, the atonement is Christ's, the purification is Christ's. It is all Christ. As we saw, Paul says in Romans 8:3 that "Christ came in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin." In this, "He condemned sin in the flesh." This is the purpose of designating hairy goats. They picture Christ who came in the likeness of sinful flesh, but who prevailed over it. That Christ died for both Israel and Gentile is recorded by John –

"And one of them, Caiaphas, being high priest that year, said to them, "You know nothing at all, nor do you consider that it is expedient for us that **one man should die for the people**, and not that the whole nation should perish." Now this he did not say on his own *authority*; but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation, and not for that nation only, **but also that He would gather together in one the children of God who were scattered abroad.**"

-John 11:49-52

And in Hebrews 9:11, 12 we read –

"But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation. Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption."

After the atoning Sacrifice came the second part of Christ's work, that of the goat *la'Azazel*, or "for Azazel." Concerning this term, there are quite a few opinions about

what this word means. One view is that it is a mountain about 12 miles east of Jerusalem, known by Jewish writings as *har'Azazel*. This is wrong from the outset. The Torah was received by Moses in the wilderness. It wasn't until eons later, at the time of David or even Solomon, that this would have been done at Jerusalem. It is incorrect.

The second is that this is the same concept as the two birds used for the purification of a leper. The ritual for the two, and the symbolism of the birds, is actually entirely different. One bird was set free after being plunged into the water/blood mixture of the other. Nothing like that is done here. That was a picture of Christ's atoning death and resurrection. This is Christ's atoning death and bearing away of our sins.

The most common translation of Azazel is "She-Goat Of Going Away," thus, "the Scapegoat." But Leviticus 16 never uses the word *ez*, or she-goat. Instead it uses *sa'ir*, or he-goat. One would have to use the gender inversion principle in this, making Christ, a male, into the Body of Christ, a female. But the work is done for the body, not by the body. This does not match – "scapegoat" is incorrect.

The correct option is that Azazel is Satan, he in opposition to God. Some say that Azazel can't be Satan because that name is never used again for the devil in the Bible. But that is no argument. In the New Testament, Jesus and others call Satan Beelzebub. That comes from the Old Testament Baal-zebub, the God of Ekron, a false god. The reason why he can be called Satan in the New is because an offering to any false god is, by default, an offering to the devil.

Satan is also called the devil, the tempter, the wicked one, the ruler of this world, the god of this age, the prince of the power of the air, etc. And, metaphors are used to describe him – a wolf, a roaring lion, a great dragon, and a serpent. Many of these are used only once in Scripture. *La'Azazel*, set in opposition to *la'Yehovah*, describes one in type who is set in opposition to the Lord. And this is a natural translation of Azazel, "one who has separated himself from God." That Azazel is pointing to Satan is attested to by the passage in Zechariah 3 where Joshua, typical of Christ, is stood before the Angel of the Lord and Satan. The picture being made in these two goats bears this out.

As a marvelous clue that this is the case, the first time *la'azazel* is used is in Leviticus 16:8. Exactly 33 verses later, in Leviticus 17:7, it says this -

"They shall no more offer their sacrifices to demons, after whom they have played the harlot. This shall be a statute forever for them throughout their generations."

-Leviticus 17:7

The word translated as “demons” there is “*la’seirim*,” or “for the goats.” It is the same word, *sa’iyir*, used for the goat of Leviticus 16. Luke says that Jesus began His ministry “at about thirty years of age.” His ministry was three years, meaning that He was about 33 when He was crucified. These 33 years are prefigured in the 33 verses from the introduction of *la’azazel* to what that term is pointing to, the goat demons.

The goat “for Azazel” was to be taken into the wilderness, a place which in Scripture is noted as the abode of evil spirits. There it was to be released. It was never to return again to the people. Christ is our sin-Bearer. He went into the pit of death and there delivered the sins of mankind to that pit where the devil and his demons will someday be cast. The goat “for Azazel” is Christ carrying our sins to where, and to whom, they belong.

Not only did Israel reject their atonement pictured in the first goat, they also rejected the removal of sins, pictured in the second. Both Mark and Luke specifically record that Barabbas was a murderer. But more, Peter in Acts does as well, saying this to the people—

“The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our fathers, glorified His Servant Jesus, whom you delivered up and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let *Him* go. ¹⁴ But you denied the Holy One and the Just, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, ¹⁵ and killed the Prince of life, whom God raised from the dead, of which we are witnesses. ¹⁶ And His name, through faith in His name, has made this man strong, whom you see and know. Yes, the faith which *comes* through Him has given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.

¹⁷ ‘Yet now, brethren, I know that you did it in ignorance, as did also your rulers.’”

-Acts 3:13-17

In the goat, the guilt for the sin was to be removed; taken from the Lord’s sight so that the people stood before Him faultless. But they rejected the atonement, and they rejected the removal. And even more, they collectively violated their own law, the Law of Moses, in the process of rejecting Christ. In Numbers 35, we read this –

Moreover you shall take no ransom for the life of a murderer who is guilty of death, but he shall surely be put to death. Numbers 35:31

This is exactly what they did. They took a ransom in Christ Jesus to pay the price of a murderer who was already condemned. And so why is this account of Jesus and

Barabbas important? It is because Christ was intended to fulfill each picture of this scene. He was to be the Sacrifice; He was to be the sin-Bearer; and he was to be the timely Man. But Israel rejected each. They called for the blood of the sacrifice to return to them. They called for a murderer instead of a sin-Bearer, and they rejected the return of the timely-Man. In rejecting these, they have then rejected Him as High Priest under the New Covenant.

Their guilt according to the Law of Moses stands as a witness against them, and their guilt in rejecting what the law pointed to likewise stands. Because of failing to have their sin carried away “for Azazel,” twice in Revelation, Jesus calls them “a synagogue of Satan.” Until they come to Christ, Satan is their god. It is with anti-Christ, not Christ, that they will sign a 7-year peace deal. As Christ is the final sacrifice for the sins of the people, there can be no atonement for their national guilt. Such is the nature of rejecting the One to whom the rites and rituals of the law pointed.

As an extra note concerning the three fall feasts, all of them are recorded in order in Christ’s birth, trial & death, and resurrection. As I said, Yom Teruah, the Day of Trumpets, pictures Christ’s birth as Israel’s King. Pilate asked, “Shall I crucify your King?” After that, He was crucified in fulfillment of Yom Kippur. And after that, the Feast of Tabernacles is seen in the words of John 1:14–

“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.”

These are the things that the Bible testifies to. I have attempted to stick to the Bible in almost all circumstances, and for the simple reason that the Bible stands alone as the witness of God to what He has done through His Son, our Lord. Having said that, I would like to add in a final thought, derived from the Talmud. There was, according to the Talmud, a tradition that a scarlet thread held by the high priest of Israel would miraculously turn white each year on the Day of Atonement after the goat for Azazel was led away. The Talmud, however, states in Tractate Yoma 39b –

“The Rabbis taught that forty years prior to the destruction of the Temple the lot did not come up in the [high priest’s] right hand nor did the tongue of scarlet wool become white...” Talmud, Tractate Yoma 39b

The changing of the scarlet thread to white was an annual acknowledgment to the people of the words of Isaiah –

“Come now, and let us reason together,”
Says the Lord,
“Though your sins are like scarlet,
They shall be as white as snow;
Though they are red like crimson,
They shall be as wool.” Isaiah 1:18

Among other things, the Talmud is a recorded history of the Jewish people, and thus it stands as an evidence that something historically occurred. I read a Rabbinic commentary which chastised Christians for using the Talmud as a polemic against Jews (as if we have no right to refer to their own writings), stating that the statement is taken out of context, and implying that it would be more likely that the scarlet thread didn't turn white because of the Jews who apostatized and followed Jesus, rather than the traditional Christian thought that Jesus is actually the One, and final Atonement for the people's sins.

He further went on to say that the miraculous events in Israel were already steadily on the decline for a lengthy period of time, because the people had also been in a steady decline in their attitude towards God. Thus, he said it was actually not a surprise that the thread didn't change.

But that is both illogical, and it is supporting of the Bible itself. Both John the Baptist and Jesus actually spoke against Israel's moral decline. If they had listened and repented, according to the Bible, so God would have pardoned. How much more so when they rejected the Only one who could truly take away their sin!

Further, it is recorded history that Jesus gave Israel the sign of Jonah as a warning. Jonah proclaimed, “Yet forty days and Nineveh will be destroyed.” Jesus told Israel that as Jonah so proclaimed, so they would be destroyed, a year for a day until judgment. And so they were, just as He prophesied, and just as Scripture and the Talmud both record.

The Day of Atonement passage here in Leviticus 16, the record of the Lord's promised severity in punishment upon Israel for rejecting both Him and the Prophet whom He promised to send, the witness of the New Testament authors, and a note of confirmation of no atonement for the people of Israel in their own Talmud, all show that there is no atonement for Israel apart from Christ.

Further, the Bible goes on to state that there is no atonement for any – Jew or Gentile, apart from Christ. The Bible bears witness to us of what the Lord has done in redemptive

history for the people of the world. He has shown us what the consequences for rejecting this work are, and He offers us unlimited grace if we will turn to Him through Christ, and put away deeds of an already fulfilled law.

If you are a Jew or a Gentile who is attempting to merit God's favor through observance of the Law of Moses, you are God's enemy, and you will perish in your arrogance for rejecting what He alone can do, and what He alone has done. He stepped out of the eternal realm, He put on garments of flesh, He walked among His people, and He fulfilled the law which He gave to them.

After this, He gave His life in exchange for the sins of the world. His work demonstrates that He is fully capable of this, and His resurrection proves that it is so. He is the timely Man who came back from the barren wilderness after conducting away our sins forever, proven in His glorious resurrection. Come unto Christ, be reconciled to God through His shed blood, and put away your selfish, arrogant deeds which can never satisfy God.

Everyone who thirsts, come unto the waters. And you who have no money, come, buy, and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price (Isaiah 55:1). Christ Jesus, our salvation offers you pardon, full atonement, and the carrying away of your sin-burden, once and for all time. Come poor sinner to the Fount of everlasting blessing which is found at the foot of Calvary's cross.

Closing Verse: *"For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. ²⁶ And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written:*

*"The Deliverer will come out of Zion,
And He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob;
²⁷ For this is My covenant with them,
When I take away their sins." Romans 11:25-27*

Next Week: Leviticus 17:1-16 *In Christ, there is a cleansing flood...* (The Sanctity of Blood) (30th Leviticus Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if you have a lifetime of sin heaped up behind you, He can wash it away and purify you completely and wholly. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

Yom Kippur, The Day of Atonement

“Then Aaron shall come into the tabernacle of meeting
Shall take off the linen garments which he put on, so he shall do
When he went into the Holy Place
And shall leave them there, as I am now instructing you

And he shall wash his body with water in a holy place
Put on his garments, come out and offer his burnt offering
And the burnt offering of the people
And make atonement for himself and for the people
-----with this proffering

The fat of the sin offering he shall burn on the altar
In this precept he shall not falter

And he who released the goat as the scapegoat
Shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water
And afterward he may come into the camp, so to you I note

The bull for the sin offering
And the goat for the sin offering too
Whose blood was brought in to make atonement in the Holy Place
Shall be carried outside the camp, so you shall do

And they shall burn in the fire, so to you I tell
Their skins, their flesh, and their offal as well

Then he who burns them shall wash his clothes
And bathe his body in water, so shall he do
And afterward he may come into the camp
These things shall be done as I am instructing you

“This shall be a statute forever for you:
In the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month you shall do

You shall afflict your souls
And do no work at all, to this law you shall be true
Whether a native of your own country

Or a stranger who dwells among you

For on that day the priest shall make atonement for you
According to this word
To cleanse you, that you may be clean
From all your sins before the Lord

It is a sabbath of solemn rest for you
And so be sure to depart from this law never
And you shall afflict your souls
It is a statute forever

And the priest, who is anointed
And consecrated to minister as priest in his father's place
Shall make atonement, and put on the linen clothes
The holy garments; to minister before the Lord's face

Then he shall make atonement for the Holy Sanctuary
And he shall make atonement for the tabernacle of meeting
-----so shall it be
And for the altar, and he shall make atonement for the priests
And for all the people of the assembly

This shall be an everlasting statute for you
To make atonement for the children of Israel
For all their sins, once a year
And he did as the Lord commanded Moses; as to him He did tell

Lord God, You have sent Jesus to atone for sin
We thank You for doing what we could not do
Through Him new life can begin
And so, O God, we call out through Him to You

Hear our cry for mercy, upon sinners such as us
Know that we trust in Your word, and Your power to save
We are freed from sin's bondage through Jesus
It was for us that His precious life You gave

Hallelujah! To You, O God, our voices we raise
Hallelujah! To You, O God, we give all of our praise

Hallelujah and Amen...

LEVITICUS 17:1-16 (THE SANCTITY OF THE BLOOD)

Some years ago, Louie Giglio, did a now very famous sermon on the substance known as laminin. The technical definition of laminin is that it “is the most abundant glycoprotein molecule found in basement membrane, [it] has multiple functions in eukaryotic tissues. It serves to attach epithelial cells to basement membrane, aids development and migration of specific cell types in growth and maturation, and has been implicated in tumor metastasis and some types of infection.” (PubMed)

In essence it could be equated to a glue for holding cells to a foundation of connective tissue in the body of animal life, including humans. This glue then ensures proper functioning of the cells. And... it has a shape amazingly similar to the Christian cross.

That was all Louie needed to whip together the wonderfully inspiring sermon that was based on this substance. His conclusion is that it confirms Colossians 1:17. That speaks of Jesus and says, “And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.”

The word “consist” there is translated by the NIV as “hold together.” It is an uplifting sermon, and one will go away from it feeling much better about life because it is, after all, a life application sermon. There is nothing wrong with this for the most part, but we need to remember that the truth of the Bible isn’t based on the shape, or lack of shape, of anything in the human body.

Nor is it dependent on anything else which is *unknown* to be true. In other words, until Louie Giglio did the sermon, the truth of the Bible was never in question because of there being laminin, or there being no such thing as laminin. One could say that the Bible is confirmed as true because a substance (we will call it Trinitarium) is discovered inside atoms which is the basis for all generated power, and which is shaped like the Trinity model used by seminaries to explain the relationship between the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This then would logically and completely confirm Romans 1:20 which speaks of God’s eternal power and Godhead, wouldn’t it. Well, as no such thing is yet discovered, then that would imply that Romans 1:20 isn’t yet true, and it won’t be true until we find Trinitarium. I really hope we find it soon...

Text Verse: *“For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell,²⁰ and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross.” Colossians 1:19, 20*

I'm not into life application sermons, and other than the intro to sermons, I don't like to get far from the word, unless it is to demean my own physical appearance, or to make note of how exceptionally lovely my wife and this congregation are. The Bible doesn't need me to make stuff up in order for it to be sound, reasonable, and self-confirming.

We've been through so many internal confirmations of Scripture in the past, that – really and honestly – only a fool would say, “This book has no merit at all.” As a text verse, I shied away from Louie's Colossians 1:17, and I went right to the heart of the matter. The truth of the cross isn't found in something that looks like the cross, be it laminin or an Egyptian Ankh, or any other random or purposeful fabrication of something.

Rather, the truth of the cross is found in what it symbolizes – reconciliation between God and man. One can logically determine what God's divine attributes are. He can then logically determine that there is no peace with God because in order to make nice with one attribute, He would have to violate another one of His attributes. In other words, there is a tension which exists between God and man which cannot be resolved apart from what God has done in Jesus Christ. This is logically so. Everything about God is logical, it is orderly, and it results in inescapable truths.

The resolution to this tension exists, it cannot be resolved by us, and yet it can be resolved. God tells us how, and then he shows us what that resolution actually looks like. Laminin bears an uncanny resemblance to it, but my hope in what God has done is not based on something as dubious as that. My hope, and what should be your hope too, is based on the cross of Jesus Christ, and the blood which was shed there.

There is sanctity in the blood, there is power in the blood, and the blood itself makes atonement through the soul that is in it. What that means will be explained to you in our verses today. They are verses which, as always, point us to the Person and work of Jesus Christ. It's all to be found in His superior word. And so let's turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. Blood at the Altar of the Lord (verses 1-7)

¹And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying,

Chapter 17 begins the second major section of the book of Leviticus. The first major section went from chapter 1 to chapter 16. As we saw, it covered mostly laws for

sacrifice and for purification, all of which culminated in, and were highlighted by, the laws for the Day of Atonement in Chapter 16.

This second major section will go from chapter 17 to the end of the book in chapter 27. For the most part, these chapters will look to the process of sanctification in the lives of the people. The regulations to be laid down will govern common, everyday life. They are intended to instill in the people holiness as they live in the Lord's presence. This section will be highlighted in the instructions for the sabbatical years and the year of jubilee.

These eleven final chapters, which form this major section, are subdivided starting with Chapters 17-20 which deal in matters concerning the general holiness of the people. In these chapters, a great distinction between Israel and the heathen people of Canaan is made. In essence, "They do evil things, but you are to conduct yourselves in holiness."

Chapters 21 & 22 deal with holiness in relation to the priests and their offerings. Chapters 23-25 mostly cover the feasts of the Lord, and the years of Sabbath and Jubilee, but which also cover a few other important points. Chapter 26 bears words spoken in the first person to the people of Israel by the Lord. Those words define the anticipated blessings and curses which will come to pass based on their conduct as His chosen people. And finally, Chapter 27 will cover vows which are made by the people. It is Moses who is first addressed in opening this section. As the designated lawgiver, the Lord speaks directly to him, but with words which then follow on to the entire congregation, as is noted in the next words...

² "Speak to Aaron,

Words for the mediator of the covenant; for the high priest who will oversee the covenant; and for the one who is to render judgments in accord with that office of overseer.

^{2 (con't)} to his sons,

Words for the priests who will perform the regular duties of the priesthood, including whatever son of Aaron who will eventually assume the position as high priest.

^{2 (con't)} and to all the children of Israel,

This is the first time that this specific phrase is made. What Moses is commanded includes words for the entire congregation as well. In designating these three categories

in one sentence, the requirements are for all alike. In essence, the priestly class, including the high priest himself, are placed on the same level as any other in the congregation. The words are binding on all without distinction. Though the priests may administer the law for the people, they are equally bound to every precept of the law.

² (con't) **and say to them, ‘This is the thing which the Lord has commanded, saying:**

The words are from the mouth of the Lord, having passed through Moses the lawgiver, and which are now to be presented to the entire congregation without distinction. As the instructions for the Day of Atonement were just given, these words must be taken in relation to that. Laws are forthcoming which will actually necessitate that most solemn annual occurrence to be conducted. The stern hand of the law will be made known, but the provision of grace for ignorant violations of the law has already been revealed.

³ **“Whatever man of the house of Israel who kills an ox or lamb or goat in the camp, or who kills *it* outside the camp,**

The meaning of the words of the thought now being presented are widely debated. For now, and concerning just verse 3, instructions are being given concerning the slaughtering of an ox, lamb, or goat – either inside or outside of the camp.

The word used for “kills” is *shakhat*, meaning “to slaughter,” but it is not necessarily a sacrifice. It is simply the killing of an animal. The word for “camp” means just that. In this case, it is the camp of people currently traveling on their way to Canaan. It is used when the people are in the land of Canaan when designating a camp of people who are prepared for battle, but it is not a word used to speak of the entire nation of Israel in the land of Canaan. Understanding these words will help clear up scholarly confusion.

⁴ **and does not bring it to the door of the tabernacle of meeting to offer an offering to the Lord before the tabernacle of the Lord,**

While Israel is in the camp which surrounds the tabernacle, and until the time they would come to the land of Canaan and begin to live in cities, it was required that these sacrificial type animals were to be slaughtered as an offering to the Lord.

Some scholars say that this means that “when” they are slaughtered as sacrifices this was the case, but if they were simply killed for food, this was not the case. Thus, it would be ensuring that sacrifices were only made to the Lord, and only at His temple. This is not correct. The law, rather, is for any of these animals, regardless of whether it is a

sacrifice or merely for food. It was to first be offered as an offering to the Lord. This is certain because of the word used which simply means “to slaughter.”

However and despite this, the implication is that the animal – regardless if it was only meant to be eaten – was considered as a sacrifice by the people. As they were not in a habitable land, any slaughter of such an animal would be considered a rarity. They were fed with manna, and there was no actual need to slaughter such an animal, and so any such slaughtering would be considered as a sacrifice by the one slaughtering it. Therefore, it had to be first offered to the Lord.

4 (con’t) the guilt of bloodshed shall be imputed to that man.

Because of the implied use of such an animal as a sacrifice, a person would be guilty of bloodshed if it was not presented first to the Lord. This is actually seen when speaking of the people in Isaiah’s time, where first the term *shakhat*, or “slaughter” is used, and then the term *zabakh*, or “sacrifice” is then used –

“He who kills a bull *is as if* he slays a man;
He who sacrifices a lamb, *as if* he breaks a dog’s neck;” Isaiah 66:3

4 (con’t) He has shed blood; and that man shall be cut off from among his people,

If anyone so slaughtered an animal without first offering it to the Lord, then the guilt of bloodshed was upon him, and he was to be cut off. In this case, “cut off” means death. If a person was guilty of bloodshed, implying the blood of a man, the penalty was death.

But the question is, “Why would slaughtering an animal in this way bring on blood guilt?” The answer is that an animal sacrifice is typical of the one, final sacrifice of Christ. To kill an animal as a sacrifice, but not present it to the Lord, would be a denial that only Christ’s blood is sufficient to save.

The Israelites were just coming out of Egypt where they had participated in the religious worship of the Egyptians. They were now to have those false systems of worship purged from their lives, and to only make offerings to the Lord. In failing to do so, they would be denying the Lord who redeemed them, and that their redemption is only fully realized in the coming of Christ.

In the section of Leviticus which concerned dietary laws, the question of “what” could be eaten was defined. Here in this chapter, the question of “how” something could be

eaten is now defined. This is the first of such instructions, pointing directly to the coming Person and work of Christ.

⁵ to the end that the children of Israel may bring their sacrifices which they offer in the open field, that they may bring them to the Lord at the door of the tabernacle of meeting, to the priest, and offer them *as* peace offerings to the Lord.

This verse explains the difficulties of verse 4. The word *zebakh*, or “sacrifice” is now used. In fact, it is used four times in this verse. It first says, “that they may bring their sacrifices which they sacrifice.” Then at the end, it repeats itself saying, “and sacrifice sacrifices.”

Any slaughtering of such an animal, whether it was actually intended as a sacrifice or not, was deemed as such by the Lord. He has provided manna, and He will provide meat for the people as well, and so their needs are met. Anything beyond that is to be deemed by the Lord as a sacrifice, regardless of its end use in the minds of the people. Therefore, they are now to be fully considered as sacrifices, requiring priestly rites.

In this verse, there is a contrast between the “the open field,” and “The door of the tabernacle of meeting.” The words in Hebrew are *pene ha’sadeh*, and *petakh ohel moed*. One is literally, “the face of the field.” The other is “door tent of meeting.” The reason for this contrast will be explained in verse 7. In the case of these sacrifices, they were to be brought to the tent door, to the priest, and offered as “peace” or “fellowship” offerings to the Lord.

If you remember, it is an offering where there is a mutual sharing between the Lord and His people, just as in our Lord’s Supper today. Thus, this peace offering is, in type and picture, an anticipatory look ahead to what we now look back on –

“For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the *same* night in which He was betrayed took bread; ²⁴ and when He had given thanks, He broke *it* and said, “Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me.” ²⁵ In the same manner *He* also *took* the cup after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink *it*, in remembrance of Me.”

²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death till He comes.” 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

These peace offerings were an anticipatory commemoration of the body and blood of Christ. They were proclaiming the Lord's death *till He came*; we proclaim the Lord's death *until He comes again*.

⁶And the priest shall sprinkle the blood on the altar of the Lord at the door of the tabernacle of meeting, and burn the fat for a sweet aroma to the Lord.

This is describing the part of the peace offering which is for the Lord. Without giving all of the types and pictures of Christ which were minutely detailed in Chapter 3, it is enough to say that the blood is typical of Christ's blood, and the fat – of which there are specific parts mandated solely to the Lord, picture the most intimates aspects of Christ. They are the essence of who He is. These were returned to the Lord.

The word “sprinkle” for what is done with the blood is incorrect. It was cast, or splashed, upon the altar, not sprinkled. It is to signify a complete surrender of Christ's will to the Lord. Along with the casting of the blood, the fat – the essence of Christ the Man – was to be burned to the Lord as a fragrant offering, a sweet aroma to the Lord. It is Christ upon the altar as Paul notes –

“Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. ² And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.” Ephesians 5:1, 2

Further, this is now the third time that the *pethakh*, or “door” of the tent of meeting is mentioned in three verses. But this time is used in conjunction with *mizbakh Yehovah*, or “altar (of) Yehovah.” It is the altar of sacrifice which is set before the door. The sacrifice at the altar is what symbolically allows access through the door.

Here we have three specific pictures of Christ. He is the Altar of the Lord; He is the Sacrifice; and He is the Door. Along with these are the many other references – the blood, the splashing of the blood, the tent of meeting, etc. Each and every one of them is directing us to Christ Jesus.

⁷They shall no more offer their sacrifices to demons, after whom they have played the harlot.

The public “altar of Yehovah” of verse 6 is named as a direct contrast to the many private altars which were used by the people when they offered to the *seirim*, or goats, signifying “demons.” The word *saiyr*, or “goat,” literally means “hairy goat.” It is the

same animal which was used in Chapter 16, and presented before the Lord for selection by lot, one for the Lord, and one for Azazel.

What this is telling us, is that Israel had been sacrificing to demons in the open fields. This was to the Lord a form of harlotry. Just as a person leaves their spouse and goes into a harlot for intimacy, thus denying the spouse their marital rights, so Israel had gone to these demons for intimate worship, denying the Lord His rights as their betrothed Husband.

The word “harlot” here however, certainly carries a double force to it. When sacrifices were made to demons, it also carried with it the idea of pagan revelry and licentiousness. This was seen in the incident of the golden calf.

The open spaces are contrasted to the altar of the Lord. Private sacrifice to the demons is contrasted to public sacrifice to the Lord. Intimate perverse conduct, is contrasted to intimate holiness and fellowship. What had been was no longer to be allowed. There can be no fellowship between the Lord and demons. Paul explains –

“Observe Israel after the flesh: Are not those who eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar? ¹⁹ What am I saying then? That an idol is anything, or what is offered to idols is anything? ²⁰ Rather, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to demons and not to God, and I do not want you to have fellowship with demons. ²¹ You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the Lord’s table and of the table of demons. ²² Or do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than He?” 1 Corinthians 10:18-22

7 (con’t) This shall be a statute forever for them throughout their generations.”

The meaning of these words must be considered in context. In Deuteronomy 12, the mandate that these particular animals be brought to the sanctuary is terminated. There it says –

“When the Lord your God enlarges your border as He has promised you, and you say, ‘Let me eat meat,’ because you long to eat meat, you may eat as much meat as your heart desires. ²¹ If the place where the Lord your God chooses to put His name is too far from you, then you may slaughter from your herd and from your flock which the Lord has given you, just as I have commanded you, and you may eat within your gates as much as your heart desires.” Deuteronomy 12:20, 21

These are the same animals which are now forbidden in Leviticus to be slaughtered except in the presence of the Lord. And so the words, “statute forever” are not speaking of the slaughtering of the animals, but of the offering of the animals to the hairy ones, or demons. Instead, they were to always be offered to the Lord alone.

Before continuing on, three main points must be raised concerning what has been seen. First, is that these verses are given as pictures of Christ’s coming ministry. That has been clearly presented.

Secondly, we are to see the failure of the people under the law to meet these requirements. Throughout the rest of the Old Testament, it is shown that the people failed by offering to demons. It is recorded specifically in Jeremiah 13:27, Ezekiel 20, and in Hosea 9:10 & 12:11 – among other places. But more directly, it is recorded in Amos 5:25 that the people even continued to offer to these demons in the time of the wilderness wanderings. This is repeated by Stephen in Acts 7.

This continued failure of the people, from their very inception of being called under the Law of Moses is noted to show them their need for grace – thus the Day of Atonement, and thus Christ whom that prefigures. It was intended to then show them, and us, that the law is incapable of saving anyone. And it was intended to show us our desperate need for something else – again, to lead us to Christ.

And thirdly, it is then to show us that only Christ can bring us to God. The *pethakh ohel moed*, or door of the tent of meeting, is the only access which is given for us to meet with the Lord. As Christ is that Door, then we must go through Him, and none other, in order to be right with God.

*The soul of the flesh is in the blood
And it is this then that makes atonement for you
Only through the precious, crimson flood
Can you be cleansed, spotless, and new*

*There at the Altar, the blood is cast
And it is this Sacrifice which will open the Door
Through it is new life; gone is the past
Through that death, comes life evermore*

*Be sure and know that there is but this One way
No other avenue can reconcile you to Me*

*But in coming through My Son, you start a new day
One which will continue unabated for all eternity*

II. The Soul of the Flesh is in the Blood (verses 8-16)

⁸“Also you shall say to them: ‘Whatever man of the house of Israel, or of the strangers who dwell among you, who offers a burnt offering or sacrifice,

These words now go to any specific burnt offering or sacrifice. The previous verses looked to any slaughter of an animal in general, which was to be taken by the Lord as an intended offering of fellowship with Him instead of a demon. Now, any Israelite man, or even a foreigner, was instructed concerning any burnt offering or sacrifice they might make. A new limitation is placed on them...

⁹and does not bring it to the door of the tabernacle of meeting, to offer it to the Lord, that man shall be cut off from among his people.

When such an offering is made, but it has not been brought to be presented to the Lord at the door of the tent of meeting, it is to be considered an offense worthy of excommunication. Rather than death, excommunication is probably intended here. Three times in this chapter, it says man’s offense is worthy of being “cut of from his people.” However, only here is “people” plural in the Hebrew. Thus, rather than being cut off from the body of people, Israel, it seems to imply the body of people which are his father’s kin.

Only the Lord’s appointed place of worship was acceptable for burnt offerings or sacrifices, and only the Lord’s designated priest was acceptable to handle such. To fail in this would be a grievous offense, worthy of excommunication. The reason for this prohibition is that no person was any longer allowed to mediate for himself or his family. In the past times, this was the head of the household’s responsibility. No longer would it be so in Israel.

This then looks forward to Christ as the sole Mediator between God and man. There is no end-around to be made where we can go directly to God apart from Christ. Only through Him as our High Priest, and only through a sacrifice or offering that is in anticipation of His coming, could Israel find access to God, and also be able to remain in fellowship with his own people.

¹⁰ ‘And whatever man of the house of Israel, or of the strangers who dwell among you, who eats any blood, I will set My face against that person who eats blood, and will cut him off from among his people.

The eating of blood was forbidden all the way back in Genesis 9. In fact, it is the very first prohibition given to man after the flood of Noah. All animal life was given to man to eat, but no flesh with the blood in it could be eaten. Thus, the eating of blood here includes the eating of flesh which had not been bled out first. This applied to the Israelite as well as to the stranger who dwelt among the people. This was necessary in the camp of Israel during the wilderness wanderings, but later when they were about to enter the land of Canaan, this rule was relaxed in Deuteronomy 14 –

“You shall not eat anything that dies *of itself*; you may give it to the alien who *is* within your gates, that he may eat it, or you may sell it to a foreigner; for you *are* a holy people to the Lord your God.” Deuteronomy 14:21

For the Lord to set His face against someone means, literally, to pour out His anger on him. In this, there were two ways this could happen. If it was known by others that he had done this, he would receive the just punishment from the leaders. But if done in secret, the Lord Himself would pursue and render judgment on him.

¹¹ For the life of the flesh *is* in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it *is* the blood *that* makes atonement for the soul.’

In this verse, one word is translated as both “life” and “soul.” This somewhat confuses the sense of what is being said. The Hebrew reads, “For soul the flesh in (the) blood it.” The blood is actually the seat of life within the flesh of the body. A person can lose the use of their legs, but the legs still live. But if the blood is cut off from them, they die and corrupt.

Understanding this about the blood gives us the first reason for the prohibition. The nature of the blood being the soul of the flesh is the first reason for the command. And secondly, the Lord says it is because, “I have given it to you to make atonement for your soul.” Blood is consecrated by the Lord for sacrificial worship.

And then with that understanding, we come to the final clause. Many translations say, “for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul.” But what the Hebrew is saying takes us back to the use of “soul” in the first clause. Because the blood *is* the soul of the flesh, it is what provides atonement. Therefore, rather than saying it makes atonement

for the soul, meaning the one being atoned for, it says, “the blood itself makes atonement *through the soul* that is in it.” It is speaking of the soul of the blood in the sacrifice, and what it does in relation to the atonement process. Although seemingly nitpicky, it means that something must die, giving up its soul, in order for atonement to be made.

If merely blood itself could provide atonement, one could bleed out a quart of blood, keep living, and atone for sin. But it is the soul of the flesh itself, which is the blood, and which animates the flesh, that provides atonement. The validation that death has occurred through the shed blood provides atonement. It is why Paul says this about Christ in Romans –

“For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be *in the likeness of His* resurrection, ⁶ knowing this, that our old man was crucified with *Him*, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. ⁷ For he who has died has been freed from sin.”

-Romans 6:5-7

As Christ died for our sin, then we who are in Christ have died with Him. Our sins are once and forever atoned for. Therefore, the prohibition against eating meat with blood in it no longer stands. It was a type and picture of Christ alone until He had finished the work of the law. If you are one to eat bloody steaks, you are free to do so. It doesn't personally interest me. Mine are pretty much chewy leather, but should my preferences ever change, so be it.

The prohibitions in Acts concerning blood were for a set purpose, and are not repeated in the prescriptive letters of the epistles. It is those letters, especially those of Paul, from which we derive our church-age doctrine. Thus this prohibition is no longer in force.

¹² Therefore I said to the children of Israel, ‘No one among you shall eat blood, nor shall any stranger who dwells among you eat blood.’

The prohibition of eating blood was given because it is the vehicle of life. For this reason, the Lord reserved all blood to Himself. To eat the blood was to assimilate into oneself something which belonged to Him alone. It was therefore idolatrous to use it in any other way than designated by Him. If it was not used in the rites of the tabernacle, it was to be poured out and covered with earth.

¹³ “Whatever man of the children of Israel, or of the strangers who dwell among you, who hunts and catches any animal or bird that may be eaten, he shall pour out its blood and cover it with dust;

Up to this point, only the animals of sacrifices have been discussed. There was the positive command of offering the blood to the Lord, but there was also the negative of not eating the animal’s blood. This negative command now continues to extend, coming to agreement with the prohibition given to Noah so long ago. Any creatures which were clean and used for food by the Israelites were to have the blood drained out first, and then that blood was to be covered with dust.

This prohibition also extended, as before, to the strangers who dwelt among Israel. If any such stranger didn’t follow this practice, it would then quickly spread to the people of Israel, causing them to fall into sin by their failure to act in accord with the law. There is a sense of finality in the words here. The first time that *aphar*, or “dust,” was used in the Bible was in Genesis –

“And the Lord God formed man *of* the dust of the ground.” Genesis 2:7

Immediately after that, in the same verse, it then says,

“...and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.”

From the dust man was made, but he wasn’t yet alive. Only in the breathing of the Lord into the nostrils of man did he become a *nephesh khayah*, or “soul living.” Therefore, when eating an animal, the life was to be poured out and covered with the dust. In man or animal, when the life is poured out, the dust reclaims ownership over what is left.

This is true with but one exception. It is Jesus, the Lord God who breathed life into man. And yet, He then descended from the man He breathed life into. In the shedding of His blood upon the ground from which His earthly body came, He gave up His soul, and yet the ground found no victory over Him. The life returned, the soul reanimated, and by the power of the Lord God, He walked out of that tomb. Atonement for us was made with the pouring out of His soul, and yet He lives. Only in Him is true and eternal life. This is why He stated the following –

“Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you.⁵⁴ Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood

has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. ⁵⁵ For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. ⁵⁶ He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. ⁵⁷ As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me. ⁵⁸ This is the bread which came down from heaven—not as your fathers ate the manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread will live forever.” John 6:53-58

¹⁴ for *it is* the life of all flesh. Its blood sustains its life. Therefore I said to the children of Israel, ‘You shall not eat the blood of any flesh, for the life of all flesh is its blood. Whoever eats it shall be cut off.’

Again as before, the word “soul” is used three times in this verse, not the word “life.” It says, “for the soul of all flesh is its blood with its soul (meaning its blood and soul together). Therefore, I said to the children of Israel, you shall not eat the blood of any flesh, for the soul of all flesh is its blood.”

The animals here in discussion are not sacrificial animals, and yet, the prohibition still stands. It shows that it is the soul of the animal, meaning the blood, where the focus is directed. If one were to eat the soul of the animal, it would be for the purpose of life. But Colossians 1 tells us that only Christ is the true Source and Sustainer of life. Therefore, blood was forbidden. The physical aspect of what is presented is showing us spiritual truths concerning Christ.

¹⁵ “And every person who eats what died *naturally* or what was torn *by beasts, whether he is a native of your own country or a stranger, he shall both wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. Then he shall be clean.*

No reason for this allowance is given, but it clearly shows that the prohibitions here are spiritual in nature, and this for several reasons. An animal which died by itself, or one which was killed by other beasts, did not have the blood drained out of it. The animal is dead because its lifeblood has stopped flowing.

To eat this animal cannot be compared to eating blood itself, because the soul had departed. And yet, it is still true that the blood remained in the animal. Such meat was forbidden to be eaten in Leviticus 7:24. But if it were out of necessity, accident, or trickery by another, or whatever other reason, the person was merely considered unclean.

As there was no intent here, but because he still ate something forbidden, it shows the spiritual nature of the mandate. And then secondly comes the means of purification from defilement. The first is washing the clothes, and the second is bathing. Both of these are external acts. They have absolutely nothing to do with what went into the man. And yet, they are required in order to be considered purified.

And finally, the last part of the purification was to wait until sundown, at which time he would be clean again. If he ate his meal at 6:55 pm, and the day started at 6pm, then he would be defiled for 23 hours and 5 minutes. If he ate and then washed at 5:45pm, then he would only be defiled for 15 minutes. Clearly this shows us that the defilement is spiritual and not actual. Further, it pertained to an Israelite and stranger alike. In order to be considered clean, the command stands for both.

As we have seen already, the washing of the garments points to trampling out sin in one's life. The bathing points the purification of one's life by Christ. And the evening time points to the time that Christ died and was placed in the tomb. With His death and burial, all defilement of man was truly washed away. This ceremonial period of defilement simply looked forward to the cleansing from all defilement provided by the Lord.

¹⁶ But if he does not wash *them* or bathe his body, then he shall bear his guilt."

What this means is that he was guilty of sin because of not going through the necessary purification rituals. In this case, he would have to offer an offering for his sin in accord with the trespass offering of chapter 5. If he failed to offer that, and if he then defiled the sanctuary, or ate of sacred things such as the tithes, then he would be subject to even greater punishment.

Again, as we close out this section, we need to think on why we have been shown these things. It is the same as earlier. First, we are being shown pictures of what lay ahead in the ministry of Christ. Those have been clearly laid out. Secondly, we are again to see the failure of Israel in meeting these requirements. In 1 Samuel 14, we will read this –

"Now they had driven back the Philistines that day from Michmash to Aijalon. So the people were very faint. ³² And the people rushed on the spoil, and took sheep, oxen, and calves, and slaughtered *them* on the ground; and the people ate *them* with the blood. ³³ Then they told Saul, saying, 'Look, the people are sinning against the Lord by eating with the blood!'" 1 Samuel 14:31-33

Likewise, in Ezekiel 33, the Lord accuses the people of eating meat with the blood as one of the offenses which brought their destruction upon themselves. Although we have only gone through a minor number of the laws pertaining to the people of Israel so far in Exodus and Leviticus, there are none that they did not violate at some point in their history.

It is the constant and continued failure of Israel under the Law of Moses which shows us the need for God's mercy and grace. Israel rejected that offering when Christ came among them, but it is still available to us and to them; for any who will simply reach out and receive it.

And thirdly, it is then to show us that only Christ can bring us to God. The carefully selected wording of the soul of the flesh being the blood, and that "the blood itself makes atonement through the soul that is in it," is speaking of the soul of the blood in the sacrifice, and what it does in relation to the atonement process.

As the blood of bulls and goats can never take away sin, then everything that we have looked at here today is ultimately pointing to the One, final, and complete sacrifice of Christ Jesus for the sins of man. This is the entire point of this chapter being placed first after the Day of Atonement passage. It is only Christ, or it is no relationship with God. There are no alternatives, and there is no reliance on a law which merely condemns those who are under it.

Thank God for His giving of Christ for our many transgressions. Thank God that He provided a way back for those who are willing to accept it. And thank God that we are freed from the burden of this law because of the complete and acceptable fulfillment of it by the Lord. Through Him, we are accepted, fully and forever, into the family of the redeemed. Come to Christ, and enter through the Door of salvation into a new and better promise.

Closing Verse: *"For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes." Romans 10:4*

Next Week: Leviticus 18:1-30 *Laws for morality so as not to become beguiled* (In These, Israel Will be Defiled) (31st Leviticus Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if you have a lifetime of sin heaped up behind you, He can wash it away and purify

you completely and wholly. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Sanctity of the Blood

And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying
These are the words He was then relaying
“Speak to Aaron, to his sons
And to all the children of Israel, and to them say
‘This is the thing which the Lord has commanded, saying:
Hear the words conveyed to you this day

“Whatever man of the house of Israel
Who kills in the camp an ox or lamb or goat
Or who kills it outside the camp
Now you are to make careful note

And does not bring it to the door
Of the tabernacle of meeting, according to this word
To offer to the Lord an offering
Before the tabernacle of the Lord

The guilt of bloodshed shall be imputed to that man
Blood he has shed
And that man shall be cut off from among his people
Away from the people he shall be led

To the end that the children of Israel
May bring their sacrifices, in obedience to this word
Which they offer in the open field
That they may bring them to the Lord

At the door of the tabernacle of meeting, so heed this word
To the priest, and offer them as peace offerings to the Lord

And the priest shall sprinkle the blood
On the altar of the Lord at the door
Of the tabernacle of meeting
And burn the fat for a sweet aroma to the Lord for sure

They shall no more offer their sacrifices to demons
After whom the harlot they have played
This shall be a statute forever
For them throughout their generations, it shall be obeyed
“Also you shall say to them:
‘Whatever man of the house of Israel
Or of the strangers who dwell among you
Who offers a burnt offering or sacrifice, as well

And does not bring it to the door
Of the tabernacle of meeting, as I say to you
To offer it to the Lord
That man shall be cut off from among his people, this you shall do

‘And whatever man of the house of Israel
Or of the strangers who dwell among you, who eats any blood, so I now say
I will set My face against that person who eats blood
And will cut him off from among his people; it shall be this way

For the life of the flesh is in the blood
And I have given it to you upon the altar, to this extent
To make atonement for your souls
For it is the blood that for the soul makes atonement

Therefore I said to the children of Israel
‘No one among you shall eat blood, as to you I say
Nor shall any stranger who dwells among you eat blood
Pay heed to My word this day

“Whatever man of the children of Israel
Or of the strangers who dwell among you
Who hunts and catches any animal or bird that may be eaten
He shall pour out its blood and cover it with dust; so he shall do

For it is the life of all flesh
Its blood sustains its life, this precept is true
Therefore I said to the children of Israel
‘You shall not eat the blood of any flesh; this you shall not do

For the life of all flesh is its blood; pay heed to what I say
Whoever eats it shall be cut off; so it shall be this way
“And every person who eats what died naturally
Or what was torn by beasts as well
Whether he is a native of your own country or a stranger
He shall both wash his clothes and bathe in water, as to you I tell

And be unclean until evening
Then he shall be clean
But if he does not wash them or bathe his body
Then he shall bear his guilt; in him guilt shall be seen

How splendid and wonderful it is, O God
That we have been freed from the burden of the law
So many failed in the walk that they trod
And upon them sorrows of punishment they did draw

But through Christ there is now release and favor
In Christ, we have a glorious and eternal hope
Through His work alone, can we heaven’s delights savor
And so on Him we have set the sighting of our scope

Our eyes are fixed, our hope is set
In Christ alone is our joy and desire found
In Him our assurance of heaven is met
And so to You through Him we sing our joyous sound

Praise God; praise Him all saints, sing forth your praise
From this time forth, and even for eternal days

Hallelujah and Amen...

LEVITICUS 18:1-30

(IN THESE, ISRAEL WILL BE DEFILED)

In today's passage, we have some requirements which did not previously apply to the people of the world. They were things which were not forbidden before the law was given. As those things are mentioned, I will cite to you the applicable examples so that you can see this.

However, there was a time when these things became unacceptable for the Lord's people to participate in, and the reason for this is to be explained as well. And yet, one of the laws which is mandated here is actually set aside, and even mandated to be done for a certain circumstance which will also be noted.

It is a surprising thing, the law of Moses and its many commands and precepts. And without a careful, contemplative, and detailed understanding of it, one could come away thinking there were either errors or contradictions in it. But this is definitely not so. Each difficulty we have faced has been overcome through a detailed analysis of what is presented.

One truth that stands out about the law though, is that if it were not given, then sin would not be imputed for violating its precepts. This was the case with Abraham, it was the case with Jacob, it was the case with Moses' parents, and it was the case with others along the way as well. They lived and died without sin being imputed to them for what would suddenly become offenses punishable under the law. Paul explains how this works in detail in the book of Romans. A part of that explanation forms our text verse today –

Text Verse: *“For apart from the law sin was dead. ⁹I was alive once without the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died. ¹⁰And the commandment, which was to bring life, I found to bring death. ¹¹For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it killed me.” Romans 7:8-11*

Apart from the law, sin was dead. But then... the law. Adam was alive apart from the law. But then came... the law. It was one simple thing, but disobeying it threw the entire human race into a catastrophic whirlwind which continues to tear humanity apart to this day. There is but one remedy to the storming gale winds, and that is found in Jesus Christ.

Paul understood the torment of the introduction of law upon humanity, and he cried out for relief from the dilemma he faced. Where! Where can I turn to in order to be freed from what I face? And then He found Christ. He closes chapter 7 with wonderful words of release for us to consider –

“I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good. ²² For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. ²³ But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. ²⁴ O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? ²⁵ I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.” Romans 7:21-25

Sexual sin. It is something that many of us have faced. Maybe some of us still secretly face it. It is certainly something every single one of us must deal with. Perversion is plastered openly on the internet, on TV, and even in open society as we head down the roads of life. It is something terribly enticing, and yet it is even more destructive. And like all sin, it never satisfies. It simply leads us down a spiraling eddy from one level of perversion to the next.

The word is not silent on the subject, and so neither may we be silent on it. Instead, it is a theme which is prominently detailed in His superior word. And so let’s turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. Words of Law (verses 1-23)

¹Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying,

The words which lie ahead are words of law, and thus Moses alone is the addressee. What will follow are words not of ritual and ceremonial pollution, but instead they concern the moral state of life in regards to holiness. So far in Leviticus, the idea of ceremonial uncleanness and its accompanying remedy has been noted. Now, begins moral uncleanness and its penalty.

Many of the laws of this chapter concern domestic purity, and thus they are laws which are appropriate for conduct even though the law of Moses is now set aside. In following them, there will be happiness and purity in the home. In not following them, discontent and moral perversion becomes evident. This is all the more true because the writers of

the New Testament continue to warn against sexual immorality, and Jesus' words on the final page of Scripture warn against it as well, stating –

“Blessed *are* those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city. ¹⁵ But outside *are* dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie.” Revelation 22:14, 15

The sexual perversion which is being thrust upon society in general, and upon the church in particular, in the recent past is wholly contrary to Christian conduct, and it is to be rejected. Sex has been ordained by God to be between a man and a woman who are united in the bonds of marriage. That is the extent of what is biblically acceptable.

From the words of this chapter, this will be made perfectly evident. The Lord sets His standards for sexual conduct in contrast to the practices of the surrounding nations who were engaged in all sorts of unnatural, perverse practices.

²“Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: ‘I am the Lord your God.

Two thoughts are to be derived from these words. The first is that what follows is intended for the entire congregation. “Speak to the children of Israel” means that all are to hear, and all are included in what follows. The words of the Lord proceed through the human lawgiver, Moses, to the ears of the entire congregation.

The second thought is found in the words, “I am the Lord your God.” This is a phrase that has been spoken only once so far in Leviticus, in 11:44. They are again being reminded that Yehovah is sovereign over them. *They* had agreed to the words of the covenant, *they* had agreed that Yehovah would be their one and only God, and *they* had placed themselves under His complete authority, including all things forbidden and all things commanded.

Three times in this chapter He will repeat, “I *am* the Lord your God,” and three times He will say, “I *am* the Lord.” The reminders are to call attention to the people that it is Yehovah who has directed, and His directions are in contrast to the workings of those of the other nations. This is then noted in the following words...

³ According to the doings of the land of Egypt, where you dwelt, you shall not do; and according to the doings of the land of Canaan, where I am bringing you, you shall not do; nor shall you walk in their ordinances.

Egypt is the land they had left; Canaan is the land they were heading to. Egypt was destroyed by the Lord upon their departure; Canaan's destruction is promised to occur upon their arrival. The gods of those lands were thus shown to be nothing in comparison to the Lord, and the practices of the people, allowed under their gods, were not to be practiced.

The words, "nor shall you walk in their ordinances" means exactly that. To "walk" in the Bible indicates life conduct. To walk according to the ordinances of Egypt and Canaan would be to conduct their lives as these defeated nations had conducted their own lives.

As Egypt pictured the bondage of Satan, and as Israel was brought out from that bondage, they were not to return to its practices. As Canaan signifies the land in which these redeemed will dwell, even while walking in this world, so the Lord's redeemed were not to re-engage in the practices of the world. These two thoughts – leaving Egypt and dwelling in Canaan – are seen in Paul's words –

"And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, ²in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, ³among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others." Ephesians 2:2:1-3 (Egypt)

"But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints; ⁴neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. ⁵For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. ⁶Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. ⁷Therefore do not be partakers with them." Ephesians 5:3-7 (Canaan)

⁴You shall observe My judgments and keep My ordinances, to walk in them: I am the Lord your God.

The contrast is now set. There WAS Egypt, there WILL BE Canaan, and there IS the covenant of the Lord. This expression, "You shall observe My judgments and keep My ordinances" bears emphasis, and it is set in direct contrast to the "ordinances" of Egypt

and Canaan. In essence, He is saying, “You shall observe ONLY my judgments and keep ONLY my ordinances.”

The *mishpat*, or judgments, are an extension of His justice. They are right, and they are intended for the good of the people. The *khuyyot*, or ordinances, are those things prescribed by the Lord as fixed patterns of conduct for right living and proper order.

With the observance of these determined, He again repeats the reason for this, “I am the Lord your God.” “I am Yehovah, and I am your God. Your walk will be as I direct because I have brought you out of Egypt, and we have covenanted together that you will walk in obedience to My precepts henceforward.” And there is a good and blessed reason for this...

⁵You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, which if a man does, he shall live by them: I am the Lord.

If Leviticus 11:44 contains the central theme of the book of Leviticus, “...you shall be holy; for I am holy,” Leviticus 18:5 certainly contains the main logical reason for this, and the promised outcome for walking in holiness. It is such an important verse, that it is incorporated into the thought of Genesis 2 & 3, and it is substantially repeated several times in both the Old and New Testaments. In Genesis 2, the Lord gave a command which promised death if disobeyed. The implication then is that life would result through obedience –

And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, “Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; ¹⁷ but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.” Genesis 2:16, 17

In Genesis 3, because of man’s disobedience to the Lord’s law, access to the tree of life, by which man could live forever, was denied. Death entered the world. Now a promise is made that through obedience to this law, the man shall live. Many scholars pass this off as meaning “live happily,” have a “higher life,” possess “true life,” etc. This is not at all what is being relayed here. It is a promise that if a man keeps the requirements of the law, he will live and not die. On the flip side, if one does not keep the requirements of the law, he will die and not live.

The Lord is dwelling there in their presence. Access to Him is restricted because of the sin-nature of man, but also because of the law itself. But in fulfillment of the law, access

would naturally be granted once again. It could not be otherwise. The law is given to give life. If life is promised, then it must be granted.

If one doesn't die, then he continues to live. If he lives forever, then he has eternal life. This is the implication of the words, and it is solidified by the use of a definite article in front of the word "man." It doesn't say "if a man does." It says, "if the man does." Be sure to correct your Bible. This verse is looking forward to Christ – The Man who, in fact, did keep the ordinances and judgments of Yehovah, and He thus possesses eternal life.

This is exactly explained in the book of Romans, but elsewhere in the New Testament as well. Christ fulfilled the law, and thus the law is fulfilled. In Him, life is granted. If you are looking for access to restored paradise, and to the Tree of Life, you need look no further than Jesus Christ. He is "The Man who did."

Nehemiah 9:29 refers to this verse after the people's return from the punishment of exile. Ezekiel 20 repeats this verse three times showing that failure to keep the Lord's law is what resulted in that punishment. Paul then cites this same verse twice, in Romans 10:5, and in Galatians 3:12 to show that Christ, who fulfilled the Law of Moses, is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes in Him. It is faith in His completion of this law that grants eternal life. He did the work, we must do the believing.

And so now, with the promise of life made, the laws of the Lord which began in earnest in Exodus 20 with the giving of the Ten Commandments now continues here once again. As I said earlier, the laws which follow are moral in nature. In obeying what is stated, either as a command under the Law of Moses, or a precept of holy living in the New Covenant, many troubles will be avoided.

⁶'None of you shall approach anyone who is near of kin to him, to uncover his nakedness: I *am* the Lord.

The Hebrew uses two words which essentially both mean "flesh." None of you shall approach anyone who is *sheer besaro*, or flesh of his flesh. Although nearly synonyms, the first is certainly flesh as in nearness – I am of the same flesh as my father. The second word is flesh in substance – We are all made of human flesh. The prohibitions here are based on the first word *sheer*. Sexual relations, stated by the term "uncover nakedness," in near family relations is prohibited.

It has to be noted that this was not something that could have been implemented at the beginning. When the human race was getting started, or when it was expanding after the flood, it was necessary for kin to be intimate. Even Abraham married his own half sister.

However, the Lord is now mandating this for His people in order to ensure proper functioning of the family unit, and strengthening of the greater societal structure as well. In the family, a brother cannot perform the role of both a brother and a husband in the most effective manner. A mother could not be a mother and a wife to the same man and perform both roles effectively.

In society, a strengthening of families occurs when a man and a woman join together. There is a new unity which strengthens the overall community in such marriages. The Lord's intent is for the protection and strengthening of both. To ensure that they realize this is from His wisdom and at His direction, he then once again states His name, *ani Yehovah*, I am Yehovah. From here, three classes of forbidden intimacy are given, 1) relations through blood; 2) direct relations by affinity; and 3) indirect relations by affinity.

⁷The nakedness of your father or the nakedness of your mother you shall not uncover. She *is* your mother; you shall not uncover her nakedness.

The word "or" here is not correct. The second sentence explains the first. It should say, "The nakedness of your father, and the nakedness of your mother, you shall not uncover." As the father and mother are one flesh due to their union, a son sleeping with his mother would then uncover both her nakedness and the father's. This then is further defined by the next verse...

⁸The nakedness of your father's wife you shall not uncover; it *is* your father's nakedness.

A man is not to have sex with his father's wife, even if she is not the person's mother. This would then also uncover the father's nakedness. It is something that actually occurred when Reuben, the eldest of Jacob, slept with Bilhah, his father's concubine. Absalom also slept with his father David's concubines in 2 Samuel 16. It also occurred in the early church as is recorded in 1 Corinthians 5. Paul fully condemned this occurrence.

⁹The nakedness of your sister, the daughter of your father, or the daughter of your mother, *whether* born at home or elsewhere, their nakedness you shall not uncover.

Intimacy with either a whole sister or a half sister is forbidden. This particular law was violated by Amnon, the son of David, when he went into his half sister Tamar in 2 Samuel 13.

¹⁰ The nakedness of your son's daughter or your daughter's daughter, their nakedness you shall not uncover; for theirs *is* your own nakedness.

Intimacy between a man and his granddaughter is forbidden. Interestingly, nothing is said of a man and his daughter as was the case with a son and his mother. Some believe that was a part of this verse and that it was accidentally dropped from the original, but that is only scholarly guessing and there is no evidence of that.

¹¹ The nakedness of your father's wife's daughter, begotten by your father—she *is* your sister—you shall not uncover her nakedness.

This verse is actually rather complicated. If it is as the English reads, then it is simply a repetition of what was said in verse 9. That would make it superfluous. One opinion is that verse 9 is speaking of the son by a second marriage, but this verse is speaking of a son by a first marriage.

A second opinion is that an error has crept into the text in verse 9 and so that is speaking of a full sister, whereas this is speaking of a half-sister. A third option is that this is referring to a Levirate marriage where a man performs the duty of rearing up a child for a deceased brother. This is outlined in Deuteronomy 25:5.

If such a relationship occurred, the two families would be near kindred, and marrying the daughter of a woman who had been given a child by the son's father would then violate that near-family relationship. That seems the most likely. I am not a favor of claiming textual error just because a verse is difficult. It is an easy way out of complicated matters. In the end, the nearness of the relationship is what is being spoken of here.

¹² You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's sister; she *is* near of kin to your father.

One was not to have intimacy with one's paternal aunt. Having said that, Moses himself was the product of such a relationship. His father married his aunt, and Aaron, Moses, and Miriam were born to this union. Thus, one can see that this particular law is a divine statute rather than a natural moral law. This is evident because no prohibition is

extended to one's niece. Rather, it was an accepted practice in Israel for a person to marry one's niece, such as when Othniel married his niece Achsah in Joshua 15.

13 You shall not uncover the nakedness of your mother's sister, for she *is* near of kin to your mother.

As with the previous verse concerning the father's sister, a man was likewise forbidden to be intimate with his mother's sister.

14 You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's brother. You shall not approach his wife; she *is* your aunt.

Some interpret the first sentence to mean that a man was not to commit sodomy with his uncle. That is not at all what this is speaking of. Sodomy was forbidden in all cases and at all times. It is a perversion of natural order in all circumstances. Rather, the second sentence explains the first. By having intimate relations with a wife of an uncle, a person uncovered the uncle's nakedness.

15 You shall not uncover the nakedness of your daughter-in-law—she *is* your son's wife—you shall not uncover her nakedness.

In Leviticus 20:12, the penalty for this is death for both offenders. It uses there a word, *tevel*, which is found only there and in verse 23 of this chapter when speaking of bestiality. It indicates "confusion." For a man to sleep with his son's wife is a confusion of the natural order. In Ezekiel 22:11, it is shown that this abominable practice was not unknown among the Israelites.

16 You shall not uncover the nakedness of your brother's wife; it *is* your brother's nakedness.

This must be taken in the proper context of the Israelite society. If a brother died, and the wife had no children, the brother was under obligation by the law to go into the widow in order that she might bear a child in her dead husband's name. The instructions for this are found in Deuteronomy 25. However, this was an exception mandated by the Lord to preserve the line. Any other intimacy would pervert the line. This law was broken by Herod Antipas who took his brother's wife as his own in Matthew 14.

17 You shall not uncover the nakedness of a woman and her daughter, nor shall you take her son's daughter or her daughter's daughter, to uncover her nakedness. They *are* near of kin to her. It *is* wickedness.

If a man married a woman who already had children, he could not afterward be intimate with either her daughter or one of her granddaughters – either through a son or a daughter. As they were of the same flesh as her, such was considered wickedness. The word used to describe it is a new one in Scripture, *zimah*. It comes from *zamah*, meaning to plan. Thus, this is an especially bad plan, even a scheme of mischief.

18 Nor shall you take a woman as a rival to her sister, to uncover her nakedness while the other is alive.

This prohibition stands only during the life of the wife. Should she die, then a man might marry the sister, but not while the wife was alive. The reason for this is because polygamy was acceptable under the law of Moses, and it is something not forbidden under the New Covenant except for anyone who is an elder or deacon within the church. Other than those two exceptions, Paul never comments on such a matter. He let society determine the rules of marriage in that regard. But though polygamy was acceptable in Israel, it did not include marriage of two sisters. The lesson of Leah and Rachel proved to them that only enmity could result. Thus the Lord uses the term *tsarar*, or adversary, to describe the matter.

19 'Also you shall not approach a woman to uncover her nakedness as long as she is in her *customary* impurity.

No intimacy was to occur during the time of a woman's period. Ezekiel notes this as one of the crimes of the people of Israel which led to exile.

20 Moreover you shall not lie carnally with your neighbor's wife, to defile yourself with her.

Here a word is introduced to ensure no mistakes were made. It is *shekobeth*. It means specifically intercourse. Thus this is an explicit description of a violation of the seventh commandment concerning adultery. Violations of this precept are recorded in both testaments.

21 And you shall not let any of your descendants pass through *the fire* to Molech, nor shall you profane the name of your God: I *am* the Lord.

u-mizarkha lo titen l'ha'abir la'molekh - "And your seed no give to pass over to Molech." The Hebrew word translated as "descendant" here is *zara*, it simply means "seed." The words, "the fire" are inserted by the translators.

This is the first mention of the Ammonite god Molech. The name simply means "king." What this verse is speaking of isn't as easy to determine as one might think. As the word "seed" is used, and as the term "the fire" is inserted, one must go forward in Scripture to assume that this means burning one's children as an offering to Molech.

Further, it would then be a giant departure from the tone of the entire chapter, which is speaking of sexual intimacy. Therefore, this is probably speaking of a perverse offering of intimacy to the idol Molech where the man's semen is made an offering, either to a prostitute of Molech, or to the idol itself. This type of sexual intimacy is still practiced by both sexes in cultures of the world today. Later, in Scripture, offerings to Molech by Israel will actually take on the form of human sacrifice through fire.

Whatever the practice is, whether sexual perversion, or actually burning a literal descendant, it is spoken against in the sternest manner by saying, "...nor shall you profane the name of your God." By making an offering to Molech, the name of Yehovah would be profaned. Thus He ends with *ani Yehovah*, "I am Yehovah." Molech is a false king, Yehovah is their true King.

²² You shall not lie with a male as with a woman. It is an abomination.

Though this is a precept of the law of Moses, it is also something which is shown to be perverse both before the law of Moses, and which is considered as such in the New Testament as well. Despite modern teaching by many apostate churches, this is, and it continues to be, a vile practice which is wholly incompatible with proper human sexuality, and the commands of both testaments. The same is true with the next verse...

²³ Nor shall you mate with any animal, to defile yourself with it. Nor shall any woman stand before an animal to mate with it. It is perversion.

As I said above, this is the first of two uses of *tevel*, or confusion, in Scripture. In this practice, there is an unnatural mixing, or confusing of the order which God created and ordained. As will later be seen, such infractions were punishable by death. It is contrary to holiness and normalcy, and so it is forbidden to be practiced by the Lord's people. For now, it is warned against because it was something known to have been practiced in Egypt, and it was an abomination that would be seen in Canaan.

*Lord God, Your word is written, Old Testament and New
And the words are clear concerning sexual sin
There is intimacy we may enjoy, and other things we may not do
One will bring us life; by the other we are done in*

*But the lines are blurred, even in our church today
People call evil that which is right and good
And that which is perverse is given a resounding "It's OK!"
How can something so clear be so hugely misunderstood?*

*Lord God, keep us from sexual immorality which does defile
Keep us on the narrow path where life and health is found
In paying heed to your word, we shall receive a welcome smile
And in Your presence joy and peace shall evermore abound*

*Lead us, O God, be near and watch over us
We come to You, O Father, through our Lord Jesus*

II. Words of Warning (verses 24-30)

²⁴ 'Do not defile yourselves with any of these things;

The chapter began with five verses of preamble, admonishing the people to pay heed to the instructions of the Lord. The chapter now ends with seven verses of warning concerning what has been presented. If the warnings are not heeded, the expected punishments for disobedience are also given.

²⁴ (con't) for by all these the nations are defiled, which I am casting out before you.

The Lord refers to exactly this in 2 Chronicles 33 in reference to Manasseh, King of Judah. Take time to read that today. For now, in Genesis 15, the Lord spoke these words to Abraham –

“But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete.” Genesis 15:16

The time has come. The longsuffering of the Lord towards the people of Canaan has ended, the land has become utterly defiled, and now after over 430 years there will be a change in ownership. Here he sets a direct challenge to the people. He uses the same

word here concerning the defilement of these other people which he had just used in warning to them – “Do not defile yourselves” / “by all these, the nations are defiled.”

The promise to Abraham will be fulfilled, certainly and speedily. The Lord has spoken that He will cast out the land’s inhabitants before His chosen nation. But the warning is first given.

²⁵ For the land is defiled;

Again, the same word *tame*, or defiled, is used. Not only are the people defiled, but the land itself is defiled. Therefore, from the land itself, a reaction necessarily results...

^{25 (con’t)} therefore I visit the punishment of its iniquity upon it, and the land vomits out its inhabitants.

When man fell, creation fell. When man’s final restoration comes, so there will be restoration in creation. The land is subject to the moral conduct of the land’s inhabitants. This is expressly stated to Israel elsewhere. When they live properly and according to the law of the Lord, the land will yield its blessings. When they live improperly, the land will suffer the divine visitation of the Lord. So much so that it will vomit out its inhabitants.

This is now the first time that *qo*, or vomit, is used in Scripture. It will be seen only 8 times, but 3 of them will be in this chapter. In this, the land is personified. It will respond to the Lord’s divine visitation and do so by vomiting out its miserable inhabitants as if they were a stomach virus or putrid food.

²⁶ You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, and shall not commit *any* of these abominations, *either* any of your own nation or any stranger who dwells among you

It has been expressly stated that the people and the land are defiled because of their abominable practices. The Lord has likewise told them that they are to keep his ordinances and judgments in order to keep from defilement. The implication here is that if they do, they will not be cast out of the land as those there now will be.

However, these laws apply not only to them, but to anyone who dwells among them. Should they fail in this, then the land will continue to be defiled, and it will again vomit out the offenders. Divine judgment will fall regardless of how the righteous live. If the

unrighteous are in the land, it can be expected. This was true at Noah's time, it was true in the first exile of Israel, and it was true in their second exile. It has proven true in nation upon nation as well.

²⁷ (for all these abominations the men of the land have done, who *were* before you, and thus the land is defiled),

The thought in this verse is quite similar to verses 24 & 25, but there the admonition was for the Israelites to not do what was done by the present inhabitants of the land and thus defile themselves and the land. Here the inhabitants of the land are specifically said to have committed these abominations, thus defiling the land. The reason is important, and is explicitly explained next...

²⁸ lest the land vomit you out also when you defile it, as it vomited out the nations that *were* before you.

This is now the eighth time in this chapter that the term "defile" is used. Israel can, and would, become just as defiled as the people of Canaan if they didn't pay heed to the warnings now given. And the land could, and would, vomit them out just as the present inhabitants were to be vomited out. The Lord is making no distinction between them and the people of Canaan here. Instead, He is highlighting the similarity between the two.

Further, the idea of them being vomited out actually accentuates the situation in comparison to Adam's expulsion from Eden. There he was driven from Eden, but here the Israelites would be more violently *vomited* out of their own promised land.

²⁹ For whoever commits any of these abominations, the persons who commit *them* shall be cut off from among their people.

This verse refers to all people individually. In order to keep the community free from defilement, and in order to maintain their status in the land, and to not be vomited out as promised, those who commit any of the infractions mentioned in this chapter were to be cut off from among the people. As will be shown later, some were to be stoned to death, some would face divine judgment, but all were to be excommunicated from the community and driven out from among the people.

³⁰ ‘Therefore you shall keep My ordinance, so that *you* do not commit *any* of these abominable customs which were committed before you, and that you do not defile yourselves by them: I *am* the Lord your God.’”

The word translated here as “ordinance” is *mishmereth*. It should be translated as “watch” or “charge.” The people of Israel are being told to stay awake, be alert, and not allow themselves to fall into error by failing to be attentive to the Lord’s charge. This then is a summary of all that has been said. In keeping the Lord’s watch, they will not allow corrupt people to come in stealthily and infect the whole.

This in turn would keep them from being defiled, and this in turn would keep them as a nation from being vomited out of the land. One thing will inevitably lead to the next. In the end, without attentiveness, there will be only defilement leading to disaster. And disaster is certain if defilement occurs.

The final words, *ani Yehovah elohekem*, “I (am) Yehovah your God,” are the same words which introduced the section to the ears of the people of Israel. Now they close out the same section. They are a signature of finality. The Lord is present, He is watching, and so the people are likewise to watch. The choice is theirs, but the laws are His. When the two conflict, Israel will be on the losing end of the deal.

Though this passage, like many more to follow in the near future, are somewhat lacking in Christological pictures, Christ is there nonetheless. He is there as THE MAN who did fulfill this law. He is THE MAN who then accepted the punishment for all violations under this law for those who would be willing to trust Him with their eternal souls. He is THE MAN who then died under this law which He fulfilled, taking it to the cross with Him. Thus the law died with Him. And He is THE MAN who rose again in order to justify those who have trusted Him.

But the Lord has not stopped calling us to holiness. The same idea of sexual purity in Israel is also expected in the church. Though the Law of Moses is annulled through His work, His moral standards are set, and they are repeated in the writings of the apostles.

Land was defiled by people both before the law came into effect, and it was defiled by those under the law. The land continues to be defiled by the same perverse acts today. And the worst part of the matter is that the church has begun to take the lead in both accepting and even promoting these vile actions of sexual impurity. And this brings us to the final use of “vomit” in Scripture. It is in Revelation 3, to the church at Laodicea. Let's read that now (go read Revelation 3:14-22).

Not just localized lands, but the entire earth, has become defiled. The true and faithful church has retreated to almost a remnant in comparison to the false, wicked group who claim they are a part of the body. Judgment cannot be far off, but until it comes, we must do our part to maintain purity within the churches we attend.

We must provide the world with a view as to what they are doing wrong, so that when we are gone, they will have some sense of what is also expected of them. They must turn to the Lord, refuse the mark of the beast, and be willing to give their own lives up in order to gain what is true and eternal life.

But we would hope and pray that any listening to this message now would be wise enough to turn and call out to Christ, even before that time of worldwide judgment arrives. Christ Jesus is the answer, and He can bring your heart, defiled by sin, to a right state once again. But first you must call out to Him. Make today the day.

Closing Verse: *“It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and such sexual immorality as is not even named among the Gentiles—that a man has his father’s wife! ² And you are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he who has done this deed might be taken away from among you. ³ For I indeed, as absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged (as though I were present) him who has so done this deed. ⁴ In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together, along with my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, ⁵ deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.”*
1 Corinthians 5:1-5

Next Week: Leviticus 19:1-37 *Lots of people should have been stoned or jailed...* (In This, Israel Failed) (32nd Leviticus Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if you have a lifetime of sin heaped up behind you, He can wash it away and purify you completely and wholly. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

Laws of Physical Intimacy

Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying
These are the words He was then relaying

“Speak to the children of Israel

And say to them; as I now proclaim:
'I am the Lord your God
So you shall pay heed to My name

According to the doings of the land of Egypt
Where you dwelt, you shall not do
And according to the doings of the land of Canaan
Where I am bringing you, you shall not do such too

Nor shall you walk in their ordinances
You shall observe My judgments, and My ordinances keep
To walk in them: I am the Lord your God
Is it blessings or curses you wish to reap?

You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments
Which if a man does, he shall by them live
I am the Lord
And these instructions to you I now give

'None of you shall approach anyone
Who is near of kin to him, so I now say
To uncover his nakedness
I am the Lord; you shall not act in this way

The nakedness of your father
Or the nakedness of your mother
You shall not uncover
She is your mother; her nakedness you shall not uncover

The nakedness of your father's wife
You shall not uncover
It is your father's nakedness
It is his and not for another

The nakedness of your sister
The daughter of your father, or the daughter of your mother
Whether born at home or elsewhere
Their nakedness you shall not uncover

The nakedness of your son's daughter
Or your daughter's daughter, as to you I address
Their nakedness you shall not uncover
For theirs is your own nakedness

The nakedness of your father's wife's daughter
Begotten by your father; heed the words I express
She is your sister
You shall not uncover her nakedness

You shall not uncover the nakedness
Of your father's sister as you know
She is near of kin to your father
Near her you shall not go
You shall not uncover the nakedness
Of your mother's sister as well
For she is near of kin to your mother
Pay heed to the words I now tell

You shall not uncover the nakedness
Of your father's brother also
You shall not approach his wife
She is your aunt; near her you shall not go

You shall not uncover the nakedness
Of your daughter-in-law; heed this address
She is your son's wife
You shall not uncover her nakedness

You shall not uncover the nakedness
Of your brother's wife; this you shall not do
It is your brother's nakedness
Pay careful heed to the words I instruct to you

You shall not uncover the nakedness
Of a woman and her daughter; refrain from this
Nor shall you take her son's daughter or her daughter's daughter
Such a thing is truly amiss

To uncover her nakedness, as I to you address
They are near of kin to her; it is wickedness

Nor shall you take a woman
As a rival to her sister; such a thing you shall not do
To uncover her nakedness while the other is alive
Pay heed to the words that I instruct to you

'Also you shall not approach a woman
To uncover her nakedness
As long as she is in her customary impurity
This shall not be done as to you I so express

Moreover you shall not lie carnally
With your neighbor's wife, this you shall not do
To defile yourself with her
To your neighbor you shall be faithful and true

And you shall not let any of your descendants
Pass through the fire to Molech, according to my word
Nor shall you profane the name of your God
I am the Lord

You shall not lie with a male as with a woman, my holy nation
It is an abomination

Nor shall you mate with any animal
To defile yourself with it
Nor shall any woman stand before an animal to mate with it
It is perversion, as to you I now submit

'Do not defile yourselves with any of these things
For by all these are defiled the nations
Which I am casting out before you
For committing these abominations

For the land is defiled
Therefore I visit the punishment of its iniquity upon it
And the land vomits out its inhabitants

For the perversions they did commit

You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments
And shall not commit any of these abominations; you shall not do
Either any of your own nation
Or any stranger who dwells among you

(For all these abominations
The men of the land have done, so to you I say
Who were before you
And thus the land is defiled to this very day)

Lest the land vomit you out also
When you defile it, if these things you do
As it vomited out the nations
That were before you

For whoever commits any of these abominations
The persons who commit them, such I will repay
Shall be cut off from among their people
Pay careful heed to all I say

‘Therefore you shall keep My ordinance
So that you do not any of these abominable customs commit
Which were committed before you
And that you do not defile yourselves by them, so I now submit

I am the Lord your God
You shall in holiness before me tread

Yes, it is so. You are the Lord our God
And to You we owe all heart and soul
You have brought us from the wayward path we tread
And have instructed us in a life of self-control

We were defiled by sin, even sin of the flesh
We had walked in a manner contrary and impure
With the world’s ways, our lives we did enmesh
Judgment was looming, but then came the cure

You sent Jesus to cleanse us from sin and defilement
He fulfilled the law, and then offered Himself for us
Upon His cross, all Your wrath was spent
Thank You, O God, for our Lord Jesus

For Him and through Him we shall give you all our praise
And we shall do so evermore! Even for eternal days

Hallelujah and Amen...

LEVITICUS 19:1-37

(IN THIS, ISRAEL FAILED)

There are a lot of verses to go through today, but they will get done. Although many of the laws that we will look at have absolutely no bearing on anything we would consider as relevant to our society today, some of them do. In fact, Paul and other New Testament writers mention quite a few precepts which parallel those we will see.

I won't highlight them all because there are a lot of verses to get through, but I'll give you enough to show you that there is a consistency in the moral precepts of the two testaments. As the law is fulfilled and annulled in Christ, we now are free from those things which are not repeated in the new. We have no prohibitions on shaving beards for example. Why anyone would want to do that is a bit hard to understand, but we are free to do so if we wish.

Tattoos. I am not a fan of them, but there is nothing in the New Testament to forbid wearing them. Our pointing finger needs to be pointed in the right direction and for the right reasons. Having said that, just imagine yourself bound to all of the rules that are in today's passage! And then imagine that you are bound to it, your children are, and your children's children are. There can be no slip ups, and there can be no overlooking infractions.

One violation of any of these precepts breaks the entire law. The people who cared about their state before God must have longed each year for the Day of Atonement. Outside of that, there was only the constant nagging that they had let the Lord down, time and again. Thank God for Jesus who has freed us from this!

Text Verse: *"Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith. ²⁸ Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law. ²⁹ Or is He the God of the Jews only? Is He not also the God of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also, ³⁰ since there is one God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith." Romans 3:27-30*

How can we boast before God when Jesus has done all the work? We are saved not by deeds of the law, but by faith in Jesus! This is the incredible marvel of what we have going for us in the New Covenant. We aren't just saved by faith, we continue to be saved by faith. Surely the words of Scripture are true – "He who glories, let him glory in the Lord."

This is the truth that we will continue to see today. Israel failed, we have failed, but Jesus prevailed. Where there was condemnation, there is now peace with God. Thank God for Jesus Christ. This truth is to be found in His superior word. And so let's turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

¹And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying,

Like the words of Chapter 18, words of law lie ahead, and so the Lord again speaks directly, and only, to Moses. They are words which will include both moral and ceremonial aspects. Some will bear on what is simply morally honorable, such as rising for the gray headed in verse 32.

It should be remembered, that laws like that one would not bear any penalty if they were otherwise not given. But once the law is given, it is a precept which must be adhered to. To fail to stand for the gray headed would then be a violation of the law. As James says in his epistle, to keep the whole law, but yet to stumble in one point, one is then guilty of breaking the entire law. And to show how wide-ranging this guilt extends, we read the next words...

²“Speak to all the congregation of the children of Israel,

The words of this chapter are to be conveyed to *kal adat*, or “all [the] congregation of the children of Israel, because they apply to all. This is the only time the phrase is used in Leviticus, and it is only used one other time in the entire Torah, in Exodus 12:3 at the giving of the Passover instructions. No one is exempt, and ignorance of the law is, therefore, no excuse. The law, including every single precept – no matter how large or small – is a unified whole. All people were bound to it, and all were expected to comply. And there is a reason for this...

^{2 (con't)} and say to them: ‘You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God *am* holy.

The Chapter is subdivided into sixteen separate groupings, including the first which comprises verses 1 & 2. Each of these groupings ends with a declaratory statement, “I am the Lord,” “I am the Lord your God,” or – in this case – “I the Lord your God *am* holy.” The holiness of God is tied up in the laws which He gives to His people. Therefore, they were required to comply with His words in order to reflect that same holiness. In other words, holiness is the basis for, and the goal of, what is relayed.

As these laws deal with interactions between the Lord and His people, or between the people themselves, they embody much of the Decalogue itself, some directly, others implicitly. In fact, the scholar Kalisch wisely states –

“This remarkable chapter is perhaps the most comprehensive, the most varied, and in some respects the most important section of Leviticus, if not of the Pentateuch; it was by the ancient Jews regarded as an epitome of the whole Law; ... it has at all times been looked upon as a counterpart of the Decalogue itself.” Kalisch.

The admonition to be holy, as the Lord God is holy, ends the first sub-grouping of the chapter.

³‘Every one of you shall revere his mother and his father, and keep My Sabbaths: I *am* the Lord your God.

Two seemingly unrelated commands are given in one short verse. And yet they are intricately tied together. As a whole, they form what could be considered the two pillars of Israel’s moral governance. The first is reverence for mother and father. The second is honoring the Lord’s Sabbaths. As they are tied together here, they are actually also tied together in the Decalogue, but in reverse. They are also the only two positive commands in the Decalogue – “You shall,” instead of “You shall not.”

It is of high note that “mother” is placed before “father” here. It is also of high note that this reverence is placed *before* the Sabbath. In the Decalogue, the Forth Commandment is the Sabbath, and the Fifth is honoring one’s parents. And in the fifth, the father is noted before the mother. What to make of this?

Reverence of the Lord is tied up in the Sabbaths. Hence the term, *shabbatotay*, or “My Sabbaths.” And yet, reverence for the parents is listed prior to that of the Sabbaths. It is to teach Israel that one cannot honor the Lord properly if they do not honor their parents. And likewise, one cannot honor their parents properly if they do not equally esteem both – mother and father, or father and mother.

It is interesting, however, that the Sabbath observance for Israel is the only command in the Decalogue to be wholly set aside in Christ. Honor of the Son *as* our Sabbath Rest now replaces honoring of the Lord *on* a Sabbath Rest.

The violation of not honoring one’s parent is noted in Israel, such as in Micah 7:6. Violations of not keeping the Sabbath are noted in Scripture, such as in Nehemiah 13:15.

They failed to honor the Lord their God. This ends the second sub-grouping of the chapter.

⁴‘Do not turn to idols, nor make for yourselves molded gods: I *am* the Lord your God.

The next command essentially embraces both the first and second commands of the Decalogue. It is first to not turn to *ha’elilim* or “the idols.” This is the first time the word is used. It comes from the word *al*, or “no,” and thus it literally means “the nothings.” Paul, understanding this nuance, repeats it in 1 Corinthians 8:4 –

“Therefore concerning the eating of things offered to idols, we know that an idol *is* nothing in the world, and that *there is* no other God but one.”

Understanding that these are “nothings,” the Lord then tells them to not make for themselves molded gods, as if they were making something. Psalm 118 explains that those who do such things hold the same value as what they produce – they render themselves of no value, becoming nothings –

“But our God *is* in heaven;
He does whatever He pleases.
⁴Their idols *are* silver and gold,
The work of men’s hands.
⁵They have mouths, but they do not speak;
Eyes they have, but they do not see;
⁶They have ears, but they do not hear;
Noses they have, but they do not smell;
⁷They have hands, but they do not handle;
Feet they have, but they do not walk;
Nor do they mutter through their throat.
⁸Those who make them are like them;
So is everyone who trusts in them.” Psalm 118:3-8

The Old Testament is filled with references to violations of these two precepts. In this, Israel failed to honor Yehovah their God. This ends the third sub-grouping of the chapter.

⁵‘And if you offer a sacrifice of a peace offering to the Lord, you shall offer it of your own free will.

The words of this verse are more certainly rendered, “you shall offer it for your acceptance,” not “of your own free will.” When a peace offering was offered, it was to be according to a set procedure. If that was not followed, the offeror and his offering would not be accepted. Chapter 17 showed that the Israelite’s were in the habit of offering their sacrifices to the goat idols. This was now forbidden, but it was not enough to tell them to abstain from sacrificing to these demons. Instead, their offerings were to be to the Lord, and in a set manner.

⁶ It shall be eaten the same day you offer *it*, and on the next day. And if any remains until the third day, it shall be burned in the fire.

There were two classes of peace offerings in Chapter 7, the first class, an offering of thanksgiving, had to be eaten on the first day alone. The second class, a vow or voluntary offering, could be eaten on the next day. It is the second such class which is described here. But the same warning as given in Chapter 7 is repeated here. Anything remaining had to be burnt up on the third day.

⁷ And if it is eaten at all on the third day, it *is* an abomination. It shall not be accepted.

This prohibition looks forward to Christ who was resurrected on the third day, and who saw no corruption. As this is a peace offering which is shared in by both the Lord and the offeror, eating it on the third day would be wholly unsuited to that typology.

⁸ Therefore *everyone* who eats it shall bear his iniquity, because he has profaned the hallowed *offering* of the Lord; and that person shall be cut off from his people.

To violate the typology of the unblemished, incorruptible Christ was reason for excision from the people of God. Though the people didn’t have an explanation for this, there were two reasons they needed to be obedient. First, the command has been given. That alone is justification. Secondly, when Christ came, there would be no excuse in missing the typology that they had personally participated in for so many centuries.

⁹ ‘When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not wholly reap the corners of your field, nor shall you gather the gleanings of your harvest.

The subgroup continues with a seemingly unrelated admonition to not wholly reap the land. But, as the first law, that of the peace offering, concerns a relationship with the Lord, this law is directed to a relationship with one’s fellow man. It is the same thought as uniting the honoring of parents and the keeping of the Sabbath. One cannot honor

the Lord rightly if they do not care for their poor neighbors. How can one offer an acceptable peace offering to the Lord while not being a living peace offering to their neighbor?

And so Israel was instructed to leave the corners of their fields and not reap them. They were to further leave behind anything which dropped during the reaping process. They were not to bend over and pick it up. That way, the poor could follow after them and gather the gleanings. To understand this, and to see it in practice, read the book of Ruth. To understand the book of Ruth, watch or read the sermons on Ruth on the Superior Word website. This verse is a mirror of Leviticus 23:22. It contains rather remarkable Hebrew which will be looked at when we get there. Stay tuned!

¹⁰ And you shall not glean your vineyard, nor shall you gather every grape of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the poor and the stranger: I *am* the Lord your God.

Like the harvest of the field, so it was to be in the vineyard as well. Here, a unique word, *peret*, is seen. It essentially means single fruit, and it comes from another unique word, *parat*, which means “to chant.” As one improvises, or scatters, words in a chant, so single grapes are scattered on vines, and single grapes fall from bunches. When going over the vines, any clusters were to be taken, but any grapes growing by themselves were to be left. And any that dropped as the clusters were cut were to be left behind. All of this was for the sake of the poor and the stranger.

The first king of Israel, Saul, violated the law of the peace offering, as did others in the Old Testament. The word also condemns the people for oppressing the poor. In this, Israel failed to honor the Lord their God. This ends the fourth sub-grouping of the chapter.

¹¹ ‘You shall not steal, nor deal falsely, nor lie to one another.

Stealing here is a repeat of the Eighth Commandment. Dealing falsely, as well as lying, are all classed together as kindred sins. These same precepts carry through in the New Covenant as well.

¹² And you shall not swear by My name falsely, nor shall you profane the name of your God: I *am* the Lord.

These words correspond to the Third Commandment. There are those who believe that the Bible implies that it is inappropriate to make any vows, or to swear, at all. This is

incorrect. Vows are mandated elsewhere in Scripture. However, they are only to be made in the name of the Lord. Further, as this verse defines when one swears by the Lord's name, it was never to be a false vow.

Stealing, dealing falsely, and lying are found throughout Israel's time under the Law of Moses. Swearing falsely in the Lord's name is as well, such as in Isaiah 48:1. In this, Israel failed to honor the Lord their God. This ends the fifth sub-grouping of the chapter.

13 'You shall not cheat your neighbor, nor rob *him*. The wages of him who is hired shall not remain with you all night until morning.

The word "cheat" here gives the sense of oppression. One was not to do something towards their neighbor to bring hardship upon him, nor was anyone to rob their neighbor. And positive treatment of one's hired hand was expected as well. The word *peullah*, or wages, is introduced here. It means simply "labor," but it implies that which results from the labor, and thus wages. If a person worked, they were not to have their pay withheld from them. To say, "I will give it to you in the morning," was to deprive him of his food and bed in the night. What was owed was to be paid. This is seen still in practice at the time of Jesus as is reflected in the parable of the workers in the vineyard in Matthew 20.

14 You shall not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling block before the blind, but shall fear your God: I *am* the Lord.

These words are to be taken literally. Cursing a deaf person who cannot hear, and who then cannot respond in order to defend himself is truly wicked. But the term for deaf here also includes those who are out of range for hearing. It is inappropriate to curse someone who is not available to defend himself. Secondly, the Lord protects the blind by commanding that no person should ever put a *mikshol*, or stumblingblock, before them. The very thought of doing such a thing is a perverse, unholy thing. This "stumblingblock" is a new word which will be seen only fourteen times, with eight of them being found in Ezekiel.

Oppression and robbing by the people is seen elsewhere in the Old Testament. The other forms of wrongdoing are not specifically noted as having been done, but the same terms – blind and deaf – are specifically applied to Israel for failing to heed the Lord. In these things, Israel failed to honor Yehovah. This ends the sixth sub-grouping of the chapter.

¹⁵ ‘You shall do no injustice in judgment. You shall not be partial to the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty. In righteousness you shall judge your neighbor.

A new word, translated as “injustice,” and which is variously spelled and spoken, is brought in now. This thought is then further defined. It is both unjust to show partiality to the poor because he is poor, and to show preference to the mighty because he is mighty. Instead, the eyes of the one judging are to be blind to the state of the person, and are to judge according to what is right, regardless of how it will affect either the rich or the poor, or how they could benefit personally off such a judgment to the rich or to the poor.

Instead, all judgments are to be in righteousness alone. This should be an obvious precept in all places and at all times, but like Israel of old, America today violates both of these, and we do it with zeal. Toss in preference because of race, political affiliation, fame, and a host of other irrelevant issues, and injustice rules the land.

¹⁶ You shall not go about *as* a talebearer among your people; nor shall you take a stand against the life of your neighbor: I *am* the Lord.

The *rakil*, or talebearer, is introduced here. This is one who goes from place to place spreading false or defamatory statements. Such was to be rejected. In a similar fashion, gossips are especially spoken against in the New Testament. Along with this, one was not to take a stand against the blood, or life, of their neighbor. Injustice is spoken against numerous times. The talebearer being allowed to continue is spoken against in Jeremiah and Ezekiel, and the blood of Naboth was stood against by his neighbors in 1 Kings 21. In these and other instances, Israel failed to honor the Lord. This ends the seventh sub-grouping of the chapter.

¹⁷ ‘You shall not hate your brother in your heart. You shall surely rebuke your neighbor, and not bear sin because of him.

Hating one’s brother will inevitably lead to other sins. There is no way around this. Further, if a neighbor does wrong and we refrain from rebuking him, we are prone to bear sin because of his wrongdoing against us. Both are the natural course of such things. This second precept is explicitly laid out by Jesus in Luke 17:3.

¹⁸ You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I *am* the Lord.

The previous words were given to rebuke an offender. These now go further. If one rebukes, and no change takes place, the offended is still to refrain from taking vengeance, or even bearing a grudge. Offense is to flow like water off the back. These words are substantially repeated by Paul in Romans 12. And in an opposing positive to what has thus far been instructed, Israel was to go even further and love their neighbors, even as one loves himself.

The precepts of verse 17 are both explicitly violated by Absalom, son of David, in 2 Samuel 13. The commands of verse 18 are not explicitly stated as having been violated by Israel, but the Lord is said to take vengeance against them for their own infractions. In this, Israel failed to honor the Lord. This ends the eighth sub-grouping of the chapter.

¹⁹ ‘You shall keep My statutes. You shall not let your livestock breed with another kind. You shall not sow your field with mixed seed. Nor shall a garment of mixed linen and wool come upon you.

The words, “You shall keep my statutes,” look to what follows. These precepts are to be followed without fail. The first is to keep types of livestock from interbreeding. The word *kilayim*, or kind, is introduced here. It will be seen three times in this verse and once in Deuteronomy. Such interbreeding worked against the natural order of things established in Genesis 1. Despite not allowing interbreeding, the use of interbred animals is seen in the use of mules in the Old Testament. The first such time refers to the mules of the sons of King David.

Next, to sow fields with mixed seed would stress the soil, and it would also stress the crops – one type fighting against another. Thus, this was forbidden. And finally, no garment was to be made of both linen and wool. The words “linen and wool” are a single Hebrew word, *shaatnez*, which is found only here and in Deuteronomy 22:11. It means “mixed stuff.” To wear a garment of two or more materials would cause the garment to wear out unevenly. Only garments of single materials were thus to be worn. These laws each carry a moral meaning which can be summed up in New Testament verses such as –

“You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the Lord’s table and of the table of demons.” 1 Corinthians 10:21

“Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? ¹⁵ And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer

with an unbeliever? ¹⁶ And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God.” 2 Corinthians 6:14-16

These verses in Leviticus are given to point us to the spiritual truth that we are not to mix the holy with the profane. One will always stress, and often wear out the other.

²⁰ ‘Whoever lies carnally with a woman who *is* betrothed to a man as a concubine, and who has not at all been redeemed nor given her freedom, for this there shall be scourging; *but* they shall not be put to death, because she was not free.

What is seen here is a woman who is a bondwoman who is espoused to another man. She is partly free, but still partly slave. Such an espousal would not yet be considered legally complete, and so a verdict of adultery could not be made because she was not properly married to another man. Only a scourging, but not a sentence of death could be handed out in such a case. It is debated whether the scourging was to be on the woman only, or on both. However, only the man was required to bring a trespass offering...

²¹ And he shall bring his trespass offering to the Lord, to the door of the tabernacle of meeting, a ram as a trespass offering.

The woman, being the property of another, and thus having no property of her own, could not bring a trespass offering. However, the man was required to do so. The laws for the trespass offering have already been given, and so the specifics of this are not detailed now. However, the symbolism, if you recall, points directly to Christ and His work in forgiving our trespasses.

²² The priest shall make atonement for him with the ram of the trespass offering before the Lord for his sin which he has committed. And the sin which he has committed shall be forgiven him.

With this offering according to what is laid out in the law, the sins are atoned for, and thus the trespass is forgiven. Although the offense may seem highly unusual to us today, it is exactly appropriate for a society which included the ownership of slaves.

²³ ‘When you come into the land, and have planted all kinds of trees for food, then you shall count their fruit as uncircumcised. Three years it shall be as uncircumcised to you. *It* shall not be eaten.

The verse here is one of blessing. First, it says, "When you come into the land." The blessing of entering the land is implied. Next, it says, "and have planted all kinds of trees." The blessing of possessing the land in permanence is implied. Next it says, "for food." The blessing of productive land, land which will produce food, is implied. Then it says, "you shall count their fruit as uncircumcised." There is the blessed assurance that the plants will bear. Next, it says, "Three years it shall be as uncircumcised to you." The blessing of healthy trees, that the land will remain in the planter's possession, and they will continue to bear, are all implied. The mandates here only apply to trees planted after arrival in the land. Those already established were not under this law.

In this verse, the word *aral*, or "to count as foreskin," meaning uncircumcised, is seen. It will be seen just once more in Habakkuk 2:16. And so what the Hebrew reads is, "and you shall circumcise its uncircumcision. The fruit itself is considered uncircumcised, and so the blossom is to be plucked off as if circumcising it. This increases the health and strength of the plant, something known for countless generations. In this law, it would keep those who were untrained in such things from causing themselves undue harm in later years because of having weak, poorly performing trees.

²⁴ But in the fourth year all its fruit shall be holy, a praise to the Lord.

The word *hillul*, or "praise" is to be seen only here and in Judges 9:27. It is a festival, or rejoicing, for the harvest. The fruit was to be considered both holy, and an offering to the Lord. The priests would certainly receive it and do with it according to the law, probably going so far as to apportion it out to the poor and needy, and so on. It may also be that the fruit could be eaten in Jerusalem at a pilgrim feast as an offering and a praise to the Lord, but it could not be commonly eaten at home at this time.

²⁵ And in the fifth year you may eat its fruit, that it may yield to you its increase: I am the Lord your God.

In the fifth year, the fruit belonged to the household, except for the tithe, which certainly applied to fruit trees as well as other produce. For two years, that tithe would be eaten in Jerusalem at a pilgrim feast, or it would be exchanged for money and the money spent at the feast. In the third year, this fruit tithe would be given away as prescribed by law. The words, "that it may yield its increase" are given as a promise that if the law was obeyed, it would bear as anticipated. As Charles Ellicott states, "So far, therefore, from being losers by waiting till the fifth year, they will actually be gainers." This ends the ninth sub-grouping of the chapter.

²⁶ ‘You shall not eat *anything* with the blood, nor shall you practice divination or soothsaying.

These prohibitions are given to avoid participating in any type of heathen practices. It is more than probable that this is a special reference to magic or idolatrous rites which included the eating of blood, or meals which included blood. The second prohibition is a cause of much conjecture. The Hebrew says, *lo tenakhashu*. Some see the word as deriving from *nakhash*, or serpent, and so it is divination by serpents. Another believes it is from a word meaning, “to whisper.” And so it is mutterings and incantations.

Thirdly, it says *v’lo teonenu*. The word comes from *anan*, or “cloud,” and so it is the clouding over of an enchanter for divination, or the reading of clouds for telling good or bad fortune.

²⁷ You shall not shave around the sides of your head, nor shall you disfigure the edges of your beard.

The word *naqaph*, or around, is introduced here. It is what the men of war will do when going around Jericho in order to destroy it. The cutting of the hair around the head to form a hemisphere to look like one of the three stooges was done by Arabs and other worshipers of the god Orotal. The practice is mentioned in proper translations of several verses in Jeremiah.

The second practice, that of disfiguring the edges of one’s beard, is too troubling to contemplate, so we will go on... Actually, to cut off the corners of the beard was a practice of pagans. They would take the cuttings and offer them to their gods. Though these prohibitions were stated in a now-fulfilled law, one must ask himself why they would ever want to cut their beard. It’s almost incomprehensible to consider.

²⁸ You shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor tattoo any marks on you: I *am* the Lord.

Seret, or “cuttings” which are intended for the dead, and *kethobeth qaaq*, or “marks tattoos” are both introduced here. This will be the only mention of tattoos in Scripture. Both were pagan practices which defiled the body, created in the image of God. They were for superstitious reasons, and in some cases it was to honor their gods. Although not all of these practices are explicitly stated as having been violated by Israel, some of them are, such as practicing soothsaying. In these ways, Israel failed to honor the Lord. This ends the tenth sub-grouping of the chapter.

²⁹ ‘Do not prostitute your daughter, to cause her to be a harlot, lest the land fall into harlotry, and the land become full of wickedness.

This was, and in parts of the world to this day remains, a common custom. Fathers selling daughters causes the practice to increase, even to the point where the entire land becomes filled with immorality. At times, the daughters were sold into whoredom for the sake of appeasing their gods, this then led to spiritual harlotry as well. One thing always leading to another, the Lord forbade this.

³⁰ ‘You shall keep My Sabbaths and reverence My sanctuary: I *am* the Lord.

The admonition here is purposeful. Instead of following the pagan practices just described, the people were to observe the weekly Sabbaths, and reverence the Lord’s sanctuary. The other practices drew their hearts away from Him; these would draw them near to Him. But, the pagan practices were often followed. Whoredom in the land, both literal and spiritual flourished, and the Lord’s sanctuary was often abandoned by the people. Israel failed to honor the Lord. This ends the eleventh sub-grouping of the chapter.

³¹ ‘Give no regard to mediums and familiar spirits; do not seek after them, to be defiled by them: I *am* the Lord your God.

Ov or “mediums,” meaning necromancers, and *yiddeoni*, or spiritists, meaning wizards, or conjurers, are both introduced here. Israel’s recorded history is plagued with such people coming into fashion, being expelled by good kings, and coming back into fashion under bad kings. Israel failed to honor the Lord their God through this. So ends the twelfth sub-grouping of the chapter.

³² ‘You shall rise before the gray headed and honor the presence of an old man, and fear your God: I am the Lord.

This is given as a stark contrast to those things previously mentioned. Though they were to be rejected and ignored, the gray headed was to be honored, even with great reverence. This custom was, and is, not unknown among the pagans, but it is specifically mandated here by the Lord. Some go so far as to teach rising when they pass by, and then sitting down again so that they know you rose for them. Job says, “Wisdom is with aged men, And with length of days, understanding” (Job 12:12). Old age in the Bible is considered an honorable thing which is to be rewarded with respect. This ends the thirteenth sub-grouping of the chapter.

³³ ‘And if a stranger dwells with you in your land, you shall not mistreat him.

A stranger willing to dwell with the Israelites, and who was willing to submit himself to the laws and customs of the land, was not to be oppressed. Interestingly, throughout the chapter, the Lord has been speaking to all of Israel. Suddenly, He speaks to only one person, then to all again. It says, “And if a stranger dwells with you (singular) in your land (plural), do not mistreat (plural) him. The singular must be speaking of Messiah. The verse is telling Israel that if someone dwells with the Lord, who is a son of Israel, he is to be treated as one of them. An example of this would be Ruth who chose the Lord as her God. Jesus, the Messiah of the Jews, is Christ of the Gentiles.

**³⁴ The stranger who dwells among you shall be to you as one born among you, and you shall love him as yourself; for you were strangers in the land of Egypt:
I *am* the Lord your God.**

Israel, all of Israel, came from another land. Even if they were born in the land of Israel, their forefathers were brought out of Egypt and into the land of Israel. As the Lord loved Israel and brought them into the land, and as He treated them as the rightful owners of the land, He commanded the Israelites to so treat the foreigners who dwelt among them. This command is repeated by the Lord in Ezekiel 47:22, a time after the tribulation period. The foreigners who remain at that time are to be considered as native born. However, in Ezekiel 22:7, the Israelites violated this precept. Israel failed to honor the Lord through this. This ends the fourteenth sub-grouping of the chapter.

³⁵ ‘You shall do no injustice in judgment, in measurement of length, weight, or volume.

Fair judgment was to be imparted as well. In measurements of length, weight, and volume, there was to be a set standard. This is so much so that in Scripture a right measure is noted as coming from the Lord Himself. It is He who sets the standard, and therefore, to violate that is to violate His character. And false dealings were then considered a wicked abomination. In this verse, a new word, *mesurah*, is given. It is where the English word measure is derived from. It specifically speaks of measure by volume. To support this verse, we next read...

**³⁶ You shall have honest scales, honest weights, an honest ephah, and an honest hin:
I *am* the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt.**

The term “honest” means that these instruments and units were to be the same for buying and for selling, and they were to be based upon a set standard. The *mozen*, or

scales, are introduced here. In Israel, they consisted of balances. They were to be honest and would prove the weights, or amounts, accordingly. The originals of these things would surely have been maintained at the sanctuary. Any cheater could be found out by comparing with the set standard. That is, unless those in the sanctuary also dealt in an underhanded manner. But this was not to be the case. The Lord brought them out of Egypt, and He expected the people to act in accord with His divine law.

It is seen in the Old Testament that Israel failed to honor the Lord their God through these weights and measures. This ends the fifteenth sub-grouping of the chapter.

³⁷ 'Therefore you shall observe all My statutes and all My judgments, and perform them: I *am* the Lord.'

It is because of the Lord's work, His redemption, His guarantee of their inheriting the land, His promised blessings upon them, and for watching over them while they worked, and as they slept – and for countless other reasons of blessing – He told them that they were not given license to sin, but to hold to His statutes and judgments, performing them because it was right to do so. Unfortunately, and as we have seen, Israel failed to honor Yehovah in these many ways. This ends the sixteenth and final sub-grouping of the chapter.

Having shown, once again, the failings of Israel under the law, is it any wonder that the Lord sent Jesus? Without Him, there is nothing but failure on the part of man. There is the constant falling away from what is sound, holy, and also reasonable. It is in our very nature. Israel was merely selected as God's nation to show us this. They were given the perfect land, the most marvelous of promises, and the greatest of abundance and blessing. And yet, they continuously turned from Him to the path which was unsound.

Were it not for His covenantal promise to keep them as a people, they would have been utterly swept away with the sands of time. But He did preserve them, and through them came the Savior of the world. In all of the laws we have seen today, and in all of the countless other laws which are recorded in the Law of Moses, He never violated one. Now, through Him, restoration with God is possible. The law which stood opposed to us, and which brought us condemnation, is fulfilled in Him. By a simple act of faith in that, you can be reconciled to God, and your account will be recorded as "Not guilty. This one stands justified." I would hope that you would make the choice today to call out to this wonderful God who is so willing to forgive, that He did all the work Himself.

Closing Verse: *“Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. ²⁰ Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.” Romans 3:19, 20*

Next Week: *In doing good, they needed to be nudged... Leviticus 20:1-27 (In These, Israel Will be Judged) (33rd Leviticus Sermon)*

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if you have a lifetime of sin heaped up behind you, He can wash it away and purify you completely and wholly. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

Holy Behavior Towards God and Man

And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying
These are the words He was then relaying

“Speak to all the congregation
Of the children of Israel
And say to them: ‘You shall be holy
For I the Lord your God am holy, so to you I tell

‘Every one of you shall revere
His mother and his father, as in this life you trod
And keep My Sabbaths
I am the Lord your God
‘Do not turn to idols
Nor for yourselves molded gods make:
I am the Lord your God
These words you shall not forsake

‘And if you offer a sacrifice
Of a peace offering to the Lord
You shall offer it of your own free will
Pay heed to this word
It shall be eaten the same day you offer it
And on the next day too
And if any remains until the third day

It shall be burned in the fire, so you shall do
And if it is eaten at all on the third day
It is an abomination
It shall not be accepted, not in any way
Therefore everyone who eats it shall bear his iniquity
Because he has profaned the hallowed offering of the Lord
And that person shall be cut off from his people
So shall it be according to this word
'When you reap the harvest of your land
You shall not reap the corners of your field wholly
Nor shall you gather the gleanings of your harvest
Heed these instructions given by Me

And you shall not glean your vineyard
Nor shall you gather every grape of your vineyard too
You shall leave them for the poor and the stranger: I am the Lord your God
So these things you shall do

'You shall not steal, nor deal falsely, nor lie to one another
And you shall not swear by My name falsely
Nor shall you profane the name of your God:
I am the Lord, and so these things shall be
'You shall not cheat your neighbor
Nor rob him. Pay heed to this warning
The wages of him who is hired
Shall not remain with you all night until morning

You shall not curse the deaf
Nor put a stumbling block before the blind
But shall fear your God: I am the Lord
These things you shall keep always in your mind
'You shall do no injustice in judgment
You shall not be partial to the poor
Nor honor the person of the mighty
In righteousness you shall judge your neighbor

You shall not go about as a talebearer among your people
-----Pay careful heed to this word
Nor shall you take a stand against the life of your neighbor:

I am the Lord
'You shall not hate your brother in your heart
No, you shall not be so grim
You shall surely rebuke your neighbor
And not bear sin because of him
You shall not take vengeance
Nor bear any grudge against the children of your people
-----so you have heard
But you shall love your neighbor as yourself:
I am the Lord

'You shall keep My statutes
You shall not let your livestock breed with another kind
-----this you shall not do
You shall not sow your field with mixed seed
Nor shall a garment of mixed linen and wool come upon you

'Whoever lies carnally with a woman
Who is betrothed to a man as a concubine, you see
And who has not at all been redeemed nor given her freedom
For this a scourging there shall be
But they shall not be put to death, you see
Because she was not free

And he shall bring
His trespass offering to the Lord
To the door of the tabernacle of meeting
A ram as a trespass offering, according to this word
The priest shall make atonement for him
With the ram of the trespass offering, it shall be admitted
Before the Lord for his sin which he has committed
And it shall be forgiven him the sin which he has committed

'When you come into the land
-----and have planted all kinds of trees for food
Then you shall count their fruit as uncircumcised
Three years it shall be as uncircumcised to you
It shall not be eaten, of this law please be apprised
But in the fourth year all its fruit shall be holy

A praise to the Lord, and therefore shall it be
And in the fifth year you may eat its fruit
That it may yield to you its increase:
I am the Lord your God
In obedience, to you there shall be peace

'You shall not eat anything with the blood, as I am now relaying
Nor shall you practice divination or soothsaying

You shall not shave around the sides of your head
-----which would look weird
Nor shall you disfigure the edges of your beard

You shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead
Nor tattoo any marks on you: I am the Lord; do as I have said
Do not prostitute your daughter
To cause her to be a harlot, pay heed to this address
Lest the land fall into harlotry
And the land become full of wickedness

You shall keep My Sabbaths and reverence My sanctuary:
I am the Lord; these instructions in your heart you shall carry
Give no regard to mediums and familiar spirits
Do not seek after them, to be defiled by them, so I tell you
I am the Lord your God
These things you are expected to not do

You shall rise before the gray headed
So shall you do according to this word
And honor the presence of an old man
And fear your God: I am the Lord

And if a stranger dwells with you in your land
You shall not mistreat him, please understand
The stranger who dwells among you
Shall be to you as one born among you
And you shall love him as yourself
For you were strangers in the land of Egypt:
-----I am the Lord your God; so this you shall do

You shall do no injustice in judgment
In measurement of length, weight, or volume
You shall have honest scales, honest weights
An honest ephah, and an honest hin:
-----Yes, honesty in all shall you assume

I am the Lord your God
Who brought you out of the land of Egypt, as you know
'Therefore you shall observe all My statutes and all My judgments
And perform them: I am the Lord; it shall be so

Oh impossible law, where can I go from you?
Who will from this body of death free me?
To Jesus Christ, I will go; it is what I will do
The law is a tutor to lead me to Him, and in Him I am set free

By this law, I have a consciousness of sin
How utterly sinful sin is, by it I can clearly see
By this law, I am utterly defeated; I am done in
But by faith in Jesus, He has set me free

Thank You Lord God for the giving of Your Son
Thank You that You have broken off the yoke and set me free
By faith alone I am saved; through His cross it is done
Now I can live for You, but when I fail
-----You have already forgiven me

Thank You for the perfect life of my Lord
Who fulfilled every detail of Your perfect word

Hallelujah and Amen...

LEVITICUS 20:1-27

(IN THESE, ISRAEL WILL BE JUDGED)

When we get down to verse 22, we will once again read of the promise to Israel that they would enter and possess the land of Canaan. It would be theirs as an inheritance. It is a great promise, but it is one which is both conditional and unconditional, depending on certain things. That will be seen when we get to those verses. The nature of the promise is based on the law. That has been seen, it will be seen today, and it will continue to be seen.

But, there is a greater inheritance for us which is not based on the law. And it is a promise which actually predates the law itself. Paul speaks of it several times in his writings. In the book of Romans, he speaks of it quite a bit. If it is not based on the law though, then what is it based on? He tells us in our text verse of the day...

Text Verse: *“For the promise that he would be the heir of the world was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴ For if those who are of the law are heirs, faith is made void and the promise made of no effect, ¹⁵ because the law brings about wrath; for where there is no law there is no transgression.”*

-Romans 4:13-15

Paul, under inspiration of the Holy Spirit, clearly tells us that the law brings about wrath. Who wants that? What kind of perverse individual would set aside faith in Christ’s fulfillment of the law in order to face God’s wrath? Well, there are lots of them out there.

And I’m not talking about Jews who have simply rejected Christ outright. I’m referring to supposed Christians who have accepted Him in His Person, but rejected Him in His action. Unfortunately, one cannot separate a person from his actions. Just as David said to Saul, “Wickedness proceeds from the wicked,” so righteousness proceeds from the Righteous. What Christ did was righteous. And from Him proceeds righteousness. When one receives Christ and what He did, they receive His righteousness. To reject what He did is to reject what He is. Paul says that if those who are of the law are heirs, faith is made void and the promise made of no effect. We can either live by faith in Christ – all of Christ, meaning all of what He has done for us, or we can attempt to earn God’s favor and obtain the inheritance apart from Him. There are no other options. Israel found out that obtaining the inheritance was not so easy. In fact, they still don’t have it. It is the constant and firm message of the Bible.

We can honor the Lord as He determines, and thus be pleasing to God, or we can set about to obtain righteousness on our own. But the Lord has determined – it is by faith in Christ Jesus and His work that we stand justified. It is by deeds of the law that we stand condemned. Do you want the promised inheritance? Then trust in Jesus. This is the message which is found once again in today’s passage. It is the lesson of His superior word. And so let’s turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. Dishonoring the Lord as Father (verses 1-9)

¹Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying,

Like the words of Chapters 18 & 19, words of law lie ahead, and so the Lord speaks directly and only to Moses. Whereas the previous chapters gave moral and ceremonial laws for holy conduct towards God and fellow man, these verses will explain the penalties for violating such laws. The Lord is slowly and methodically revealing to Israel His will, and consequences for disobedience to that will.

Chapter 18, after listing many of the perversions which were to be abstained from, said that it was for these things that the occupants of the land would be vomited out. He then said that any of Israel who committed these things would be cut off from among their people. Chapter 19 continued with prescribing laws for the people. Now, the specific punishments for violations will be given. This is to keep the land undefiled. If these judgments are not followed, the implication is that land would likewise vomit Israel out.

²“Again, you shall say to the children of Israel:

The words given are for the whole congregation. They are to be commonly known and adhered to by all. The only way such laws could be expected to be obeyed is if all of the people heard them. The precepts laid down were to be commonly held knowledge, and the penalties for violating them were to be made known. In this, there was to be instilled in the people the fear of consequence for failing to be obedient to the precepts.

^{2 (con’t)} ‘Whoever of the children of Israel, or of the strangers who dwell in Israel, who gives *any* of his descendants to Molech, he shall surely be put to death.

In Chapter 18, the laws of incest were mentioned first, and in detail. Only then was the prohibition against giving one's descendants to Molech addressed. Now that is reversed, and the prohibition concerning Molech is stated first.

As was the case in Chapter 18, the Hebrew word for "descendant" here is *zara*, it simply means "seed." This may actually be referring to child sacrifice as will be seen later in the Bible, but it very well may be speaking only of a perverse offering of intimacy to the idol Molech where the man's semen is made an offering, either to a prostitute of Molech, or to the idol itself. As most of the chapter deals with sexual misconduct, this is not at all unlikely.

The seed of Israel was to be kept pure and holy. It was not to be used for defiled purposes, and the intent of the people was to lead to Messiah, if the people offered their seed – literal, or in the form of children – it was a direct challenge to the redemptive purposes of the Lord for bringing Messiah into the world. And so, regardless as to what the offering is, the person was to be put to death.

² (con't) **The people of the land shall stone him with stones.**

Not only was the person to be put to death, but the Lord determines the exact type of death he was to suffer, that of stoning. In this verse is the first use of the verb *ragam*, or stoning, in the Bible. The act of stoning has already been mentioned eight times in Exodus, but using a different word, *saqal*. The two are actually synonyms, and both are used in one verse in Joshua, for example, to convey the same meaning -

And Joshua said, "Why have you troubled us? The Lord will trouble you this day."
So all Israel **stoned** (*ragam*) him with stones; and they burned them with fire after they had **stoned** (*saqal*) them with stones. Joshua 7:25

Stoning, or lapidation as it is known, was the most severe means of capital punishment among the people of Israel. It was something which carried on, even into New Testament times. It continues to be practiced by followers of Islam today. The idea of this type of punishment is that the person was no longer fit to touch. Instead, the people were to stand at a distance and destroy him *ba'eben*, or "by (a) stone," The word is singular. Stone is created by God, thus this indicates that they were the instruments of God's righteous judgment upon the offender.

³ **I will set My face against that man, and will cut him off from his people,**

The verse in the Hebrew begins with “And.” “And I will set my face...” It has already been said that he was to be put to death by stoning, and so this, at first, seems curious. But the next verses explain the matter. If the people refuse to stone him, or if there is not sufficient evidence in order to convict him, it will not in any way negate what is coming to him. The Lord promises that no matter what, 1) He will set His face against him, and 2) He will cut him off from his people.

For the Lord to set His face against someone is an indication of wrath and indignation. He will be the object of the Lord’s fury. This then will result in the person being cut off from his people.

^{3 (con’t)} **because he has given *some* of his descendants to Molech, to defile My sanctuary and profane My holy name.**

There are three main reasons for cutting him off. The first is that he has cut himself off through his act. He has taken his seed and offered it to a false god. This has essentially been a willful cutting off of himself from both the Lord, and from posterity within the Lord’s covenant people.

Secondly, he has defiled the Lord’s sanctuary. Through sin, the people contracted defilement. In turn, they defiled the sanctuary of the Lord which remained in the midst of them. This was seen, for example, in Leviticus 15:31 concerning uncleanness from discharges. There the Lord said, “Thus you shall separate the children of Israel from their uncleanness, lest they die in their uncleanness when they defile My tabernacle that is among them.” He repeats this same sentiment in Leviticus 16 as well.

Thirdly, the offender would profane the Lord’s holy name. This would occur in several ways, first, by acknowledging a lesser god, it would diminish the name of the Lord in the eyes of other nations, having reduced Him to the level of any false god. It would also diminish His name because the man offered his own seed to a false god, but only animal sacrifices to the Lord. Thus in other’s eyes, the greater offering was made to the false god. In this, the name of the Lord would be despised by the man, and disgraced in the eyes of others.

⁴ **And if the people of the land should in any way hide their eyes from the man, when he gives *some* of his descendants to Molech, and they do not kill him,**

There is a stress in the Hebrew here where the word “hide” is repeated. In essence, it says, “And if in hiding, the people hide their eyes.” It is a way of saying that the people have willingly shut their eyes to what this man has done.

In this, they may know what he did and refuse to acknowledge it, or if they simply look away from it as if it was his own business, or if they will not bear witness against him, or if the court will not find guilt in him for his action, or for any other such reason, they will have failed to act. Instead of executing him, they allow him to live. If such be the case...

⁵ then I will set My face against that man and against his family; and I will cut him off from his people, and all who prostitute themselves with him to commit harlotry with Molech.

When the people hide their eyes from the thing that has been done by such a man, all involved will suffer the wrath of the Lord. He will set His face against him as the offender, against his family who was aware of his actions, and he will cut off every person who was aware of, but unwilling to respond against, his actions. In this, the Lord says they have prostituted themselves and committed harlotry. This is to be taken in the general, biblical sense of idolatry with false gods being considered harlotry. In this case, it is with *ha'molekh*, or “the Molech,” that they have so acted.

The name Molech means “king.” By placing an article in front of it here, the Lord is essentially saying they are commuting harlotry with “the king.” They have willfully chosen another sovereign over themselves in place of the Lord. It is the greatest of offense.

In this harlotry to Molech, Israel failed. Several times. Solomon built a high place for Molech, and both 2 Kings 23 and Jeremiah 32 explicitly state that the people offered to Molech. It is also implicitly referred to in Ezekiel 23.

⁶ ‘And the person who turns to mediums and familiar spirits, to prostitute himself with them, I will set My face against that person and cut him off from his people.

This was first forbidden in 19:31. There the Lord said to give them no regard nor seek after them. By doing so, they would become defiled. Here, the punishment is stated as coming from the Lord. He would personally act against anyone who failed to obey this precept. A record of Him doing just this is found in 1 Chronicles 10. King Saul had sought out a medium, and the Lord acted –

“So Saul died for his unfaithfulness which he had committed against the Lord, because he did not keep the word of the Lord, and also because he consulted a medium for guidance. ¹⁴ But *he* did not inquire of the Lord; therefore He killed him, and turned the kingdom over to David the son of Jesse.”

-1 Chronicles 10:13, 14

⁷ Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I *am* the Lord your God.

This is a positive command in order to battle against the need for negative ones. This is the purpose of the entire passage. The people were to stay clear of that which was unclean, morally offensive, and which would profane the name of the Lord as well as defile His sanctuary. This could only come about by refraining from such sin, punishing such sin in those who did not comply, or by purification through the sacrificial system when allowed.

⁸ And you shall keep My statutes, and perform them:

The words here point not just to the statutes so far mentioned, but to all of those which had and would issue from Him. They were to both keep and perform. One can keep without performing, such as in the person who knows to do right, but doesn't do it. One can also perform without keeping. Such would be the person who does what is right without having considered it as right or not. He simply acted, and his actions were proper. The Lord wanted a wholeness in the people where they would mentally carry His statutes with them, and also perform what they carried in their minds.

⁸ (con't) I *am* the Lord who sanctifies you.

This is one of three times that the Lord states this in the Pentateuch. He also repeats it in Ezekiel 20. The Lord told the people to sanctify themselves because He had, in fact sanctified them. There is a mutual outworking of the sanctification which needed to occur. If they failed to do this, the Lord's sanctification of them was nullified in them.

⁹ 'For everyone who curses his father or his mother shall surely be put to death. He has cursed his father or his mother. His blood *shall be* upon him.

The verse begins with the word *ki*, or “for.” Therefore, it is being uniquely tied in with what was just said. To curse father or mother is to bring discredit upon the name of the Lord who ordained the genealogy of the child.

In the previous chapter, the opposite of what we see here was stated. There it said, “Every one of you shall revere his mother and his father.” Now it uses the word *qalal*. It means “curse,” but it also carries the sense of making light of something. Thus it includes speaking disrespectfully, or diminishingly of one’s parents. It is the polar opposite of revering them.

Further, unlike verse 19:3, where the mother was placed first, here the father is. It is a clear indication that the Lord expects equal reverence for both parents, and to do verbal harm to them is a punishable offense. In this, it says that, “His blood shall be upon him.” In Exodus 21:17, it explicitly says that he who cursed his father or his mother was to be put to death. The words here, “his blood shall be upon him,” signify that. He is guilty of death, and that is what he is to receive.

*Lord, You are as a Father to us, it is true
But we often dishonor You in thought and act
In the things we think, and say, and do
We diminish Your glory, by showing no tact*

*Help us to be pleasing children in Your sight
Correct us when we walk in the wrong way
Illuminate our path with Your guiding light
And keep us, O Lord, from ever going astray*

*Lord, You are as a Father to us, it is true
And it is our heart’s desire to honor You as such
To live holy in all we think, and say, and do
And so when we stray, send Your corrective touch*

II. Dishonoring the Lord through relations (verses 10-21)

¹⁰ ‘The man who commits adultery with *another* man’s wife, *he* who commits adultery with his neighbor’s wife, the adulterer and the adulteress, shall surely be put to death.

This is the seventh of the Ten Commandments, and it is also explicitly warned against in verse 18:20. In Israel, this went only one way. When a man, single or married, slept with a married woman, both were to be put to death by stoning. However, as polygamy was allowed in Israel, the same was not true with an unmarried woman sleeping with a married man.

¹¹ The man who lies with his father's wife has uncovered his father's nakedness; both of them shall surely be put to death. Their blood *shall be* upon them.

This was forbidden in 18:7, 8. For disobeying this, the penalty was death. Again, it says, "Their blood *shall be* upon them." What they have done is deserving of death, and death is what they are expected to receive.

¹² If a man lies with his daughter-in-law, both of them shall surely be put to death. They have committed perversion. Their blood *shall be* upon them.

This was forbidden in 18:17. The act is described by a word, *tebel*, which was first seen in 18:23 in regards to bestiality. It means "mixture," and thus "confusion." In this act, there is a confusing of what is right and proper. The lines of propriety have been completely jumbled up through such an act, and thus their blood is upon them. This is the last use of *tebel* in Scripture, tate to it.

¹³ If a man lies with a male as he lies with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination. They shall surely be put to death. Their blood *shall be* upon them.

This was forbidden in 18:22, and it is considered as an especially revolting crime because it is contrary to nature itself. For such, there was to be but one penalty, death. Literally, "dying they shall die." They were deserving of death, and they were to be executed.

¹⁴ If a man marries a woman and her mother, it *is* wickedness. They shall be burned with fire, both he and they, that there may be no wickedness among you.

This was warned against in 18:17. Here it is described as *zimmah*, or "wickedness." It literally means "a plan," and thus it is an especially bad one. The offenders devised something perverse, and for it they were to be burned with fire. What this most likely means is that they were to first be stoned, and then their bodies burned with fire. This is the penalty for Achan in Joshua 7:25. That account seems to interpret what this passage here means.

¹⁵ If a man mates with an animal, he shall surely be put to death, and you shall kill the animal.

Like the perverse sin of homosexuality, the same is true with bestiality. This was warned against in 18:23. If such a thing occurred, then dying he shall die, and the animal was to be killed as well. This held for both man and woman...

¹⁶ If a woman approaches any animal and mates with it, you shall kill the woman and the animal. They shall surely be put to death. Their blood *is* upon them.

There was no partiality or unfairness against one sex or the other. Just as if a man committed this perverse act, so it was with a woman. In the end, dying they shall die, and the beast was to be killed as well. In this, they were deserving of death, and the sentence was to be carried out.

¹⁷ 'If a man takes his sister, his father's daughter or his mother's daughter, and sees her nakedness and she sees his nakedness, it *is* a wicked thing. And they shall be cut off in the sight of their people. He has uncovered his sister's nakedness. He shall bear his guilt.

This was forbidden in 18:9 & 11. The second clause explains the first. To “see” his or her nakedness means to participate in the physical act of a union, not just to behold with the eyes. This is what King David's son Amnon was guilty of, but nothing was immediately done about the crime. However, in the end, he was cut off from his people, just as is promised here when he was killed by his brother Absalom.

The act here is termed a *khesed*, or disgrace, and the one who is so engaged in it is said to bear his guilt. The term “cut off” is debated though. Does it mean formal excommunication, or does it mean death. Scholars are divided, but either way it is termed a disgrace.

¹⁸ If a man lies with a woman during her sickness and uncovers her nakedness, he has exposed her flow, and she has uncovered the flow of her blood. Both of them shall be cut off from their people.

This was forbidden in 18:19. The command extends to both in the use of the two clauses – 1) He has exposed her flow, and 2) she has uncovered the flow of her blood. This indicates prior knowledge by both, and they have willfully violated the precept. The problem with this is that it is an intimate act, and so for the punishment of being cut off from the people to be brought about, they would have to openly admit the act.

¹⁹ 'You shall not uncover the nakedness of your mother's sister nor of your father's sister, for that would uncover his near of kin. They shall bear their guilt.

This was expressly forbidden in 18:12, 13. No civil punishment is explicitly made for this offense. Instead, it simply says that they shall bear their guilt. It appears then that the

Lord would determine what was suitable to the offense as He directed their lives according to His wisdom. Such is seen in the next verse...

²⁰ If a man lies with his uncle's wife, he has uncovered his uncle's nakedness. They shall bear their sin; they shall die childless.

This was spoken against in 18:14. The punishment given here, that they shall die childless, is one which could carry several meanings. It seems unlikely that the Lord would divinely intervene in every such marriage, keeping them from having children. It also seems unlikely that any children born to such a union would die before their parents, thus rendering them childless at their own death. What is more likely is that any child born to such a union would not be counted as the result of that union. Instead, it would – by law – be reckoned as the child of the uncle to whom she was first married. In this, the offending man would never have his own progeny after him, and the offending woman would bear the disgrace of having a child which was not reckoned to the natural father. Such seems more likely, and it follows through to the next verse...

²¹ If a man takes his brother's wife, it is an unclean thing. He has uncovered his brother's nakedness. They shall be childless.

This was prohibited in 18:16. The same penalty for the previous offense would be imposed here, bearing the same disgrace to the offenders. The explanation given seems all the more likely, because the only other times that *ariri*, or “childless,” is seen in Scripture are in Genesis 15:2, and Jeremiah 22:30, both of which carry the connotation of bearing shame at dying without progeny. The person mentioned in Jeremiah 22:30 actually did have children though.

*Lord God, Your word is written, Old Testament and New
And the words are clear concerning sexual sin
There is intimacy we may enjoy, and other things we may not do
One will bring us life; by the other we are done in*

*But the lines are blurred, even in our church today
People call evil that which is right and good
And that which is perverse is given a resounding “It’s OK!”
How can something so clear be so hugely misunderstood?*

*Lord God, keep us from sexual immorality which does defile
Keep us on the narrow path where life and health is found*

*In paying heed to your word, we shall receive a welcome smile
And in Your presence joy and peace shall evermore abound*

*Lead us, O God, be near and watch over us
We come to You, O Father, through our Lord Jesus*

III. Separation Unto the Lord (verses 22-27)

²² ‘You shall therefore keep all My statutes and all My judgments, and perform them, that the land where I am bringing you to dwell may not vomit you out.

This is what is known as a prosopopoeia. It is a figure of speech in which an abstract thing is personified. In this case, the land is so personified, indicating that the sins of the people would cause it to vomit the people out. This was to be the case with the current inhabitants, and Israel would not be immune from such a measure if they failed to pay heed to the statutes and judgments which were placed before them now.

In the end, the two exiles of Israel can only be ascribed to their own disobedience. The two returns of Israel must then be ascribed to the covenant faithfulness of the Lord, which is in accord with His mercy towards those He covenanted with. There is no merit in Israel in their return, and there is only blame in them for their exile.

²³ And you shall not walk in the statutes of the nation which I am casting out before you; for they commit all these things, and therefore I abhor them.

Although these words are a part of the Law of Moses, many of these are moral standards which are directed by the conscience. An obvious one is homosexuality. Paul speaks of this in Romans 1. In fact, this entire passage contains mandates which are generally considered normal in most societies. However, only through the giving of the law can sin be imputed. The natural workings of the world dictate that immorality be avoided, but once the law was introduced, a definite penalty for violating it could then be imposed. Paul explains this in Romans 5:12, 13 –

“Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned— ¹³(For until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law.”

The law now is defining what sin is, how to avoid it, and what its consequences are. As the law is now annulled in Christ, such sin is not imputed for those who are in Christ.

This is the marvel of what God has done for us in Christ. Paul explains it in 2 Corinthians 5:18, 19 –

“Now all things *are* of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, ¹⁹ that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.”

Instead of imputing our trespasses to us, God has reconciled us to Himself through Christ and His fulfillment of this law. That is what makes the next promise so marvelous for the Christian...

²⁴ But I have said to you, “You shall inherit their land, and I will give it to you to possess, a land flowing with milk and honey.”

God promised the land to Israel, but it is both a conditional and an unconditional promise. It is unconditional in whose land it is, but it is conditional in how they may use it. “When you are obedient, the land is yours and you may dwell in it. When you are disobedient, the land is yours and you may not.” However, the land is theirs as an inheritance. But sometimes the inheritance wouldn’t be so great, because even the nature of the land was subject to the obedience of Israel.

This is the first, and only, time that the term “a land flowing with milk and honey” is used in Leviticus. A land flowing with milk and honey implies richness and fertility. Milk comes from cows and so it means there will be abundant pasture lands. Honey comes from bees which pollinate flowers and so it implies all sorts of fruit trees, herbs, and flowers.

Further the term "a land flowing with milk and honey" has a spiritual connotation. It isn't just speaking of the physical abundance but also of spiritual abundance. It is the land of God's word and the people through whom that word has come.

The word of God is said to be sweeter than honey. It is also equated with milk which nourishes. Thus, this is a reference to that as well. The land would literally flow with milk and honey for sustaining Israel's physical lives. It would also flow with milk and honey for sustaining their spiritual lives.

In looking back on Israel, it is possible to see that both the physical and spiritual aspects of this verse have come about in the land. The Lord promises them abundance now, but

later in Scripture, He promises that both of these – the physical and spiritual aspects – would be denied them for their disobedience. The conditional nature of the covenant is seen in this. And the reason is given...

²⁴ (con't) **I am the Lord your God, who has separated you from the peoples.**

Yehovah their God had separated them from the peoples, and thus they were to separate themselves from the practices of the peoples. Should they fail to do this, they would be taught their lesson *among* the peoples. They would live in defiled lands, and among defiled people because they too had defiled themselves.

But, as I said a minute ago, what Christ has done for us, in fulfilling the law and in granting a new covenant, is far superior to what Israel was promised. We are free from the law, and thus free from sin's penalty. God is not imputing sin to us because of our transgressions. And thus, our promised inheritance cannot be conditional. Rather the inheritance is eternal, and the mediation by Christ is superlative to that of Aaron –

“And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.” Hebrews 9:15.

²⁵ **You shall therefore distinguish between clean animals and unclean, between unclean birds and clean, and you shall not make yourselves abominable by beast or by bird, or by any kind of living thing that creeps on the ground, which I have separated from you as unclean.**

In the previous verse, the Lord used the word *badal*, or “separated,” by saying He has “separated you from the peoples.” Now the same word is used again to make a theological point. As we saw in the dietary laws, each unclean animal actually carried a spiritual meaning in the New Testament. It is not that they are actually unclean, but that they were being used as types and pictures of other things for our benefit. Paul explains to us that what is recorded in the Old is meant to teach us in the New.

The Lord has asked them to separate between clean and unclean animals to teach them that they have been separated as clean from the unclean peoples. The fulfillment of this lesson is recorded in Acts where Peter was told to eat exactly what is forbidden here in Leviticus. When he refused, the Lord told him, “What God has cleansed you must not call common or unclean.”

The dietary laws, like circumcision, and like Sabbath observance, were given as theological insights into what God would do for us in Christ. Now, our separation is a spiritual, not a physical one. We are separated unto God through Christ, not through adherence to an annulled system of laws. It's rather difficult to see how people miss this, but it is a common, and growing, problem in the church today.

²⁶ And you shall be holy to Me, for I the Lord *am* holy, and have separated you from the peoples, that you should be Mine.

These words are a close repeat of those found in Leviticus 11:44, and they comprise what is essentially the central theme of the entire book. The Lord again says that he has *badal*, or "separated" Israel from the peoples, therefore, they were to be holy as He is holy. It is the observance of the laws which could make this possible for them, but such was impossible.

The bracketing of the dietary laws, in particular, by these statements of separation show us rather clearly that those restrictions were to be markers of their separation. And the nullifying of them in Acts shows that the separation which is now found is far, far superior.

In Christ, it is faith in His *fulfillment of the law* which make this possible for us, and such is not only possible, it is accomplished. We are holy because He is holy. Now He asks us to be holy as He is holy. Our position will remain unchanged, but our current state is to be worked out for Him and for His glory in holiness.

²⁷ 'A man or a woman who is a medium, or who has familiar spirits, shall surely be put to death; they shall stone them with stones. Their blood *shall be* upon them.'

It seems on the surface as an odd way to suddenly end the chapter, but it fits rather well when one considers the flow of what has been said. In 19:31, consulting such a person is forbidden. In verse 6 of this chapter, the penalty for consulting such a person was then given. However, now the penalty for performing as a medium or having a familiar spirit is expressly stated. Whether a man or a woman, dying they shall die.

Women are specifically mentioned here for a couple reasons. First, it has always been more common that women have acted in this capacity. This is seen throughout cultures and ages. Secondly, due to man's tendency to provide clemency towards females, the Lord specifically directs that anyone, regardless of sex, was to die.

And this is to be accomplished “by (a) stone,” it is singular again. As noted before, stone is created by God, and thus Israel is to be the instrument of the Lord’s righteous judgment upon such offenders who would attempt to usurp these rights and roles which belong to the Lord alone.

And even in this, there is a lesson for us. As I just said, the mediums and wizards were to be stoned because they infringed upon a realm which belongs to God alone. But this is what each of us does when we attempt to merit God’s favor through deeds of the very law we are looking at.

In this, *we infringe upon what Christ has done for us*. We step into a realm of personal merit before God and say, “I am fully capable of accomplishing those things which will make me holy.” This is a place which is completely contrary to the New Covenant in Christ. It is He who makes man holy, because it is He who has fulfilled this law. Our righteousness is an imputed one, not one which is earned. To set that aside is to step into that terrible realm which belongs to Christ, and it is that Stone by which we shall die in our futile attempt at outdoing Him.

Let us never be found in such an unhappy position. Instead, let us hold fast to Christ, let us be holy because He is holy, and because He has made us holy. Our work is not *for*, but *because of*. If we can keep this distinction clear, we will be in the sweet spot. Let us rest in Christ, trust in Christ, and honor God through Christ. Thank God for Jesus Christ.

Closing Verse: *“Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith. ²⁸ Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law. ²⁹ Or is He the God of the Jews only? Is He not also the God of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also, ³⁰ since there is one God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith. ³¹ Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law.” Romans 3:27-31*

Next Week: Leviticus 21:1-24 *My, Jedidiah! In those garments you sure look good...*
(Suitable for the Priesthood) (34th Leviticus Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if you have a lifetime of sin heaped up behind you, He can wash it away and purify you completely and wholly. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

In These, Israel Will be Judged

Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying
These are the words He was then relaying

“Again, you shall say to the children of Israel:
These things to them you are to tell

‘Whoever of the children of Israel
Or of the strangers who dwell in Israel
Who gives any of his descendants to Molech
He shall surely be put to death, as to you I now tell
The people of the land shall stone him with stones
Toss good and hard and break those bones
I will set My face against that man
And will cut him off from his people; he will bear the blame
Because he has given some of his descendants to Molech
To defile My sanctuary and profane My holy name

And if the people of the land
Should in any way hide their eyes from the man
When he gives some of his descendants to Molech
And they do not kill him, according to My plan

Then I will set My face against that man
And against his family; they shall be a wreck
And I will cut him off from his people
And all who prostitute themselves with him
-----to commit harlotry with Molech

‘And the person who turns to mediums and familiar spirits
To prostitute himself with them in this way
I will set My face against that person
And cut him off from his people; I shall perform what I say

Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy
For I am the Lord your God
These things you shall do
And you shall keep My statutes, and perform them:

-----I am the Lord who sanctifies you

'For everyone who curses his father or his mother
Shall surely be put to death, it shall be so
He has cursed his father or his mother
His blood shall be upon him; to the pit he shall go
'The man who commits adultery with another man's wife
He who commits adultery with his neighbor's wife
The adulterer and the adulteress
Shall surely be put to death; so shall end their cheating life
The man who lies with his father's wife
Has uncovered his father's nakedness
Both of them shall surely be put to death
Their blood shall be upon them, as to you I address

If a man lies with his daughter-in-law
Both of them shall surely be put to death, so I to you say
They have committed perversion
Their blood shall be upon them; such evil you shall put away
If a man lies with a male as he lies with a woman
Both of them have committed an abomination
They shall surely be put to death
Their blood shall be upon them; you are to be a holy nation

If a man marries a woman and her mother
It is wickedness, so it is true
They shall be burned with fire
Both he and they, that there may be no wickedness among you
If a man mates with an animal
Pay heed to what I now tell
He shall surely be put to death
And you shall kill the animal as well

If a woman approaches any animal and mates with it
You shall kill the woman and the animal too
They shall surely be put to death
Their blood is upon them, as I am telling you
'If a man takes his sister

His father's daughter or his mother's daughter as I am telling
And sees her nakedness and she sees his nakedness
It is a wicked thing
And they shall be cut off
In the sight of their people, so it shall be
He has uncovered his sister's nakedness
He shall bear his guilt; abide by these laws from Me
If a man lies with a woman during her sickness
And uncovers her nakedness, he has exposed her flow
And she has uncovered the flow of her blood
Both of them shall be cut off from their people; you shall do so

'You shall not uncover the nakedness
Of your mother's sister nor of your father's sister too
For that would uncover his near of kin
They shall bear their guilt, as I now say to you
If a man lies with his uncle's wife
He has uncovered his uncle's nakedness
They shall bear their sin
They shall die childless

If a man takes his brother's wife
It is an unclean thing, you see
He has uncovered his brother's nakedness
They shall be childless; pay heed to these words from Me
'You shall therefore keep all My statutes and all My judgments
And perform them, no doubt
That the land where I am bringing you to dwell
May not vomit you out

And you shall not walk in the statutes
Of the nation which I am casting out before you
For they commit all these things
And therefore I abhor them through and through
But I have said to you
"You shall inherit their land; things will be sunny
And I will give it to you to possess
A land flowing with milk and honey

I am the Lord your God
Who has separated you from the peoples
-----in the land that you will trod

You shall therefore distinguish
Between clean animals and unclean, check the kosher label
Between unclean birds and clean
And you shall not make yourselves abominable

By beast or by bird
Or by any kind of living thing that creeps on the ground
Which I have separated from you as unclean
Eat only that which the law proclaims is sound
And you shall be holy to Me
For I the Lord am holy
And have separated you from the peoples
That you should be Mine, yes to belong unto Me

'A man or a woman who is a medium
Or who has familiar spirits, shall be put to death surely
They shall stone them with stones
Their blood shall upon them be

Lord God, You have from among the nations called us
Not to live the law given so long ago
But to live by faith in the work of Christ Jesus
And on the straight path of faith, we shall go

Our hope is found in Him alone
We will not look to our own righteousness
From the law like children into sons we have grown
And so in Christ we shall praise You, and Your name we shall bless

Only in Him can we find peace with You
Only in Him are we counted as holy in Your eyes
Thank You for Christ, ever faithful and true
Thank You for Christ, our heavenly prize

Hallelujah and Amen...

LEVITICUS 21:1-24

(SUITABLE FOR THE PRIESTHOOD)

When I was a kid, mom and dad would take us up to Massachusetts every year for a summer vacation. It is a beautiful spot out in the remote western mountains, and has the smallest township in the state person-wise, but it is spread out over many miles of beautiful forests, hills, and mountains.

Right in the center of the town, the very heart of it, is where the church is. It's only open for a couple months each summer, and it hires the summer preacher from elsewhere. One year, they hired a person who really wanted to preach. He had the heart and the desire to do so. You had to know this was the truth, because he also had the single worst stststststutter that I, or anyone else in attendance, had ever heard. It was literally painful to listen to.

He would get stststststuck on a T, and it would grow to the point where his face would literally contort. And it wasn't an occasional ststststststick. It happened constantly. Everyone knew the word he was trying to say, and certainly everyone wanted to simply yell it out and get on with the ever-lengthening sermon. Would we have the 2 pm baseball game at Austin farm? There's only 2 hours left and he's only done 10 sentences. The sermon is 25 pages. Baseball? We may not make it to dinner... or breakfast tomorrow.

It really was brutal, but people were polite. Needless to say, he didn't get a re-invite the following year. It may have been better if everyone made light of it and actually yelled out the word he was t t t t t t t t trying to say. Maybe it would have helped him if we participated. Maybe not. There may have been a filled noose at the parsonage the next morning. It's hard to say, but it was a sad and heartbreaking thing. I think about him often. He really wanted to do what he was wholly unsuited to do.

I feel that way as well. I think I can type a good sermon, but I know my delivery is not Joel Osteen quality – something I'm actually grateful for. We have a small church filled with the best people. I would miss that if I were eloquent and famous. But Sunday afternoon video editing makes me grateful for several things. I am grateful for cut and move, and I am grateful for morph cut. Cut and move means that I simply cut out my blunders. Morph cut means that I can morph the two images into one so that nobody can tell there was cut and move.

Watching, or listening to, one of my edited versions, you might think, “He’s not that bad.” The folks in attendance know otherwise, and for their patience, I am weekly grateful. But this poor guy’s sermons could never have been edited. There would have been nothing left after editing.

Text Verse: *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, ⁴ just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, ⁵ having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, ⁶ to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved.” Ephesians 1:3-6*

In Christ, we are accepted. This doesn’t mean that we all are perfect. And it doesn’t mean that we are all qualified to do anything we wish. As much as my heart breaks for that guy in the little church on the mountain, he wasn’t qualified to preach. It’s not that he was unqualified because his defect was unacceptable to God. It is that he was not acceptable to the ears of his audience. If he was a sound follower of the Lord, I can assure you that the Lord was well-pleased with his faith to try.

I’m grateful for this as well. I don’t need to be a Joel Osteen or an Adrian Rodgers. And a large church would mean I didn’t have the blessed relationship I have with those in a small church. He has fitted all things according to His wisdom. When that wisdom coincides with our desires, that is the sweet spot. And that is the spot I feel I’m in every single morning when I wake up.

Be sure that if you are in Christ, the Lord has accepted you, even if others don’t. There is only favor streaming from Him because of who you are. That’s the blessing of being a follower of Jesus. It is the message of Scripture. Today we will look back on what it was like before His coming, and we will look at why it was that way. It’s all to be found in His superior word. And so let’s turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. Priestly Moral Restrictions (verses 1-9)

¹And the Lord said to Moses,

The opening words are different than are normally given. Usually it says, “And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying...” Here it says, “And the Lord said to Moses.” The Hebrew words for “spoke” and “said” carry essentially the same thought of conveying a message, but

spoke is more concise. One commentary on the difference says, “You choose DABER if you only need to tell people what to do, but AMAR if the task is so complex that it requires a partnership and people working together.” And again, the same word follows in the next words...

¹ (con't) **“Speak to the priests, the sons of Aaron, and say to them: ‘None shall defile himself for the dead among his people,**

The Lord uses the same word, *amar*, directing Moses to “‘Say’ to the priests, the sons of Aaron, and say to them.” He twice repeats the same word. But, the phrase He uses is unique to the five books of Moses. Six other times it says, “the sons of Aaron the priests.” Only here it reverses that and says, “the priests, the sons of Aaron.”

This rewording of the phrase is intended to relay the truth that they are priests *because* they are sons of Aaron, and not because of their own merit. Aaron was called by the Lord, and he did nothing to merit the call. As the book of Hebrews notes, there was no oath rendered in their priestly call, unlike Jesus who was made a Priest based on an oath recorded in the psalms. Like Aaron, who was called apart from any personal merit, this same thought transfers to all of his sons.

These words are to be conveyed to all of the priests who descend from Aaron. The instructions are given solely for them in this chapter. So far, the laws for holiness of the entire community have been given, and which pertained to all – both priest and layman. But, those who administer the law are set apart to the Lord in a unique way, and therefore additional requirements are to be laid upon them. The first, and thus chief requirement is that...

¹ (con't) **‘None shall defile himself for the dead among his people,**

The last chapter ended in a seemingly odd manner. It reintroduced the thought which said, “A man or a woman who is a medium, or who has familiar spirits, shall surely be put to death; they shall stone them with stones. Their blood shall be upon them.” As I said then, mediums and wizards were to be stoned because they infringed upon a realm which belongs to God alone.

People who practiced these things consulted the dead on behalf of the living. Instead of this, the people were to consult those who mediated the law on behalf of the people, meaning the priests. And the priests were to remain completely separate from the defilement of death. In this verse, the Hebrew does not say, “for the dead.” Instead, it

reads, “for (a) soul do not be defiled.” The idea is that of a dead person however. When a soul leaves the body, you are mourning not for the body, but for the soul that has departed. The body without a soul is defiled, and it will transmit that defilement.

No priest was to touch a dead body, enter the house where a dead person was, help prepare or carry a dead body, etc. Such things defiled a person, and they became unclean for seven days, which then required certain rites of purification for their uncleanness. The reason for this, above all, is that death is the result of sin. It is the greatest penalty for sin, and it is the final identifying mark that a person bore sin. The law has already said that the man who does the things of the law will live by them. Each death was another testimony to the fact that no person had done the things of the law, and they suffered the just consequences of their failure.

In death, the mortal body began its rapid process of corruption and decay. This sign of the fallen world was a defiling marker for any who came in contact with it. Priests were expected to administer the law of life, at least life as far as the law could provide.

Every sacrifice that was detailed in the first half of Leviticus was an anticipatory type of death which foreshadowed the Person and work of Christ. It is He who, as Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15, swallowed up death in victory. For the priests to be defiled by death, it would indicate that their mediation was tainted. Thus, they were to be prohibited from the same freedoms granted to the lay people. For them, however, gracious exceptions were made...

² except for his relatives who are nearest to him: his mother, his father, his son, his daughter, and his brother;

The scholar Keil says that, “in the case of death among members of the family or household, defilement was not to be avoided on the part of the priest as the head of the family.” This is an insufficient explanation. No exception is given if a slave died in a house, which would by default render someone unclean, but that would have been just as unavoidable. This defilement due to a near relative is obviously given out of God’s kindness to the priest’s humanity.

It should be noted that this is second of only three times in the Bible where the mother is mentioned before the father. Several reasons probably exist for this subtle change. The first is the extremely close bond between a child and the mother. This would go hand in hand then with the already seen kind nature of God towards the priest’s humanity.

It extends even to the thought of Christ on the cross who took the time to care for the mother who bore Him before giving up His breath. Secondly, as the son's qualifications for the priesthood depend on his mother's character as will be seen in verse 7, the mother is identified before the father, who by his nature as a priest makes the child qualified for the priesthood as well.

This again points to Christ whose mother had necessary qualifications which needed to be highlighted in order for Him to qualify as our High Priest. Chief among them, He needed to be born of a virgin. Further, as Christ's human father was via adoption, there is a distance there which brings the nearness of Mary closer to Him than Joseph. In the end, naming the mother first subtly looks forward to Christ as much as anything else. In all of the mentioned family members, there is a nearness considered in these exceptions. It allowed the priest to mourn over his dead close relatives. It is a nearness which extends to a certain point, however, and no more...

³ also his virgin sister who is near to him, who has had no husband, for her he may defile himself.

When a woman of Israel married, she went to her husband as one flesh, and she ceased being united in the unique family relationship that she once stood. Until that occurred, when she was a virgin near to him, he could defile himself for her, but upon her marriage, this right and honor ended. At that time, the husband was responsible for her funeral and tending to her internment.

⁴ Otherwise he shall not defile himself, *being* a chief man among his people, to profane himself.

This is a highly debated, and wholly confusing verse in the Hebrew. However, before reading what the Hebrew says, who is it that has been markedly left out of the list of people a priest can defile himself for? The wife. Here, the Hebrew reads, *lo yitama baal b'amav l'he-khalow*. No shall defile husband in his people to profane himself. "To profane himself" gives the sense of "with respect to a marriage by which he profanes himself."

The implicit reading of this is that a husband is not to defile himself for his wife. Scholars disagree, saying it is obvious that as she is nearest to him of his close relatives, she is by default included. There is nothing obvious about that. The fact that the wife is not mentioned in the list completely negates that.

Scholars also say that Ezekiel was specifically told to not mourn his wife, thus implying that the normal thing to do was to mourn for a dead wife. But mourning and defilement are not the same thing. And so that can be tossed out. What is obvious is that the word *baal*, or husband, is used, and it is in conjunction with three verses which specifically leave the wife out.

One would ask though, “Why is a priest not permitted to defile himself for his own wife?” The only answer which makes any sense is that in the death of his wife, he has profaned himself already. According to Genesis 2:24, the man and the woman become one flesh when they married. Therefore, there is a state of profanation which exists because of her death, and it is not to be further exacerbated by his defiling himself for her soul.

And doesn't this look forward to Christ and the church? When a soul departs, there is death, but in Christ, there is no defilement. As we noted earlier, death is swallowed up in victory. But Christ had to first profane Himself, taking on our sins, in order for that defilement to be cleansed. He became unclean so that we might be clean. The priest in type is looking forward to Christ because he was not to defile himself for his wife. Nor does Christ now defile Himself for us. Cleansing occurred at the cross, and there is now no defilement because of this.

⁵ ‘They shall not make any bald *place* on their heads, nor shall they shave the edges of their beards nor make any cuttings in their flesh.

This verse is referring to other nations ways of expressing grief which were seen when someone died. Verse 19:28 has already warned against these things for the lay people, and it now explicitly extends to the priests. It is certain that this is speaking of mourning for the dead, because in Deuteronomy 14:1, the prohibition is repeated with the words, “for the dead.” These things are comparable to today's customs of wearing black, and so on. The priests were not to change their appearance in such outward signs of mourning, because they were holy unto the Lord, and were to reflect His glory at all times.

⁶ They shall be holy to their God and not profane the name of their God,

This explains the reason for the prohibitions given so far. The priests were to be holy, as the Lord is holy. In defiling themselves in these various ways, they would otherwise profane His name. The name which is then explicitly stated...

⁶ (con't) **for they offer the offerings of the Lord made by fire, *and* the bread of their God; therefore they shall be holy.**

The Lord, Yehovah, is their God. It is to Him that their fire-offerings were made. These are then explained as the “bread” or “food” of their God. The word “and” doesn’t belong here. The fire-offerings stand as representative of all of the offerings to the Lord. It is because they make these offerings, all pointing to Christ, that they were to be holy, and to not deviate from that state.

⁷ **They shall not take a wife *who is* a harlot or a defiled woman, nor shall they take a woman divorced from her husband; for *the priest* is holy to his God.**

The rules now go from contact and mourning for the dead which defiles, to contact with the living which could do the same. A woman who was a prostitute, even if she was reclaimed, could not become the wife of a priest. A defiled woman would be one who had lost her virginity, which in Israel would already be improper. But a priest could marry a woman not of Israel, and so this prohibition is stated so that it is understood that even if a foreigner, she was not to have been defiled. A priest was also not to marry a divorced woman. Any of these would demonstrate an unholiness which was incompatible with his position as a priest of God.

⁸ **Therefore you shall consecrate him, for he offers the bread of your God. He shall be holy to you, for I the Lord, who sanctify you, *am* holy.**

Verse 1 said, “Speak to the priests, the sons of Aaron.” It appears that this is what is being referred to here. Each priest was to hold every other priest accountable for their marriages. They were to ensure that no such illegal marriage was to take place, because he, along with each of them, offers “the bread of your God.” The priest then was to be holy, and they were to be holy to one another. And the exacting reason is again given as it has been at other times. It is because Yehovah is the one who sanctifies them. They were to be holy because the Lord set them apart as holy.

⁹ **The daughter of any priest, if she profanes herself by playing the harlot, she profanes her father. She shall be burned with fire.**

There are no exceptions here that later Jewish traditions introduce. The words are clear and precise. If a priest’s daughter become a whore, the name of her father would be profaned. In profaning his name, the name of the Lord would be profaned. There was to be no leniency for such an act. However, there is dispute as to what being burned with

fire means. Does it mean that she was to be first stoned and then burned? Or was she to be put on a heap of sticks and burned alive? It goes unstated here. Either way, she was toast.

*I am the Lord who sanctifies you
Therefore you shall be holy as I am holy
To this precept you shall be true
You shall follow My word and emulate Me*

*You shall not profane the name of your God
You shall not defile yourselves before Me
You shall walk circumspectly on the path you trod
You shall be holy for I am holy*

*I have redeemed you from your past, a life of sin
I have called you unto holiness, yes, to be holy
You were destined for hell, you were all but done in
And I saved you; now you shall follow after Me*

II. Requirements of the High Priest (verses 10-15)

¹⁰ ‘He who is the high priest among his brethren, on whose head the anointing oil was poured and who is consecrated to wear the garments, shall not uncover his head nor tear his clothes;

This is the first use of *ha’kohen ha’gadol*, or “the priest, the great one.” He is distinguished by the office of high priest. This is explicitly noted in mentioning the anointing oil which was poured on him, and who alone was allowed to wear the garments of the high priest. These two things in particular distinguished him as Israel’s high priest.

First and foremost he is commanded to not uncover his head. Specifically, this means to allow his hair to be loosed, meaning unkempt. This was a sign of mourning, and he was never to demonstrate such an attitude. He was first, foremost, and always, to be holy to the Lord. Further, he was not to tear his clothes. To do so was an indication of distress or anguish. As the intercessor between the Lord and the people, his conduct in one of these ways would give either a sense of utter despair to the people, or that he was impugning the Lord’s fairness, justice, or ability to control any given situation. It is ironic

that this first command to the high priest of Israel was openly disobeyed in the presence of the Lord who gave the command –

And the high priest arose and said to Him, “Do You answer nothing? What *is it* these men testify against You?” ⁶³ But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest answered and said to Him, “I put You under oath by the living God: Tell us if You are the Christ, the Son of God!”

⁶⁴ Jesus said to him, “*It is as* you said. Nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven.”

⁶⁵ Then the high priest tore his clothes, saying, “He has spoken blasphemy! What further need do we have of witnesses? Look, now you have heard His blasphemy! ⁶⁶ What do you think?” Matthew 26:62-66

Jesus was placed under oath by the high priest. Because of the position of the high priest, He was bound by the Law of Moses, which He gave to Israel, to tell the truth. He did, and therefore He remained without guilt in the matter. And yet, the high priest was guilty of violating a precept of the very law which he said Jesus was guilty of violating. There is an irony that runs through the Bible that is truly amazing when put in its proper light.

¹¹ nor shall he go near any dead body, nor defile himself for his father or his mother;

To go near a dead body means to enter a house or other area where a dead body was. He was not to come near any such dead person and thus contract defilement. The anointing oil on him was of more importance to keep free from defilement than even to defile himself for his own father or mother. His call to the office of high priest was one bestowed upon him by the Lord, and so to the Lord alone was his full, continuous, and pure devotion to be fixed.

¹² nor shall he go out of the sanctuary,

There is a dispute as to the meaning of “go out of the sanctuary.” Most scholars take this as “for the sake of a funeral, mourning, or some other sorrow or disaster which would take him from his duties.” Others say that he literally was never to leave the sanctuary because he was the high priest, and to the Lord, his life was dedicated. It seems more likely that this is speaking of going out of the sanctuary in abandonment of his duties in order to grieve, but that he was not restricted to the sanctuary at all times. This then would explain the next words...

¹² (con't) **nor profane the sanctuary of his God;**

This means that if he were defiled at some point, he could not enter the sanctuary until his time of purification was complete. He could not enter the sanctuary if he had never left the sanctuary. And so it seems that the first clause is speaking of not all times, but at times referred to in the other verses. This is the more obvious when the high priest got married as all men do. In his marriage union, he *would* contract defilement according to the chapter on discharges. This would certainly not be something he would do while in the sanctuary. Therefore, it cannot be that the high priest was never to leave the sanctuary.

¹² (con't) **for the consecration of the anointing oil of his God is upon him: I *am* the Lord.**

These words can be translated in two major ways. The first is that “the consecration of the anointing oil of his God is upon him.” Thus, the anointing oil is being used as representative of the high priestly office as it was in verse 10, along with his other garments. The second is “for crown, anointing oil is upon him.” The word used here, *netser*, is the same word used to describe the golden crown which adorned the high priest’s turban, and which also can mean “consecration.” Thus, both the crown and the oil are being used as representative of the office.

As the golden crown was engraved with the words *Qadosh Yehovah*, or “Holy (to) Yehovah” the final words of this verse, *ani Yehovah*, or I (am) Yehovah, seem to point to both being referred to. It is hard to be dogmatic, and no matter which, the office of high priest anticipates the greater office of Christ as High Priest, the oil of the anointing points to the prophetic influence of the Spirit resting upon Christ, and the crown points to Christ’s kingly status. Thus, He is our prophet, priest, and king.

¹³ **And he shall take a wife in her virginity.**

If the high priest were to marry a woman who was not a virgin, it would profane his seed. In this, he was a type of Christ to come. In 2 Corinthians 11, Paul writes the following –

“For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present *you as* a chaste virgin to Christ.” 2 Corinthians 11:2

In each way, the type was to lead to the Antitype. He was to be an Old Testament example of the greater High Priest to come.

¹⁴ A widow or a divorced woman or a defiled woman or a harlot—these he shall not marry; but he shall take a virgin of his own people as wife.

These prohibitions are given against the words of the previous verse. You shall do this; you shall not do this. There was no room for reinterpreting the law in another way.

¹⁵ Nor shall he profane his posterity among his people, for I the Lord sanctify him.”

What this means is that the high priest was not to enter into such a forbidden marriage because it would then render his children, born of such a union, ineligible for the privileges of the priesthood. The Lord had sanctified him, and he was to maintain that line of sanctity through holy offspring.

However... in Christ's line women of these categories are seen, such as Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, and Bathsheba, among others. Thus, the regulations here are symbolic only. True defilement doesn't occur from such unions. It is the picture of Christ being betrothed to the chaste virgin to which these verses point. In the end, regardless of one's genealogy, all defilement ceases in Christ. This is even true with the first high priest who had to be sanctified in order to enter the priestly line in the first place.

*A High Priest, perfect in all ways
One who is consecrated to mediate for us
And He is qualified to do so for eternal days
He is our Lord; He is the Lord Jesus*

*Unto Himself a spotless bride He has taken
A chaste virgin beautiful and pure
Someday our departure we will be a'makin'
Until then, we patiently endure*

*But soon we shall be off to the sanctuary of God
For now, we await the time when unto Him we go
But our feet are ready, with the gospel we are shod
As we direct others on the correct path to follow*

III. Defects Among the Priests (verses 16-24)

¹⁶ And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying,

We now return to the usual means of address where the Lord speaks (*daber*) to the people. In the previous section, the people were to do something in conjunction with the word of the Lord in order to not become defiled. Here, the people are designated as defiled *by* the word of the Lord. They need do nothing to be so; it is simply the way it is.

¹⁷ “Speak to Aaron, saying: ‘No man of your descendants in *succeeding* generations, who has *any* defect, may approach to offer the bread of his God.

If the sacrifices which were offered to the Lord were to be without blemish, how much more should those who make them be without defect! The word *mum*, or defect, is now introduced. Most of the 21 times it is seen will be in the books of Moses. It indicates a blemish which can be either physical or moral.

The spiritual nature of the sacrifices looked to the Person and work of Christ. The same is true with the spiritual nature of the priests. This was seen in exacting detail in the description of their garments, and in their ordination. These words now continue to expand on that thought.

Throughout the time of the Aaronic priesthood, any who was otherwise qualified to serve, but then who showed a defect as named here, would thus be deemed as unacceptable to serve. The entire time of the law, the people were being shown only types and shadows of Christ to come. Thus, until He came, the same standards and expectations were required in their priests as would be seen in the true Priest. This is the lesson here in order for Israel to understand the holiness of the Lord.

¹⁸ For any man who has a defect shall not approach: a man blind or lame, who has a marred *face* or any *limb* too long,

These words now begin to list what “defect” of the previous verse means. One who is *ivver*, or blind, was disqualified. The word comes from the word *or*, or skin. It is as if skin is pulled over the eye, causing it to not see. Such would be disqualified. Next is the *pisseakh*, or lame. The word is introduced here and it comes from a primitive root meaning “to hop.” One who is lame will appear to make small hops to correct his defect. Such was disqualified to minister before the Lord.

The *kharam*, or marred, was also disqualified. The word is used to indicate a city to be dedicated to God through destruction. Thus, it would be a flattened nose, a destroyed face, mutilated ear, etc. These such appearances disqualified their making offerings to the Lord. And then is noted the *sara*, or deformed. This word is seen for the first of but

three times. It means, “to extend,” or “stretch out.” Thus it is anything superfluous or deformed. It would certainly include things like extra fingers and toes, long arms, etc.

¹⁹ a man who has a broken foot or broken hand,

Included also were those with the foot or hand which was broken. The word is *shever*, and it indicates a break, a fracture, a crushing, etc. In ancient times, when someone broke a bone, it would often mean he would be deformed permanently. And so whether born this way, or he became this way, the defect rendered him unsuitable to minister before Yehovah. Although not a priest, one such person was Saul’s son. He was broken in this manner as a child and remained lame throughout his life. That is recorded in 2 Samuel 4 –

“Jonathan, Saul’s son, had a son *who was* lame in *his* feet. He was five years old when the news about Saul and Jonathan came from Jezreel; and his nurse took him up and fled. And it happened, as she made haste to flee, that he fell and became lame. His name *was* Mephibosheth.” 2 Samuel 4:4

²⁰ or is a hunchback or a dwarf, or a man who has a defect in his eye, or eczema or scab, or is a eunuch.

The *gibben*, or hunchback, is a word found only here. It is from an unused root meaning to be arched or contracted. And so it would indicate a hunchback, a crook-back, etc. However, another possibility is that this is speaking of an arch over the eyes, and thus a gnarl-browed person who resembles an ape. This is a minority opinion though.

After him is the *daq*, or dwarf. The word comes from *daqaq*, or crushed. By implication it is something small or thin; a very little thing. Next comes another unique word to the Bible the *tebalul b’enow*, or “defect in eye.” The word comes from a word meaning to mix or confuse. This is probably speaking of cataracts or some other confusion of colors within the eye which is defective.

Anyone with *garav*, or eczema, was out. This word is seen first here, and it will be seen only once more in Leviticus and once in Deuteronomy. It comes from a root meaning to scratch. Thus it is an itchy affliction of the skin. No itchy people may serve. Likewise, the *yallepeth*, or scab, renders a person unclean. It is an eruptive disease which will be seen here and in the next chapter, and then it will be history.

And lastly, the eunuch was excluded. The term is *meroakh ashek*. Both words are only found here. Together, they mean crushed stones, and thus testicles. The idea here is that any such defect would render a person unsuitable to minister to the Lord.

These verses have caused much consternation to people in the world, and questions abound on Christian Q&A sites as to why the Lord disqualified such people. The questions inevitably go on to ask if these things continue on today. The first has been answered by me already. These things were given to point us to the true and perfect High Priest, Christ Jesus. The second will be answered before we finish today. It should be noted though that even in the Old Testament, a perfect appearance was no indication of a perfect person. The same word, *mum*, or blemish, was used to describe Absalom, the son of David as being perfect in his appearance, having no blemish. And yet, he was a loser who ended by being buried beneath a pile of stones, signifying the loser life he led. Others with blemishes were decent people who found the Lord's favor, such as the Ethiopian eunuch Ebed-Melech. That is recorded in Jeremiah 39:16-18 –

Go and speak to Ebed-Melech the Ethiopian, saying, 'Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: "Behold, I will bring My words upon this city for adversity and not for good, and they shall be *performed* in that day before you. ¹⁷ But I will deliver you in that day," says the Lord, "and you shall not be given into the hand of the men of whom you *are* afraid. ¹⁸ For I will surely deliver you, and you shall not fall by the sword; but your life shall be as a prize to you, because you have put your trust in Me," says the Lord.'"

²¹ No man of the descendants of Aaron the priest, who has a defect, shall come near to offer the offerings made by fire to the Lord. He has a defect; he shall not come near to offer the bread of his God.

These words are given to supplement what has already been provided. Twelve named defects were given to outline the general state of who would be considered unacceptable to minister before the Lord. Those twelve were only representative, however, of any and all other defects not specifically mentioned. It is certain that a person missing a limb or an ear would be likewise unqualified. A deaf person would be unsuitable to minister, etc.

This verse is given to demonstrate this. Twelve is the number of *perfection of government*. In the priestly government, there was to be perfection, and so those twelve items were given to support this idea. Those who offered the bread of their God were to be perfect in type because the One they picture is perfect in reality.

However, the restrictions on these sons of Aaron were only for drawing near to make the offerings to the Lord. They were not forbidden from assisting in other things that the priests needed to accomplish. During second temple times, periodic examinations of all priests were made. If any had become disqualified, they could still perform these assistant duties. If any had become well, they could be reintroduced into the regular priesthood. But all still had the same right to receive the provisions of the priests...

²² He may eat the bread of his God, *both* the most holy and the holy;

All things given to the priests, both the most holy and the holy offerings, were acceptable for all of the priestly class, regardless of any defect. This is something that a priest who was defiled because of uncleanness could not do. And so even under the law, we see a difference between natural infirmities and moral defilement. The typology of Christ is what is important. The rewards for maintaining that typology were bestowed upon all. This included things like wave offerings, other sacrificial portions reserved for the priest, first-fruits, tithes, things laid under a ban, etc.

²³ only he shall not go near the veil or approach the altar, because he has a defect, lest he profane My sanctuaries; for I the Lord sanctify them.”

To go near the veil means to perform the duties in the holy place where the table of showbread, menorah, and altar of incense was located. Each of these were serviced at specific intervals by the priests. To approach the altar means to assist in the sacrifices there, including the daily, and other regularly, scheduled sacrifices. For them to perform those duties would profane His sanctuaries. The word is plural to indicate that each was its own holy place, with its own typological significance as it points to Christ. For a defective person to serve there would then violate the typology.

²⁴ And Moses told *it* to Aaron and his sons, and to all the children of Israel.

The words here are in fulfillment of those given in verse 1. But they go further. Not only were the words imparted to Aaron and his sons, but to all of the children of Israel. This is important, because it was to tell Israel that all people were to know how the priests were to conduct their affairs. There was not a code for the priests which they alone could manipulate. There was a set code that the people could see being adhered to, or being violated. The priestly class, in this sense at least, was not above the common people.

And this is true with the requirements for elders and deacons today. The church hierarchy *does not decide* who is qualified; God does. From there, the people have the right to see those qualifications being lived out in their leaders. How unlike the way the affairs of larger denominations are run today. How unlike Catholicism which secrets away perverts from public and congregational scrutiny.

Earlier, I noted that parts of this passage have caused consternation among people. This is both within, and without, the church. People who want to show how bad the God of the Bible is will come here and type up ridiculous commentaries on how God doesn't accept people with defects. Confusion among Christians follows suit.

As to why the Lord required people with such defects to be excluded from making offerings, that was already answered. It was to maintain the typology in anticipation of Christ. As with the sacrifices, as with the furniture, utensils, conduct of the people, and so on, so it is with the physical infirmities of the people. As to whether these requirements are still in effect today, I will give you two different commentaries from two different, widely accepted, scholars, both of whom I cite from time to time. Listen to the difference between the two –

“Let no man say this is a part of the Mosaic law, and we are not bound by it. It is an eternal law, founded on reason, propriety, common sense, and absolute necessity. The priest, the prophet, the Christian minister, is the representative of Jesus Christ; let nothing in his person, carriage, or doctrine, be unworthy of the personage he represents. A deformed person, though consummate in diplomatic wisdom, would never be employed as an ambassador by any enlightened court, if any fit person, unblemished, could possibly be procured.” Adam Clarke

“As these priests were types of Christ, so all ministers must be followers of him, that their example may teach others to imitate the Saviour. Without blemish, and separate from sinners, He executed his priestly office on earth. What manner of persons then should his ministers be! But all are, if Christians, spiritual priests; the minister especially is called to set a good example, that the people may follow it. Our bodily infirmities, blessed be God, cannot now shut us out from his service, from these privileges, or from his heavenly glory. Many a healthful, beautiful soul is lodged in a feeble, deformed body. And those who may not be suited for the work of the ministry, may serve God with comfort in other duties in his church.” Matthew Henry

Adam Clarke's commentary could not be more flawed, both to the point of ridiculous, and disgusting. Further, it bears in it one of the most legalistic, unrealistic, and

mishandled evaluations of Scripture that I have ever read. Moses had a defect of the tongue as did Paul. Paul had a physical infirmity which necessitated others to tend to him. Adam Clarke gets 1001 demerits for his perverse commentary.

The answer is that the law is annulled in Christ, in its entirety. He has arbitrarily picked and chosen selected portions of it for his own perverse view on that which is clearly not moral in nature. I have highlighted this several times in this passage alone. The reason for the prohibitions is typology. As the typology is fulfilled in Christ, then it is done. We cannot insert after-Christ's ministry typology into what Christ has done as if it bears on what He did. Further, he uses the term "ambassador" when speaking of ministers. This is incorrect. The apostles were Christ's ambassadors, and Paul – such an ambassador – had defects.

Our instructions for choosing elders and deacons in the Gentile-led church age is defined by Paul in the pastoral epistles written to Timothy and to Titus. Those letters define who can minister, and what their requirements are. We do not go back to a fulfilled, obsolete law to determine who can and cannot serve as a minister.

Beloved, if you are in Christ, God sees you without any flaws, without any defects, and without any sin. He sees you through the accomplished work of His Son, and when He does, He sees absolute perfection. Every spot is erased, every ding is filled in, every crack is smoothed over, and every misalignment is aligned. If you want to see how Christ sees His people, watch the music video on YouTube call Flawless, by Mercy Me. They do a great job of it.

This does not mean that we do not have expectations for our chosen men who minister before the Lord, but they are not physical, bodily expectations. They are *moral* guidelines and precepts which reflect the already-finished work of Christ.

This is what we need to remember when we come to difficult passages like this. Inevitably, someone is bound to ask you about hard concepts like our last verses of the day. We can absolutely blow it like Adam Clarke did, or we can see *the grace... in Christ's face, and we can be ready to share that message everywhere and everyplace*. We are accepted because of Jesus. That is, if we belong to Jesus. If you don't let's get that settled today.

Closing Verse: *“Go, eat your bread with joy,
And drink your wine with a merry heart;
For God has already accepted your works.” Ecclesiastes 9:7*

Next Week: Leviticus 22:1-33 *In attending during this sermon, you will not be bored... (I am the Lord) (35th Leviticus Sermon)*

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if you have a lifetime of sin heaped up behind you, He can wash it away and purify you completely and wholly. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

Suitable for the Priesthood

And the Lord said to Moses

“Speak to the priests, the sons of Aaron what I have said

And say to them:

‘None shall defile himself among his people for the dead

Except for his relatives who are nearest to him

His mother, his father, his son, his daughter, and his brother

Also his virgin sister who is near to him

Who has had no husband, for her he may defile himself

-----but for no other

Otherwise he shall not defile himself, as I say

Being a chief man among his people, to profane himself in any way

‘They shall not make any bald place on their heads

Nor shall they shave the edges of their beards also

Nor make any cuttings in their flesh

These are prohibited as you now know

They shall be holy to their God

And not profane the name of their God, this shall never be

For they offer the offerings of the Lord made by fire

And the bread of their God; therefore they shall be holy

They shall not take a wife who is a harlot

Or a defiled woman, this thing shall not be

Nor shall they take a woman divorced from her husband

For the priest to his God is holy

Therefore you shall consecrate him

For he offers the bread of your God; these offerings to Me
He shall be holy to you
For I the Lord, who sanctify you, am holy

The daughter of any priest
If she profanes herself by playing the harlot
-----morality she has spurned
She profanes her father
She shall with fire be burned

'He who is the high priest among his brethren
On whose head the anointing oil was poured
-----such as everyone knows
And who is consecrated to wear the garments
Shall not uncover his head nor tear his clothes

Nor shall he go near any dead body
Nor defile himself for his father or his mother too
Nor shall he go out of the sanctuary
Nor profane the sanctuary of his God, as I now instruct you

For upon him is the consecration of the anointing oil of his God
I am the Lord; circumspectly he shall tread

And he shall take a wife in her virginity
A widow or a divorced woman or a defiled woman or a harlot too
These he shall not marry
But he shall take a virgin of his own people as wife, so he shall do

Nor shall he profane among his people his posterity
For I the Lord sanctify him, and so this is how it shall be
And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying
These words to Him He was relaying

"Speak to Aaron, saying:
'No man of your descendants in succeeding generations
Who has any defect, may approach to offer the bread of his God
No, even of his closest relations

For any man who has a defect shall not approach:
A man blind or lame, who has a marred face or any limb too long
A man who has a broken foot or broken hand
Or is a hunchback or a dwarf; when such with him is wrong

Or a man who has a defect in his eye
Or eczema or scab, or is a eunuch – they shall not apply

No man of the descendants of Aaron the priest
Who has a defect, shall come near to offer
The offerings made by fire to the Lord
He has a defect; no such thing shall he proffer

He shall not come near to offer the bread of his God
He may eat the bread of his God without reproach
Both the most holy and the holy
Only he shall not go near the veil or the altar approach

Because he has a defect
Lest My sanctuaries he profane
For I the Lord sanctify them
And so from these duties he shall abstain

And Moses told it to Aaron and his sons as well
And to all the children of Israel

Lord, in You is found the perfect High Priest
And because of You, we are accepted before God
From the greatest of us, even to the least
To Your greatness, we shout and applaud
As a kingdom of priests, we shall minister before You
And it shall be so even for eternal days
Offering worthy sacrifices, from hearts proven and true
Yes, before Your throne, we shall give You eternal praise

Glory to God in the highest; glory to our King
Glory to God in the highest; hear our voices sing

Hallelujah and Amen...

LEVITICUS 22:1-33 (I AM THE LORD)

In this chapter, there are several sub-divisions. The first section is directed to the responsibilities of the priests. Then comes a short section on the rights of the priesthood and those who may, to some extent, join in those rights. After that is a section on suitable offerings, and those which are to be rejected. And finally, there is a short section which further defines sacrificial parameters.

These are certainly not the end of the sacrifices mentioned in Leviticus, but they are a necessary part prior to what lies ahead. One would think that with all of the detail, and all of the repetition in this book, the people would have not only known what to do, but would have done it. Or if they did those things, they would at least have done them properly.

Think it through, we have the Lord. He has established a priesthood which performs at a specific sanctuary, and what they do is based on specific guidelines. The things that are brought to them are based on minute details of what is acceptable and what is not. The people were aware of these things, and so if they didn't want to do them, as detailed, then why do them at all?

Again, think it through... in order for the offering to be accepted, it had to meet all of these specific criteria. As the offering is to the Lord, and as mandated by the Lord, then it would make no sense to offer anything at all unless it was properly done. Right? Why would you go to work if you knew you were not only going to not be paid, but that you would also be beaten for showing up? And the reason for this is that you refused to wear the right uniform.

If you did, you would get paid and not beaten up. But as long as you wear the wrong one, there is no benefit in even going, much less going inappropriately. This is what Israel is being instructed on, and so they knew what to expect if they didn't pay heed to what they were supposed to do. And yet, they still didn't do... what they were supposed to do!

Text Verse: *"Your first father sinned,
And your mediators have transgressed against Me.
28 Therefore I will profane the princes of the sanctuary;
I will give Jacob to the curse,
And Israel to reproaches."* Isaiah 43:27, 28

This isn't just an arbitrary verse about Israel failing to pay heed. Instead, they had been told, such as here in Leviticus. They were warned again, such as in Deuteronomy. And they were continuously warned throughout their history. On one page, there is disobedience, on the next there is punishment, and on the next there is mourning and repentance. What a bunch of dolts, yes?

Well... let's not be too finger pointy in that. In the church, we have a far better covenant, based on far better promises, and much more latitude in what we can and cannot do. And yes, we also have exacting specifications laid out for us to do them. And yet, with a Bible in every house, and a church on every corner, we can't seem to do any better than Israel did.

We have perverts in the pulpit, we have sacrifices which are tainted with immorality, and we have flowing discharges of licentious behavior oozing out of the pews of church after church. It's hard to imagine how this can be.

In particular, the churches which today openly condone homosexuality and every other perverse type of behavior one can imagine. Like Israel of old, do they somehow think the Lord will ignore this? Do they think Israel's bringing a maimed, blind, or stolen animal to the altar is somehow different than their tainted spiritual offerings?

And what about each one of us. Where are we in our devotion to Christ? Where are we in our holy and acceptable offerings? If He were reading your heart right now (and He is), do you think what He pries out of it will be pleasing to Him?

What are you doing here today? If it is to supposedly be pleasing to the Lord... well then, you'd better be working on being pleasing to the Lord. A standard was given to Israel; a standard is given to us. You shall therefore be holy because the Lord Your God, named Jesus, is holy. This is the lesson we are to see in these passages. It's all to be found in His superior word. And so let's turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. For and Of the Priesthood (verses 1-16)

¹ Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying,

Here we have the standard formula for introducing a new section of thought by the Lord. The Lord speaks to Moses, indicating a new set of instructions and laws are forthcoming.

The last section dealt with that which made a priest suitable for ministering to the Lord, or excluding him from his duties. This will continue with that.

There are times when they would naturally become unclean. When such times arose, they were to abstain from their duties, and to even keep away from partaking of the holy portions. This is set in contrast to a priest with a defect which closed out the previous chapter. He could not perform the duties of a priest, but he was allowed to partake of the holy portions. The restrictions on uncleanness are stricter than those of mere physical defect. This is now seen in the following words...

²“Speak to Aaron and his sons,

The words of this section are directed only to the priests of Israel, and not to the common people. They have a particular set of instructions which are expected to be followed.

^{2 (con’t)} that they separate themselves from the holy things of the children of Israel, and that they do not profane My holy name *by* what they dedicate to Me: I *am* the Lord.

These words are looking forward to what will be said. The holiness of the Lord, and ensuring that His name is glorified, is so important that it is highlighted even before the ways in which it can be profaned are given. To understand this, it would be like saying to those being commissioned as officers in the Air Force, “You will separate yourselves from the uniform of the service so that you do not bring disgrace upon it.” One might immediately say, “But I am being given this commission. Why would I separate myself from the uniform which signifies my commission?”

He has prematurely asked what will next be answered with the occasions for doing what has just been stated. Thus, for the priests of Israel, this is an emphatic statement, given in advance of the details. The honor of the Lord is preeminent. The ways for maintaining the honor of that name are now to be defined...

³Say to them: ‘Whoever of all your descendants throughout your generations, who goes near the holy things which the children of Israel dedicate to the Lord, while he has uncleanness upon him, that person shall be cut off from My presence: I *am* the Lord.

These words begin to explain how a priest can defile the holy name of the Lord. This first example is if he were to go near the holy things dedicated by the people while in a state

of uncleanness. The holy things include the portions of the sacrifices which the priests were to receive as their food for sustenance. Any instance which renders a person unclean, of the many which have been detailed so far in Leviticus, had to be purified first. For some things, it simply meant that they had to wait until evening, for others, they may have had to wash themselves and/or their clothes, etc. Whatever was required to purify them, and which was not exactly followed, meant their uncleanness remained. In such a state, if they partook of the holy things, they were to be cut off from the Lord's presence.

This is the only time in the five books of Moses that this term, *mil-lephanay*, or "from My presence," is used in this way. The normal term for excision is, "that soul shall be cut off from among his people." But here, because it is dealing with the priests, they would be cut off from His presence. It is a solemn warning which would have served Nadab and Abihu well if they had known it, and it is a solemn warning which will be ignored by the sons of Eli in 1 Samuel, and which will result in disaster for them.

⁴ 'Whatever man of the descendants of Aaron, who is a leper or has a discharge, shall not eat the holy offerings until he is clean.

The leper is specified in Chapter 13, the one with a discharge is specified in Chapter 15. Two things in particular are to be considered here. The first is that a person who is unclean is in a different category than a person who has a defect. As I said earlier, a person with a defect could eat of the holy things, but they could not minister before the Lord. But a person with uncleanness could not eat of the holy things. And yet, the unclean person was not permanently banned. Once he was cured, he could resume his duties and partake of the holy things. On the other hand, a person with a permanent defect was permanently banned from ministering because of the defect. It is the holiness of the Lord which is on preeminent display here.

⁴ (con't) And whoever touches anything made unclean by a corpse, or a man who has had an emission of semen,

Touching a corpse, or anything made unclean by a corpse, will be explained in Numbers 19. The emission of semen was detailed in Chapter 15. Such things made a person unclean for set periods of time, and they required exacting rites for purification.

⁵ or whoever touches any creeping thing by which he would be made unclean, or any person by whom he would become unclean, whatever his uncleanness may be—

Leviticus 11 detailed the creeping things which defiled. The second clause, that of touching a man by whom he would become unclean sums up a host of the things already detailed, such as a leper, a person with an emission, on so on. Such things as these brought about defilement which required purification.

⁶ the person who has touched any such thing shall be unclean until evening, and shall not eat the holy *offerings* unless he washes his body with water.

In this case, there are two stipulations. The first is that he is unclean until evening. One would assume that this would mean that he is clean after that time, as has been the case at other times for various types of contact. However, for the priest, unless he washes his body, he shall not eat of the holy offerings.

John Gill takes this as a type for the New Testament that a person who comes to Christ shall not take part in the Lord's Supper until they are first baptized. That isn't found in the New Testament, but it is an insightful exhortation nonetheless. Both are commanded by the Lord, and to do one without the other leaves a bit of a void in one's full obedience to Christ. If you haven't been baptized as an open profession of your faith, it is right that you do so.

⁷ And when the sun goes down he shall be clean; and afterward he may eat the holy *offerings*, because it *is* his food.

The previous verse required washing, but he remained unclean until the going down of the sun, at which time the new day began. With the coming of the new day, he was again recognized as clean. It was only after this that he could eat of the holy offerings. In essence, he was on a forced-fast due to his uncleanness for the duration of that time. This was then an important consideration for the priests to live holy, and to watch their conduct at all times.

The reason for the specificity here is because in general, priests were to be held to the highest standards at all times. But, in the case of such uncleanness, what might otherwise carry a greater penalty due to the office was mitigated. Nothing greater was imposed upon them than upon the common people because they needed their daily food. This is something that would have otherwise been deprived them.

⁸ Whatever dies *naturally* or is torn *by beasts* he shall not eat, to defile himself with it: *I am* the Lord.

To die naturally, or to die from being torn by beasts, meant that the animal had not been properly bled. This was already prohibited to the people of Israel in 17:15. In such a case for the common people, it says there that they were to wash their clothes, bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. However, for the priest, they were strictly forbidden from this at any time. If they disobeyed, they would defile themselves as priests. In Ezekiel 4:14, he adamantly proclaims that he had never done such a thing, and found any such thing completely abhorrent. He would never presume to do such a thing, especially because the priests had a greater weight of penalty to face if they presumed to do so...

⁹ ‘They shall therefore keep My ordinance, lest they bear sin for it and die thereby, if they profane it: I the Lord sanctify them.

Here, the term *mishmarti*, or “My watch” is translated as “My ordinance.” It says, “They shall therefore keep My watch.” It is a way of saying, “They shall always be on guard concerning this.” Unlike the common people who may accidentally eat of meat which was not properly bled, the priests had no excuse.

They received their food from the offerings of the people, they were the ones who were in charge of the offerings, and they were responsible for the blood rituals. There was actually no excuse for a priest to ever violate this. If they did, the Lord says that they would bear sin and die. To profane the watch of the Lord was to ignore the Lord who sanctified them. In verse 8, the Lord proclaimed His name, *ani Yehovah*. Now He proclaims His authority over them, *ani Yehovah meqadesham*, “I am Yehovah who sanctifies them.”

¹⁰ ‘No outsider shall eat the holy offering; one who dwells with the priest, or a hired servant, shall not eat the holy thing.

The word translated as “outsider” here is *zur*. It is elsewhere translated as a layman. It comes from a root which means “to turn aside,” as if in lodging. If the priest had someone like an old friend from high school, or the like, stop by for a visit, this person was not allowed to partake of the holy portions. The second class is a *toshav*, or sojourner. This might be someone who actually lives with the priest, even a non-permanent slave. The third class is a *sakir*, or hired servant. This is a wage earner under a priest. None of these would likewise be allowed to eat of a holy thing. They were not a permanent part of the house, and thus they were excluded from partaking. On the other hand...

¹¹ But if the priest buys a person with his money, he may eat it; and one who is born in his house may eat his food.

In both these cases, the people became permanent members of the household. According to Genesis 17, circumcision for such people was mandatory, and thus they became as Israelites in this regard. Because of this, it would not be right to deprive them of partaking in what the household itself was entitled to. If they were excepted from this, then the priest would otherwise be under obligation to provide two separate sources of food each day for his home. This was a burden the Lord did not levy upon them. Instead, they were accepted into the rights of the covenant people, and into the rights of the priestly household.

¹² If the priest's daughter is married to an outsider, she may not eat of the holy offerings.

When a woman married, she joined a new house. Unless her husband was a priest, she was no longer deemed as a member of a priest's household. Again, the word *zur* is used. He is other than of the priestly caste, and is not included in its privileges. In such a case, she gave up her right to partake of the holy offerings.

¹³ But if the priest's daughter is a widow or divorced, and has no child, and has returned to her father's house as in her youth, she may eat her father's food; but no outsider shall eat it.

In losing her means of household through widowhood or divorce, she could again be brought under the household of her father and once again partake of the offerings. However, if she bore children, a new household was established with children of a non-priestly father. Thus, she could no longer be brought under his household. She was therefore excluded from the offerings. The verse ends with the same warning as in verse 10 to show the stringent nature of not allowing outsiders to eat of the offerings. However...

¹⁴ 'And if a man eats the holy *offering* unintentionally, then he shall restore a holy *offering* to the priest, and add one-fifth to it.

This is a precept which finds its origin in verse 5:16. In this case, a person somehow unintentionally ate of a holy offering. As we know, ignorance of the law does not excuse guilt. In order to make restitution, he was required to restore the original value through

a holy offering, and then add a fifth to its value. This was to instruct Israel to carefully watch how they conducted their affairs in regards to that which was deemed holy.

¹⁵ They shall not profane the holy *offerings* of the children of Israel, which they offer to the Lord,

The major question of this verse is, “Who is ‘they’ referring to?” Some translations just insert the word “priests,” assuming they are the subject. However, the preceding verses pertain to the laymen, not the priests, and so it is surely referring to them. Should they partake of the offerings when not so authorized, it is they who profane the offerings which have been raised up to the Lord.

¹⁶ or allow them to bear the guilt of trespass when they eat their holy *offerings*; for I the Lord sanctify them.’

Again, this is surely speaking of the people and not the priests, and so it should say something like “...and bring the burden of the guilt of trespass in their eating.” And then again, we read words almost identical to verse 9, *ki ani Yehovah meqadesham*, “for I am Yehovah who sanctifies them.” That was spoken about the priests, now it is about the people. It is the Lord who sanctifies both.

Unfortunately, the people failed to sanctify themselves. It was a chronic problem in Israel, one which led to two exiles, and much grief. The witnesses for their first exile called, and they didn’t listen, and so off to Babylon they went. The witnesses for their second exile called out, and they continued to ignore the Lord. Malachi, 430 years before the coming of Christ, spoke of Israel’s constant disobedience of the very precepts found in this chapter.

The entire book speaks against them, but chapter 1 is like reading a line by line indictment against them for infractions against these chapters of Leviticus. Let’s take a moment to read it...

“A son honors *his* father,
And a servant *his* master.
If then I am the Father,
Where *is* My honor?
And if I *am* a Master,
Where *is* My reverence?
Says the Lord of hosts

To you priests who despise My name.
Yet you say, 'In what way have we despised Your name?'
⁷ "You offer defiled food on My altar,
But say,
'In what way have we defiled You?'
By saying,
'The table of the Lord is contemptible.'
⁸ And when you offer the blind as a sacrifice,
Is it not evil?
And when you offer the lame and sick,
Is it not evil?
Offer it then to your governor!
Would he be pleased with you?
Would he accept you favorably?"
Says the Lord of hosts.
⁹ "But now entreat God's favor,
That He may be gracious to us.
While this is being *done* by your hands,
Will He accept you favorably?"
Says the Lord of hosts.
¹⁰ "Who *is there* even among you who would shut the doors,
So that you would not kindle fire *on* My altar in vain?
I have no pleasure in you,"
Says the Lord of hosts,
"Nor will I accept an offering from your hands.
¹¹ For from the rising of the sun, even to its going down,
My name *shall be* great among the Gentiles;
In every place incense *shall be* offered to My name,
And a pure offering;
For My name shall be great among the nations,"
Says the Lord of hosts.
¹² "But you profane it,
In that you say,
'The table of the Lord is defiled;
And its fruit, its food, *is* contemptible.'
¹³ You also say,
'Oh, what a weariness!
And you sneer at it,"
Says the Lord of hosts.

“And you bring the stolen, the lame, and the sick;
Thus you bring an offering!
Should I accept this from your hand?”
Says the Lord.
¹⁴ “But cursed *be* the deceiver
Who has in his flock a male,
And takes a vow,
But sacrifices to the Lord what is blemished—
For I *am* a great King,”
Says the Lord of hosts,
“And My name *is to be* feared among the nations. Malachi 1

*Walking holy before the Lord
For it is He who has sanctified us by His great name
And so in obedience to His word
We will offer nothing blemished, or that which is lame*

*Our sacrifices will be pure and undefiled
What we offer will be of the very best
For through His redemption we have been reconciled
And in His goodness alone, we find our place of rest*

*Yes, we shall walk in a holy and righteous way
We shall bring honor to the name of our Lord
For all our lives, through each and every day
We shall be obedient, to His magnificent, superior word*

II. Acceptable and Unacceptable Offerings (verses 17-33)

¹⁷ And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying,

We have gone through the physical requirements to be a practicing priest, and also through the requirements for purity among them. Now the same type of precepts will be explained for the animals which are to be acceptable as offerings. Here the words of this verse introduce this new direction.

**¹⁸ “Speak to Aaron and his sons, and to all the children of Israel, and say to them:
‘Whatever man of the house of Israel, or of the strangers in Israel, who offers his**

sacrifice for any of his vows or for any of his freewill offerings, which they offer to the Lord as a burnt offering—

The directions here are for both Aaron and his sons, as well as for all of Israel. What is to be offered by the people is to come with a right heart towards the Lord, and what is accepted by the priests is to be acknowledged as right and proper towards Him. The people's offerings also include strangers, or proselytes. Any person who came to offer to the Lord was under the same obligations. The guidelines for the offerings themselves were detailed in Chapter 7.

¹⁹ you shall offer of your own free will a male without blemish from the cattle, from the sheep, or from the goats.

The wording here, rather than "of your own free will" should say, "that it may be accepted." In other words, the verse is saying that the sacrifice must be a male for it to be accepted. This was to be from the cattle, sheep, or goats. Each of these, as detailed in past sermons, picture Christ in their own unique way. Not only did they do so in their nature, but also in that they are to be without blemish, just as Christ was without spot or blemish in His earthly ministry.

²⁰ Whatever has a defect, you shall not offer, for it shall not be acceptable on your behalf.

Just as the priests were to be without any defect, the same is true with the offering. In each point, we are to learn that we are to only give that which is perfect to the Lord. In today's world, this does not mean our bodies must be perfect as then, nor must our offerings be perfect in their make up, but rather, both are to be perfect in that they are devoted to God through Christ, who perfectly passes them on to His Father. Each physical application now carries a spiritual meaning in the church age.

²¹ And whoever offers a sacrifice of a peace offering to the Lord, to fulfill his vow, or a freewill offering from the cattle or the sheep, it must be perfect to be accepted; there shall be no defect in it.

This verse seems to just be a repetition of the previous verses, but it is not. In the instructions for a peace offering found in Chapter 3, it says that it could be either of a male or a female. Thus, this verse is given to distinguish it from what has already been said of the other offerings. The peace offering to fulfill a vow would be based on some type of promise made to the Lord if He acted, such as in making a vow when facing

danger. One made as a freewill offering would normally be presented to acknowledge mercies which had been received. In any such offerings, perfection was required. Again, they look forward to what God has done in Christ for us.

²² Those *that are blind or broken or maimed, or have an ulcer or eczema or scabs, you shall not offer to the Lord, nor make an offering by fire of them on the altar to the Lord.*

The verse is rather plain to understand, but a couple curiosities. First, the word “blind” is actually a noun used for the first of but three times, *ivaron*. As a noun, it would better be translated “blindness.” Secondly, the word “maimed” is more often translated as “determine” or “decree.” The idea is of pointing out sharply in a figurative sense. However, in a literal sense, when one points sharply, it will lead to maiming another, such as an animal. Third, the word *yallepheth*, or scabs which was introduced in Chapter 21 is now seen for the last time. Goodbye to it.

The repetition of “you shall not offer” and “nor make an offering of fire by them,” point to the responsibilities of both the layman and of the priest. They were to both be attentive to what they were offering to the Lord. If you remember from the last chapter, such defects also disqualified one as a priest to the Lord.

²³ Either a bull or a lamb that has any limb too long or too short you may offer as a freewill offering, but for a vow it shall not be accepted.

In this verse, a word used only once in the Bible is seen, *qalat*, or “too short.” This was considered a defect as much as a limb which was too long. The same type of defects seen in the priests are also seen in the animals here. However, this verse seems to contradict what was just said in verses 18-22, where this was prohibited as a free-will offering. Some say the verse has been corrupted, and it should say, “you may not offer.” The Greek translation of the OT says that you can slaughter them for yourself, but they are not to be offered. During the second temple period, it was said that they could be consecrated for the upkeep of the sanctuary, but they could not be sacrificed on the altar. Whichever is correct, the Hebrew of this verse presents difficulties.

²⁴ You shall not offer to the Lord what is bruised or crushed, or torn or cut; nor shall you make *any offering of them* in your land.

The *maak*, or bruised, is introduced. It comes from a root meaning “to press.” One can see how that then results in a bruise. After that is a second new word, *kathath*, or

crushed. It means “to crush by beating. A third new word, *nathaq*, or “torn away,” is seen. It would indicate some part of the animal was torn off. These, along with animals which were cut, could not be offered to the Lord.

²⁵ Nor from a foreigner’s hand shall you offer any of these as the bread of your God, because their corruption *is* in them, *and* defects *are* in them. They shall not be accepted on your behalf.”

As with the people of Israel, so it was to be with the foreigner. The word here is not the same as that of verses 10 and 18. This word gives the sense of “son of the unknown.” It would be a person from another land looking to honor the God of Israel. No offering was to be made to the Lord with such defects because in order to represent what is acceptable to a perfect God, there must be perfection in what is offered to Him. This is then to be directly relayed to moral issues for those in Christ. All morality among His people must be in line with perfect righteousness.

One remarkable aspect of this verse is that a new word is introduced here, and which is used but two times in Scripture, *miskhath*, meaning disfigurement or corruption. The only other time it is seen is when speaking of Christ in Isaiah 52:14 –

“Just as many were astonished at you,
So His visage **was marred** more than any man,
And His form more than the sons of men;” Isaiah 52:14

What was considered unacceptable in these animal offerings is that which made us acceptable to God because of the work of Christ. It was His wrath poured out on the perfect Christ, not the corruption of the fallen world in an animal’s defect, which brings us close to Him once again. The offering of Christ was marred, but the mars were for our defects, not His.

²⁶ And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying:

The final section of the chapter commences with these words. In what is a break from most introductions, the words are spoken to Moses alone. There is no command to relay them to Aaron or to Israel, even though all would hear them when they were read.

²⁷ “When a bull or a sheep or a goat is born, it shall be seven days with its mother; and from the eighth day and thereafter it shall be accepted as an offering made by fire to the Lord.

Any of the three types of sacrificial animals was required to be with its mother for seven days. There are several suggested reasons for this. The first is that it is still weak in its first seven days, and thus is not a suitable offering to God. An animal of eight days would begin to be alert, able to get out and about, and the like.

Secondly, the animal had not yet been given a chance to exist, and the mother had not had a chance to enjoy her child. Thus it is a verse of mercy on both. Thirdly, the eighth day, like for circumcision of a child, signifies new beginnings. The old life is gone, and that which is new lies ahead, even if it is a life of sacrifice. This then would tie in with 1 Corinthians 7:14 where a child is sanctified by his believing parent. Otherwise it would be unclean. At a certain point, this would no longer be the case, and the child must come to God through Christ.

And finally, as a type of Christ, He being the Antitype of all suitable sacrifices, was not suffered to die in His infancy, which is what Herod wanted, but He died as a Man. Likewise, no man can be an acceptable sacrifice to God because of the infancy of their weakness and failings. Rather all must stand before God in the strength of Christ alone who is the perfection of that virtue and who was sacrificed on our behalf, if we so choose that most glorious option.

²⁸ *Whether it is a cow or ewe, do not kill both her and her young on the same day.*

A second prohibition is now levied on the sacrifice. However, the word for “kill” here is a general word, and doesn’t necessarily mean either, or both, are sacrificed, even though the tenor of the whole passage points to that, at least for one of the animals. It is generally accepted that this is a verse of mercy. For the animal, yes, but more so it is written for the bond of mother and child, and for the moral feelings of all who would understand the inappropriate nature of killing both in one day. To do so would blunt the natural sentiments of kindness and mercy in the heart.

²⁹ *And when you offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving to the Lord, offer it of your own free will.*

Again, as earlier, the word *ratson* in this verse means it should be translated as, “offer it for your acceptance.” This is not speaking of a free will offering, but of what follows next which will make the sacrifice acceptable.

³⁰ *On the same day it shall be eaten; you shall leave none of it until morning: I am the Lord.*

This is a command repeated from Leviticus 7:15. It is a prohibition similar to that of the Passover lamb in Exodus 12, and of the Manna in Exodus 16. Both were types of Christ, and this is as well. A thanksgiving offering is for something which has been accomplished, such as deliverance from affliction of some sort. God delivered, or provided, and so it wouldn't be appropriate for an acknowledgment of it to be dragged out.

To consume the offering over more than one day would be to do just that, thus one would be benefiting off of the Lord's deliverance instead of being grateful for it. If there was too much for one person to eat it, he should then share the offering with others, such as is explicitly prescribed in Deuteronomy 12. To not do so would not be showing the thanks that the offering implied. And to not share Christ, follows in the same self-centered way. Who is saved, truly grateful for that salvation, and yet unwilling to share what they have been given in Christ! This then is a theme fully developed by the author of Hebrews in verses 13:15, 16 –

“Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of *our* lips, giving thanks to His name. ¹⁶ But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.”

³¹ **“Therefore you shall keep My commandments, and perform them: I am the Lord.**

This, and the final two verses of the chapter, form the conclusion of the section. Everything that has been submitted is expected to be kept and performed. This is the same pattern which was seen at the end of Chapters 18 and 19. What is probable then, is that this concluding section covers everything in Chapters 20-22. They each build upon one another – conduct of the people; conduct of the priests; and acceptability of the priests and of the offerings. In order to impress upon them the importance of this, He repeats *ani Yehovah, I am Yehovah*.

³² **You shall not profane My holy name, but I will be hallowed among the children of Israel. I *am* the Lord who sanctifies you,**

The name is what everything centers on. To honor the Lord and to follow His commands is to hallow His name. To do otherwise is to profane His name. And thus He says that He will be hallowed among the people. He will either be hallowed *among* them, or he will be hallowed *upon* them. The choice is theirs. In verse 9, speaking of the priests, He said, “I Yehovah sanctify them.” In verse 16, speaking of the common people, He said, “...for I Yehovah sanctify them.” Now, he speaks to all collectively, *ani Yehovah meqadishkem*, “I am Yehovah who sanctifies you.” It is a note that all are to be holy, as He is holy.

³³ who brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God:

Again, as in Chapter 11, He ties His redemptive act of bringing the people out of Egypt into their need for sanctification. He redeemed; the people need to act on that redemption. It is the exact same thought we are given in the New Testament. The Lord saves, and so we are to respond to that salvation by being obedient, faithful followers of Him. We are to conduct our lives in the holy fear of the redemption in which we stand.

^{33 (fin)} I *am* the Lord.”

ani Yehovah. I am Yehovah. The divine name has been used 21 times in this short chapter. Nine of those times, He proclaimed His name as who He is. His name represents His nature and being. In the coming chapter, He will take that name and define the way in which Israel is to honor and celebrate it throughout their year. Each of the ways that He reveals is a picture of Christ Jesus to come.

As this is so, then the divine name, Yehovah, is an anticipatory name, given to be used until the coming of Christ. This is an important precept to remember, and one which is missed by many in various off-shoots of Christianity which have arisen in the recent past. There is a move away from the name of Christ Jesus, or Yeshua, to the sanctifying of names which only looked forward to His completed work. It is the name of Christ Jesus which Paul says is above every name, and it is that name which he says every tongue should confess.

Let us not be found deficient in our theology by incorrectly esteeming any other name than that of Christ Jesus. Yehovah *has* revealed Himself, and He *is* our Lord. He *is* Jesus. When we read about the Lord's desire for us to be holy as He is holy, all we need to do to get started is to look unto Jesus and emulate Him. It is in this way that we honor God the Father, and in no other. If you have been caught up in one of these sects which deviates from this teaching, pull yourselves up and out of it. Commit to Christ Jesus, and proclaim His name alone as Your hope.

“Let us recollect with gratitude that our great High Priest cannot be hindered by any thing from the discharge of his office. Let us also remember, that the Lord requires us to reverence his name, his truths, his ordinances, and commandments. Let us beware of hypocrisy, and examine ourselves concerning our sinful defilements, seeking to be purified from them in the blood of Christ, and by his sanctifying Spirit. Whoever attempts to expiate his own sin, or draws near in the pride of self-righteousness, puts as great an affront on Christ, as he who comes to the Lord's table from the gratification of

sinful lusts. Nor can the minister who loves the souls of the people, suffer them to continue in this dangerous delusion. He must call upon them, not only to repent of their sins, and forsake them; but to put their whole trust in the atonement of Christ, by faith in his name, for pardon and acceptance with God; thus only will the Lord make them holy, as his own people.” Matthew Henry

Closing Verse: *“For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light ⁹ (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), ¹⁰ finding out what is acceptable to the Lord.” Ephesians 5:8*

Next Week: Leviticus 23:1-3 *Six you work, one you rest – do the math...* (The Feasts of the Lord, The Sabbath) (36th Leviticus Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if you have a lifetime of sin heaped up behind you, He can wash it away and purify you completely and wholly. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

I Am the Lord

Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying
These are the words He was then relaying

“Speak to Aaron and his sons
That they from the holy things themselves separate
Of the children of Israel
And that they do not profane My holy name; get this straight

By what they dedicate to Me:
I am the Lord; so it shall be

Say to them: ‘Whoever of all your descendants
Throughout your generations, according to this word
Who goes near the holy things
Which the children of Israel dedicate to the Lord

While he has uncleanness upon him, as you have heard
That person shall be cut off from My presence: I am the Lord

'Whatever man of the descendants of Aaron
Yes any of them that is seen
Who is a leper or has a discharge
Shall not eat the holy offerings until he is clean

And whoever touches anything made by a corpse unclean
Or a man who has had an emission of semen; if such is seen

Or whoever touches any creeping thing
By which he would be made unclean before Me
Or any person by whom he would become unclean
Whatever his uncleanness may be—
The person who has touched any such thing
Shall be unclean until evening, so shall it be
And shall not eat the holy offerings
Unless he washes with water his body

And when the sun goes down
He shall be clean; a reason for a happy mood
And afterward he may eat the holy offerings
Because it is his food

Whatever dies naturally or is torn by beasts, according to My word
He shall not eat, to defile himself with it: I am the Lord.

'They shall therefore keep My ordinance
Lest they bear sin for it and die thereby
If they profane it
I the Lord sanctify them; this is why

'No outsider shall eat the holy offering
One who dwells with the priest, or a hired servant too
Shall not eat the holy thing
So I am instructing you

But if the priest buys a person with his money
He may eat it; with this right he is imbued
And one who is born in his house
May eat his food

If the priest's daughter is married to an outsider
She may not eat of the holy offerings; it is to be denied-her

But if the priest's daughter is a widow or divorced
And has no child, and has to her father's house returned
As in her youth, she may eat her father's food
But no outsider shall eat it, this right he has not earned

'And if a man eats the holy offering unintentionally
Then he shall restore a holy offering to the priest
And add one-fifth to it
And then the debt is ceased

They shall not profane the holy offerings
Of the children of Israel, which they offer to the Lord
Or allow them to bear the guilt of trespass
When they eat their holy offerings; for I the Lord sanctify them
----- So shall they heed this, My word

And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying
These are the words he was then relaying

"Speak to Aaron and his sons
And to all the children of Israel, and to them say:
'Whatever man of the house of Israel
Or of the strangers in Israel, as I now relay

Who offers his sacrifice for any of his vows
Or for any of his freewill offerings
Which they offer to the Lord as a burnt offering
Yes, any of these profferings

You shall offer of your own free will
Be sure to take careful notes
A male without blemish
From the cattle, from the sheep, or from the goats

Whatever has a defect, you shall not offer
-----do not make this gaffe

For it shall not be acceptable on your behalf

And whoever offers a sacrifice of a peace offering
To the Lord, to fulfill his vow
Or a freewill offering from the cattle or the sheep
It must be perfect to be accepted; as I tell you now
There shall be no defect in it
This command I do to you submit

Those that are blind or broken or maimed
Or have an ulcer or eczema or scabs; heed now this word
You shall not offer to the Lord
Nor make an offering by fire of them on the altar to the Lord

Either a bull or a lamb
That has any limb too long
Or too short you may offer as a freewill offering
But for a vow it shall not be accepted; do not get this wrong

You shall not offer to the Lord
What is bruised or crushed, or cut or torn
Nor shall you make any offering of them in your land
This to you I do now warn

Nor from a foreigner's hand
Shall you offer any of these as the bread of your God
Because their corruption is in them, and defects are in them
They shall not be accepted on your behalf
-----In this there can be no approval nod

And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying:
These continued words He was then relaying

“When a bull or a sheep or a goat is born
It shall be seven days with its mother, according to this word
And from the eighth day and thereafter
It shall be accepted as an offering made by fire to the Lord

Whether it is a cow or ewe, as to you I say

Do not kill both her and her young on the same day

And when you offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving to the Lord
Offer it of your own free will, heed now this word
On the same day it shall be eaten
You shall leave none of it until morning: I am the Lord

“Therefore you shall keep My commandments
And perform them: I am the Lord, so to you I do these things tell
You shall not profane My holy name
But I will be hallowed among the children of Israel

I am the Lord who sanctifies you
Who brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God
I am the Lord
Therefore walk circumspectly as before Me you trod

Lord God, You have sanctified us
And so now help us to sanctify ourselves as well
To ever emulate Jesus
Yes, our hearts we ask that You so impel

May we walk in a manner honorable and right
Never deviating from this noble way
May Christ Jesus be our ever-guiding Light
May He lead us in the bright, eternal day

And we give glory to You in the highest
Yes our voices raised
We bless Your glorious name
And forever it shall be praised

Hallelujah and Amen...

LEVITICUS 23:1-3

(THE FEASTS OF THE LORD, THE SABBATH)

We enter today into the Feasts of the Lord. There are varying views on these Feasts, but in a quick categorical outline, we can identify a few major ones. The first is that these feasts are “for Israel.” Some even call them “The Feasts of Israel” or the “Jewish Feasts.” Type either into your search bar and this will come up immediately. This is wrong from the outset as will be explained, but simply stated, Scripture calls them “Feasts of the Lord.” We are to go no further.

A second view is that these feasts are divided up into “spring feasts,” and “fall feasts,” and that these divisions are then given in relation to Christ’s two advents. In other words, He fulfilled the first four feasts in His first advent, and He will fulfill the last three in His second advent. This is problematic for several reasons.

First, there are actually eight feasts, not seven. The first is a weekly feast throughout the year, and the other seven are annual feasts. Secondly, He fulfilled all, not half of them in His first advent. I would say that this makes that view rather problematic.

Another view is that the spring feasts are fulfilled in His first coming, and the fall feasts are too, but they have a future application in His second advent which pertains to the nation of Israel alone. This is problematic because it then makes these, by default, Feasts of Israel, which is something that those who hold to this view explicitly state. They equivocate on the naming of the feasts in order to justify this unjustifiable stand.

What is true and correct, is that all eight feasts are Feasts of the Lord, and they are fulfilled in the work of Christ. They are a part of the law of Moses, a law which is explicitly stated to be fulfilled by Christ in the epistles, and which is recorded numerous times in the word of God. And not only is the law fulfilled, it is 1) obsolete; 2) annulled; 3) set aside; 4) nailed to the cross. These terms are all explicitly stated in the New Testament. The law is done. It is true that Israel is given seven more years under the law to accomplish certain things according to Daniel 9, but these things are in relation to Christ’s finished work of the law, not in acceptable observance of a now-obsolete law.

To say that Christ has yet to fulfill the three fall feasts, is to say that Christ did not fulfill the law. If Christ did not fulfill the law, then Christ is not the end of the law for all who believe. If the law is not fulfilled, then the law is still in effect for all people. When it says in Romans that there is “now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus,” we can be assured that this is in error because the law brings wrath, and it brings

condemnation. If Christ didn't fulfill the law, He is not the Messiah, we are not "in Christ," because we have put our hope in someone who is not Christ, and the law, in its entirety, is still binding on us today.

This doesn't just mean the parts that we want to observe, like maybe the Sabbath or not eating pork (ewww bacon!), but all of the law. It means that we are condemned for wearing clothes made of two different materials. We are condemned when we fail to tithe (give, give, give!). We are condemned when we harvest anything in the seventh year of the Sabbath-year cycle. We are condemned if we don't have tassels on the four corners of our garments... Shall I go on? Remember what James says, if we keep the entire law, and yet stumble in one point, we are guilty of it all. If Christ didn't fulfill the law, including the feasts, we stand – condemned.

Text Verse: *"So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, ¹⁷ which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ."* Colossians 2:16, 17

I imagine you will hear this text verse for the next few weeks as we open each sermon on the Feasts of the Lord. Paul's words about food and drink are given in relation to the dietary laws of Israel. Let no one judge you in such things. The law is dead; nailed to the cross. His words regarding a festival *are* "the Feasts of the Lord" found here in Leviticus 23. Let no one judge you in such things. The law is dead; nailed to the cross. His note about "sabbaths" is inclusive of the Feast of the Lord known as the Sabbath, and of all Sabbath observance. He uses the plural to cover any and all Sabbaths which are found in Israel's yearly calendar. Let no one judge you in such things. The law is dead; nailed to the cross.

In fact, what Paul is doing in this verse is citing Hosea 2:11 concerning these same things in relation to Israel. Israel would be judged by such things, but in Christ, we are not. It's fun for heretics to pick and choose what they will or will not do in the church, but it won't be fun when they stand before the Lord and find that they made a mockery of His finished work by deciding that what He did wasn't enough in their own narcissistic minds to please God. He asks us to trust in Christ, and in Christ alone. It's not that difficult unless you just can't stop looking in the mirror all day.

Today we will look over the Feast of the Lord known as the Sabbath. There are four major views within what we would call "Christianity" on the Sabbath. The first is that of the Seventh Day Adventists – it is a moral law of God, and it is binding. Saturday is to be

a Sabbath, and it is mandatory for all “Christians.” This is something the Hebrew Roots movement also teaches.

The second is the “Christian Sabbath” view. This is where the Sabbath is changed to Sunday, and it is a mandatory day of observance. The third belongs to Luther. He says that the Sabbath was for the Jews, and it does not pertain to Christians, but rest and worship, though required, are not connected to any particular day.

The fourth view is the “Fulfilled Sabbath.” Fulfilled means... fulfilled. In Christ, we enter our rest, as the Bible states. Paul says in Romans 14, “One person esteems one day above another; another esteems every day *alike*. Let each be fully convinced in his own mind” (verse 5). Obviously, taking Paul’s words cited earlier, and this verse here, along with simple Christian logic, the fulfilled view is correct. The first is heresy, and it will only bring condemnation. The second will be addressed later, but it is nonsense. The third is not found in Scripture, although it isn’t heretical or necessarily nonsense. It’s just not correct.

As far as the first, the heresy of Sabbath observance as a necessary requirement in today’s church is pitiful. All the information we need for salvation is found in Paul’s epistles. He, as the apostle to the Gentiles, defines clearly and precisely what we need to do to be saved; what we need to do in order to be pleasing to God; and how to also instruct others in meeting those same goals.

Nowhere does he say anything concerning the Sabbath, except to argue against observing it. What part of the concept of “grace” these heretics don’t understand is hard to grasp. It’s a simple word with a simple meaning, as is the concept of a gift. One does not work in order to receive a gift. And though the Sabbath is a day of not actively working, it is a day of spiritual work in order to not physically work. Our hope and our rest is in Christ alone. This is a fundamental truth which is found in sound Christian doctrine. It’s all to be found in His superior word. And so let’s turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. The Feasts of the Lord (verses 1 & 2)

¹ And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying,

The main addressee here, as is most commonly seen, is Moses. It is he who will receive the laws laid out here, directly from the Lord. In the preceding chapters, we have been

given directions and commands concerning the holiness of the sanctuary, the holiness of the priests, the holiness of the people, the holiness of the sacrifices, and so on. All of these were in relation to the holiness of the Lord. This chapter now details the holiness of the Lord in relation to the annual calendar – times of special observances within each year.

² **“Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them:**

The Lord’s words to Moses are directed to *bene yisrael*, or “the children of Israel.” The term *ben* literally means, “son.” However, the translation as “children” is appropriate. The reason for this is theological in nature. In the book of Galatians, Paul writes that as long as an heir is a child, he is no different than a slave. He then says in Galatians 4:3-

“Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world.”

However, He goes on in the next verses to say-

But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons” (4, 5).

In Christ, we go from being “children,” with no true rights in the family, to becoming sons with full rights. As he says in Galatians 4:7, “Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.” That alone stands as a testimony to the superiority of the New Covenant over the Old. The Old simply anticipated the New. In Christ, the Old is gone because it has been fulfilled in Him. The address now as “children” is appropriate. They will now be given instructions as children, who are required to do certain things, in anticipation of the time when these things are realized in Christ.

² (con’t) **‘The feasts of the Lord,**

moade Yehovah – “Appointed times (of) Yehovah.” The name Yehovah, translated as “the Lord,” is used 36 times in this chapter. There then is a heavy stress on this divine name. In contrast to this, the name “Israel,” when speaking of the people of the nation, is used only seven times, and it is always in the sense of being the addressee (five times), or of the responsibilities laid upon them (two times). This is rather important to remember. These are not “Feasts of Israel,” nor is that term ever used in Scripture.

When the feasts are mentioned, it is always in relation to the Lord, directly or indirectly. In using the term “Feasts of Israel,” as has become popular in modern times, it takes the focus off the Lord entirely, but it is the Lord, meaning Jesus, who has fulfilled each and every one of these feasts.

By stating they are feasts of Israel, a misguided concept of these somehow having a future fulfillment in national Israel is seen. This makes for incredibly bad theology, and it harms evangelistic efforts which otherwise might be effective. If people see the fulfillment of these feasts in their proper light, meaning in Christ Jesus, they will then be able to see their need for Christ Jesus. If Israel is the focus, this truth becomes obscured, or even eliminated.

The Hebrew word for “feast” is *moed*. This comes from *yaad*, meaning to appoint, assign, designate, etc. That in turn comes from a primitive root meaning to fix upon, as by agreement or appointment. Thus, the *moed* is a specific meeting in time, place, and/or appointment. Its first use in Scripture was in Genesis 1:14 when the stars were set in the heavens to be for signs and *l’moadim*, or “for seasons.”

Charles Benson states, “These, in our translation, are termed feasts; but the word here used, rather means solemn seasons, or meetings, and as the day of atonement was comprehended in them, which was not a feast, but a fast, they certainly are improperly termed feasts.”

If one looks at these set times in a forward-looking way, he is correct. There is as much set restriction as there is command to accomplish. One cannot work on the Sabbath. In the Feast of Weeks, the people are told to do no customary work, etc. However, if one in our dispensation looks back on what these feasts anticipated, and rightly sees their fulfillment in Christ, then they truly are “feasts” of the Lord for us to revel in. He did the work, we receive, and feast upon, the benefits of that work. Still, Benson is right. what is a more appropriate term would be “appointed times.”

^{2 (con’t)} **which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations,**

asher tiqre-u otam miqrae qodesh – “which you shall call out calling-outs holy.” The word “convocations” here is *miqra*. It comes from the word *qara*, which is also in this verse, translated as “proclaim.” Moses is instructed to “call out” the coming feasts as assemblies, thus “calling outs” or “convocations.”

^{2 (con’t)} **these are My feasts.**

eleh hem moadai – “These they, My feasts.” The term *moadai*, or “My feasts,” is only used here and in Ezekiel 44:24 where it is speaking of the future millennial reign of Christ where His feasts and Sabbaths will again be observed. This should in no way cause confusion with the believer in Christ in this dispensation. In the millennium, some feasts will be observed by Israel in commemoration of what Christ *did*. This in no way means that these are to be observed now. In fact, to mandate observance of these feasts is to set aside the grace of Christ who fulfilled them for us. Paul speaks of this in Galatians 4:9-11, where he says –

“But now after you have known God, or rather are known by God, how is it that you turn again to the weak and beggarly elements, to which you desire again to be in bondage? ¹⁰You observe days and months and seasons and years. ¹¹I am afraid for you, lest I have labored for you in vain.”

It is a futile thing indeed to attempt to merit God’s favor apart from the work of Christ. To set aside what Christ has done, and to attempt to please God through observance of an appointed meeting that has met its appointed fulfillment in Jesus’ work, is to merit bringing God’s wrath down upon oneself. Let us not be so foolish as to have this attitude of ingratitude. If we believe we can attain holiness through observing these feasts, we maintain that we have not become holy through Christ. What a slap in the face of God!

*Feasts to the Lord; they were accomplished as is appointed
Together we celebrate what the Lord has done
They are fulfilled in Christ, the One who was anointed
In these feasts, we see the work of God’s own Son*

*Our observance isn’t as the law mandated
No, our observance is in how we act toward our Lord Jesus
In Him we have our Sabbath rest; so the Bible has stated
And that is just the first of eight fulfilled by Christ for us*

*Each reveals something marvelous accomplished by the Lord
And so to Him, we gratefully give thanks and praise
With Him always in our thoughts, and contemplating His word
We find the fulfillment of these special, festal days*

II. The Feast of the Sabbath (verse 3)

³**‘Six days shall work be done,**

sheshet yamim te-aseh melakah – “six days you shall do work.” These words are directive in nature. Therefore the week is divided into two sections, active work and active cessation from work. Man is not to be idle when he should be working, and man is not to be working when he should be at rest. What is curious is that one person is being addressed. The verb is second-person singular. This is odd because at the end of the verse, the verb will be plural.

The workweek in Israel is based on a seven-day calendar, beginning on Sunday and ending on Saturday, just as it is in the US today. Unlike our time schedule today though, each day begins at evening and goes through until the next evening. Thus Sunday, the first day of the week, begins at evening – literally sundown – on Saturday, and goes through until sundown the next day.

Things that needed to be done were to be done *before* the Sabbath so that no work was to be done *on* the Sabbath. This, however, does not mean that one *must* work every day. If so, for example, it would violate the other mandated feasts of the Lord. Rather, what should be done was to be done, but not on the Sabbath.

This pattern of working six days has its source in the early Genesis account. The evening/morning schedule is recorded at the end of each day of creation, beginning with Genesis 1:5. With the completion of creation on the sixth day, the record then states –

“Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished. ² And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. ³ Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.” Genesis 2:1-3

Thus, Israel was instructed to labor six days and rest on the seventh, as is next seen...

^{3 (con't)} **but the seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn rest,**

Here the term, *shabath shabathon*, or “(a) resting day of solemn resting” is used. This specific term, *shabath shabathon*, is only used six times in Scripture. Four times it speaks of the weekly Sabbath, once for the Day of Atonement, and once concerning the seventh year of Sabbath rest. The people were to rest, and they were to contemplate God and His works on their behalf.

Concerning this term, *shabath*, or Sabbath. It first must be understood that this is referring to Saturday. Biblically, there is no such thing as a Sunday Sabbath. To say, "Today is the Sabbath," only means, "Today is a Saturday, and it is my day of rest." There is no transfer of Sabbath to Sunday to be found in Scripture. That is a fallacy known as a "category mistake."

Understanding this, the word *shabath* implies rest and cessation from labor. This cessation of labor for Israel merely looks forward to a different type of rest. It was a foretaste of the blessed eternal rest which man lost, but which was promised to be restored. Man was created outside of the Garden of Eden and was *rested* in the Garden to worship and serve His God. This was lost.

Despite this matching the pattern of creation, and despite the Lord sanctifying the seventh day as a day of rest, even from the seventh day after the creation began, there is no record of anyone observing a Sabbath, meaning a Saturday day of rest, until after the Exodus from Egypt. At the time of the giving of the manna, the Lord, through Moses, instituted the first Sabbath –

Then he said to them, "This *is what* the Lord has said: 'Tomorrow is a Sabbath rest, a holy Sabbath to the Lord. Bake what you will bake *today*, and boil what you will boil; and lay up for yourselves all that remains, to be kept until morning.'"

-Exodus 16:23

Those who say that a Sabbath is still required today must make things up about what occurred at that time, saying that there was confusion in the elders about what to do on the Sabbath because they had this double portion on Friday and they were confused about what to do with the second portion on Saturday. Would they be allowed to violate the Sabbath to prepare it?

This is nonsense. Nothing in Scripture indicates that the Sabbath existed at all until that point in history. Not a single verse outside of Genesis 2:3 hints at it. Further, the text itself later disproves it. Secondly, Genesis 2:3 only became a written fact at the giving of the law through Moses, and more, it was only written after the account concerning the manna in Exodus. Genesis 2:3 simply describes the fact that God sanctified the seventh day, but it goes no further than that.

There is nothing prescriptive added to the general statement which was made in Genesis. Thirdly, the reason is given for the Sabbath in the presentation of the Ten Commandments in Exodus 20 and in Deuteronomy 5, but the reason given for it is

different in both. In Exodus 20 it is based on Creation, "For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth" (20:11). But in Deuteronomy 5, it is based on Redemption, "And remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the Lord your God brought you out from there by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm; therefore the Lord your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day" (5:15).

Despite this, the two are tied together. Israel was already redeemed at the giving of the law at Sinai. Therefore, as a sign of God's rest following His creative efforts, which had subsequently been lost in the Garden of Eden, the redeemed of Israel were given the Sabbath.

Thus there is no contradiction between Exodus and Deuteronomy. One acts leads to another. The fallen world could not be redeemed unless it had first been created. Everything is looking forward to God's rest; a rest which can only be found in Christ. As the law could only bring a curse, then the Sabbath was only a shadow, looking forward to Christ's fulfillment of it.

At the time after the Exodus, the Sabbath was uniquely revealed to Israel. It was at the time of their organization as a nation to show that the Lord is Creator and Redeemer. Until that point, there was no need to mandate the Sabbath to the world. And further, the words to the people in Exodus 16 when the Sabbath was first given directly clue us into this because it said there, "Tomorrow *is* a Sabbath rest." It does not say *ha'shabbat*, or "**the** Sabbath." Instead, it leaves off a definite article. If the people were aware of the Sabbath as an institution, it would have said *ha'shabbat*, "**the** Sabbath." It does not. Instead, Moses was made aware of it in connection to the giving of the manna.

Unfortunately, some versions, utterly mistranslate that verse and add in two definite articles which don't exist in the Hebrew. They say, "To morrow is **the** rest of **the** holy sabbath unto the LORD" (KJV). By adding these in, they insert inappropriate and confused theology to the text.

And finally, in the same line of thought, Moses gave additional specificity by repeating the words and adding in the word "holy." He said to Israel, "Tomorrow *is* a Sabbath rest, a **holy** Sabbath to the LORD." The entire phrase of Exodus 16:23 smacks of, and implies, uniqueness, and thus first-time instruction concerning Sabbath requirements.

The reason why it's important to know this is because of the highly divergent teachings on the Sabbath within Christianity. Those who teach that a Saturday Sabbath is required

for Christians today, will make the claim that it is an eternal standard of God that always existed for humanity. This verse in Exodus shows this is not true.

In the giving of the Sabbath in connection with the Manna came two pictures of Christ. He is our Bread, and He is also our Rest. That He is our Rest is seen explicitly in Hebrews 4:3, "For we who have believed do enter that rest." By faith in Christ, our heavenly Bread, we enter into God's eternal rest, pictured by the giving of the Sabbath *along with* the Manna. It is only a picture. This continued to be revealed in Exodus 16. In verse 25, it then said –

Then Moses said, "Eat that today, for today *is* a Sabbath to the LORD; today you will not find it in the field." Exodus 16:25

Again, there was no article in front of "Sabbath." It simply said, "a Sabbath." However, this was the formal institution of the Sabbath for Israel, and so it actually precedes the giving of the law. As the formal institution, the name was given to designate the day. Next, Exodus 16 shows that God provided in advance *of* the Sabbath *for* the Sabbath by providing manna. And third, He directed that what was provided on Friday was to be prepared on Friday, in advance of the Sabbath. It then formed a picture of Christ coming after the giving of the law. He gave us Christ, and then He gave us rest in Christ via fulfilling the law.

The law was annulled through His completed work, and with it the Sabbath day requirement was annulled. However, as an ordinance to Israel, there was more for them to learn at the time of the giving of both the manna and the Sabbath. In verse 26 of the same chapter, it said, "Six days you shall gather it, but on the seventh day, the Sabbath, there will be none."

In saying this to Israel, it was to be understood that this first Sabbath wasn't a one-time occurrence. Rather it was to become the standard at all times and as long as the manna was provided. However, it could be inferred at that time that the Sabbath was then only to be observed during that period when the manna was given. It wasn't until the giving of the law, that the Sabbath was fully incorporated into what was expected of Israel, even apart from the times when manna was given. One might ask, "Who cares about that?" But for Israel, we see an incremental giving of instructions for the Lord to progressively reveal His intentions to the people.

Step by step, the Lord methodically shaped Israel to become His obedient people. By giving them the Sabbath in connection with the giving of the manna, He was preparing

them for a time when the Sabbath would be required *apart* from the manna. Which would have been easier for people to adjust to? Being given two portions of manna and being told to prepare them on Friday and then not work on Saturday, or being told to prepare food on Friday and not do anything on Saturday when houses were full of things they had stored up through normal life?

The giving of the manna for six days and withholding it on the seventh, before entering a normal agricultural setting, was a valuable preparation for the time when the manna would no longer be provided. The wisdom of God is seen in how He introduced the Sabbath into the lives of His people, Israel.

After this initial giving of the Sabbath, it was incorporated into the Ten Commandment in Exodus 20, giving specifics about what could not be done on that day. After that, it was introduced again in Exodus 31 where it was given great specificity. In those verses, a unique chiasmic structure was given –

Exodus 31:13-17 - The Sabbath Rest

A Sign between the Lord and Israel (7/11/2016)

- a. Surely My Sabbaths you shall keep
 - b. For it is a sign between Me and you
 - c. Throughout your generations,
 - d. You shall keep the Sabbath, therefore, for it is holy to you
 - e. Everyone who profanes it shall surely be put to death
 - f. For whoever does any work on it
 - x. Work shall be done for six days,
 - but the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord
- f. Whoever does any work on the Sabbath day
 - e. He shall surely be put to death
- d. Therefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath
 - c. Throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant
- b. It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel
- a. On the seventh day He rested and was refreshed

In the first half of the chiasm, it explains the requirement. It then gives the naming of the punishment first and then the reason for the punishment. The second half of the chiasm does the opposite. It gives the reason for the punishment, then the naming of the punishment, and then the explanatory basis for the sequence.

In the Old Covenant, man worked and then rested. In the New Covenant, man rests and then works. A picture is made of the process of salvation in the two dispensations. Israel worked six days and then rested on the Sabbath. It was in anticipation of the time of rest which lay ahead when all things would be restored.

With Christ's coming we rest in honor of His finished work, and then we conduct our work week. This is why in the first half of the chiasm, line e gives the penalty – death, and then line f gives the reason for the penalty – working on the Sabbath. Whereas in the second half of the chiasm, the order is reversed. First is noted the reason for the penalty – working, and then is given the penalty – death. Our rest is in Christ and what He has done. We have died to the law; we now live and work in Christ.

Understanding this, we see in Exodus 31 that the Lord told Israel that the Sabbath would be a sign between Him and them, a sign of sanctification. However, for the believer in Christ, we do not receive our sign of sanctification through an external observance. Rather, our sign of sanctification is the sealing of the Holy Spirit. It is received simply by placing faith in the finished work of Christ. Paul notes this in Romans 15 –

“Nevertheless, brethren, I have written more boldly to you on *some* points, as reminding you, because of the grace given to me by God,¹⁶ that I might be a minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.”

-Romans 15:15, 16

The sign of the Sabbath is not at all for this dispensation. With Christ's coming, we rest first in Him and in honor of His finished work, and then we conduct our work. This is the lesson found back in Exodus 31 for those who will pay heed. After that, the Sabbath was mentioned one more time in Exodus. In 35:2, the mandating of the Sabbath is given with the warning that anyone who works on that day was to be put to death. After that, it immediately added in something new to the Sabbath laws saying, “You shall kindle no fire throughout your dwellings on the Sabbath day” (Exodus 35:3).

Along with all the other things that the people were already told to not do on the Sabbath day, a new requirement was added in. No fire was to be kindled in any dwelling on the Sabbath. No manna was provided on the Sabbath and so they were to prepare their food a day in advance of the Sabbath. As a further restraint, they were told to not even kindle a fire. To kindle a fire was a laborious process of work. As food wasn't cooked, they were not to consider making a fire for any other reason. As John Lange says about this –

“The addition, prohibiting the kindling of fire, indicates that the law of the Sabbath is made more rigorous in the matter of abstinence.” John Lange

The Israelites were to actively abstain from work in every possible way. The same is not true now. In Christ, we are given a different aspect of the same precept. We are *not* told to abstain from every work in order to attempt to merit God’s favor. Instead, we are to rest in the finished work of Christ. In the end, whether before the cross or after, it is all done in relation to Christ.

And that brings us to the relationship of the placement of the Sabbath requirements given in Exodus 31 and then in Exodus 35. In Exodus 25 through the first half of Exodus 31, the instructions for the construction of the tabernacle were given. Immediately after that long section came the giving of the Sabbath law verses, showing that they were a sign of sanctification to Israel.

In chapter 35 came the details of the actual construction of the tabernacle. That went all the way until the end of the book. But just prior to those details was the final note concerning the Sabbath requirements. Understanding the placement of these two Sabbath law passages shows us a simple and profound truth. The keeping of the Sabbath by Israel was tied directly into the presence of the Lord among them. It was He who sanctified them, and the Sabbath was a sign of that sanctification.

Now, in Christ, we have what that sign only pictured. As it says in Hebrews 4:3, “For we who have believed do enter that rest.” The word used there to describe this rest is found in Acts 7 where Stephen cites the Lord’s question concerning His place of rest, and then it is used 11 more times, but only in the book of Hebrews. There it explains the meaning of entering God’s rest. It is a rest which is not at all found in the Sabbath day, but in Christ.

In fact, in the New Testament, outside of the gospels, which describe Jesus’ fulfilling the law, the term “Sabbath” is found only 10 times. Nine of those are in Acts, and are only used in relation to Jewish/Synagogue observance. The final time is in Colossians 2, our text verse today, where Paul adamantly speaks against being judged by anyone in relation to Sabbath observance.

The reason for this is that Christ *is* our place of rest. It is through Him that we are granted access, once again, into that Garden of Delight that we were expelled from so long ago. As Paul says, “the substance is of Christ.” What is important to understand is that Paul’s epistles are doctrine for the church age. To ignore his letters means there is

no doctrine for the church age. All theology thus becomes a pick and choose path to God.

Attempting to be justified before God through works sets aside both the notion of receiving a gift as well as the granting of grace. This is the error of those who state that we are to observe these festivals of the Lord, including the Sabbath, in order to be pleasing to Him. One cannot merit grace. It simply must be received. Anything else... is not grace. Mandatory Sabbath observance is a heresy.

³ (con't) **a holy convocation.**

miqra qodesh – convocation holy. This is what verse 2 specified for the feast days, and this is what is now repeated for the Sabbath. It is a holy convocation. The Lord is calling His people, Israel, to observe this day as a holy calling. Unlike the next seven feasts, this is the only weekly one, and thus it is set apart from the others. However, this in no way means that it is not a Feast of the Lord. What it does mean, however, is that no other feast was to take precedence over it. Some of the feasts lasted a full week, and at times, others may have lined up with a Sabbath day. In such cases, the Sabbath requirements were not to be set aside. Instead, the Sabbath was to be kept to the Lord, despite whatever else occurred. This included the prohibition that...

³ (con't) **You shall do no work *on it*;**

kal melakah lo taasu – All work no you shall do. The verb is second-person plural. No work was to be conducted on a Sabbath day. There is no exemption from this. However, it is noted in Scripture, and by the mouth of the Lord, that priestly duties were to continue even on Sabbath days. This is seen in Matthew 12 –

At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath. And His disciples were hungry, and began to pluck heads of grain and to eat. ² And when the Pharisees saw *it*, they said to Him, “Look, Your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath!”

³ But He said to them, “Have you not read what David did when he was hungry, he and those who were with him: ⁴ how he entered the house of God and ate the showbread which was not lawful for him to eat, nor for those who were with him, but only for the priests? ⁵ Or have you not read in the law that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and are blameless? ⁶ Yet I say to you that in this place there is *One* greater than the temple. ⁷ But if you had known

what *this* means, 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the guiltless. ⁸ For the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath."

-Matthew 12:1-8

The priest's duties to the Lord took priority over a Sabbath Day observance. Think it through. As those whose duties to the Lord were exempt, how much more then are those who are "in" the Lord because of His finished work also exempt from this. He is the Lord of the Sabbath; we are placed in Christ through faith in what He has done, and therefore we are no longer under the laws which only pointed to Him.

^{3 (fin)} **it is the Sabbath of the Lord in all your dwellings.**

This translation here is confusing and should rather read, "...it is **a Sabbath to** the Lord in all your dwellings." Otherwise, it seems like the Lord is even now working six days and taking the seventh off. Rather, they were to work and then rest to the Lord, honoring Him on this special day dedicated to Him.

Now, with His having fulfilled the law, we enter God's rest. This is the reason why the first part of the sentence is in the second-person singular – "Six days you shall work." The Lord speaks specifically to Christ. "You (alone) shall do the work." In the second half, it is in the second-personal plural – "All work you (all) shall not do." This cannot be arbitrary, and it cannot simply be attributed to scholarly error. It is far too obvious to be a mistake. Instead, it is instructive.

It is speaking of us resting in Christ's accomplished work. "You Christ My Son, shall do the work. You all, My people, shall rest in My Son's work. It is His effort, and not in our own effort. The words of Jesus, Paul, and the author of Hebrews all agree that our true rest is found in Christ, and in Him alone. The Sabbath was only a picture of what was to come. Concerning the Sabbath, in Christ we proclaim, "Feast fulfilled."

With that knowledge, we are to rest in Christ, trust in Christ, and be pleased to have been reconciled to God solely by the work of Christ. Thank God for Jesus Christ. If you are listening to this sermon, and if you are trying to merit God's favor through your works, be it Sabbath observance, or helping ladies across the street, you're a making a fundamental mistake. You are placing yourself in the equation. What you need to do is to remove yourself, and put Jesus in it, completely and wholly. By trusting in what He has done, you will be in the sweet spot, and on your way to glory.

Closing Verse: *“For he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works as God did from His.” Hebrews 4:10*

Next Week: *Leviticus 23:4-8 Redeemed and living in holiness; Christ as our Head... (The Feasts of the Lord, The Passover and Unleavened Bread) (37th Leviticus Sermon)*

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if you have a lifetime of sin heaped up behind you, He can wash it away and purify you completely and wholly. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Feasts of the Lord, The Sabbath

And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying
These are the words He was then relaying

“Speak to the children of Israel
And say to them: ‘The feasts of the Lord
Which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations
These are My feasts; pay heed now to My word

‘Six days shall work be done
But the seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn rest
A holy convocation
You shall do no work on it; as previously addressed

It is the Sabbath of the Lord
In all your dwellings, pay heed to this word

Lord God, a Sabbath of rest You gave to Israel
A weekly feast to honor You
But in this feast is a story to tell
A story of what Christ Jesus did do

He came to this place of work, toil, and sweat
And He labored for us so that we could truly find rest
In Him the work is finished; the requirement is met
And so now in Him, we are eternally blessed

We read in Hebrews 4 and verse number 3
That in Him when we believe we find our true rest
The feast is fulfilled; we now rest peacefully
Yes, in Christ Jesus, we are eternally blessed

Hallelujah to You, O God, great things You have done!
Hallelujah to You, O God, for the giving of Jesus Your Son!

Hallelujah and Amen...

LEVITICUS 23:4-8

(THE FEASTS OF THE LORD PASSOVER & UNLEAVENED BREAD)

With the *weekly* Sabbath explained last week, today we begin the *annual* feasts of the Lord. The first two of them, Passover and Unleavened Bread, have already been explained rather thoroughly in past Exodus sermons. However, the Lord is restating them now as Feasts of the Lord because He wanted Israel to carefully observe them, each year, at set times.

They were to be annual pictures of Christ to come. If they paid attention to the symbolism of the Bible, and grasped what various things picture, they would then be able to more readily understand the evident nature of Christ's fulfillment of each of them. They would also then know what was expected of them after He completed His work.

Unfortunately, Israel as a whole missed it. A certain portion of them got it, but the vast majority didn't. For the most part, even Christians don't really get it either. There are a lot more people in today's world than in years past who are going back and looking more carefully at the Old Testament and seeing how it points to Christ. This is a good thing.

And yet at the same time, there are a lot of supposed Christians who are not only going back and looking at the Old Testament, they are unfortunately sticking to it as a means to an end. Instead of looking at how it points to Christ, they have taken and started applying these things to themselves.

It has become a viral infection within the church. Instead of seeing the annual feasts of the Lord as remarkable markers of Israel's history which were to lead them to recognize their Messiah when He came, they instead find them to be observances which will hopefully lead them to a closer relationship with the Lord of the Old Testament. As wacky as that sounds, that is what is going on. It happened to me this week after giving the Sabbath sermon. Emails came flooding in, mis-citing and abusing Scripture, in order to show we are still under the law (Matthew 5:17-20).

People need to realize that the Lord, Yehovah of the Old *is* the Lord, Jesus of the New. These annual feasts were given to show us what He would do for us, and thus how we were to then live for Him. They are mere shadows of spiritual truths which pointed to the reality found in Christ Jesus.

Text Verse: *“So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, ¹⁷ which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.” Colossians 2:16, 17*

The substance is of Christ. The feasts of Israel were shadows, not reality. In Christ we have the substance, and in Christ we are to dwell. The tragedy of law-observance in today’s world is all the more heartbreaking when one considers that all it takes is a minor amount of study to realize that Christ is the end of these things; He is the fulfillment of them.

If I were to take you outside and offer you a table full of gold and other riches, or let you take the shadow in its place, which would you go for? The fool would go for the shadow, and he would end up with nothing. One cannot take a shadow. In the end, he is left completely empty handed.

On the other hand, the wise person, (which I know you all fit that category), would take the table full of riches. And guess what! In taking the substance, you get the shadow too. You get it all. But please, leave me the table, that was not a part of my offer to you. Go buy your own table with all that gold.

All kidding aside, the person who is caught up in law observance is the fool who gets nothing. Even the shadow he thinks he possesses will be taken from him.

For the truly wise person, grab the substance! Take hold of Christ Jesus, and rejoice in His work, accomplished for us, and then live for Him as you are shown how to do. It’s all to be found in His superior word. And so let’s turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. The Passover (verses 4 & 5)

⁴‘These *are* the feasts of the Lord, holy convocations

Although not word for word, this is practically a repeat of verse 2. There the Lord said, “The feasts of the Lord, which you shall proclaim *to be* holy convocations, these *are* My feasts.” Because this is now repeated, it is generally assumed by some that the Sabbath isn’t actually a feast of the Lord. This is incorrect. It is a feast of the Lord, one which is weekly in nature. These are annual, and are thus set apart from the weekly Sabbath.

Further, by designating the Sabbath first and separately, the intent was to ensure that an annual feast was not to override, or nullify, the weekly Sabbath. They were to be held concurrently if they fell to the same day, but the Sabbath requirement was not to be ignored. With that understanding, the repetition concerning the feasts of the Lord now is given to enumerate the annual feasts in their order.

Although a bit confusing, the calendar to be used is the Redemption Calendar mandated by the Lord in Exodus 12. Until that time, the beginning of the annual calendar was in the seventh month, originally known in Hebrew as *Ethanim*, a word meaning something like “permanent flowings.”

After the Babylonian exile, the name of the month took on the Aramaic name of Tishri. This word, Tishri, comes from an Akkadian word, *tasritu*, meaning “beginning.” This could rightly be called the Creation Calendar as it was used since the time of creation. However, Tishri would become the seventh month in the newly established Redemption Calendar. This Redemption Calendar was first mandated in the Book of Redemption, Exodus. There in Exodus 12 it says –

“Now the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, ²‘This month *shall be* your beginning of months; it *shall be* the first month of the year to you.’” Exodus 12:1, 2

The name of this newly established first month was *Aviv*, meaning ear, especially green ears of grain. Later, after the Babylonian exile, the name of the month would be changed to the Aramaic name, Nisan. In Assyrian, the word means “beginning.” Thus it is a new beginning after the first. The calendar change itself is giving us insights into God’s new beginnings in Christ.

This pattern of creation followed by redemption is seen throughout the Bible. It is seen in the calendars used. Also, in the giving of the Ten Commandments, they were relayed to the people first based on creation in the Decalogue of Exodus 20. However, it is based on redemption in the Decalogue of Deuteronomy 5.

All the way at the end of the Bible in Revelation, the praising of God for His marvelous works is first given based on His creative efforts, and then it is based on His redemptive efforts. We are being shown spiritual truths in how God lays out His word, and His plans. The Feasts of the Lord, therefore, will contain such spiritual truths. God is the Creator, and He is also the Redeemer. His feasts will show us the redemptive process of man through pictures of the coming Christ.

^{4 (con't)} **which you shall proclaim at their appointed times.**

In the annual calendar, the arrival of each feast was proclaimed at its time appointed by the Lord. This was done with trumpet blasts, heralding in the start of the feast day.

It is to be noted now that although all of the feasts are appointed by the Lord in anticipation of their fulfillment in Christ Jesus, not all of them are actually fulfilled on a specific day. For example, no specific calendar day is given for the feast of Firstfruits. The feast of Weeks is based on the feast of Firstfruits, whenever that would occur, fifty days later would come Weeks. No calendar day is specified for either in Scripture.

The feast of Yom Kippur is specified for the 10th day of the 7th month, but it was literally fulfilled on the same day as the Passover when Christ died as both our Passover Lamb, and our Atoning Sacrifice. The calendar was set for Israel to demonstrate a logical order in which redemptive acts take place, but that order is actually realized solely in the now-fulfilled work of Christ.

These feasts can logically be ordered, not according to the calendar year, but on what they have accomplished through the life and ministry of Christ Jesus. A breakdown of this would be –

A. Yom Teruah (Day of Acclamation) – Birth of Christ into humanity: a redemptive act tied to the beginning of the Creation calendar.

B. Pesakh (Passover) – Redemption: a one-time redemptive act based on the perfect life of Christ, summed up in His birth through crucifixion.

B. Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement) – Atonement: a one-time redemptive act based on the perfect life of Christ, summed up in His birth through crucifixion.

A. Bikurim (Firstfruits) – Resurrection: Birth of Christ from the dead: a one-time redemptive act on a date determined by the Lord.

C. Ha'Matsot (Unleavened Bread) – Sanctification: a redemptive act, ongoing for God's people; those who are "in Christ."

D. Shavuoth (Weeks) – God indwelling man: made available because of the crucifixion and resurrection. A one-time redemptive act on a date determined by the timing of the resurrection.

D. Sukkoth (Tabernacles) – God dwelling with man: proven by the resurrection. The feast sums up the purpose of all redemptive acts of the Lord. It is ongoing for God's people, even to eternity.

⁵ On the fourteenth *day* of the first month

The day mandated here was first determined in Exodus 12:6, but it must be taken in the proper context of Exodus 12. There it said –

“Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: ‘On the tenth of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of *his* father, a lamb for a household. ⁴ And if the household is too small for the lamb, let him and his neighbor next to his house take *it* according to the number of the persons; according to each man’s need you shall make your count for the lamb. ⁵ Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take *it* from the sheep or from the goats. ⁶ Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month.’” Exodus 12:3-6

When the Lord spoke those words to Israel, it was the very first time that the term *edah*, or congregation, was used. That word comes from another word *yaad* which means “to appoint” or “to meet.” They were first called at the time of the Exodus to be a congregation of people involved in a united act according to the commandment of God.

The Passover as a feast of the Lord is based on that original Passover held at the time of the Exodus from the bondage of Egypt. It was that redemptive act which was to now be celebrated annually on the same day of the original occurrence. But that was merely a picture of the coming work of Christ, delivering humanity from the bondage of sin under the devil’s yoke.

On the tenth day of the month, the people were told to take a lamb according to the house of the father. That means appropriate to the size of the house. The word “lamb” used there was *seh* and it simply means one of the flock, either a goat or a lamb. They were to take such an animal, without blemish, and keep it until the fourteenth of the month.

Everything about the Passover was given in anticipation of Christ Jesus. In that original Passover, the lamb was a sacrifice which would, because of its nourishment, carry the people through the exodus of their redemption from Egypt. Jesus is called the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world in John 1:29.

His life, because of its nourishment, carries the believer through the exodus of our redemption from the world of sin and death, which Egypt pictures. Paul, in the New Testament, explicitly calls Jesus our Passover offering in 1 Corinthians 5:7 –

“Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.”

That the lamb was to be without blemish is seen realized in Christ’s perfect life. In Luke 23, after his interrogation concerning the Lord, Pilate declared Jesus without fault –

“So Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowd, ‘I find no fault in this Man.’”

-Luke 23:4

In Hebrews 7:26, we also read this about Jesus –

“For such a High Priest was fitting for us, *who is* holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners...” Hebrews 7:26

And Peter, writing to the Jews of the dispersion, refers directly to the Passover for his description of Jesus –

“...knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, *like* silver or gold, from your aimless conduct *received* by tradition from your fathers,¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.”

-1 Peter 1:18, 19

No defect was to be seen in the Passover lambs because they were to picture to the world the perfect, undefiled, and spotless Lamb of God. As we read, the selected animal was further specified as “a male of the first year.” This requirement was given to the Hebrews as a note concerning the lamb standing in place of the firstborn. In the plague upon Egypt, all the firstborn were to die, but for those of Israel, the firstborn was to be redeemed through the death of the lamb. Thus it is an act of substitution. The mandate also looked ahead to Christ.

In the first year, an animal is considered more perfect in terms of innocence, and yet it is in the midst of life. Later in Exodus, it was prescribed that such offerings came after the eighth day of their life. This is the same day that a baby is circumcised.

Therefore the chosen animals picture the innocent Christ in the midst of life. Not a baby in Bethlehem, and not an old man in Nazareth, but a male in Jerusalem in the midst of His life, and yet endowed with innocence. It was He who was to be made an Offering of redemption. He was born without original sin, lived without any sort of committed transgression, and was humble, pure, undefiled, and harmless. Christ is the epitome of

what we would think of in such an innocent animal, and He is what the Passover animal was to prefigure.

Along with being of the first year, one more aspect of the animal was noted. It could be either from the sheep or the goats. Both animals are used as sacrifices in the Bible for various reasons. The exception which allowed for either a sheep or a goat was probably given to allow the poorer people to buy a less valuable goat instead of a sheep. The smell of the goat offering is not as sweet as a lamb, but it was acceptable as a sin offering. It was a picture of Christ. As Paul in 2 Corinthians 5, says –

“For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” 2 Corinthians 5:21

The Lamb, having the finer smell, also pictures Christ as Paul's words of Ephesians 5 state –

“And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.” Ephesians 5:2

The lamb was generally considered the more likely choice at the Passover and among the people, but either animal ultimately pictured Christ. Thus the Lord allowed either for the feast. And so, understanding these previously provided guidelines which were given to Israel, it is on the fourteenth day of the first month that the Passover would begin. As it next says...

⁵ (con't) **at twilight**

The Hebrew here says *ben ha'arbayim* – “between the evenings.” It seems like a perplexing phrase, but it is one which accounts for biblical time. In the Bible, a day is divided into “evening” and “morning.” Thus there are actually two evenings to be reckoned. The first began after twelve and went through until sunset.

The second evening began at sunset and continued till night, meaning the whole time of twilight. This would therefore be between twelve o'clock and the termination of twilight. Between the evenings then is a phrase which allows the three o'clock sacrifices at the temple to be considered as the evening sacrifice even though to us it would otherwise be considered an afternoon sacrifice. This is the same time-frame that Christ died on the cross, which is recorded in the gospels as three o'clock in the afternoon.

The term, *ben ha'arbayim*, or “between the evenings” is used 11 times in the Bible. Each time it details the work of Christ; the time of day when He died on the cross. Later in Scripture, this term would eventually become known as the time of the “evening offering,” or simply “the sacrifice.” This is found, for example, in the great challenge between the 450 prophets of Baal and Elijah –

“And it came to pass, at *the time of* the offering of the *evening sacrifice*, that Elijah the prophet came near and said, ‘LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that You *are* God in Israel and I *am* Your servant, and *that* I have done all these things at Your word. ³⁷ Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that You *are* the LORD God, and *that* You have turned their hearts back to You again.’” 1 Kings 18:36, 37

This time became so important to the Jews, that even during exile when the sacrifices had stopped being made, those who were observant still used that time of day to make a sacrifice of prayer, petition, and praise to God. This is seen in Daniel 9:20, 21 –

“Now while I *was* speaking, praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God, ²¹ yes, while I *was* speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, reached me about the time of the **evening offering.**”

⁵ (con't) **is the Lord's Passover.**

pesakh l'Yehovah – “Passover to Yehovah.” I must note now that only the first Passover, when leaving Egypt, required several things which were never required again. One of them was the selecting of the animal on the tenth day of the month. Nothing is said about that later in Scripture. However, that specified period was given for a specific reason. It was to show that Christ would someday come and be crucified on a Friday. Despite many incorrect challenges to this throughout the years, the Bible bears witness that Christ died on a Friday, the 14th day of the month.

From selection to slaughter is a period of five days. If one selects an animal on the tenth day and sacrifices it in the evening of the fourteenth day, it is a total of five days. The animal of that original Passover was to be kept during that period, and until the time of the Passover. The reason for the Lord mandating this was not that the family could observe it for defects as is so often claimed.

Rather, it was *selected because it had no defects*. Animals with defects were noted and disregarded at the selection of the animal. The reason for this advanced time was to ensure that everyone had an animal ready for the Passover.

The instructions were probably given to the people before the plague of darkness came upon the land. That plague lasted three full days. Therefore, the selection five days earlier was necessary. However, in picture that five-day period anticipated Christ's final week, from the evening of Palm Sunday until the evening of the Passover, a time-frame which the four gospels record as being five full days. In Mark 11:11 it says –

“And Jesus went into Jerusalem and into the temple. So when He had looked around at all things, as the hour was already late, He went out to Bethany with the twelve.” Mark 11:11

If one counts five evenings from Sunday evening, they will come to Friday evening. Sunday evening to Monday evening is one. Monday to Tuesday is two. Tuesday to Wednesday is three. Wednesday to Thursday is four. And Thursday to Friday is five. If anyone is interested in a detailed breakdown of the four gospels showing exactly this, it is attached at the end of this sermon (pg 702).

The key to understanding the timeline for Christ's day of crucifixion is the term “Preparation Day” which is included in all four gospels. If one follows the timeline and notes that term, they can see the perfection of how the timeline given back in Exodus is realized in the harmoniously recorded gospels. There are four aspects of the original Passover that were only required that one time, but which were never repeated again –

- 1) Eating of the Passover in Goshen.
- 2) Selecting the lamb on the tenth day.
- 3) Striking the blood of the lamb on the lintels of the houses.
- 4) Eating the lamb in haste.

These were one-time events which succeeding generations did not have levied upon them. Thus, the original Passover alone serves as the necessary picture of the greater work of Christ. As an annual feast of the Lord, it was both commemorative of what occurred in delivery from Egypt, and that delivery from Egypt was in anticipation of the full and final delivery of man from the bondage of sin and the yoke of the devil.

*A Lamb, spotless, and pure – without any defect
Will be sacrificed in my place*

*And looking at that Lamb, I can certainly detect
The greatest love and grace... this I see looking upon His face*

*Oh! That I could refrain and not see Him die
Oh! If there could be any other way
How could this Lamb go through with it for one such as I?
Oh God! This perfect Lamb alone my sin-debt can pay*

*Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!
Behold the sinless One, there on Calvary's tree
He has prevailed and the path to heaven has been unfurled
The Lamb of God who died for sinners like you and me*

II. The Feast of Unleavened Bread (verses 6-8)

Like the instructions for the Passover, an analysis of the Feast of Unleavened Bread would be incomplete without referring to the original mandate for the feast in Exodus 12-

“Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. On the first day you shall remove leaven from your houses. For whoever eats leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that person shall be cut off from Israel. ¹⁶ On the first day *there shall be* a holy convocation, and on the seventh day there shall be a holy convocation for you. No manner of work shall be done on them; but *that* which everyone must eat—that only may be prepared by you. ¹⁷ So you shall observe *the Feast of Unleavened Bread*, for on this same day I will have brought your armies out of the land of Egypt. Therefore you shall observe this day throughout your generations as an everlasting ordinance. ¹⁸ In the first *month*, on the fourteenth day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread, until the twenty-first day of the month at evening. ¹⁹ For seven days no leaven shall be found in your houses, since whoever eats what is leavened, that same person shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether *he is* a stranger or a native of the land. ²⁰ You shall eat nothing leavened; in all your dwellings you shall eat unleavened bread.” Exodus 12:15-20

⁶ And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the Lord;

The day after the Passover, a new feast is introduced, to which the Passover is joined. However, the word “feast” here is not the same as that used in verses 2 or 4. That was *moed*, this is *khag*. It is not good when translations fail to make a distinction between these completely different words. The *moed* of the previous verses should be translated as “appointed times.” The word *khag* can then rightly be translated as “feast.”

The word *khag* comes from *khagag*, which in turn, indicates “to move in a circle” or specifically “to march in a sacred procession.” From there you have the implication of being giddy; to celebrate, dance, and feast. It is to be a time of worship, celebration, and sacrifice. It is a pilgrim feast.

The word is based on the same root as the name of the prophet Haggai and it is also connected to the Arabic word for *hajj*, which muslims perform when they make a trek to Mecca to worship their false god. If you look at photos of their hajj, you will see them going in a circle as they move towards the idol of their false god, a black stone called the *al-Hajar al-Aswad*; the Black Stone. This is the general idea of the *khagag*. One moves in a circle in a sacred procession; thus celebrating, dancing, and feasting.

This and the final feast, Sukkoth, are the only two of Leviticus 23 which use the term *khag*. They are also both set off as more than single days, but rather each encompasses an entire week. However, as we will see later in Scripture, the Feast of Weeks will also be a part of a *khag*, or pilgrim feast, as well.

Although the Passover and Unleavened bread are both annual feasts of the Lord, and even though they eventually will become united in terminology, the Feast of Unleavened Bread is a separate and distinct celebration with its own picture and fulfillment in Christ and in His church.

As the Passover is on the 14th of the month, this feast immediately follows from the 15th to the 21st day of the month. Every year at this time, it was to be the standard observance of the people. The 15th of the month would be the time of the full moon.

⁶ (con't) **seven days you must eat unleavened bread.**

Exodus 12:15 says the same thing as here, but it further said that on the first day of the feast, they were to remove all leaven from their houses. Whatever day of the week the 15th fell on, they were required to do this, and they were to keep it out for a full week. During this time, they were to eat unleavened bread.

The reason for this at the Exodus was that it pictured the complete removal of the yeast of Egypt from their bread. In the Bible, bread is the fundamental means of sustaining the body – even a symbol of life itself. If one didn't remove the yeast of Egypt, it showed that they longed after that which Egypt provided.

In essence, they had failed to separate themselves from the life they were called to leave. The removal of Egyptian yeast thus symbolized their new life, being purified from their old means of sustaining life. This was to be commemorated year by year, eating unleavened bread as a memorial to their redemption.

In general, yeast can be considered in two ways. First it causes fermentation, and thus corruption. But it also causes the bread to rise, thus picturing pride, which itself is a form of corruption. The remembrance of the feast is given to remind them of having been severed from the wicked practices of Egypt.

However, the type is given for us to see the Anti-type, Jesus, and His perfection. It is also to remind us of our obligation to act in a pure and undefiled manner. This is explicitly stated by Paul in 1 Corinthians 5. The Corinthians were having issues with immorality in the church and Paul wrote to them words of correction. In them he identifies both Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread –

“Your glorying *is* not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? ⁷Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. ⁸Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened *bread* of sincerity and truth.” ¹
Corinthians 5:6-8

We have been called out of “spiritual Egypt,” meaning the fallen world. If we don't remove the yeast of Egypt, meaning the old immoral ways of the world, it shows that we still long after that which the world provides rather than what Christ has granted. As always, every word we are seeing in the Old Testament is pointing to a much larger picture of redemptive history.

In the words of this verse, we are given a positive command, “seven days you must eat unleavened bread.” This is explicit. For seven days, unleavened bread was to be eaten. It doesn't say “You may not eat bread with leaven for seven days.” Instead it says, “seven days you must eat unleavened bread.”

It is not a negative command, which means that they could abstain from any bread as long as they didn't partake in leavened bread. Instead it is a positive command. They *were to eat* unleavened bread during the entire feast. This goes in picture to what was just cited from Paul in 1 Corinthians, "let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened *bread* of sincerity and truth."

Not only are we to *not* partake of sin, but we are to actively live our lives in "sincerity and truth." It is not that we can abstain from the whole if we abstain from one; it is that we are to abstain from one while partaking in the other. And this is a most important point. What has become fashionable with Judaizers and the Hebrew Roots movement, is to cite those verses from Paul as an indication that we are still required to observe the feasts of Leviticus 23.

He is not at all saying this. He is taking those feasts, and spiritualizing them into our new life in Christ. We are no more required to observe the Leviticus 23 feasts, than we are required to go to Jerusalem to do so, and while there be required to perform the necessary sacrifices attached to the feasts. Don't get duped into believing what those heretics pass on. In Christ we are deemed as sinless, and we are asked to act in accord with that. That is the substance over the shadow. That is the gold on the table.

⁷ On the first day you shall have a holy convocation;

miqra qodesh, or "convocation holy," is called for on the 15th of the month. It was to be a gathering of the people for sacrifice, prayer, and fellowship. It may also have included instruction as well. As I said earlier, these convocations were called by the blowing of silver trumpets which were directed by the Lord to be made for this purpose. That is recorded in Numbers 10:10 –

"Also in the day of your gladness, in your appointed feasts, and at the beginning of your months, you shall blow the trumpets over your burnt offerings and over the sacrifices of your peace offerings; and they shall be a memorial for you before your God: I *am* the Lord your God."

^{7 (con't)} you shall do no customary work on it.

meleket abodah, or "work servile," means employment or other regular work. This then is not a Sabbath observance which forbid work of any kind, including cooking meals. In Exodus 12:16 it was explicitly noted that food could be prepared on this particular day of

convocation. Thus it was not a Sabbath. Why is this important to know? It is because it once again identifies what is correct concerning the death of Christ. The gospels precisely state that the day following Christ's crucifixion was a Sabbath, not a convocation. In Luke 23, this is recorded –

“Then he took it down, wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a tomb *that was* hewn out of the rock, where no one had ever lain before. ⁵⁴ That day was the Preparation, and the Sabbath drew near.

⁵⁵ And the women who had come with Him from Galilee followed after, and they observed the tomb and how His body was laid. ⁵⁶ Then they returned and prepared spices and fragrant oils. And they rested on the Sabbath according to the commandment.” Luke 23:53-56

Therefore, understanding the terminology here and in that of the gospels, we can know, along with other assurances, that Christ's cross occurred on a Friday, not a Wednesday or a Thursday.

⁸ But you shall offer an offering made by fire to the Lord for seven days.

The specific offerings to be made to the Lord are not detailed until Numbers 28. They will include two young bulls, one ram, and seven lambs in their first year. Each was to be without blemish. Along with those, a specified grain offering was to be made. Further, a goat for a sin offering was to be made. This same offering was to be made on each day of the feast, along with the regular daily offerings of the priests.

^{8 (fin)} The seventh day *shall be* a holy convocation; you shall do no customary work on it.”

The seventh day of the feast would be the 21st of the month. A second *miqra qodesh*, or “convocation holy” was to be held on this day. However, in Exodus 13:6, this seventh day was specifically identified as its own *khag*, or feast, to the Lord. Israel was to not merely abstain from work, but they were to actively celebrate the work of the Lord. The entire week was to be a feast, but the seventh day was to be a feast unto itself as a festive termination to the entire feast.

Concerning the Exodus account, some Christian scholars attempt to align the resurrection of Christ with the day that Israel was conducted through the Red Sea. However, this would not align with the table of stops recorded in Numbers 33. The Jewish calendar reckons this seventh day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread as that day.

Accordingly, the final day of the Feast would be the day they passed through the waters of the Red Sea. This is correct, and there is a reason for this.

The two holy convocations bracket the feast. One occurs on the first day of the feast and one on the seventh. They stand as representative of the entire period of the feast. But this feast that Israel celebrated is only a picture of our time in Christ in this earthly life, from the day of our adoption until the day we go home to glory, pictured by passing through the Red Sea.

Just as the Red Sea stood before Israel, there is an impossible gulf for us to cross over. And yet the Lord has made that way possible. He has taken the natural and combined it with the miraculous in order to allow His redeemed to cross over to safety on the other shore where our heavenly home awaits. This is the symbolism we are to see in the observance of the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

We are redeemed by Christ through His cross, pictured by the Passover. We then enter into our Christian life, pictured by the seven days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. At the end, we are conducted home through that once impossible-to-pass-through gulf, pictured by that final, joyous, feast day.

By the 21st day of the month, the full moon of the first day of the feast became a waning moon. The darkness would have been more pronounced, just as it is in our deaths, but there was still a brighter light to lead us. It is Christ in us, the hope of glory. The path for our full and complete redemption has been paved through that impossible gulf where every drop of water will be removed for our passage. There will be guaranteed safety as we pass through into His glory.

Either death or rapture is coming. The Lord is carefully watching over His flock until that day. When the time of our calling arrives, the infinite gulf will be parted. We, His redeemed, will pass through with ease and safety. This is all pictured in the annual celebration of Israel in the conjoined feasts of the Lord – Passover and Unleavened Bread. Concerning both the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, in Christ we proclaim, “Feasts fulfilled.”

Closing Verse: *“A little leaven leavens the whole lump.” Galatians 5:9*

Next Week: Leviticus 23:9-14 (The Feasts of the Lord: Firstfruits)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if you have a lifetime of sin heaped up behind you, He can wash it away and purify you completely and wholly. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

Passover and Unleavened Bread

'These are the feasts of the Lord
Holy convocations which you shall proclaim
At their appointed times
Each year it shall be the same

On the fourteenth day
Of the first month at twilight
Is the Lord's Passover
A time when the moon is full and burning bright

And on the fifteenth day
Of the same month, pay heed to what is said
Is the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the Lord
Seven days you must eat unleavened bread

On the first day
You shall have a holy convocation
You shall do no customary work on it
So it shall be for the entire nation

But you shall offer an offering
Made by fire to the Lord for seven days, so to you I submit
The seventh day shall be a holy convocation
You shall do no customary work on it

The Passover is fulfilled as says 1 Corinthians 5:7
And for this we are ever grateful to the Lord
It is through His cross that we can return to heaven
So we are assured in Your word

And the feast of Unleavened Bread
It is fulfilled as well in Christ Jesus

To Him we now live in it, as the word has said
Great things, O God, You have done for us!

Hallelujah to You, O God, great things You have done!
Hallelujah to You, O God, for the giving of Jesus Your Son!

Hallelujah and Amen...

TIMELINE OF CHRIST'S PASSION WEEK

Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey on Sunday, 6 April 0032. This is based on dating from the prophecy of Daniel 9:24-27 and the exemplary work of Sir Robert Anderson.

However, people will still try to find a reason why the crucifixion wasn't on Friday, 11 April 0032. There are a couple reasons why this is disputed, each which certainly results from misunderstanding of biblical terminology. The first is a fear that what's stated in Matthew 12:40 would mean an error in what Jesus said. The second results from a perceived conflict between the gospel accounts in Matthew, Mark, and Luke and that of John.

In the first disputed reason, Jesus is quoted by Matthew as saying, "For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." Matthew 12:40

The resurrection certainly occurred on a Sunday and only the most extreme cases dispute this – and they do it without justification. Some folks fear that because He rose on a Sunday and it was "3 days and 3 nights" that Jesus was in the tomb then it was either Wednesday or Thursday that He must have gone to the cross. It's important to note that this verse is from Matthew and is directed to the Jewish people – Jesus as King. Hebrew idioms would have been understood and not needed any clarification or verbal amending. To the audience Matthew was writing to any part of a day is considered to be inclusive of the whole day. It's no different than terminology we use today. If I arrive in Florida on a plane at 11:30pm on 11 April, during a later conversation I would still say I was in Florida on that day. The biblical pattern of "evening and morning" being a day goes back to the first chapter of the Bible and includes an entire day – regardless of what part of a day one is referring to.

The same verse, as recorded in Luke says, "As the crowds increased, Jesus said, "This is a wicked generation. It asks for a miraculous sign, but none will be given it except the sign of Jonah. For as Jonah was a sign to the Ninevites, so also will the Son of Man be to this generation." Luke 11:29, 20 In this instance, Luke was not writing to only Jewish people, but predominately to non-Jewish people – Jesus as the Son of Man. Therefore, the terminology is amended to avoid confusion. This occurs many times in the gospels and therefore the addressees (or the background of the writers themselves) need to be identified to understand proper terminology.

The second issue to be resolved is that some scholars claim that John “appears” to place the crucifixion on a different date than the other writers. Because of this, an attempt to insert some second type of Passover meal is made. This supposedly helps the Bible out of an apparent problem. However, no such meal is identified in the Bible – at any time. Nor is it necessary to make something erroneous like this up. The Bible identifies the timing of the entire Passion Week, dispelling the problem. The terminology for “Preparation Day” used in all four gospel accounts absolutely clears this up and will be noted below.

Here’s what you need to know:

Paul plainly states that the Feast of Firstfruits is a picture of the resurrection:

“But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.” 1 Corinthians 15:20

The feast of Firstfruits was a Sunday according to Leviticus 23:15 – “From the day after the Sabbath, the day you brought the sheaf of the wave offering, count off seven full weeks.” Note: the Sabbath is a Saturday. We don’t need to go any further there to know this is correct and that Christ rose on a Sunday.

Here is the math from the gospel accounts. It’s all there in black and white and very easy to look up –

**“Six days before the Passover, Jesus arrived at Bethany, where Lazarus lived, whom Jesus had raised from the dead.” John 12:1 This would have been a Sabbath day (Saturday.)

**“The next day the great crowd that had come for the Feast heard that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem.” John 12:12 This would have been 5 days before the Passover, meaning Sunday (Palm Sunday) as the Passover would have started Thursday night at sundown and run until Friday night at sundown (remember biblical days start at sundown).

The account couldn’t be clearer that the next day after the Passover was a Sabbath. This is indicated several times. Some people have attempted to use the terminology in John (it was a “high day” or a “special Sabbath”) to indicate that it could have been a day other than a Saturday. Special Sabbaths are specified in Leviticus and don’t necessarily fall on Saturdays. However, the term “Sabbath” as used in the other gospel accounts is

indicating a Saturday. There is no indication, anywhere, that there were two Sabbaths in a row on this particular week. In fact, such an analysis does an injustice to the reading of the text. Therefore, the special Sabbath occurred on a regular Sabbath day (Saturday).

From this we can give the entire week's schedule (refer to the cited verses in your own Bible to familiarize yourself with what's being said) –

Sabbath 6 before // John 12:1 - ...six days before the Passover. Bethany/Lazarus.

Sunday 5 before // John 12:12 & Mark 11:10 - The next day... Palm Sunday/Riding the donkey.

Monday 4 before // Mark 11:12 Now on the next day... Jesus cursed the fig tree.

Tuesday 3 before // Mark 11:20 Now in the morning... The withered fig is identified.

Wednesday 2 before // The gospels are silent on what occurred on this day.

Thursday 1 before - Passover starts at Sundown //Mark 14:1 After two days it was the Passover... (this is the first timing mentioned since Mark 11:20 which was Tuesday).

Note: Pay special attention to the fact that in the following accounts Mark is using Jewish time (sunset to sunset and John is using Roman time) -

Mark 14:12 - "Now on the first day of Unleavened Bread when they killed the Passover Lamb."

John 13:1 - "Now before the Feast of the Passover..." Meal, Washing of Feet, Gethsemane.

***Christ crucified this same 24 hour period, but it was obviously after the final night at Gethsemane and then the illegal trial. Mark is speaking of this event from sundown, John is speaking of it on Roman time (this is obvious because they use different terminology for the same meal where Judas left to betray the Lord... can't miss this point and get it right.)

6 days before - Saturday

5 days before - Sunday

4 days before - Monday

3 days before - Tuesday

2 days before - Wednesday

1 day before - Thursday

The Day - Friday

The problem with people believing that John was speaking of a different day (as mentioned above) is that they miss the fact that the terminology for the day is different based on the author. To clear up any misunderstanding between the synoptic gospels

and the Gospel of John, one needs only to compare the uses for the term "Preparation Day." Once one does this, there are no discrepancies in the accounts –

Matthew 27:62 – "The next day, the one after the Preparation Day, the chief priests and the Pharisees went to Pilate." This was the day after the crucifixion. Matthew says it is the day "after Preparation Day."

Mark 15:42 – "It was Preparation Day (that is, the day before the Sabbath). So as evening approached..." This is the day of the crucifixion. Mark says "It was Preparation Day."

Luke 23:5 – "It was Preparation Day, and the Sabbath was about to begin." This is the day of the crucifixion. Luke says "It was Preparation Day."

John 19:14 – "Now it was Preparation Day of the Passover." This is the day of the crucifixion. John says "It was Preparation Day."

Based on the biblical evidence, there is

- 1) No discrepancy between any of the accounts.
- 2) Jesus was crucified on a Friday.
- 3) Jesus rose on a Sunday.

As a final note, the Bible says 13 times that He was raised "on" the third day. This is mentioned by Jesus himself as well as the apostles. Therefore, it must have been Friday that Christ was crucified.

Please don't believe (as some have claimed) that Christ rode the donkey into Jerusalem on a Saturday instead of a Sunday. This would have been the Sabbath. If He did, He would have violated the law –

"Observe the Sabbath day, to keep it holy, as the LORD your God commanded you. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your ox, nor your donkey, nor any of your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates, that your male servant and your female servant may rest as well as you."

-Deuteronomy 5:12-14

There is no need to make the assertion it was a Saturday unless you simply wanted to finagle the dating. There is also no biblical provision for an exemption to the commandment prohibiting working a donkey. As stated above, the work of Sir Robert Anderson in the 1800s clearly demonstrates that Jesus rode into Jerusalem on 6 April 0032. This can be validated in other ways and is the correct year and month for the Lord's crucifixion.

The biblical evidence is quite clear and without ambiguity or total uncertainty...Jesus Christ was crucified as the Passover Lamb on Friday, 11 April 0032 and was resurrected to eternal life on Sunday 13 April 0032.

He now offers eternal life to all who call on Him by faith. Have you accepted His offer of peace?

LEVITICUS 23:9-14 (THE FEASTS OF THE LORD: FIRSTFRUITS)

Today we turn to the Feast of Firstfruits. It is a small number of verses, but it points to the second half of the greatest event in all of human history. As it is a part of the Law of Moses, we know that it is fulfilled, and all sound Christian scholars will admit this. It is one of the spring feasts of the Lord, and the agreement is that all of the spring feasts are fulfilled, completely and entirely, in Christ's first advent.

The disagreement on the feasts of the Lord in relation to fulfillment doesn't arrive until we come to the fall feasts – known to most as Trumpets, Atonement, and Tabernacles. It is best to not get too ahead of oneself in analyzing the Bible for others, because whatever I say would then fill the hearer's mind with presuppositions about what is being said when we finally arrive at whatever passage I previously referred to.

However, in the case of the feasts of the Lord, there should be no problem with coming to the fall feasts with a presupposition that they are already fulfilled. And so, as I have done several times already, especially when we looked at the Day of Atonement passage of Leviticus 16, I would like to *again* remind you that the Law of Moses is fulfilled in Christ. This is made explicit time and time again in the New Testament.

As the feasts of the Lord, both spring and fall, are a part of the Law of Moses, then they – by default – must be fulfilled. If they are not, then Christ... didn't fulfill the law. If so, then it is not fulfilled. And if this is so, then Christ is not the end of the law for all who believe. And if this is so, what are we doing in church? If the law is not fulfilled in Christ, then we of all men are the most pitiable.

But such is not the case. We are not to be pitied, but emulated! We have a hope which is grounded in the truth of God as is revealed in the Person and work of Jesus Christ! We have the hope of glory, and we have the assurance of salvation. Praise God for what He has done in Jesus!

Text Verse: *"So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, ¹⁷ which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ." Colossians 2:16, 17*

Paul tells us there that the feasts of the Lord are mere shadows of the true Substance which is found in the Person and work of Christ. Isaiah wrote of what was coming in

Christ, including a hint at what would be fulfilled concerning the Feast of Firstfruits. The shadow would find its substance. Here is what he says –

“After the suffering of his soul, he will see the light and be satisfied. My righteous servant will justify many by the knowledge of himself; and he will bear their iniquities.” Isaiah 53:11 (World English Bible)

For this verse, I switched from the usual preaching Bible that I use, the NKJV, to the World English Bible. The NKJV, like the older KJV, is based upon a source text which dropped out some rather important information. The oldest copy of that text, the Masoretic Text, comes more than 1000 years after the work of Christ, and it was a text maintained by the Jews.

There are several places where it is rather apparent these Masoretes purposefully manipulated the text to hide something wonderful; to hide Christ. Isaiah 53:11 is one of those passages. Mark that down and go compare the incorrect reading of the KJV to what is corrected by modern Bibles. And how do we know the correction is correct? Because in 1947, a group of documents was found in Qumran, Israel which predate the coming of Christ. Included in these documents, now known as the Dead Sea Scrolls, was the Great Isaiah scroll. In Isaiah 53:11, lo and behold, the words which match the Septuagint, another copy of the Old Testament, written in Greek, and also which predates the coming of Christ, says the same thing – “After the suffering of his soul, he will see the light and be satisfied.”

The direct object in both the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Septuagint is the word “light.” Something magnificent, symbolized by the word “light,” would happen to the Servant after the suffering of His soul. It is in this, and not the suffering, in which satisfaction would come. The suffering would lead to the light. What was Isaiah saying? He was saying the same thing that the Bible has said from the very beginning. It is something which is said again, in a different way, in today’s verses.

What are we to see in these six verses of Leviticus 23? Something wonderful. Something filled with hope for fallen man. Something directly from the mind of God which points to the future work of Christ Jesus. This is what we are to see. These things are all to be found in His superior word. And so let’s turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. That Which Is First (verses 9-14)

⁹ And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying,

The words given here are here are identical to verse 1, and they have not been spoken since verse 1. In other words, there was the mandated weekly Sabbath which was considered its own feast. Then there was the introduction of the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. But both of these fell under the original introduction of verse 1. Now a new introduction is given. Why would this be?

The answer is found in what the following verses proclaim. As we saw, the Sabbath, the Passover, and the Feast of Unleavened Bread had already been proclaimed to the people of Israel. They were simply re-explained to the people here in Chapter 23, and defined as feasts of the Lord.

What will now be proclaimed is not only a new feast of the Lord, not specifically mandated before, but it is also a feast which could not be observed during their time in the wilderness. The Sabbath, Passover, and Unleavened Bread were feasts to be held anywhere at any time. Such was not the case for Firstfruits. Israel was on the way to Canaan. Their expected arrival was yet ahead. That their time in the wilderness would last 40 years was merely a result of coming disobedience.

Had that not occurred, they would have gone into Canaan in a very short amount of time, and the very next year at approximately this same time, they would be observing their first year of these feasts. This was the intent, but it would not actually happen for a full 40 years. Despite this, it is a feast for those dwelling in the land, when the ground was set to produce its spring harvest.

¹⁰ “Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: ‘When you come into the land

ki tabo-u el ha’arets – There is assurance in these words. “When come you into the land” signifies arrival – sure and guaranteed. For Israel, this was their immediate expectation. For them, there was expected to be a short time of preparation, and then they would boldly march in and receive their inheritance.

That the amount of time until their arrival would extend beyond the lives of almost every adult in the camp is of no matter to the Lord. He has said it would come to pass, and so it shall. If a time of refinement, chastisement, and learning was necessary for these people before they entered, so be it. But enter they would.

¹⁰ (con’t) which I give to you,

asher ani noten lakem – The implication here is that this is the Lord’s land. One cannot bestow what he does not possess. Further, as the owner, giving it to Israel signifies that it is Israel’s inheritance. Conditions for dwelling in the land accompany the grant, and if those conditions are not met, the negative results are also stated. But the land is for Israel. When they are obedient, the land is theirs, and they may dwell in it. When they are disobedient, the land is theirs, and they may not dwell in it. But it is the Lord’s land, set apart for Israel. When Israel is in the land, they were to observe this feast to the Lord.

As a point of note, this is the third of only four times in the book of Leviticus that a command is given in a prospective manner. It is something expected only in the future, when the people have arrived in their promised inheritance.

The four times this type of command are given are found in Leviticus 14:34 when speaking of the Lord putting a leprous plague in a house. Again in Leviticus 19:23 when the people enter the land and plant fruit trees, they were to be considered as uncircumcised for three years. Then this note in Leviticus 23 concerning this Feast of Firstfruits. Finally, in Leviticus 25:2 will come the mandate of the seventh-year Sabbath of the land.

^{10 (con’t)} **and reap its harvest,**

u-qetsartem eth qetsiyrah – “And shall reap the harvest.” As Israel was to be an agrarian society, their lives would be centered on the annual cycle of planting and harvesting. The Lord is anticipating this and directing them according to such a schedule. At the time of reaping, the feast of the Lord would be celebrated.

The word “reap” here is *qatsar*. It means to cut down. It can be used figuratively in the sense of being discouraged, mourning, being troubled and so on. At a harvest, one may mourn the labor, but it is a mourning which leads to joy. That which results from the labors is what one actually anticipates.

The word harvest, *qatsiyr*, is derived from *qatsar*. It is that which grows, and which is to be reaped. Even more, what is later stated about this reaping, is that it is the very beginning of the harvest. In Deuteronomy 16, while explaining terms of the Feast of Weeks, the next feast to be celebrated after Firstfruits, we will read this –

“You shall count seven weeks for yourself; begin to count the seven weeks from *the time you begin to put the sickle to the grain.*” Deuteronomy 16:9

This then is the very commencement of the harvest; the first of that which is reaped.

10 (con't) then you shall bring a sheaf

Here, the word translated as “sheaf” is *omer*. It is a word which carries two distinct meanings. The first is a specific dry measure of something. In this case, it would be grain. If this is the intent, then it is the same measure as the amount of Manna which was stored up in the golden pot which was recorded in Exodus 16. An *omer* is one-tenth of the standard measure known as an *ephah*.

The second meaning of *omer* is simply a sheaf. This is the meaning which is found in Deuteronomy 24:19, and also in Ruth 2:7. There are good scholarly commentaries which favor either meaning of the word. Jewish commentaries state that this is a set measure. Flavius Josephus agrees, saying it is a measure which has been dried, beaten, and had the barley purged from the bran.

Because of the symbolism being pictured, I would personally agree with the translation which says “sheaf.” It is a single sheaf, cut down – the first of the harvest. But more, this is barley, not wheat. Barley is the first crop to ripen each year.

Barley is the crop of the poor people, being a lesser grain than wheat. It is known as the crop of hairy ears because of its hairy appearance. The word "barley" in Hebrew is *seorah* which is closely related to the word *se-ar* or hair.

Hair in the Bible indicates an awareness of things, especially that of sin. The goat for example, which is used in Leviticus for the sin offering, is known as *sair*. We have an awareness of sin in the hairy goat sin offering. In Numbers there is a type of person known as a Nazirite. This is someone who made a vow or was consecrated to the Lord.

During the time of that vow, they were never to cut their hair. Samson was a Nazirite from birth as were Samuel and John the Baptist. Paul took a Nazirite vow in Acts. The hair on their head was a reminder of their state, just as the hairy goat is a reminder of sin. It is man's place to be aware.

10 (con't) of the firstfruits of your harvest

The word translated as “firstfruits” is *reshith*. It means, “the beginning,” “the first,” “the chief,” “the finest,” etc. It is the first word used in Scripture, *b’reshith*, or “In the

beginning.” It comes from the same root as *rosh*, which is the first in time, place, order, or rank. It is the principle thing. In this verse, the term *reshith*, or “firstfruits” is singular.

10 (con’t) to the priest

el ha’kohen – “unto the priest.” It is to the priest ministering before the Lord that this beginning offering was to be brought.

11 He shall wave the sheaf before the Lord,

Without being argumentative, whether set dry measure, or whether sheaf (but we shall go with sheaf), the priest was to take the *omer* and wave it before the Lord. The Lord was to personally see the waving of this sheaf; it was to be waved there in His presence.

The word translated as “wave,” *nuph*, gives the sense of “to quiver.” Thus it means to vibrate up and down or to rock to and fro. To get the idea of what the priest does, the word means elsewhere “to wave,” “to beckon,” “to sprinkle,” “to rub,” “to saw,” and so on. Each of these implies motion and vibrancy.

11 (con’t) to be accepted on your behalf;

The words here are more appropriately translated as, “so that you may be accepted.” The offering was made not for the offering to be accepted, but for the acceptance of those offering. The word “your” is plural, speaking of all of the people of the land.

11 (con’t) on the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it.

One of the greatest divisions of interpretation of this entire feast is answering the question, “What Sabbath is being referred to here?” The answer was a dividing line between the Sadducees and the Pharisees of the Second Temple times. The vast majority of commentators agree with the Pharisees and say it is referring not to the weekly Sabbath, but to the first day of the holy convocation which follows immediately after Passover.

In other words, the Passover began, as verse 5 states, “On the fourteenth *day* of the first month at twilight.” The next day, the first day of Unleavened Bread, or the fifteenth day of the month, was a holy convocation where no regular work was to be done. Thus, the day after this supposed “Sabbath” would be the 16th, and it would be on this day that the offering was to be presented.

This is incorrect for several reasons:

- 1) The feast now being looked at began with its introductory words, “And the Lord spoke to Moses saying.” There is thus no scriptural reason for tying the two feasts together in this way. Any such alignment would be incidental, not purposeful.
- 2) The first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread is *not a Sabbath* (oops), nor is ever termed as such. It is a “holy convocation.” No work of any kind was to be conducted on a Sabbath. However, the preparation of food, something not allowed on a Sabbath, was allowed on this day according to Exodus 12:16 (oops). Further,
- 3) all yeast was to be removed from the house on this same day, another work which would not be authorized on a Sabbath (oops).
- 4) If the day now in question was a weekly Sabbath, following the holy convocation, which would occur every seventh year or so, then the people – if not priests – bringing this sheaf to the temple on that weekly Sabbath day, would be a violation of that Sabbath which was now being observed. But Leviticus 23:3 was specifically placed first in order of the feasts to show that no feast celebration was to interfere with the *regular weekly Sabbath*. But this would have to be the case if the Sabbath referred to in this verse was the holy convocation referred to in the previous feast (one more oops).

I'm sad, you see

For the Pharisee

Because he failed to exegete carefully

He did contemplate his Scripture improperly

The correct answer is that this is a weekly Sabbath which would fall into the time of the harvest season when the first grain became ripe, whenever that occurred. As the Passover is during this season, it would more often than not occur on the day after whatever weekly Sabbath occurred *during* the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Why is this so important to understand? It is because when this is taken incorrectly, as has been done continuously by modern scholars, it causes the timeline of Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection to be improperly manipulated. It introduces a false reading of Scripture, and thus a false rendering of the Passion week timeline. It may seem like hair-splitting to worry about this, but the timeline of Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection

is so carefully detailed by the Lord, that He really wants us to not botch it up when we look at it. This is certain.

¹² And you shall offer on that day, when you wave the sheaf, a male lamb of the first year,

On the same day as the waving of the sheaf, a *kebes*, or male lamb of the first year was to be offered. The first time the *kebes* was mentioned was in the initial instructions for the Passover found in Exodus 12:5. The word comes from an unused root meaning, “to dominate.” It is a ram just old enough to butt. Being in its first year implies innocence. But there is more...

¹² (con’t) without blemish,

There was to be no defect. It was to be perfect in all ways.

¹² (con’t) as a burnt offering to the Lord.

A burnt offering is one which signifies a life dedicated wholly to the Lord. The entire animal is burnt up as a sweet smelling aroma to Yehovah.

¹³ Its grain offering shall be two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour

Along with the lamb was to be a grain offering of *solet*, or fine flour. This is from an unused root meaning to strip; flour, as chipped off; and thus fine. It is generally considered, even when not specifically stated, that wheat was the flour used in such an offering. It would be the best of things offered to the greatest of Beings, meaning the Creator.

Normally, a grain offering along with an animal would be one-tenth of an ephah of flour, but this one requires two. The reason is probably because it being a harvest feast, it implies greater liberality in the anticipation of a great harvest ahead. One tenth would be the regular offering, the second would be in anticipation of the plenty which lay ahead. Along with any grain offering, frankincense was also offered, though not stated here.

¹³ (con’t) mixed with oil, an offering made by fire to the Lord, for a sweet aroma;

The grain offering was to be *balal*, or mixed, with oil. When it was properly prepared, it was to be made an offering by fire to the Lord, as it says, for a sweet aroma.

¹³ (con't) **and its drink offering shall be of wine, one-fourth of a hin.**

The only three times that *nesek*, or drink offerings, are mentioned in Leviticus are here in this chapter. This is the first of them. The word means “cover.” The idea is that when the drink offering is poured out, it will cover that onto which it is poured. The fourth part of wine was the standard amount of the drink offering (Exodus 29:40). As this is not the time of the vintage harvest, the same amount as normal was offered.

¹⁴ **You shall eat neither bread nor parched grain nor fresh grain until the same day that you have brought an offering to your God;**

The prohibition against partaking of any of the produce of the field is given. Not until the firstfruits is offered were any of these things to be eaten by the people, implying from the new harvest. *Qali*, or parched grain, is introduced here. It is rather rare, being seen only six times in the Bible. It is roasted grain. Along with bread, no parched grain, or fresh grain was to be eaten until the rite was accomplished.

¹⁴ (fin) **it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.**

The words here are all-encompassing, but they must be taken in context of the greater biblical themes. *Khuqat olam*, or statute forever, does not mean “forever to eternity.” *Olam* simply signifies, “to the vanishing point.” This was to be a statute forever, until the symbolism was fulfilled in Christ. “Throughout all your generations” means that it was to be continuous and without interruption. “All your dwellings” means that it applies to all Israel without exception. This is, after all, a Feast of the Lord. It was an annual anticipatory look to the time when Christ would come and fulfill it. At that time, the shadow would become substance.

*A Sheaf of grain brought to the Lord
It was the first cut down in the field
Our duty in presenting it, we have not ignored
Now it is hoped that our land will greatly yield*

*When presented, the Sheaf is waved, vibrant and alive
The Lord has accepted it, as the best of the field
The harvest will be abundant; we shall surely thrive*

Yes it is hoped that our land will greatly yield

This Sheaf surely represents all that will follow it

There will be the most magnificent harvest from the field

All will be like the First, not a stalk unfit

Surely because of the Firstfruits our land will greatly yield

II. Fulfilled in Christ

As was noted, this was a feast only intended to be observed by Israel in the land which the Lord gave to His people. So much for people observing it today. It doesn't apply, nor can this precept be met by the people of the church. It is absurd to even consider mandating the observance of this feast during the Gentile-led church age.

The *omer*, or sheaf, was to be the first ripe grain of the harvest. However, the term *reshith*, indicates more than simply the first, but the best, the preeminent, the head. The word is singular. One sheaf is presented. Each of these concepts speaks of Christ. He is the one, preeminent, first, and best.

As we saw, though not specifically stated, this sheaf is of the barley crop. It is the crop of the poor. Paul points us to the significance of this in 2 Corinthians 8 –

“For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich.”

-2 Corinthians 8:9

Further, it is the crop of hairy ears, signifying a likeness to sinful man. This is reflected in Paul's words of Romans 8 –

“For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God *did* by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.”

-Romans 8:3, 4

This grain is cut down, or harvested, and then presented to the Lord. As I noted, it was to be waved by the priest before the Lord. The grain which had been cut down is caused to move, vibrancy is seen, and the semblance of life is found in it. It is the priest who conducts this. Thus, we have a picture of Christ our true High Priest causing this

preeminent sheaf to be vibrant before the Lord. It is the resurrection, where life reanimates that which was cut down. To see the fulfilled symbolism of this, we need go no further than 1 Corinthians 15 –

“But now Christ is risen from the dead, *and* has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.” 1 Corinthians 15:20

Christ was dead, He was cut down, but he was brought back from the dead, having arisen, filled with vibrancy before the Lord. As there is but one sheaf, it signifies that Christ is the one and only Representative of, or means of, future resurrection. He is the one and only Mediator; the one and only example for emulation.

And yet, a sheaf is composed of many stalks, and so this indicates the fullness of the work which He accomplished. Every aspect of Christ the Man was cut down and buried, but in His resurrection, all of who He is was resurrected.

But in this verse, Paul shows us that this is not the end of the story. He uses the term *aparché*, or firstfruits, which is also a singular noun. He is the first, but Paul continues by saying, “of those who have fallen asleep.”

This is why the Hebrew of verse 11 says, “so that you may be accepted.” It is in the plural, speaking of those who are accepted because of the Firstfruits, Christ. It is Christ’s resurrection that then justifies us, and thus guarantees our resurrection as well. This is seen first in Paul’s words of Romans 4 –

“It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, ²⁵ who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification.” Romans 4:24, 25

Christ died for our sins, seen in His atoning death, and He was raised for our justification. Once justified, Paul continues to explain what will occur because of this. Again to 1 Corinthians 15 –

“For since by man *came* death, by Man also *came* the resurrection of the dead. ²² For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. ²³ But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those *who are* Christ’s at His coming.” 1 Corinthians 15:21-23

After noting what was to be done, the words then tell when it was to be done. It was to be on the day after the Sabbath. I went into painful detail explaining why the term “the Sabbath” means a weekly Sabbath and nothing else. It does not in any way point to the holy convocation of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The reason this is important, as I said, is because of the timeline of Christ’s Passion. In Luke 23 we read the following –

“Then he took it down, wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a tomb *that was* hewn out of the rock, where no one had ever lain before. ⁵⁴ That day was the Preparation, and the Sabbath drew near.” Luke 23:53, 54

No doubt that this is speaking of a Sabbath, not a convocation. The term Sabbath is specific. However, John says the following –

“Therefore, because it was the Preparation *Day*, that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and *that* they might be taken away.”

-John 19:31

The reason why this was a “high day” was because the holy convocation and the regular Sabbath occurred on the same day, not because the holy convocation *is* a Sabbath day. As I said, any such alignment would be incidental, not purposeful. And this was correct for about 1500 years. Anytime the two lined up, it was an incidental occurrence.

However, for it to be lined up when Christ would suffer and die was purposeful. It was God’s intent that Christ would die on a Friday and raise on a Sunday. The types and pictures found in the Old Testament which He fulfills are many. In the end, God’s divine selection caused that particular Sabbath to be a high day in order to accomplish this.

Next we were instructed on the burnt offering, a *kebes*, or lamb. The word signifies “to dominate.” It is Christ who dominates all, verified by the resurrection. He has gained the victory over death, as Paul says again from 1 Corinthians 15 –

“Death is swallowed up in victory.”

⁵⁵ “O Death, where *is* your sting?

O Hades, where *is* your victory?” 1 Corinthians 15:54, 55

There, Paul is writing of our victory over death, but it is a victory only made possible because of Christ’s victory first. As the firstfruits; so with the entire harvest. This lamb

was to be of the first year, signifying innocence. It is the innocence of Christ who is without sin. And it was to be without blemish. Peter explains the fulfillment in Christ –

“...knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, *like* silver or gold, from your aimless conduct *received* by tradition from your fathers, ¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.”

-1 Peter 1:18, 19

This lamb was to be a burnt offering to the Lord. As we have seen, the burnt offering is as a life dedicated wholly to God. Such is the life of Christ. It is a perfect representation of what He has done. Following the mandate for the lamb came that of the grain offering. The *solet*, or fine flour is a picture of Christ, the first and finest grain of wheat, as He alluded to Himself in John 12:24 –

“Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain.”

It is a fitting emblem of Christ who is the Bread of life, and the One who thus provides everlasting life to those who partake of Him. Thus the offering is an acknowledgment of this to God. That there were two tenths instead of one speaks of the abundance of the harvest to come. It would not be just a single portion, but it is a double portion which is anticipated.

This grain offering was to be *balal*, or mixed, with oil. Oil is typical of the Spirit. It is a picture of Christ, the Bread of life, completely infused with the Spirit of God. And as is the Firstfruits, so shall be the whole of the abundant harvest to come. This entire offering was to be an offering made by fire to the Lord, for a sweet aroma. This is explained by Paul in Ephesians 5 –

“Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. ² And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.” Ephesians 5:1, 2

As it can be inferred, the double portion of the grain offering points to the fullness of the grain harvest, which includes us. It should be noted that the grain which is offered came from God, but it has been modified by man in the grinding process. Thus a type of work is involved in the picture. It is a confession that the works we do are to be performed in Christ, and are due only to Him.

And finally came the drink offering. The drink offering is of *yayin*, or wine. In the Bible, wine symbolizes the merging together of cultural expressions into a result. The thing that ought to happen can happen, symbolized by wine. In the case of a drink offering, it signifies rest and celebration.

A drink offering is one only offered in the Land of Promise, a land of defeated enemies. Thus it is a land of rest. Only when rest is provided, would the Lord accept the wine libations. All during the time of the wilderness wanderings, they were not offered.

Further, a drink offering is poured out in its entirety to the Lord, even in the land of Israel. No part of it was drank by the priests or people. This signifies that the people were partially excluded from the full blessings of the Lord while still under the Law of Moses. This is what Jesus was referring to in Matthew –

“Nor do they put new wine into old wineskins, or else the wineskins break, the wine is spilled, and the wineskins are ruined. But they put new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved.” Matthew 9:17

Jesus was speaking of the law and grace. The new wine is the new dispensation of grace to come. The old wine was the dispensation of the law. If one were to introduce the new concept into the old, it would not work because the two were incompatible. Only if one put the new wine in the new wineskins, and received the new wine, would the mind be changed. Only in Christ does man truly enter into the God’s victory and rest. This is why Paul could say in Philippians 2 –

“Yes, and if I am being poured out *as a drink offering* on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. ¹⁸ For the same reason you also be glad and rejoice with me.” Philippians 2:17, 18

Paul’s labors in the vineyard anticipated his victory and rest in Christ. This is made all the more evident in his words to Timothy –

“For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. ⁷ I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. ⁸ Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.” 2 Timothy 4:6-8

These things that we can claim now are because of what Christ has done. We have the victory and we rest because He first obtained it for us. This is the lesson of the Feast of Firstfruits. He, our Lord Jesus, is holy, and therefore we who are in Him are deemed as such as well. Again, to Paul in Romans 11 –

“For if the firstfruit *is* holy, the lump *is* also *holy*; and if the root *is* holy, so *are* the branches.” Romans 11:16

In summary, the Feast of Firstfruits is a picture of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. This is explicit in the New Testament, but it will be seen more fully when we next look at the Feast of Weeks. That feast is based on the dating of the Feast of Firstfruits that we looked at today. On a given day, but not on a set day according to the Hebrew calendar, Christ rose from the dead. From that momentous event, however, a specific event would occur fifty days later. Stay tuned for those exciting details.

Until then, let's close with the thought that Paul says “Christ rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.” He didn't rise on the fourth day, He rose on the third day. Scripture testified to this occurrence coming, and Scripture is fulfilled exactly as it said this would occur. This is the most reliable, and testified to occurrence in antiquity. No other event has such a vast and overwhelming body of evidence to support it. And more, no event has such a vast and overwhelming body of evidence to say, “It is coming.”

Both before and after the event, Scripture and history testify to the resurrection of Christ. The death, burial, and resurrection of Christ is the most singular event in all human history, and it makes possible the absolute surety that those who receive Him will likewise be resurrected. It is the hope of the redeemed, and it is founded on the solid ground of God's infallible word. Concerning the Feast of Firstfruits, in Christ we proclaim, “Feast fulfilled.” If you haven't yet called on Christ, it is high time that you do. Eternity awaits, we will all spend it somewhere, and for those who know Christ, it will be in a land of wonder and delight. For the rest, not so much. Settle your eternity today!

Closing Verse: *He is risen! Mark 16:6*

Next Week: *Leviticus 23:15-22 Great stuff in these verses when for Christ one seeks...*
(The Feasts of the Lord, Weeks) (39th Leviticus Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if you have a lifetime of sin heaped up behind you, He can wash it away and purify

you completely and wholly. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

Christ, the Firstfruits

And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying
These are the words He was then relaying

Speak to the children of Israel, and to them say:
All the things I relay to you today

'When you come into the land which I give to you
And reap its harvest; that which the land has increased
Then you shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits
Of your harvest to the priest

He shall wave the sheaf before the Lord
To be accepted on your behalf; so to you I submit
On the day after the Sabbath
The priest shall wave it

And you shall offer on that day
When you wave the sheaf, so hear My word
A male lamb of the first year, without blemish
As a burnt offering to the Lord
Its grain offering shall be two-tenths of an ephah
Of fine flour mixed with oil, so I say
An offering made by fire to the Lord
For a sweet aroma; so it shall be this way

And its drink offering of wine shall be
One-fourth of a hin to offer it correctly

You shall eat neither bread nor parched grain
Nor fresh grain until the same day
That you have brought an offering to your God
To these instructions careful heed you shall pay

It shall be a statute forever, as instructed by Me

Throughout your generations in all your dwellings it shall be

Firstfruits to the Lord, is Christ Jesus
He was crucified and buried for our sins
But He was raised for the justification of us
Yes, through the Lord, the victory He wins

And so, O God, we sing out great praises to You
Because of Christ Jesus and the work He wrought
Through Him, marvelous things You did do
And through His work we stand perfect, without spot

Hallelujah to You, yes, again we say it from the heart!
Hallelujah to You, for Christ who to us eternal life does impart!

Hallelujah and Amen...

LEVITICUS 23:15-22

(THE FEASTS OF THE LORD: WEEKS)

Though disputed by some, for all intents and purposes, the Church Age began on the day of Pentecost in the year AD32, 50 days after the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Today we're going to look at the significance of this occurrence, how it was prefigured in the Old Testament, and how it is fulfilled in the New. We'll also look at its significance in our own lives.

Before we do, there's something we should understand concerning the giving of the Spirit – and that is to be derived from a proper interpretation of the Bible. There are a million things to know about interpreting the Bible, but I will give you a few simple rules to get you started. I bring them up from time to time in Bible studies and today's sermon is a great day to bring them up again. When you're evaluating verses, you should constantly ask yourself the first two rules, and make sure you carefully apply the third –

- 1) Is this Prescriptive – does it actually prescribe something for me?
- 2) Is this Descriptive – does it merely describe something to me.
- 3) What is the context of what I am reading or studying.

Let's review – prescriptive, descriptive, and context, context, context! Context is king, and we simply cannot rip verses out of context without producing a pretext. It is certainly the greatest source of error in Christianity. Most error comes from using a passage which only describes something as if it was prescribing something. This type of error covers most of the bad doctrine that revolves around what happened at Pentecost and how we are to apply it in our lives now.

To help you get this right, I'll give you an actual example to consider. Before we got into today's sermon, I read you Leviticus 23:15-22. For you as a Christian, are those passages Prescriptive or Descriptive? In other words, do they prescribe something for us to do, or do they merely describe something for us to read and contemplate?

If you said they prescribe something for us to do, you have mishandled Scripture. You have reinserted the law which is fulfilled and obsolete. It is annulled in Christ. Further, if you say we are to observe this feast, then you must observe it as it is written. But nobody can do so, and nobody does do so. It is pick and choose theology, and it is a very poor handling of Scripture.

Today we celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. This is something that happened one time, at one location, and for a specific reason. It is a non-repeatable event. Yes, the Holy Spirit also came upon those in Samaria in Acts 8 and on the house of Cornelius in Acts 10 – but neither occurred on Pentecost, and both were in the presence of Peter to demonstrate that all (Jew, Samaritan, and Gentile) are accepted by God through faith in Christ. After these occurrences, something different now happens.

The Holy Spirit still fills believers today, but according to Paul's writings, which are prescriptive, He comes at the moment we profess faith in Jesus. The Spirit now baptizes and fills the believer in all His fullness at that moment. We cannot "get" more of the Spirit, but the Spirit can get more of us as we submit to Him.

Improperly applying Pentecost to our own conversion has led people to bark like dogs, lie on the ground and kick around like children, act in ways that would even embarrass animals, and has – and I mean this sincerely – brought great discredit upon the name of Jesus and the glorious work of the Holy Spirit in the world.

If you're into theatrical Christianity, you should know that it is an insult to the beauty and majesty of the Person of our Lord, Jesus. So please remember and consider always these rules – Prescriptive, Descriptive, and Context, Context, Context – to the glory of the Lord who called you into His wonderful kingdom.

Text Verse: *"So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, ¹⁷ which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ."* Colossians 2:16, 17

Our verses today have all kinds of wonderful things tucked away in them, or they point to all kinds of wonderful things elsewhere in Scripture. And every verse is there leading us to the Person and work of Christ. Pentecost was a one-time event, but it has a continuing application even today. Every time a person comes to Christ, the results of that first Pentecost are realized in that person.

He is sealed with the Spirit, and his eternal destiny goes from one of separation from God to one of adoption into the family of God. It is true for both Jew and Gentile, and it is a one-time non-repeatable event. One is sealed upon belief, and that seal is, according to Paul, a guarantee of our future redemption.

There is eternal salvation in Christ, and it is based on mere faith in what He has done. The things He has done are recorded in the Old Testament in anticipation of His coming,

and they are recorded in the gospels, Acts, and the epistles to show that His coming was fully effective in accomplishing those things and reconciling us to God. These are the wonderful truths which are found in His superior word. And so let's turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. Count Fifty Days (verses 15-22)

¹⁵ 'And you shall count for yourselves from the day after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering:

The "day after the Sabbath" is speaking of the Sabbath mentioned in verse 11 in the explanation of the Feast of Firstfruits. As we saw, that pictured Christ's resurrection on the Sunday (the first day of the week) after the Sabbath. The waving of the sheaf of the wave offering looked forward to the presentation of Christ Jesus alive and well before the Father. It is from this starting point that a set counting was to take place.

Unlike the previous feast, the Feast of Firstfruits, no new introductory statement is made here. In verse 9 it said, "And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying." That showed a completely different thought was being introduced into the scheduling of the feast, and that the Feast of Firstfruits was a separate thought than that of Passover.

The reason for this was to avoid the mistake in thinking that the Sabbath referred to in verse 11 is the same as the holy convocation of verse 8. It is an error very common among scholars, and one which has led to a very confused understanding of the timing of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. All we can go by is what Scripture gives us. Despite the fact that Jewish tradition aligns with the specific timing of Jesus' resurrection on the year He rose, it also had to align with the Sabbath of the week, something that would not happen if the Passover occurred on any day but a Friday. The details are significant, and tradition cannot override Scripture.

Now, without a new introductory statement, we can see that the Feast of Firstfruits and the Feast of Weeks are united in their timing. Though no specific date was given for the Feast of Firstfruits, a specific date for the Feast of Weeks is given, and is based on the Feast of Firstfruits, whenever that would occur each year. These keys are given for us to unlock the specifics of Scripture. When ignored, the doors we pass through are unscriptural ones.

It should be noted now that, in a similar manner to Passover and Unleavened Bread, this is the only other coupling of feasts in Leviticus 23. All others are introduced with introductory thoughts except these. The Feast of Firstfruits leads naturally and directly into that of Weeks. One points to the next like an arrow heading toward a target. From the resurrection, a counting will now begin...

¹⁵ (con't) **seven Sabbaths shall be completed.**

sheva shabbatot, or “seven Sabbaths,” is forty-nine days. It is an ancient trick, not using fingers to figure this out. If we know the result, and memorize the tables, we can do it in our heads. Seven times seven is forty-nine. Works every time!

The word “Sabbaths” here signifies “weeks.” It is a synecdoche where the unit stands for the whole. This will be seen in the words of the next verse, and as is seen in Deuteronomy 16:9. Further, this explains the same term used in the New Testament. Though in Greek, in Matthew 28:1, it says –

“Now after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb.”

It is from the day after a Sabbath day, and to a day after a Sabbath day. It is pointing to a day during that week which is a particularly chosen day. Thus, we derive from this the name of the feast. It is “The Feast of Weeks.” We are being directed to a particular day during a particular week as is seen next...

¹⁶ **Count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath;**

A period of seven weeks would bring us to about early June on our calendar. The Hebrew says, *ha'shabat ha'shevyit*, or **the Sabbath the seventh**. There is a definite article in front of Sabbath to ensure that the mistake is not made that this is merely a period of weeks, but a period of weeks which ends on a Sabbath day. It is the day after this Sabbath that the attention is now being directed.

Despite the name “Weeks,” the feast actually is more commonly known from the Greek translation of the Old Testament of this verse. One was to count the seven weeks, but more exactly, it was to be fifty days to the day *after* the seventh Sabbath, on whatever day that Sabbath was. The Greek translation translates the words, “fifty days” as *Penteconta*. In the New Testament, it is called, *Pentékosté*, or Pentecost. On this day, the people (the verb is plural) are required to do something particular...

16 (con't) then you shall offer a new grain offering to the Lord.

v'hiqravtem minkhah khadasah la'Yehovah – “And you shall offer grain-offering new to Yehovah.” This is a new grain offering of the wheat-harvest which stands distinct from the omer, or sheaf, of the barley harvest which was presented at Firstfruits. Thus, this feast is described as “the Feast of Harvest” in Exodus 23:16. In Exodus 32:22 & Deuteronomy 16:10, it is specifically called the Feast of Weeks, and in Numbers 28:26, it is called “the Day the Firstfruits.”

The word “new” here is *khadash*. It has been used but once so far in the Bible. It means fresh, or new thing. It comes from the verb *khadash* which signifies to renew or repair. This new grain offering is then described next...

17 You shall bring from your dwellings two wave loaves of two-tenths of an ephah.

From the people’s dwelling places, they were to bring two wave loaves. This is not to be assumed, as John Calvin and some others state, that every house was to bring two loaves. Rather, two loaves total are brought, but they were to be made out of daily household food, and not prepared from wheat solely used for sacred purposes. In other words, it is the common which is being highlighted here.

The word “wave” is *tenuphah*. It means to offer in a waving motion. It comes from the word *nuph* which was seen in verse 11, which means “to quiver.” The waving would be to vibrate up and down, or to rock to and fro. These two loaves were to be of two tenths, meaning two omers, of an ephah.

17 (con't) They shall be of fine flour;

The tenths were to be *soleth*, or processed grain; thus fine flour.

17 (con't) they shall be baked with leaven.

This is the second of only two times in the Bible where an offering was to be made to the Lord with *khamets*, or yeast. The other time is that of the thanksgiving peace-offering found in Leviticus 7:13. Yeast, or leaven, in the Bible pictures sin. It is what causes bread to puff up, and sin is what causes man to puff up. The addition of yeast also causes corruption and putrefaction to occur, the same is true with sin in man. So why was leaven added to the thanksgiving offering, and why is it added to this one? They are, after all, to be presented to the Lord.

Well, as I know you remember the details of the thanksgiving offering perfectly, I don't need to explain it, but for those who may not have heard that sermon, the reason for offering leaven was that it was an acknowledgment that the Lord accepts such an offering despite man's sin-nature. The Lord will not turn away an offering of thanks, even from a fallen, sin-filled man. Now, for the second and last time in the Bible, an offering with leaven is brought before the Lord. Therefore, this must have something to do with sin in man as well.

That is the pictorial meaning, and it will be explained more later, but for the feast itself, it may also have been to teach the people a lesson about the Lord's blessing. At the Passover, no yeast was added. The reason is specifically stated that the people departed in haste, and didn't have time to leaven their bread. Here, the people are not in haste, but in rest. Their harvest is ended, and they are having a feast before the Lord in relaxed gratitude for what He has provided.

¹⁷ (con't) ***They are the firstfruits to the Lord.***

The word here for "firstfruits" is *bikkurim*. It is not the same as the word translated as firstfruits in the Feast of Firstfruits in verses 9-14. There the word was *reshith*. This word comes from *bakar*, meaning properly, "to burst the womb." Thus, firstborn. And therefore, *bikkurim* would be the hasty fruits, or those which ripen first. They stand for the whole of the crop which follows.

What is to be understood here is that the wheat harvest by this time is almost completed, and therefore, the presentation of these loaves, though at the end of the harvest cycle, are representative of the entire harvest cycle. This day of Pentecost is a day representative of the whole harvest.

¹⁸ **And you shall offer with the bread seven lambs of the first year, without blemish, one young bull, and two rams.**

For this same feast, instead of one young bull and two rams, Numbers 28 says "two young bulls and one ram." No explanation for the change is given. Because of this, some scholars see that error has crept into the text. That is not likely with something so obvious. Especially when this feast was celebrated year by year. What this means is that these offerings were distinct from those in Numbers. The ones here belong to the loaves. The ones in Numbers are for the day of the feast itself. Thus, there is a total of these special offerings on this day of fourteen lambs, three young bulls, and three rams. The reason for giving these numbers separately, was because in Numbers the feast was

observed as required, but only after they entered the land of promise would the offerings mandated here be made, because they accompany that which came from the produce of the ground.

For the offering with the loaves, there are first seven *kebes*, or lambs. The word comes from an unused root meaning to dominate. These are *bene shanah*, or sons of the first year, implying innocence. And they are to be without blemish. Also, there was one *par ben baqar*, or “bull, son of oxen.” The word comes from *parar*, meaning to defeat. *Baqar* means to seek out. Also, there were to be two rams. The Hebrew is *ayil*, which indicates strength.

18 (con't) They shall be as a burnt offering to the Lord, with their grain offering and their drink offerings,

These animals were to be offered as burnt offerings to the Lord. Along with them were to be the standard grain and drink offerings explained in previous sermons. All of those details point to Christ and His work.

18 (con't) an offering made by fire for a sweet aroma to the Lord.

Together, the sum of these offerings were to be raised up to the Lord as a *reakh nikhoakh la'Yehovah*, or a sweet aroma to the Lord. The word *reakh* comes from *ruakh*, which gives the sense of acceptance. The Lord smells and is pleased. The word *nikhokh* gives the sense of that which is quieting, or tranquilizing. It comes from *nuakh*, meaning “to rest.”

19 Then you shall sacrifice one kid of the goats as a sin offering,

Along with the burnt offerings was to be a *saiyr izzim*, or “kid of the goats.” This was for a sin offering. The *sayir* was also the sin offering of the people on the Day of Atonement. The word *izzim* is derived from *azaz*, meaning “to prevail.”

19 (con't) and two male lambs of the first year as a sacrifice of a peace offering.

These two lambs are the same animals as the seven lambs of the burnt offering of verse 18. They are to be made a part of the peace offering as next described...

20 The priest shall wave them with the bread of the firstfruits as a wave offering before the Lord, with the two lambs.

These two lambs were to be waved before the Lord together at the same time as the leavened loaves of bread which were offered as firstfruits. The symbolism here is marvelous to contemplate.

²⁰ (con't) **They shall be holy to the Lord for the priest.**

Both the waved lambs, and the leavened bread of the firstfruits were considered *qodesh la'Yehovah*, or "Holy to the Lord," and they were reserved for the consumption of the priest alone. The word "priest" is singular. Normally only the breast and shoulder of the peace offerings was for the priests, and the offeror would receive back the rest to eat. It was thus a mutual sharing of a meal. However, in this case, the lambs were on behalf of the entire congregation, and so the lambs were deemed as Holy to the Lord and consumed wholly by the priest.

As a point of clarity, the NKJV, following the KJV, is punctuated incorrectly. The entire verse should read, "And the priest shall wave them with the bread of the firstfruits for a wave offering before the Lord; with the two lambs they shall be holy to the Lord for the priest." Otherwise, the verse is obscure and makes no sense.

²¹ **And you shall proclaim on the same day *that* it is a holy convocation to you.**

To proclaim a holy convocation means to initiate the day with trumpet blasts. This is recorded in Numbers 10:10. Although the trumpets have not yet been made, when they are, this is one of the specific purposes for them. As it says there, sounding the trumpets in this manner is to "be a memorial for you before your God." On this particular day, there was to be more than just a gathering of the people, but like the first and last day of Unleavened Bread, it was to be a holy convocation. This is then described with the words...

²¹ (con't) **You shall do no customary work on *it*.**

kal meleket abodah lo taasu – "all work regular no shall you do." Regular work was not to be conducted on this day. However, this is not a Sabbath. It is rather a day, on which according to Exodus 12:16, food could be prepared. Other Sabbath regulations would likewise not be enforced. Instead, it would be like one of our holidays.

²¹ (con't) ***It shall be a statute forever in all your dwellings throughout your generations.***

The words *khuqat olam*, or statue forever, signify “to the vanishing point.” They do not mean that we still must observe this feast. What it means is that until it was fulfilled in Christ, it was to be observed year by year. All Israel was to observe this feast at its appointed time.

22 ‘When you reap the harvest of your land,

Affixed to the end of the feast is this seemingly unrelated verse. It appears to have nothing to do with the feast at all, and it is a repeat of Leviticus 19:9. It seems superfluous and cumbersomely placed here, and yet it is perfectly placed and a remarkable verse, both in the Hebrew wording, and in what it is pointing to.

u-b’qusrekem eth qetsir artsekem – and in your reaping harvest of your land. The verb for “when you reap” is 2nd person plural as is its corresponding noun, “your land.” The words are spoken to all of Israel. There is a time when they would reap their land’s harvest. It is this time which is being highlighted.

22 (con’t) you shall not wholly reap the corners of your field when you reap,

Listen carefully and see if you can hear what is odd in these words – *lo tekaleh peat sakdekha b’qusrekha*. Anyone? Really odd. Isn’t it! “No shall you make clean riddance of the edges of your field when you reap.” For only the second and last time in the chapter, words in this verse suddenly become second person, singular. “No shall you make clean riddance (meaning “you singular”) of the edges (of) your field (singular) when you reap (singular). The only other verse where this happens was verse 3 when speaking of working six days. “Six days you shall do work,” second person, singular. And it continues...

22 (con’t) nor shall you gather any gleanings from your harvest.

v’leqet qetsirekha lo telaqet – “and the gleanings (of) your harvest (singular) no shall you gather” (singular).

22 (con’t) You shall leave them for the poor and for the stranger:

l’ani v’lager taazov otam – “to the poor, and to the stranger you shall leave (singular) them (plural, speaking of the things defined).” This is the last time in the entire chapter that it speaks in the singular. The Lord goes from speaking to all the people in the beginning clause, to just one in the middle, and then He will close speaking to all. What

is going on here? We'll try to figure it out before we finish. But for now, it is a reminder to the people that there is to be mercy upon the poor and the stranger. As Matthew Henry says, "Those who are truly sensible of the mercy they received from God, will show mercy to the poor without grudging." See the book of Ruth for this law being practiced.

^{22 (fin)} **I am the Lord your God."**

ani Yehovah elohekem – "I am Yehovah your God." The noun "your God" is plural. The Lord is speaking to all Israel. And so ends the instruction for the conduct of the feast. It is with this word of declaration that they have been instructed by Yehovah.

II. Fulfilled in Christ

The first thing that we need to get, is that there is a parallel to the timing of the first Passover to the giving of the Law of Moses and with the day of Firstfruits (meaning the resurrection of Christ) and the day of Pentecost. Each was an interval of fifty days.

The Lord told Moses on the 48th day after their departure from Egypt that He would appear to the people "on the third day." Thus, He would appear to them on the 50th day. As the Lord appeared to the people on the 50th day and gave them the law, so the Holy Spirit came down upon the people in Jerusalem 50 days after Christ's resurrection. That is recorded in Acts 2 -

"When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. ² And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³ Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and *one* sat upon each of them. ⁴ And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." Acts 2:1-4

In type then, the giving of the law prefigures the giving of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost because of the 50-day interval. As there was no Feast of Firstfruits at the time of the exodus, the feast is counted from the first day after the Passover rather than from date set here in Leviticus. Both events are preceded by a fifty-day period of learning from the Lord and anticipating a meeting with Him. This is why the calendar day for the Feast of Firstfruits is not given. It is based on a Sabbath, whenever that Sabbath would occur. What is important is the 50-day interval.

It is on this day that a new grain offering was to be made. As I said, the word “new” is *khadash*. It means fresh, or new thing. It comes from the verb *khadash* which signifies to renew or repair. It is on this day that the spiritual reconnection to God, which was lost at the fall of man, was to be repaired. Signified by this grain offering.

From this grain offering, gathered from the common stores of the people, two loaves of bread, with leaven, were to be presented to the Lord as a wave offering. The word “wave” signifies to move back and forth, coming from a word meaning to quiver. This root was the same used to describe Christ’s resurrection in the Feast of Firstfruits. As He became vibrant and alive again, we are spritually made vibrant because of His work. It is the rebirth through the work of the Spirit. Paul explains this in Ephesians 2:4-6 –

“But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), ⁶ and raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus...

They were to be two loaves of fine flour, signifying that they are pure. And yet, they were to be baked with leaven. That there were two of them signifies a contrast. In the Bible, this is what the number two signifies – a contrast, and yet a confirmation of something. There is day and there is night. They contrast, and yet they confirm the duration of a day. There is the Old Testament and there is the New. They contrast, and yet they confirm the totality of the word of God. There is Jesus – divine and human. They contrast, and yet they confirm that He is the God-Man.

In this, the two loaves are filled with yeast, and yet they are fine flour – and there are two of them. Fine flour signifies purity; grain which is processed and acceptable. Yeast signifies sin. The loaves are the redeemed of the Lord, deemed as pure, and yet still bearing sin. And more, they reflect Jew and Gentile being presented as acceptable to Him, signified by the sealing of the Spirit. This is actually seen in the writings of Paul. He twice mentions people as being firstfruits of an area known as Achaia. The first is Romans 16:5; the second is 1 Corinthians 16:15 –

“Greet my beloved Epaenetus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia to Christ.”

“I urge you, brethren—you know the household of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia...”

Epaenetus is a Jew. The name is the same as the Hebrew Judah or “praise.” And so it is believed he used his Hebrew name among the Hebrews and his Greek name among the Greeks as often happened in those days. Stephanas was a Gentile.

More interestingly, the name Achaia where both were from has the same general meaning as the Hebrew name of Egypt. Egypt or *mitsrayim* is a plural word which means “double distress.” Achaia means “grief.” These are called the Firstfruits of Grief. They are a picture of the first redeemed out of the world of grief, just as Israel was redeemed out of Egypt, or double distress.

These then show the fulfillment of the two loaves of bread with yeast being presented to the Lord at this feast, Jew and Gentile. Returning the firstfruits to the Lord is a picture of the firstfruits of the redeemed being noted as such in the New Testament. As the Day of Pentecost stands for the entire church age, these two are noted out of Jew and Gentile as examples of all who would likewise be a part of this great harvest. As it said in verse 17, “They are firstfruits to the Lord.”

The seven lambs of the first year for the burnt offering picture Christ. Seven is the number of spiritual perfection, emblematic of His spiritually perfect work. The first year signifies innocence, just as Christ was innocent. The lamb or *kebes* means “to dominate.” Through His innocence He dominated over sin and destroyed it.

Along with that was a *par ben baqar*, or “bull, son of oxen.” *Par* comes from *parar*, meaning to defeat. *Baqar* comes from a word meaning to inquire or seek out. Christ defeated the devil, seeking out those He would redeem, just as the Lord is said to seek out His sheep in Ezekiel 34.

The two *ayil*, or rams, indicating strength, shows that Christ’s strength was expended for both Jew and Gentile. They reflect the total commitment of Christ who offered all of His natural strength to His Father. He is fully sufficient to redeem all. These were returned to the Lord as a burnt offering.

After this came the grain and drink offerings. They have been fully explained in past sermons, and so suffice it to say that every detail of them points to the finished work of Christ. In short, as a refresher concerning the drink offering, it is poured out in its entirety to the Lord. No part of it was drunk by the priests or the people, signifying that the people were partially excluded from the full blessings of the Lord while still under the Law of Moses. This is what Jesus was referring to in Matthew –

“Nor do they put new wine into old wineskins, or else the wineskins break, the wine is spilled, and the wineskins are ruined. But they put new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved.” Matthew 9:17

Jesus was speaking of the law and grace. The new wine is the new dispensation of grace to come. The old wine was the dispensation of the law. If one were to introduce the new concept into the old, it would not work because the two were incompatible. Putting new wine in new wineskins is emblematic of putting new doctrine into renewed minds. Only in Christ does man truly enter into God’s victory and rest. It is a rest guaranteed by the sealing of the Spirit on Pentecost, and for each believer since that first day.

All of these offerings were considered a *reakh nikhoakh la’Yehovah*, or a sweet aroma to the Lord. As I said *reakh* comes from *ruakh*, which gives the sense of acceptance. The word *nikhokh* gives the sense of that which is quieting, or tranquilizing. It comes from *nuakh*, meaning “to rest.” Through the work of Christ, we are accepted, and the anger of the Lord is quieted. Now we enter His rest because of the work of Christ, who is our Rest.

Next described are the sin and peace offerings. The sin offering here is the *saiyr izzim*, or “kid of the goats.” As I said, this is the same as is seen on the Day of Atonement. Rather than a specific sin, this is a general sin offering for the people. It again pictures Christ. *Sayir* is the hairy goat. Hair signifies awareness. It is an offering for the awareness of sin. *Izzim* is derived from *azaz*, meaning “to prevail.” Those with an awareness of sin prevail over it in Christ.

After that came the two lambs of the peace-offering. They were waved with the two loaves of bread. The loaves, picturing both Jew and Gentile sinners sealed with the Spirit of God, and the lambs picturing the innocent Christ who dominated over sin on their behalf – meaning both Jew and Gentile – are waved as one before the Lord. Together, not separately, they are made a peace offering. It is because of Christ that the one offering of both is termed *qodesh la’Yehovah*, or “Holy to the Lord.”

This holy offering was reserved for consumption by the priest alone. That is why the word “priest” is singular here. It is an indication of the priesthood of believers. We have only one Mediator between God and man, and that is Christ Jesus, and there is no mediator between Christ and man. The symbolism of the Old shows us the folly of the supposed mediatorial priesthood of the Roman Catholic Church. Christ is our Priest, and together with Him we are made a peace offering to God.

It was after noting these final offerings that the people were told this was a holy convocation on which they were not to work. Such a holy convocation is a reminder that Christ has done the work, and that we enjoy the benefits of it. The preparing of food, which is allowed, can be equated with our spiritual growth, but all forms of works meriting salvation are accomplished solely by the Lord

With this, the rites of the Feast of Weeks were completed, but then came that obscure verse, repeated from Leviticus 19:9. Both of them bear the same odd pattern of being addressed in the plural and then moving to the singular.

It cannot be an error. The Hebrew is so obvious that anyone reading it would immediately see the change. And yet, other than one off-handed remark by one scholar that notes it is in the 2nd person singular, the matter is completely ignored.

But ignoring this leaves out any possibility of solving the enigma. What is happening here is that the Lord is speaking to the entire congregation. Imagine Him waving His hand over all of them and saying, "I want all of you to do this when you reap the harvest of the Land." And then with the same breath, He stops, points at one person, and says, "You shall not make clean riddance of the edges of your field when you reap. And neither shall you gather any gleanings of your harvest. You shall leave them for the poor and the stranger." And then He waves His hand to the entire congregation again and says, "I am the Lord your God."

It is obvious to Israel that these words are intended for all at all times, but it is equally obvious that He is singling out a specific instance, in conjunction with the Feast of Weeks, and saying, "I am giving You alone specific instructions."

As this feast is pointing to the giving of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, and as this feast represents the entire church age, and all who are included in it, then this must be referring to leaving something behind *after* the church age. The Lord is directing Christ concerning what is to be done at the rapture. The answer is found in Revelation 7.

At some point, after the rapture, there will be 144,000 Jews who will be sealed with the seal of the living God. It is they who will evangelize those left behind who will come looking for what is left over after the harvest is complete. They are the poor and the strangers who have come to glean from the merciful God who has instructed His Son to leave behind a blessing for them.

The natural question then is, “Because this is yet future, doesn’t this mean that this portion of the Law is not yet fulfilled?” The answer is “No.” The Feast is fulfilled in the giving of the Spirit, not in the rapture of the church and what comes after it. Those are merely a part of the feast, just as each new believer in Christ is. There is one fulfillment through Christ's work, and there is the continuing application of that fulfillment, just as there is one day of birth, but many birthdays.

This is why James, writing to the Jews of the end times, says to them, “Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures” (1:18). They will be their own kind of firstfruits, being a part of this feast, and yet a separate and distinct part nonetheless. It is also why the book of Revelation uses the same term for them in verse 14:4 –

“These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from *among* men, *being* firstfruits to God and to the Lamb.”

The feast continues though the feast is fulfilled. What we have seen is the truth that the law has been completed by Christ, and that He is the fulfillment of it on our behalf. We can either trust in Him, and in His finished work for us, or we can trust in the law to save us. To show us the severity of the choice, there is another pattern that goes along with the previous one of the fifty days leading up to the giving of the law, and the fifty days leading up to Pentecost.

At the time of the giving of the law, the people of Israel rejected the Lord and built a golden calf, bowing down and worshiping it. At that time, Exodus 32:28 tells us that about three thousand of the people fell before the Lord for their violation of the law.

However, at the time of the giving of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2, it says, “those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added *to them*.” Paul then provides us an explanation of this in 2 Corinthians 3:6. There he says that the letter, meaning the law, kills, but the Spirit gives life. There is a complete contrast to the two. It is the continuous lesson of the Bible. We can work our way towards God and be found guilty before the Lord, receiving our just condemnation. Or, we can trust in Christ, be granted His Spirit, and be saved. The choice is clearly laid out for us, and it is left up to us to decide which we will pursue.

This is why we don't observe these ancient feasts anymore. They are fulfilled by Him. We are merely participants in this great unfolding drama of His beautiful work. Remember our text verse for today –

“So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, ¹⁷ which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.”

These feasts of the Lord are given to show us Christ and His work on our behalf. In Him we live in the substance, not the shadow. If you are trying to find God's favor through shadowy rituals, obsolete dietary laws, and spending your Saturday as the Jews of old did (and failed by the way), then you have put up a wall – a gigantes maximus wall – between you and God. Tear it down, and pass freely and without hindrance into the arms of Christ by receiving His completed work as your own.

Closing Verse: *“For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. ²³ Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body. ²⁴ For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees? ²⁵ But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance.” Romans 8:22-25*

Next Week: Leviticus 23:23-25 *Lots of shouting on this day in Israel the nation...* (The Feasts of the Lord, The Memorial of Acclamation) (40th Leviticus Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if you have a lifetime of sin heaped up behind you, He can wash it away and purify you completely and wholly. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Giving of the Spirit

‘And you shall count for yourselves
From the day after the Sabbath, the day when death is defeated
From the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering:
Seven Sabbaths shall be completed

Count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath
-----According to this word

Then you shall offer a new grain offering to the Lord

You shall bring from your dwellings

Two wave loaves of two-tenths of an ephah, according to this word

They shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven

They are the firstfruits to the Lord

And you shall offer with the bread seven lambs

Of the first year without blemish, one young bull, and two rams

They shall be as a burnt offering to the Lord

With their grain offering and their drink offerings

An offering made by fire for a sweet aroma to the Lord

Such shall be these profferings

Then you shall sacrifice one kid of the goats

As a sin offering, so you shall do

And two male lambs of the first year

As a sacrifice of a peace offering, as I instruct to you

The priest shall wave them with the bread

Of the firstfruits as a wave offering before the Lord

With the two lambs as I have said

They shall be holy to the Lord for the priest, according to this word

And you shall proclaim on the same day

That it is a holy convocation to you, without alterations

You shall do no customary work on it

It shall be a statute forever in all your dwellings throughout your generations

'When you reap the harvest of your land

You shall not wholly reap the corners, so I attest

Of your field when you reap

Nor shall you gather any gleaning from your harvest

You shall leave them for the poor and for the stranger

I am the Lord your God, your feast-day Arranger

And so we thank You Lord Jesus, for having fulfilled this feast

You poured out your Spirit on the sons of men
Upon Jew and Gentile, and upon the greatest and the least
All who call on You, are at that moment born again

The Spirit is given; a divine guarantee
We have the surety of God, upon us sealed
Eternal salvation is granted; from condemnation we are free
Marvelous salvation; we are brought in as crops from the field

Thank You, O glorious God, for this that You have done for us
To give us new life, You sent Your only begotten; our Lord Jesus

Hallelujah and Amen...

LEVITICUS 23:23-25

(THE FEASTS OF THE LORD: THE MEMORIAL OF ACCLAMATION)

We are given rather sparse information concerning this particular feast day. Just three verses to explain it, and not much detail is provided. It is short, concise, and will require a lot of back and forth to try to figure out what it was intended to reveal to the people of Israel.

One thing is for sure, this day – known as the Feast of Trumpets by some, Rosh Hoshanna by others – is *not* a picture of the rapture of the church. How do we know this? Well, are we members of the church? And are we still awaiting the rapture? Then this feast day is not a picture of the rapture.

It has become popular since the time of the early dispensationalists to state that the spring feasts of the Lord were fulfilled in Christ's first advent, and that the fall feasts will be fulfilled in His second advent. Cl Scofield, an early dispensationalist, says that this date "is a prophetic type and refers to the future regathering of long-dispersed Israel." John Darby, of the same period, agrees with this.

This is the beginning of error. Eventually, other such error crept in, assigning this day to the rapture of the church. Along with that have come so many false teachings about this particular day that it is almost impossible to know what is true and what isn't. People make stuff up all the time and each false teaching gets passed on so many times that eventually, it appears to be true.

The best way to correct this is to simply ignore pretty much everything that is out there about this day and start from scratch. One good starting point to correct such things is to understand that this feast is a part of the Law of Moses. The Law of Moses is fulfilled in Christ. It is, according to the book of Hebrews, annulled, set aside, and obsolete. Paul says it is nailed to the cross. A law which is all of those things is no longer in effect. We are now under a New Covenant. The old is gone.

As we are the church, and the church is still here, and as the Law of Moses is done away with, then this cannot be something future to us now. This is how heresy starts. Logically, if the feasts aren't fulfilled, then we should be observing the feasts. Along with that then comes tithing, giving up pork, requiring circumcision, Sabbath observance, and other pick and choose items from the Law of Moses. Why heresy? Because this mindset says that Christ is not the fulfillment of the law for all who believe, and that we must

continue to work deeds of the law in order to be pleasing to God. A little yeast, and the whole loaf is leavened.

Rather, the feast we will look at today is fulfilled, in Christ, and in a splendid way. This doesn't mean the rapture won't happen on this day. Maybe it will. But it could happen on any of the other 364 days of the year as well. We'll leave that up to the Lord, and not attempt to usurp His right to choose, and we won't be disobedient to His word which tells us to not bother doing so.

Text Verse: *“So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, ¹⁷ which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.” Colossians 2:16, 17*

GK Chesterton said the following about New Years –

“The object of a New Year is not that we should have a new year. It is that we should have a new soul and a new nose; new feet, a new backbone, new ears, and new eyes. Unless a particular man made New Year resolutions, he would make no resolutions. Unless a man starts afresh about things, he will certainly do nothing effective. Unless a man starts on the strange assumption that he has never existed before, it is quite certain that he will never exist afterwards. Unless a man be born again, he shall by no means enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.”

Charlie, if we are looking at a feast which occurs in the seventh month of the year, then why are you citing something about the new year? Well, the reason is that there are several things going on in the annual cycle of Israel which need to be figured out in order to properly understand why the Lord selected the first of the seventh month to be the day of this particular feast. In the end, the term “new year” applies to it as well. We'll see that soon enough.

As the law points us to Christ, then we need to look for Him in the things of the law, including this which is described in the Bible as Yom Teruah, or the Day of Acclamation. It was a day, according to Jewish tradition, of sounding the *shophar*, or ram's horn trumpet, and rejoicing in the Lord. The only thing is, Israel wasn't told why they were doing this. They were just told to do so.

Though only three verses, it is a rather complicated study, but it is one which will explain why the feast was given, and how it is fulfilled in Christ. Understanding this, anyone who has their mind set on a future fulfillment of this feast will probably never agree that it is

fulfilled, despite what the Bible says about the law actually being done away with. I would hope this wouldn't be the case, but time and experience have shown that minds are not easily swayed, even when things are made explicit.

As far as introductions go, we've gone on too long already. Let's jump into these verses and look for Christ. He is there, ready to be found in His superior word. And so let's turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. The Memorial of Acclamation (verses 23-25)

²³ Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying,

As with the Feast of Firstfruits, an entirely new section is introduced, implying that the feast now to be described is logically disconnected from the previous one. As the feast following this one also begins with such an introductory statement, it is a stand alone feast. This is in contradistinction to the Feast of Firstfruits and the Feast of Weeks which were united in a particular way. No independent introduction was given at the announcement of the Feast of Weeks, showing the connection between the two.

²⁴ “Speak to the children of Israel, saying:

The words of the Lord are to be transmitted to all of the people. This is a Feast of the Lord, to be observed by all to the Lord, and so Moses is directed to speak to the people concerning it. This is no different than the public proclamations made by presidents when calling for days of national fasting, holidays, etc. The Lord is their sovereign Ruler, and He is now mandating the next feast in the year to be observed. It is specified as...

²⁴ (con't) ‘In the seventh month, on the first *day* of the month,

It is important to understand that there are two distinct calendars in the Bible. The first is the creation calendar, and the second is the redemption calendar. This same pattern of creation/redemption is seen throughout the Bible. God creates and then He redeems. The reason for giving of the Sabbath in the Ten Commandments in Exodus is based on creation, “For *in* six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth...” (20:11). However, it is based on redemption in the giving of the Ten commandments in Deuteronomy, “And remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the Lord your God brought you out from there by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm” (5:15).

The same pattern of creation and redemption is seen in Revelation when praises to God are based first on creation in Chapter 4 –

“You are worthy, O Lord,
To receive glory and honor and power;
For You created all things,
And by Your will they exist and were created.” Revelation 4:11

They are then given based on redemption in Revelation 5 –

“You are worthy to take the scroll,
And to open its seals;
For You were slain,
And have redeemed us to God by Your blood
Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation,
¹⁰ And have made us kings and priests to our God;
And we shall reign on the earth.” Revelation 5:9, 10.

Throughout the Bible, one must properly track the calendar which is being used to avoid confusion in what is going on and when. This seventh month in the redemption calendar today is known by the Aramaic name, Tishri. However, it was originally known by its Hebrew name as Ethanim. This is recorded in 1 Kings 8:2. The name Tishri was adopted after the Babylonian exile when the names from that calendar were assimilated into the Hebrew culture.

The seventh month was originally the first month of the year based on creation, but that was changed at the time of the exodus when the Lord declared the first month to commence in the springtime in the month of Aviv (later known as Nisan). That is recorded in Exodus 12:2, and it is based on redemption.

Further, despite being the seventh month of the calendar year in Judah, it was also the first month of the royal, or civil, year in Judah, matching the creation calendar. In other words, the beginning of the reign of the kings of Judah are aligned not with the ceremonial, or redemption, year beginning in the first month of Aviv/Nisan (in the spring time), but with a royal year beginning in the seventh month of Ethanim/Tishri (in the fall time).

To more fully grasp this dating system, one can refer to the book The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings by Edwin R. Thiele. His work resolves many once-believed

errors in the biblical chronology. And, as the seventh month was originally the first month since the time of creation, we can know that Adam was created at this time. Though not in the Bible, the commentary on this from Chabadba provides us invaluable insight into this –

“The 1st day of creation, on which G-d created existence, time, matter, darkness and light, was the 25th of Elul. (Rosh Hashanah, on which we mark "the beginning of Your works", is actually the 6th day of creation, on which the world attained the potential for the realization of its purpose, with the creation of the first man and woman, Adam and Eve. Rosh Hashanah is therefore the day from which the Jewish calendar begins to count the years of history; the 1st day of creation thus occurred on the 25th of Elul of what is termed -1 from creation.” Chabadba

This commentary is actually supported by an anagram which occurs between the first word in the Bible, which concerns creation, and the first day of the month of Tishri. They are both spelled with the same letters, but when rearranged the letters reflect one or the other. *bereshit* or “in the beginning” is simply rearranged into *aleph b’tishri*, or “the first of Tishri.”

Understanding that this is both the day of the creation of Adam, and the commencement of the regal, or kingly, year is important in understanding the true meaning of why the Lord chose this day for this particular feast. Three other times in Scripture, this particular day, the first of the seventh month, is mentioned. In Genesis 8:13, it is the day that the waters were dried up from the earth, and Noah removed the covering of the ark and looked upon the new world. At that time it was exactly 1657 years after the creation of the world. Man had been in the world 596,520 days.

Ezra 3 mentions this same day as the day that Jeshua and Zerubbabel, after their return from Babylon, built the altar of the God of Israel and began to offer burnt offerings to the Lord. And one last time this day is mentioned is in Nehemiah 8 when Ezra brought forward the Law of Moses and read it to all the people.

In these three occurrences of this month, we can see several readily apparent pictures of Christ. Noah looking upon the new world signifies new life in Christ who is our ark of safety in this life. The building of the altar and sacrificing on it signifies Christ our Altar of sacrifice, and our Sacrifice. And the reading of the Law of Moses pictures Christ, the fulfillment of the law. Each occurrence on this date points to the Person and work of Christ.

24 (con't) **you shall have a sabbath-rest,**

The word translated here is *shabathon* it is used only 11 times in the Bible, all in Exodus and Leviticus, and all but three are conjoined with the word *shabath*, or “sabbath.” That would then indicate a sabbath of complete rest. Because this is not conjoined with the word Sabbath, it is not a Sabbath per se, but rather simply a rest. This is explained later in this same verse. It would better be translated as a “solemn rest.”

The reason for using this word *shabathon* here is because the seventh month of the year, like the seventh day of the week, and the seventh year of the Sabbatical year cycle, is considered a month of resting. In other words the entire month is consecrated as a special month to the people. On the tenth day of this month is the Day of Atonement. Later in the month is the pilgrim feast of Ingathering which encompasses the feast of Sukkoth. And the 50th year jubilees were to be proclaimed during this month as well. Everything about the seventh month has an elevated sense to it. However, unless this day fell on an actual Sabbath day, it was simply a day of rest, and not a Sabbath.

24 (con't) **a memorial of blowing of trumpets,**

ziqaron teruah – “memorial acclamation.” The Hebrew doesn’t say “blowing of trumpets.” It is true that this is surely what occurred, but that isn’t what is stated here. The words simply mean that the people were to raise a tumult of joy. The name of the day is actually stated in Numbers 29 where it is called *Yom Teruah*, or Day of Acclamation. In Job 38, the root of *teruah*, the word *rua*, is used when speaking of the angels rejoicing at creation –

“Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth?

Tell *Me*, if you have understanding.

⁵ Who determined its measurements?

Surely you know!

Or who stretched the line upon it?

⁶ To what were its foundations fastened?

Or who laid its cornerstone,

⁷ When the morning stars sang together,

And all the sons of God **shouted** for joy? Job 38:4-7

This is the sense of the word, and of what is to occur. *Teruah* can be a war cry, an alarm, a shout of joy, the blast of the trumpet, and so forth. In this case, it is a memorial of acclamation. The Greek translation of the Old Testament specifically translates this as

the *salpiggon*, or “trumpets.” This day has been variously labeled in history as the Feast of Trumpets and the Feast of the New Year. In modern Israel, the day is known as *Rosh Hoshana* or “Beginning of the year.”

²⁴ (con’t) **a holy convocation.**

miqra qodesh – “convocation holy.” The entire day was to be a day of festive occasion. As this is the first of the month, it would coincide with the New Moon celebrations which are mentioned at various times in the Bible, but this day in Leviticus, the first of the seventh month, is surely what is mentioned in Psalm 81 where the word *rua* is again used –

“Sing aloud to God our strength;
Make a joyful **shout** to the God of Jacob.
² Raise a song and strike the timbrel,
The pleasant harp with the lute.
³ Blow the trumpet at the time of the New Moon,
At the full moon, on our solemn feast day.” Psalm 81:1-3

In this psalm, the New Moon solemn feast would be this particular feast of Leviticus 23. The full moon solemn feast would be that of the beginning of the Feast of Unleavened bread which immediately follows the Passover. It was on these holy convocations, and others like them, that the joyful shouts were to be raised.

²⁵ **You shall do no customary work on it;**

kal meleket abodah lo taasu – “all work servile no shall you do.” These words show us that the translation of “Sabbath” is not correct. On a Sabbath, no work at all was to be done. However, on this day, no regular work could be done, but people could prepare food and do other things which would otherwise be forbidden on a regular Sabbath.

²⁵ (fin) **and you shall offer an offering made by fire to the Lord.”**

Three particular sets of offerings were actually to be made on this day. First, the regular daily morning and evening sacrifices already mandated in the law were to be made. Second, as this is the start of a new month, the offerings of Numbers 28:11-15 were to be made. And a special set of offerings were to be made for this particular feast as well. They are detailed in Numbers 29:1-6.

*Shout out to the Lord! Shout with acclamation
It is He who is our King, and He who rules over us
Shout out to the Lord you holy nation
Shout out to the King, our Lord Jesus*

*Let the sound be loud, shout out joyfully
Let the land be filled with noise to herald the King
Don't sit and be silent, don't act so coyfully
Get up people, raise your voices and sing*

*It is He who has created, and He who has redeemed us
It is He who sits as King upon the throne of heaven
It is He who rules, even our King Jesus
So shout aloud at the beginning of month number seven*

II. Fulfilled in Christ

Unlike the other feasts of Leviticus 23, this one is a bit harder to pin down what it is pointing to. It needs to be fleshed out of what is provided and pieced together. First, it is the only feast which falls on the first of the month, the time of the New Moon. This is when skies are the darkest, having no light from the moon to illuminate them, the significance of which will be seen as we continue.

Now, not to confuse you, but so you can begin to see the pattern develop, we will go to 1 Chronicles 24. This chapter tells us the order of the 24 details of priests which served at the Temple in Jerusalem. The division of Abijah was the 8th division –

“And the scribe, Shemaiah the son of Nethanel, *one of* the Levites, wrote them down before the king, the leaders, Zadok the priest, Ahimelech the son of Abiathar, and the heads of the fathers' *houses* of the priests and Levites, one father's house taken for Eleazar and *one* for Ithamar.

⁷ Now the first lot fell to Jehoiarib, the second to Jedaiah, ⁸ the third to Harim, the fourth to Seorim, ⁹ the fifth to Malchijah, the sixth to Mijamin, ¹⁰ the seventh to Hakkoz, the eighth to Abijah...” 1 Chronicles 24:6-10

We next go to the New Testament, to Luke 1 to see that Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist, was a member of Abijah and was serving at the Temple and was given the promise of a son –

There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the division of Abijah. His wife *was* of the daughters of Aaron, and her name *was* Elizabeth. ⁶ And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. ⁷ But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they were both well advanced in years. ⁸ So it was, that while he was serving as priest before God in the order of his division, ⁹ according to the custom of the priesthood, his lot fell to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord. ¹⁰ And the whole multitude of the people was praying outside at the hour of incense. ¹¹ Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing on the right side of the altar of incense. ¹² And when Zacharias saw *him*, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him. ¹³ But the angel said to him, “Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer is heard; and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. ¹⁴ And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth. ¹⁵ For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother’s womb. ¹⁶ And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. ¹⁷ He will also go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, ‘to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,’ [b] and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.” ¹⁸ And Zacharias said to the angel, “How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is well advanced in years.” ¹⁹ And the angel answered and said to him, “I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and was sent to speak to you and bring you these glad tidings. ²⁰ But behold, you will be mute and not able to speak until the day these things take place, because you did not believe my words which will be fulfilled in their own time.” ²¹ And the people waited for Zacharias, and marveled that he lingered so long in the temple. ²² But when he came out, he could not speak to them; and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple, for he beckoned to them and remained speechless. ²³ So it was, as soon as the days of his service were completed, that he departed to his own house. ²⁴ Now after those days his wife Elizabeth conceived; and she hid herself five months, saying, ²⁵ “Thus the Lord has dealt with me, in the days when He looked on *me*, to take away my reproach among people.” Luke 1:5-25

Later in Luke 1:36 we read that Mary was visited by Gabriel in the 6th month of Elizabeth’s pregnancy –

“Now indeed, Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren.”

From this point, we can easily see when Jesus was born. It’s not a secret and its right there in black and white –

	<u>Mar/Apr</u>	<u>Apr/May</u>	<u>May/June</u>	<u>Jun/July</u>
Month	Nisan	Iyar	Shivan	Tamuz
Division	1 & 2	3 & 4	5 & 6	7 & 8 Abijah

*Zechariah would have been at the temple in Jun/Jul (Tamuz)

*Add 6 months until Gabriel spoke to Mary – Dec/Jan (Adar)

*Add 9 months until Christ the Lord was born – Sep/Oct (Tishri)

We have to make an obvious assumption here, that Zechariah got his wife pregnant rather quickly. But that is hardly an assumption at all. First, he couldn’t speak until the child was born, something that may have made Elizabeth rather happy, but which he would want corrected right away. Secondly, if they had been hoping for a child for so long, they would have wasted no time in fulfilling this prophecy. The assumptions are obvious. Further Luke continues with the timeline in an uninterrupted fashion, asking us to look at the dates based on the other time frames he provided in a united fashion – a very important point to consider. As a point of theology for you to tuck away, Zechariah and Elizabeth were old, but not as old as many paintings of them would have you believe. In Numbers 8 we read this –

Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, ²⁴ “This *is* what *pertains* to the Levites: From twenty-five years old and above one may enter to perform service in the work of the tabernacle of meeting; ²⁵ and at the age of fifty years they must cease performing this work, and shall work no more. ²⁶ They may minister with their brethren in the tabernacle of meeting, to attend to needs, but they *themselves* shall do no work. Thus you shall do to the Levites regarding their duties.” Numbers 8:23-26

He was under 50 years old. Though moving along, he was not ancient. I for example am 53 and I have tight, healthy skin, and youthful vigor. It would be impossible for me to believe brother Zack was any different. Anyway, based on the Bible evidence, we see that Christ Jesus was born between September and October which corresponds with the Hebrew month of Tishri. From here we can determine that Jesus *was* born on the first of Tishri. We can do this in several ways.

First, we look to 1 Corinthians 15 to see a pattern based on the tradition showing that Adam was created on the first day of Tishri, the 6th day of creation. It would follow reasonably that Jesus, the “second Adam,” was born on the same day 4000 years later, thereby completing a biblical pattern. 1 Corinthians 15:45-48 tells us Jesus is the last Adam –

“And so it is written, “The first man Adam became a living being.” The last Adam *became* a life-giving spirit.

⁴⁶ However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural, and afterward the spiritual. ⁴⁷ The first man *was* of the earth, *made* of dust; the second Man *is* the Lord from heaven. ⁴⁸ As *was* the *man* of dust, so also *are* those *who are made* of dust; and as *is* the heavenly *Man*, so also *are* those *who are* heavenly.”

When Adam was created, the Lord who created him became, in effect, his King at that moment. That He is the King is reflected then in the 47th Psalm –

“God has gone up with a shout,
The Lord with the sound of a trumpet.

⁶ Sing praises to God, sing praises!

Sing praises to our King, sing praises!

⁷ For God *is* the King of all the earth;

Sing praises with understanding.” Psalm 47:5-7

However, there is also the truth that man would turn from his King. This was known to God before He created the world. Both Peter, and John in Revelation, state this unambiguously. Speaking of Christ Jesus, Peter says –

“He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you ²¹ who through Him believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.”

-1 Peter 1:20, 21

And so, in order to redeem man, God sent forth Christ into the world, using the same pattern as is found throughout Scripture – creation and then redemption. He created Adam on the first of Tishri, and He sent the Redeemer on that same day. It was the first of the month of the creation calendar, and the first of the seventh month on the redemption calendar. And, as I said, this is the only feast designated specifically as occurring on the New Moon which is the first day of the month. It is the darkest day of the month, and thus the best day for the “glory of the Lord” to be highlighted –

“Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid.”

-Luke 2:8, 9

In 1 Kings 1:34 it is seen that the *shofar*, the ram’s horn trumpet, is blown at the coronation of the king, in that case it was Solomon. As this was the case at coronation, it then becomes obvious why the Lord mandated this feast on this particular day. It is the day when all of Israel would be joyously shouting with acclamation, and blowing shofars throughout the land. On this day, the King of the Universe was being born among men. Little did they know that they were heralding in the true, great King of Israel – Jesus Christ.

The patterns are simply too rich, too many, and too well orchestrated to be by mere chance. Again, in Numbers 23:21 we read these words –

“He has not observed iniquity in Jacob,
Nor has He seen wickedness in Israel.
The Lord his God *is* with him,
And the shout of a King *is* among them.” Numbers 23:21

There the term for “shout of a King” is “*teruat melekh*.” It is the same word, *teruah*, used here in Leviticus to signify this particular day in the redemptive calendar. This was certainly fulfilled in the shouting of the heavenly host at the birth of the great King, Jesus! And again, Psalm 47, a psalm read on this same day each year in Israel, it says the following –

“Oh, clap your hands, all you peoples!
Shout to God with the voice of triumph!
² For the Lord Most High *is* awesome;
He is a great King over all the earth.” Psalm 47:1, 2

Once again, the idea of *rua* or shouting to the King, is identified with this day. Three verses later, the psalm then says –

“God has gone up with a shout,
The Lord with the sound of a trumpet.” Psalm 47:5

There the *teruah*, or shout of acclamation, is combined with the sound of the *shofar*, all pointing to this one particular day in history when Christ was born and the King of the universe was made manifest among us.

As a marvelous pattern of creation followed by redemption, we have seen that Christ was born on the same day that Adam was created, on the first day of the first month of the creation calendar. This is the first day of the seventh month of the redemption calendar. But did anything happen in the Bible on the first day of the first month of the redemption calendar? The answer is that Exodus 40:17 says, “And it came to pass in the first month of the second year, on the first *day* of the month, *that* the tabernacle was raised up.”

The tabernacle, every detail of which points to Christ and His ministry, was erected on the first day of the first month of the redemption calendar. Thus we again have, as has been seen many times in Scripture, the pattern of creation being followed by redemption. The Creator is our Redeemer.

*The King has come, shout aloud and rejoice
He has come to redeem fallen man
Let your shouts be heard, even with a resounding voice
Blow the trumpets aloud; as hard as you can*

*He has come! The King of the ages is here
We gather around Him, He the King of the Jews
Yes, all people come, see the sight, draw near
And then go forth and spread the glorious news*

*The Baby born in a manger is the King of Israel
This Child laying helplessly shall rule all the world
It is the most marvelous news, go forth to all and tell
Spread the word, and may joy from the heart now be unfurled*

III. The Significance of Christmas

When you ask a Korean person how old they are, they will give you an answer which doesn't fit with what we understand as age. The reason why is they consider their age from conception, not from birth out of the womb. Until you get this, it is often hard to grasp why what they tell you at one time doesn't seem to match with what you find out

at other times. At least the Koreans get the idea of sanctity of life within the womb, even if democrats don't.

Understanding that Christ, the second Adam, and the King of the universe, was born on this feast day, there is one more point which obviously needs to be addressed. If Jesus was born on the first of Tishri as the Bible shows, then what on earth are we celebrating on 25 December? Over the years, people have said this was a Catholic attempt to align the holiday with a pagan festival to accommodate their older beliefs as they became Christianized.

Whether this occurred or not has nothing to do with Jesus. The equinoxes and solstices were created by God, and they reflect what God is doing in the world of creation and redemption. If this has been misused by other religions, it doesn't change the true intent for when these things occur. The significance of 25 December is far more beautiful than a crude attempt by the Catholics to harmonize pagan beliefs with those of Christianity.

The human gestation period is approximately 270 days. It does vary, but this is right at the average. If you go back 270 days from the first of Tishri you will quite often come up to 25 December.

What this means, is that Christ was conceived on this day, approximately 270 days before His birth into the world. And so, what is probably the true celebration on this day is not the birth of Jesus *from* the womb. What we've been celebrating is the birth of Jesus *in* the womb, when God united with human flesh.

Understanding that, 8 times in the past 117 years, both Christmas and Hanukkah, or the Festival of Lights, have occurred at the same time – 24/25 December. This is the same day as the Feast of Dedication mentioned in John 10:22. In John's writings, He cites Jesus' words concerning His fulfillment of this festival –

Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life." John 8:12

And again –

That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. John 1:9, 10

As incredible as it might seem, Jesus was probably conceived on the Festival of Lights, or Hanukkah, and He was certainly born on Yom Teruah. The prophetic patterns of the Bible completely and amazingly support the wonderful fulfillment of the Feasts of the Lord in Jesus!

There is no reason to look for a future fulfillment of this particular feast. It is fulfilled in Christ. And there is no reason to look for a different time of birth for Christ as some have recently done, placing it during the spring time. Incorrect! The Bible has carefully recorded special circumstances which occurred in one particular line of priests, that of Abijah for a reason. It then carefully and methodically gives exactly the other time frames necessary to pinpoint the time of year Christ was born. It also gives numerous patterns which confirm the exact date within this time of year for us to know, with all certainty, that He was born on the 1st of Tishri.

None of this is by chance. Rather, these things are recorded because God is alerting us to the fact that Jesus is the Christ anticipated in all of these redemptive pictures, and that He is the fulfillment of them all. As this is so, then He is obviously asking us to follow through with what the Bible says is necessary for our lives concerning Christ.

It says that He is God's gift to the world, and that all who believe in Him will be saved. It says that He is the only path to salvation, and that no one can come to the Father but through Him. It even says that He is the one and only Mediator between God and men. In other words, God doesn't hear the prayers of anyone, except those who come to Him through Jesus.

If you have never accepted Jesus, but think you are right with God, you are wholly mistaken. Think it through, look at what God has done in Christ, and call out to Him for salvation. This is your obligation. God has done all the work. Now He asks you to simply believe that, and by faith receive what He has done. And it is glorious.

He was born on the darkest night of the month, the night of the New Moon. On that night, God's glory lit up the heavens – it was a picture of the true Light, entering into the spiritual darkness of the world. And then He died just before the start of the brightest night of the month, the night of the full moon. Again, a spiritual picture was given to us – our Hope is not extinguished by darkness. As it says in John 1:5 –

“And the Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it”

Let us remember this and carry with us the true Light always. May the Light of Christ shine upon you now and forever. May it be so!

Closing Verse: *Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. ¹¹ For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹² And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger." Luke 2:10-12*

Next Week: Leviticus 23:26-32 *Sins can't be forgiven by paying off God, even with your very last cent (The Feasts of the Lord, The Day of Atonement) (41st Leviticus Sermon)*

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if you have a lifetime of sin heaped up behind you, He can wash it away and purify you completely and wholly. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Coming of the Second Adam

Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying
These are the words He was then relaying

"Speak to the children of Israel, saying:
'In the seventh month, as to you I attest
On the first day of the month
You shall have a sabbath-rest

A memorial of blowing of trumpets is what you shall do
A holy convocation; observe this day as I instruct to you

You shall do no customary work on it according to this word
And you shall offer an offering made by fire to the Lord

Lord, You planned it all, and then laid it out
In feasts for Israel to observe each year
To leave us with certainty; without a doubt
Seeing their fulfillment in Christ; it all becomes clear

It is true with the Day of Acclamation, we now know
We see that the angels praised God on that marvelous day

When Christ came into the world, there was a heavenly show
While the trumpets of Israel were blowing away

Thank You, O God, for the giving of Your Son
Thank You, O God, for the coming of our King
We praise You for the marvelous things You have done
And to You, forever, we shall shout aloud and sing

Hallelujah and Amen...

LEVITICUS 23:26-32

(THE FEASTS OF THE LORD: THE DAY OF ATONEMENT)

In 1967 Thomas A Harris wrote a self-help book which became a best seller. Does anyone remember the name of it? It was “I’m OK – You’re OK.” It sold over 15 million copies. The main theme and idea of the book is, “I feel good about myself and feel you’re pretty OK as well.”

The LA Times said, “Extraordinary. Harris has helped millions find the freedom to change, liberate their adult effectiveness, and achieve joyful intimacy with others.” Self-help books like this may make us feel good in a shallow way, just as a Joel Osteen sermon may do, but they certainly don’t do anything in helping us achieve joyful intimacy with God. In fact, they will inevitably leave us in a worse condition than when we began because the ever-nagging idea which is in all of us is that there is a God, and we can never know if we are OK with Him or not.

This is true with every religion on the planet as well. In the end, all of them but one attempt to resolve this problem in an upward way. We do things in order to appease God. In theological terminology, it is called “works-based salvation.” Works-based salvation is the defining element of every single religious expression known to man with but one exception – biblical Christianity.

It defines many sects within the greater umbrella of Christianity as well, but these cannot be considered “biblical Christianity,” meaning that which is based on what God has stated in His word. Although offensive to many to list these various subsects, it is actually inappropriate to not do so. Unless someone knows they are not acting in accord with God’s rules, they will never know how to act and respond accordingly.

A classic example of works-based salvation is Roman Catholicism. Their faith is defined in their own canons, and these canons of Roman Catholic law state explicitly that which is contrary to the Bible. An example of this is found in seven of the canons from their Counsel of Trent. Some of them are a bit wordy, but one will suffice to demonstrate this—

“Canon 12. If any one saith, that justifying faith is nothing else but confidence in the divine mercy which remits sins for Christ's sake; or, that this confidence alone is that whereby we are justified; let him be anathema.”

What they have declared anathema is the very heart of the gospel message. If you're not sure if I'm telling the truth, take a moment to read Ephesians 2:8, 9, or Galatians 2:16, or a host of other verses which clearly teach this.

Canon 12, along with several other canons from Trent actually declares the Apostle Paul anathema, or consigned to damnation. One of the canons would do the same to Jesus. But as Jesus is the ultimate Author of Scripture, all of the same canons implicitly damn Him as well – not a good place to be in when one must stand before the One they have damned with their words, but who will do the actual damning of their eternal souls.

Text Verse: *“So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, ¹⁷ which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.” Colossians 2:16, 17*

My brother, Ethan, once drove by a billboard that had a picture of Christ on the cross on it. Along with that was the question, “If I’m OK and you’re OK, what am I doing up here?” Think it through. If we could work our way back to God, and I mean if even one person on this planet and in all ages of human history could work his way back to God, then what would be the point of sending Jesus? If one person could do it, then it would entirely negate the purpose of the cross. The God/Man would have wasted His time, spent His effort vainly, shed His blood without need, and given up His breath in futility. But God is wiser than that.

He saw the need, He understood man’s inability to meet that need, and He sent His only begotten and beloved Son to take care of the problem. The pain of the cross is the only way that God can say to us, “I’m Ok – You’re OK.” It is this, and no other way. God did the work, man must do the believing – so the Bible does say. Why is that so hard for people to understand?

Let us put aside our prideful deeds and trust in the finished, and all sufficient atoning work of the Lord Jesus. It is a moment in history which was prefigured by a particular Feast of the Lord, the record of which is found in His superior word. And so let’s turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

Yom Kippur, The Day of Atonement

²⁶ **And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying:**

The words indicate that an entirely new feast is introduced. In other words, this is not a continuation of the Feast of Acclamation which was detailed in the previous three verses. Instead, it is a stand alone feast day which is to be heralded in as such.

²⁷ **“Also**

The verse begins with the Hebrew word *akh*, translated here as, “also.” It is often used as a restrictive, or limiting word, translated as “only.” Only this feast, and the next-to-be-described feast of Sukkoth, begin with *akh*. It thus signifies that this is a peculiar feast. As it is a limiting word, one must contemplate what part of the verse is being set apart. Is it “Only on the tenth day of the month;” is it “Only it shall be a holy convocation;” is it “Only you shall afflict your souls;” or is it, “Only there shall be an offering by fire to the Lord.”?

As a specific day is set apart for other feasts, it is surely not referring to the set day. On other feasts there are holy convocations, and on other feasts there are offerings by fire to the Lord. Therefore, it appears that the stress is laid upon the words, “you shall afflict your souls.”

This alone is unique to the feast days recorded here. And in fact, the term is used three times in these six verses. There is a stress upon it that is not to be overlooked or ignored. In fact, the word *anah*, or afflict, is used five times in the book of Leviticus, and all five are in either Chapter 16, or in these six verses, all dealing with the Day of Atonement. The word carries several meanings, but it gives the sense of looking down or browbeating. Thus, it here signifies to humble or abase oneself. There was to be no self-exaltation on this day, but rather the people were to avow their lowly state before the Lord.

²⁷ (con’t) **the tenth *day* of this seventh month**

The specific day is selected, it was to commence at evening of the ninth day of the month of Ethanim (later known as Tishri), and continue until the evening of the tenth day. This is not because it has a future fulfillment in Christ, but because of what it signifies in Christ. As we have already gone through the Day of Atonement guidelines which were given in chapter 16, we know that this day was fulfilled in Christ’s crucifixion. That did not occur on the tenth day of the seventh month. Rather it occurred on the fourteenth day of the first month. However, atonement logically follows redemption. A person is redeemed, and then the sins are atoned for, even if these things happen simultaneously in God’s mind.

The Day of Atonement is logically prior to the Feast of Sukkoth, which commences on the fifteenth day of this same month. Sukkoth, as we will see, pictures Christ dwelling in a tabernacle of flesh, and His people dwelling with Him. This could not be realized, in its fullest, until after our sins are atoned for. Thus, this feast precedes that of Sukkoth.

This is an important point to remember because, as we have noted before, it is a common claim that the three fall feasts are not yet fulfilled in Christ, and they will only be fulfilled in His second advent. This is false, and it is heresy. To say that Christ has not fulfilled these feasts is to say that Christ did not fulfill the law. Thus, the law is still binding on us. But Christ *is the end of the law for all who believe*. There is no future fulfillment of these feasts, even if there are continuing applications of them. Christ died once for all sinners, but each sinner's Day of Atonement comes on whatever day they come to Christ. It is gigantic error to say that these feasts are yet to be fulfilled.

²⁷ (con't) ***shall be the Day of Atonement.***

The Hebrew is only three words, *yom ha'kippurim hu* – “Day Atonements it.” *Yom* means “day.” *Ha'kippurim* means, “the expiations,” or “the atonements,” it being a plural word.

This word is identical with *kopher*, which has several interconnected meanings, all of which signify a covering. It can be a bribe (where a bribe covers the eyes of the one bribed); it can be pitch – as in bitumen; it can be henna – as in dyeing; or it can be a ransom, or a satisfaction. Each of these is connected to the word *kaphar* from which *kopher* comes. *Kaphar* indicates “to appease,” or “to atone.”

Considering all of this, we can see that this is a day in which sins are covered over, carried away, and a ransom is made in order to satisfy or appease the wrath of God. If one looks at Christ's work in this light, he can see that before the covering, God saw flaw. Once the covering is made, God only sees that which made the covering.

This is why Paul uses the term “in Christ.” When God looks at us, He does not see us in the state we are – fallen and wayward. Rather, He sees Christ's covering of us and nothing more. We have been ransomed, we are covered, we are deemed as flawless – all because of Another; all because of Christ.

In order for this to happen though, Christ first had to cover us. It is in His cross that this atonement occurred. It is the most solemn day in all of human history. Therefore, in anticipation of that day, each year Israel would observe the Day of Atonement. They were informed that on this most holy and particular day...

27 (con't) **It shall be a holy convocation for you;**

miqra qodesh yihyeh - "convocation holy it shall be." This repeats verse 2 of this chapter which said, "Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'The feasts of the Lord, which you shall proclaim *to be* holy convocations, these *are* My feasts.'" The Lord designated certain days to be holy convocations, and this particular day was to be one of them. However, unlike all of the others, this one has a very specific and important guideline...

27 (con't) **you shall afflict your souls,**

v'initem eth napshotekem – "and you shall afflict your souls." These words are exactly repeated four times in Leviticus and Numbers, and all refer to the Day of Atonement. The mandate was first given in verse 16:29. It is generally accepted that "afflict your souls" means to fast. The people were to deny themselves food. However, it certainly also included refraining from any other pleasures, and also an active affliction of remembering the sins of the past year and mourning over them. In Acts 27:9, this day is referred to as *tēn Nēsteian*, or "the fast," thus signifying the manner in which this day was conducted. But the word has a greater meaning in Christ where the word *anah*, or afflict, is used twice concerning this exact scene –

"Surely He has borne our griefs
And carried our sorrows;
Yet we esteemed Him stricken,
Smitten by God, and **afflicted**.

⁵ But He *was* wounded for our transgressions,
He was bruised for our iniquities;
The chastisement for our peace *was* upon Him,
And by His stripes we are healed.

⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray;
We have turned, every one, to his own way;
And the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

⁷ He was oppressed and He was **afflicted**,
Yet He opened not His mouth;
He was led as a lamb to the slaughter,
And as a sheep before its shearers is silent,
So He opened not His mouth.

⁸ He was taken from prison and from judgment,
And who will declare His generation?

For He was cut off from the land of the living;
For the transgressions of My people He was stricken.” Isaiah 53:4-8

As Christ was so afflicted, the people were to anticipate that august life and atoning sacrifice with the afflicting of their own souls. They were not to do any work of any kind as well, acknowledging that they were in a state of affliction. Nothing regular was to be done, but rather this was to be a high Sabbath.

27 (con’t) and offer an offering made by fire to the Lord.

v’hiqravtem isheh l’Yehovah – “and offer an offering by fire to Yehovah.” The offerings mentioned here are more than just those given in Leviticus 16. Others were required, in addition to the regular daily offerings. Numbers 29 gives the specific offerings which were to be presented to the Lord –

“You shall present a burnt offering to the Lord *as* a sweet aroma: one young bull, one ram, *and* seven lambs in their first year. Be sure they are without blemish. ⁹Their grain offering *shall be of* fine flour mixed with oil: three-tenths *of an ephah* for the bull, two-tenths for the one ram, ¹⁰and one-tenth for each of the seven lambs; ¹¹also one kid of the goats *as* a sin offering, besides the sin offering for atonement, the regular burnt offering with its grain offering, and their drink offerings.” Numbers 29:8-11

These then are the total offerings which were presented to the Lord. In type and picture, every detail points to the Person and work of Christ.

28 And you shall do no work on that same day,

v’kal melakah lo ta’asu b’etsem ha’yom ha’zeh – “and all work no shall you do the bone the day that.” It sounds odd when literally translated, but the word *etsem*, or bone, means “the same.” This goes back to Genesis 2:23 when Adam declared that Eve was “bone of my bones.” In other words, they were of the same substance. That then carries on in the Hebrew language to reflect that which is the same. And so, on this same day which has just been described, no work was to be done. This is more than regular work, but all work. Though not a Saturday Sabbath, it was to be a high Sabbath of resting unto the Lord.

28 (con’t) for it is the Day of Atonement,

ki yom kippurim hu – “for Day Atonements it.” Again, the word *kippurim* is plural. It signifies “expiations.” On this day, all sins and transgressions for all the repentant souls were atoned for.

²⁸ (con’t) **to make atonement for you before the Lord your God.**

l’kapher alekem liphne Yehovah elohekem – “to cover you before the face Yehovah your God.” The words are not uncommon, but they should be explained. When the Lord’s face is turned towards someone, it can be a bad thing or a good thing. In Leviticus 20:6, it says –

“And the person who turns to mediums and familiar spirits, to prostitute himself with them, I will set My face against that person and cut him off from his people.”
-Leviticus 20:6

That is bad news. However, the Lord’s face can signify blessing as well. This is seen, for example, in the Aaronic Blessing found in Numbers 6 –

“The Lord bless you and keep you;
²⁵ The Lord make His face shine upon you,
And be gracious to you;
²⁶ The Lord lift up His countenance upon you,
And give you peace.” Numbers 6:24-26

That is good news. The difference in the two is how the person is viewed by the Lord. In the case of a sinner, one cannot stand before the face of the Lord and find blessing. But when one’s sins are covered, or atoned for, then what He sees is the covering, not the one covered. This is the purpose of atonement. It is to bring warring parties back together again, and hence it is an act and rite of at-one-ment in a very real sense.

It should be obvious, that the term “make atonement for you” is referring only to the people of Israel. They were the chosen nation, and they alone were covered by the Lord’s annual provision which occurred on this sacred day. However, this is the type, and then there is the Antitype. The atoning sacrifice of Christ, the fulfillment of what is seen here, is sufficient for all people and at all times who will come to Him by faith. John clearly and specifically states this in his first epistle –

“My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the

righteous. ² And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world." 1 John 2:1, 2

The Greek word translated there as "propitiation" means, "atoning sacrifice." It is Christ who is the atoning sacrifice for the whole world; for any who will simply come. The word "propitiation" in English literally means "to appease." Thus one can again see how God's wrath is appeased in Christ's covering of us, thus allowing us to be acceptable as we stand in the face of the Lord.

²⁹ For any person who is not afflicted *in soul* on that same day shall be cut off from his people.

The Hebrew begins the verse with *ki kal ha'nepesh asher lo t'unneh*, or "For all the soul which no be afflicted." The soul stands for the person, but it is the soul which shall be cut off from the people. The phrase is used six times in Leviticus to indicate excision from the people of Israel, and it is important that consistency of these words be maintained. What is important here is what this pictures. In the Antitype, Christ, there is the truth that any who will not come to Him will be cut off from the presence of God. It is the soul which is eternal, and that soul will be lost unless the afflictions of Christ are imputed to him. If not, then only the option of eternal separation from the presence of God is left.

All of this effort in presenting to the world these ancient types and pictures, and all of the centuries of Israel's history, has been compiled to show us the immense importance of not missing what God would do in the Person of Jesus. When we hurriedly read through these often difficult passages, we miss the importance of what God is attempting to relay to us. But every word is calling out to us to consider and act. This then makes it so immensely sad when people reject Christ's work, as if it is somehow insufficient to save, and they fall back on observing these mere shadows. What a dishonor to God to do so. What a rejection of the horrors of the cross! And so, what a horrifying place to find oneself.

³⁰ And any person who does any work on that same day, that person I will destroy from among his people.

Again, instead of "person," the word "soul" is used twice in this verse, and it is for the same reason as before. The soul is eternal. The doctrine of anthropological hylomorphism teaches that a person is a soul/body unity. The soul can be, and is, separated from the body when the body dies.

However, the soul lives on in an unnatural state. But though unnatural, it does live on. A soul which is destroyed then means “lost.” One can get a future taste of what Revelation speaks of with the words, *limnen tou puros*, or “Lake of Fire.” Everything that Israel faced in a physical manner is realized in a spiritual reality for the greater world. Scary stuff for those who should care, but as of yet still don’t, or for those who do care, but have been misled about the way to avoid that terrible fate.

The prohibition here is for any and all kinds of work. This day alone was set aside as a special Sabbath-type day. Not even meals could be made, which was something allowed on the other holy convocations. This was to be a unique and awesome day for the people to remember and keep. This is made explicit with...

³¹ **You shall do no manner of work;**

kal melakah lo taasu – “all work no shall you do.” The repetition is a Hebraic way of stressing the point. We might stress this by saying, “You are absolutely not to do any work on that day.” But in the Hebrew manner, repeating the same thing is such a stress.

Two points about this. First, by default, the priests were exempt from this absolute prohibition, because it is they who had to do the work for the people in conducting the rituals for atonement. Secondly, as the priests are representatives of the Lord, then the work that they do is all-sufficient for the accomplishment of the needed atonement.

In other words, right here in this prohibition is seen the doctrine of salvation by grace through faith – an all-sufficient salvation. The priest’s work is, in type, that of Christ Jesus, our true High Priest. That was extra-supercalifragilisticexpialidociously seen in our evaluation of Leviticus 16. Every detail of what the priest did was, point by point, fulfilled in the life and work of Christ.

Therefore, as the admonition to do no work, of any kind, at all, in any way, and without exception, is given to the people of Israel, then it is a clear, precise, and absolute picture of our not doing any work, of any kind, at all, in any way, and without exception, in order to be saved. There is no “I” in this equation. It is completely and absolutely the work of the High Priest, and His work alone, which brings about our atonement and the propitious, blessed relationship that we experience with God. Will somebody please say, “Amen.”

³¹ (con’t) ***it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.***

khuqat olam l'dorotekem b'kol mo-she-vo-tekem – “statute forever to your generations in all your dwellings.” The phrase *khuqat olam*, or “statute forever,” has been explained quite a few times, but it must be explained again just in case its meaning has leaked out of your ear. The word *olam* gives the sense of “to the vanishing point.” “Throughout your generations” means that it was to be continuous and without interruption. “All your dwellings” means that it applies to all Israel without exception. As a Feast of the Lord, it was an annual anticipatory look to the time when Christ would come and fulfill it. At that time, the shadow would become substance. With the introduction of the New Covenant, this has come to its vanishing point; it is fulfilled and annulled in Christ.

However, what it pictures continues on in Christ. No person may work in order to receive the blessing of entering the presence of God. All people must rest in the finished work of Christ alone, and none can receive His mediation as our High Priest without receiving His all-sufficient atoning sacrifice by faith alone. The pattern is set, the word is written, the decision is final. All Christ, only Christ, and in Christ alone.

³² **It shall be to you a sabbath of solemn rest,**

shabbath shabbathon hu lakem – “Sabbath complete rest it to you.” This exact same phrase, with one minor difference, is given in Leviticus 16:31 as well. Here it says, *shabbath shabbathon hu lakem*; there it says *shabbath shabbathon hi lakem*. Why is it a *hi* and not a *hu*? What with this are we to do? If you’re not sure, then why am I asking you?

Not understanding the nuances of this, and as not one scholar that I know of has commented on this difference, I picked up the iPad and called Sergio in Israel. Fortunately, he was having a pastor’s conference at his house, and with a little back and forth, the explanation rose up to meet my ears. The word *hi* or *hu* in either form means “it.” However, *hi* in verse 16:31 is tied to the feminine word Sabbath. Here in 23:32 it is tied to the masculine word *shabbaton*, or “complete rest.” Why did the Lord change *hi* to *hu*? Again, if you don’t know, then why am I asking you?

The reason why is because in Leviticus 16:31 the focus is on the Sabbath; here it is on Rest. Christ is our Sabbath rest, that is made explicit in Hebrews 4:3 - “For we who have believed do enter that rest...” That was explained, in detail, in our Sabbath sermons, including the one from Leviticus 23:3.

However, the change from *hi* to *hu* here is obvious from the context. What has been the constant admonition during these instructions? No work! God has given us an amazing

insight into Christ and His work. First, He *is* our Sabbath Rest – we rest in Him positionally. But Christ is also the end of the law for all who believe. He has done the work, we find our rest in Him actually. The focus goes from *Christ our place of Rest*, to *Christ because of Whom we rest*.

^{32 (con't)} **and you shall afflict your souls;**

This is the third and final time that *anah*, or “afflict,” is mentioned in this passage. The repetition is given to demonstrate to the people that simply fasting is not enough to meet the demands of this holy day. Not only were they to not work, but they were to *actively* afflict their souls. Doing one, but not doing the other was insufficient. Not working anticipated our not working for salvation; afflicting their souls anticipated our acceptance of Christ’s afflictions for our atonement.

^{32 (con't)} **on the ninth *day* of the month at evening,**

The words here explain the words of verse 27. The tenth day of the month means the ninth day of the month at evening. If this went unstated, then one might assume that it was meant to be commenced on the evening of the tenth. Such is not the case. Instead, a day goes...

^{32 (con't)} **from evening to evening,**

m'erev ad erev – “from evening to evening.” The day starts in the evening of the ninth, and goes through until the evening of the tenth. The pattern was established at the creation. A day is from evening to evening according to the Hebrew reckoning of a day.

This is why, even from the first day of creation, and even before the sun and the moon were set in place to show us an evening or a morning, that the record says, “So the evening and the morning were the first day.” The pattern was set in God’s mind before creation, so that we would know that in the creation, a literal day is meant for each day *of* the creation. The logic is not to be missed, and yet often is. It is in this unchanging 24-hour period that the day is reckoned, and so it is with the evening of the ninth day of the seventh month at evening...

^{32 (fin)} **you shall celebrate your sabbath.”**

tishbetu shabatekem – “resting in your day of rest.” These words explain exactly what was referred to earlier with the change of *hi* to *hu* when speaking of the Sabbath of

complete rest. Christ *is* our Sabbath rest, and we *are* to rest – meaning not work – in Him. Instead, we are to live by faith in what He has done and not attempt to merit God’s favor through deeds of the law.

For the previous 11 months and 29 days, the Israelites had worked under the law to obtain God’s favor, and none of them succeeded. For them, only wrath and indignation could result from their inability to keep the law. But God gave them grace. On this momentous and august day which came each year, they were to do nothing but rest and afflict their souls.

And this was totally up to them. They would be scattered throughout the land of Israel, and for many, nobody but they alone would know if they had actually refrained from work and food, and if they had also actively afflicted their souls.

In other words, this Day of days was a day of faith. It would be between their hearts and God. Would they come by faith in their minds to Jerusalem and accept the atoning sacrifice which was being made for them? Or would they continue on in their own futile attempts at pleasing God and/or just living life without regard to Him, ignoring His word, and find only deserved condemnation lay ahead?

The choice was theirs, and the same choice is ours today. For you, what will it be? Will you rest in the complete rest which is found in Christ? Please, come to the cross of Christ and put away the vain struggle which separates you from Him. The Day of Atonement was only a picture of what was to come in the Person and work of Christ. Concerning the Day of Atonement, in Christ we proclaim, “Feast fulfilled.”

There is no future fulfillment of this feast in the nation of Israel. If you have been taught that, you have been misled. Christ is the end of the law, including this portion of it. Atonement has been secured, and each may now access that gift of God, but you must act. There is no blanket covering. God expects you to reach out by faith and receive the work of His Son. And then He expects you to rest in that completed work, once and for all. Come to the cross, give up the law which died there, and be reconciled once and forever to our heavenly Father.

Closing Verse: *“In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. ¹⁰ In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. ¹¹ Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.” 1 John 4:9-11*

Next Week: Leviticus 23:33-44 *Forever in the presence of God, free from the devil's shackles...* (The Feasts of the Lord, Tabernacles) (42nd Leviticus Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if you have a lifetime of sin heaped up behind you, He can wash it away and purify you completely and wholly. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

This week's lesson to remember: For those in Christ, God can say to us "I'm OK – You're OK – All is AOK." And as a point of commendation for God, Thomas Harris sold 15 million copies of a book that is now all but forgotten. The Bible has been printed over 5 billion times, probably much over, and it is still being sold, downloaded, internet searched, and printed billions of times a year. The most printed, read, studied, and loved book in all of human history is the Word of God! Go God!

The Day of Atonement

And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying:
These are the words He was then relaying

"Also the tenth day of this seventh month
Shall be the Day of Atonement
It shall be a holy convocation for you
This is how it shall be spent

You shall afflict your souls, according to this word
And offer an offering made by fire to the Lord

And on that same day you shall do no work
For it is the Day of Atonement, such is this day
To make atonement for you
Before the Lord your God, as to you I now say

For any person who is not afflicted in soul in this way
On that same day shall be cut off from his people, so I say
And any person who does any work
On that same day, pay heed to my word
That person I will destroy from among his people
When my anger he has stirred

You shall do no manner of work
It shall be a statute forever
Throughout your generations in all your dwellings
From this statute, you shall deviate never

It shall be to you a sabbath of solemn rest
And you shall your souls afflict
On the ninth day of the month at evening, from evening to evening You shall celebrate
your sabbath, according to this edict

O God, through Christ we are restored to You again
Our sins are covered, we have atonement
The gift of the cross shouts out to all men
The enmity is ceased, and the wrath has been spent

Thank You for what our Lord has done
Thank You that we are no longer laden with guilt
Through Calvary's cross, our victory is won
There when Christ's precious blood was spilt

Praises to You, endless praises, even forevermore
Praise to You from here on earth, and even to heaven's shore

Hallelujah and Amen...

LEVITICUS 23:33-44 (THE FEASTS OF THE LORD: TABERNACLES)

The most common thing for me on Sunday night, and then again as I rise on Monday morning, is to wonder if I will be able to complete a sermon that is worthy of the day I must put into it, of the ears that must eventually hear it, and of the God whose word I am trying to explain to others. I am always unsure if what I hope for will come about, and it is almost scary to open up the Bible, the 10 or so references I start with, and then put my hands on the keyboard to start typing.

I so desperately want there to be something interesting, edifying, and yes, new, to present. It is no joy at all to repeat something that someone else may have presented. And it is always a delight, when I type, to come across something, or some things, that I am pretty sure have never been presented the same way before – at least not that I know of.

The Feast of Tabernacles is one of the fall feasts. As I've said before, lots of people want to claim that there is a future fulfillment in these fall feasts for the nation of Israel. This is incorrect in as far as the feasts are fulfilled – completely and in their entirety – in Christ Jesus. The only future fulfillment is anytime someone realizes that He is who the Bible proclaims, and they receive Him for who He is. There are things that lie ahead for us that also may be a part of these feasts, but they are only so much so as they are guaranteed because of what has been done by Him already.

We are waiting to be glorified, but according to Paul, in God's mind that is already done because of Jesus' work. We will just catch up to what is already accomplished. Such is the case with these fall feasts. Understanding this already, I came at today's verses expecting one thing, and yet I realized they mean something entirely different than what I had expected. That is why we are to always put our presuppositions aside when looking at Scripture. Otherwise, everything presented here would have been a repeat of what has already been said. Thank goodness the sheet is blank in my head when I get going.

Text Verse: *"So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, ¹⁷ which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ." Colossians 2:16, 17*

What a surprising word we have. While going through these verses, and studying them word by word, marvelous patterns of what is said here kept coming up from Paul's hand in the New Testament. I doubt if it was intentional, but his training as a Pharisee meant

that he was fully versed in the Old Testament. As he wrote, he probably just put down in ink what was already stored up in his mind.

At the same time, the Holy Spirit was influencing him to draw out those wonderful things, and to bring them out into an epistle to this group of people, and another to that group of people. Eventually, everything that needed to be said in order to reveal Christ Jesus had come out. And there it sits, waiting for people to sit down and study and make the necessary connections.

What a marvel! What a gift we have in the pages of the Bible. It is the mind of God, revealed in letters and words through the hand of chosen men. It's a hard thing to grasp, but things that pop up from the most obscure of words suddenly form patterns and pictures which simply cannot be random. We'll see some of those today. Great stuff lies ahead, and it is all to be found in His superior word. And so let's turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. Tabernacles (verses 33-44)

³³ Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying,

The words initiate a new sequence of thought, and thus what lies ahead is separate from what has thus far been presented. In other words, as a feast will be next named, we know that it is one which is separate from the others. It is not conjoined to another such as was the case with the Firstfruits and Weeks.

³⁴ "Speak to the children of Israel, saying:

The words are to be conveyed to all of the people. This final Feast of the Lord is to be observed by all to the Lord, and so Moses is directed to speak to the people concerning it. The Lord, as their Sovereign, is now mandating this final annual feast be on...

³⁴ (con't) 'The fifteenth day of this seventh month

This is the third designated feast in the seventh month of the year. Again, this is based on the redemption calendar. Thus, this is the same as the first month of the year in the creation calendar. But because the feasts signify the redemptive acts of the Lord, the calendar used is that which begins in the springtime, not the fall. The commencement

date is set at the fifteenth of the month of Ethanim, later known as Tishri. This, like Unleavened Bread, commences at the time of the full moon and lasts a week.

³⁴ (con't) ***shall be the Feast of Tabernacles for seven days to the Lord.***

Here the word *khag*, or “Feast” is used for only the second time in the chapter. The first was in verse 6 when naming the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Now this particular word is used again for the second, seven day feast, Tabernacles. The word *khag* comes from *khagag*, which in turn, indicates “to move in a circle” or specifically “to march in a sacred procession.” From there you have the implication of being giddy; to celebrate, dance, and feast. It is to be a time of worship, celebration, and sacrifice. It is a pilgrim feast. Later in Scripture, the Feast of Weeks will also be noted as a part of a *khag*, or pilgrim feast, as well.

The term here is *khag ha'sukkoth*, or “Feast, the tabernacles.” The word *sukkah*, or tabernacle, signifies a shelter. It is variously translated as tent, tabernacle, cottage, lair, booth +etc. It comes from *sok*, which carries much the same meaning. Twice in the psalms, the word is used to speak of the tabernacle of the Lord. And finally, *sok* comes from *sakak* which signifies “to weave together.” That word hints to us what this feast is pointing to. It is used in Psalm 139 when speaking of the weaving together of the human form –

“For You formed my inward parts;

You wove me in my mother’s womb.

¹⁴ I will give thanks to You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made;

Wonderful are Your works,

And my soul knows it very well.” Psalm 139:13, 14 (NASB)

As a point of reference for understanding the fulfillment of this feast, the Greek Old Testament uses the word *skenon* for “tabernacles.” It means “tent” or “tabernacle” as well. This feast is also detailed and reviewed in Numbers 29 and Deuteronomy 16. Deuteronomy 31 adds in a specific requirement to this feast which is well worth citing –

And Moses commanded them, saying: “At the end of every seven years, at the appointed time in the year of release, at the Feast of Tabernacles, ¹¹ when all Israel comes to appear before the Lord your God in the place which He chooses, you shall read this law before all Israel in their hearing. ¹² Gather the people together, men and women and little ones, and the stranger who *is* within your gates, that they may hear and that they may learn to fear the Lord your God and carefully

observe all the words of this law,¹³ and *that* their children, who have not known it, may hear and learn to fear the Lord your God as long as you live in the land which you cross the Jordan to possess.” Deuteronomy 31:10-13

It is hard to imagine that the people were read the law only once every seven years. If one were to ever consider a famine in the land, that would be it to me. Nehemiah 8:18 notes that this requirement was accomplished by the people after their return from exile to Babylon –

“Also day by day, from the first day until the last day, he read from the Book of the Law of God. And they kept the feast seven days; and on the eighth day *there was* a sacred assembly, according to the *prescribed* manner.”

Not having read the law during this feast, if the feast was held at all, was certainly the standard. And it is for a lack of knowledge of the law that the people suffered the shame of punishment and exile. This is certain to be true, because In 2 Kings 22, the Book of the Law was “found” in the house of the Lord by the high priest Hilkiah. It had been completely forgotten, and thus its precepts were wholly unknown to king, priest, and commoner alike.

³⁵ On the first day *there shall* be a holy convocation. You shall do no customary work *on it*.

miqra qodesh – “convocation holy.” Like the other holy convocations, it signifies a day on which no regular, servile work was to be done. Meals could be prepared, and so it is not a Sabbath.

³⁶ For seven days you shall offer an offering made by fire to the Lord.

The required offerings are listed in Numbers 29:13-39.

^{36 (con’t)} On the eighth day you shall have a holy convocation, and you shall offer an offering made by fire to the Lord.

In the feast of Unleavened Bread, there were seven days, the first and the seventh were holy convocations. In this feast, there are seven days, the first being a holy convocation, and then an added eighth day is also a *miqra qodesh*, or holy convocation. However, because the Passover is tied to Unleavened Bread, they are both actually eight days in duration.

³⁶ (con't) **It is a sacred assembly, and you shall do no customary work on it.**

Here, a new word is brought into Scripture, *atsereth*, or sacred assembly. The word comes from *atsar* which signifies to shut, restrain, etc. Some scholars say that this eighth day doesn't specifically belong to the feast, but it is rather the solemn close of the whole circle of yearly feasts, and so it is appended to the feast. This isn't wholly correct. It is recorded as an ending portion of the feast in Nehemiah 8:18, 2 Chronicles 7:9, and John says the following about this eighth day of the feast –

On the last day, that great *day* of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. ³⁸ He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.” John 7:37, 38

It both belongs as an addendum to the feast, and it also closes out the festal year of Israel. From there, the people would have to wait for the Passover until this set cycle would begin again. Later however, the Feast of Purim would be added at the time of the exile recorded in Esther. This would occur in the twelfth month. And then after that the Feast of Dedication, or Hanukkah, was instituted for the ninth month of the year. That occurred during the intertestamental period, but it is recorded in John 10.

³⁷ **‘These are the feasts of the Lord which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations,**

This is a summary of the entire chapter. The feasts are all considered *miqrae qodesh*, or “convocations holy,” as was first stated in verses 2-4. These feasts then include the Sabbath, the Passover and Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Firstfruits, the Feast of Weeks, the Feast of Acclamation, the Day of Atonement, and the Feast of Tabernacles.

³⁷ (con't) **to offer an offering made by fire to the Lord, a burnt offering and a grain offering, a sacrifice and drink offerings, everything on its day—**

Exodus 29 details the daily offerings to be made, every day of the year. Along with those, the feasts had their own offerings added onto the daily offerings. These are recorded in Numbers 28 & 29. The “sacrifice” mentioned along with the burnt and grain offerings would be the sin-offerings noted there, but which are simply called here “a sacrifice.” The sin-offering being the principle sacrifice necessary to atone for the sins of the people.

³⁸ **besides the Sabbaths of the Lord, besides your gifts, besides all your vows, and besides all your freewill offerings which you give to the Lord.**

The term “besides the Sabbaths of the Lord” is a metonym which speaks of the sacrifices of the Sabbaths. In other words, the required offerings of the feasts did not set aside those required sacrifices. They were to be made in addition to them. The same is true with the people’s gifts, and vow and freewill offerings. Anything which is prescribed or promised for the Lord was to not be set aside just because the feasts had their own offerings.

³⁹ **‘Also**

Like verse 27, the verse begins with the Hebrew word *akh*, translated here as, “also.” It is often used as a restrictive, or limiting word, translated as “only.” Only Yom Kippur and Tabernacles contain *akh*. Thus, like it, this is a peculiar feast. As it is a limiting word, one must contemplate what is being set apart.

As this is an addendum to the feast which has already been described, it will be that which sets it apart as unique. It would be that which is then recorded in verse 40. A particular rite is directed for the people which is being given for them to remember the past, but it is also for them to look ahead to the future.

³⁹ (con’t) **on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the fruit of the land,**

The words here look to the other name of this particular pilgrim feast, *ha’asiph*, or “The Ingathering.” That name was designated in Exodus 23:16, and it is repeated in Exodus 34:22. It is obvious that the feast is intended to be celebrated in the land of Israel, not during the time of the wilderness wanderings. The people were supposed to go straight into Canaan and take possession. However, their disobedience kept them out of that inheritance for 40 years. During this time, the feast could not be kept as intended.

³⁹ (con’t) **you shall keep the feast of the Lord for seven days;**

takhogu eth khag Yehovah shivat yamim – “feasting a feast (of) Yehovah seven days.”
The idea here is one of great celebration.

³⁹ (con’t) **on the first day there shall be a sabbath-rest, and on the eighth day a sabbath-rest.**

Both the first and eighth day were previously called “holy convocations,” and it was said of them that no *regular work* could be done on them. But the preparation of food is not

forbidden. Thus, these are not Sabbaths. The word translated here is *shabathon*. It is used only 11 times in the Bible, all in Exodus and Leviticus, and all but three are conjoined to the word *shabath*, or “Sabbath.” That then indicates a sabbath of complete rest. Because this is not conjoined with the word Sabbath, it is not a Sabbath per se, but rather simply a rest. Make a note in your Bible.

The reason for using this word *shabathon* here is because the seventh month of the year, like the seventh day of the week, and the seventh year of the Sabbatical year cycle, is considered a month of resting. In other words the entire month is consecrated as a special month to the people. Everything about the seventh month has an elevated sense to it. However, unless this day fell on an actual Sabbath day, it was simply a day of rest, and not a Sabbath.

40 And you shall take for yourselves on the first day the fruit of beautiful trees,

The word *akh*, or only, of verse 39 is now defined with the instructions of these words. At the feast’s commencement, the people were to take, as it says, “the fruit of beautiful trees.” The word *peri*, or fruit, is used, but it seems that the term is defined next, and in Nehemiah 8. Rather than speaking of fruit specifically, the idea is the product of the beautiful trees, and thus its branches, and even branches which may still have fruit on them. The word used to describe the trees is *hadar*. It is introduced here, and it gives the idea of beauty, majesty, glory, splendor, and so on. Thus, these would be ornamental.

40 (con’t) branches of palm trees,

The word “branches” is literally *kaph*, or “hands.” It is what the appearance of *temarim*, or palms, looks like. The palm is a symbol of righteousness. Because it stands upright.

40 (con’t) the boughs of leafy trees,

The word *anaph*, or branch, is introduced here. It will be seen just seven times. It comes from a root meaning “to cover,” just as a branch would cover the limbs beneath them. The word, *aboth*, or leafy, is also new, and it will be seen just four times. It comes from a root meaning to weave or wrap up, and so you get the idea of a branch filled with intertwining leaves.

40 (con’t) and willows of the brook;

The *arav*, or willow is also new. It comes from the word *arav*, which means “pledge” or “surety.” That is connected to the word *aravon*, or pledge which is found 3 times in Genesis 38, and three times in the New Testament. Though Hebrew, it is transliterated directly into the Greek there in the NT. The word brook is *nakhal*. That comes from the verb *nakhal* which indicates to take possession, or inherit. And that in turn comes from *nakhalah*, or inheritance. These particular branches are specified here and not others. In Nehemiah 8:15, others are mentioned by name, but for now, the Lord is having us focus on these.

40 (con't) and you shall rejoice before the Lord your God for seven days.

The feast is a seven-day feast of rejoicing, as it says, *liphne Yehovah elohekem*, or “in the face of Yehovah your God.”

41 You shall keep it as a feast to the Lord for seven days in the year.

v'khagotem otow khag l'Yehovah shivat yamim ba'shanah – “and feasting it a feast to Yehovah seven days in *the* year.” The year is that which contains the cycle of redemption. Seven is the number of spiritual perfection.

41 (con't) It shall be a statute forever in your generations.

The words *khuqat olam l'dorotekem*, or “statute forever in your generations,” indicate to the vanishing point. Israel was to observe this feast forever, until it reached its fulfillment in Christ. What was mere shadow, is now substance in Him.

41 (con't) You shall celebrate it in the seventh month.

The fifteenth of the seventh month is exactly six months after the beginning of the Feast of Unleavened bread. Thus, there is this marvelous pattern of the two feasts beginning on the day of the full moon, and lasting seven days – exactly one half a year apart from one another.

42 You shall dwell in booths for seven days.

The dwelling in booths was for only seven days. The eighth day was the conclusion of the feast, and the booths were no longer used. In other words, the rejoicing in the temporary booths was in anticipation of the day when they would be removed from them into their permanent dwellings. The number eight in the Bible always signifies

“new beginnings.” It is this day which was anticipated by the people; awaiting their “new beginning.”

⁴² (con’t) **All who are native Israelites shall dwell in booths,**

The term *ezrakh*, or native, comes from the word *zarakh*, or rise, as in when the sun rises. The meaning is that of one who rises out of Israel. All who rose up from Israel were to dwell in booths. The term, however, is used in Exodus 12:48 when speaking of a stranger dwelling among Israel who participated in circumcision, and then kept the Passover – both of which point Christ’s work.

⁴³ **that your generations may know that I made the children of Israel dwell in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt:**

Every translation says basically the same thing here, and they are all certainly incorrect. It never says *anywhere* that they dwelt in *sukkoth* or “tabernacles” when they were brought out of the land of Egypt. Instead, it says in Exodus 12:37 that the Israelite’s were brought out of Egypt and, “Then the children of Israel journeyed from Ramses to Succoth...” This is what they were remembering.

It wasn’t because they dwelt in temporary booths after leaving Egypt. It was because they *had left Egypt!* Their first stop was Succoth. They were to make booths because they had left Egypt to stay in a place called “Booths,” The verse should read, “... that your generations may know that I made the children of Israel dwell in Sukkoth when I brought them out of the land of Egypt.”

Sukkoth, the name of the location means “Tabernacles.” That day corresponded to the first day of Unleavened Bread, and they passed through the Red Sea on the seventh day of Unleavened Bread. Corresponding to that, is this feast, looking back on that great redemption and deliverance.

⁴³ (con’t) **I am the Lord your God.”**

ani Yehovah elohekem – “I am Yehovah your God.” The Lord proclaims His name and position. In essence, what we are being told with these words is, “I am the self-existent Creator. When you see these things fulfilled by Someone in the future, you will know that it is Me. I am Yehovah your God, come to dwell among you.”

⁴⁴ **So Moses declared to the children of Israel the feasts of the Lord.**

The word here is *moed*, and it should be translated as “appointed times” rather than “feasts.” These are the appointed times of the Lord Jesus. Certain things were to occur at appointed times, because they would occur at set times each year, and they would again occur at set times in the future, when He came.

*We are here in Your presence, dwelling in temporary tabernacles
And we are rejoicing in all that You have done for us
A fire is inside to warm us as each ember burns and crackles
We are safely secure as we await the Lord Jesus*

*Oh to dwell in our eternal home; for this we long
May that day be soon, but we will rejoice until then
Hear our praises; hear our joyous song
Coming forth from the lips of Your redeemed among men*

*Thank You for our great hope, and the peace it does provide
Thank You for the surety we have in Christ Jesus
In His hope we now patiently abide
Anticipating all that He has prepared for each of us*

II. Fulfilled in Christ

This feast, like that of Unleavened Bread, points to Christ’s work as it is displayed in us. Unleavened Bread followed the Passover, and it signified our life in Christ; the process of sanctification. That went from the day after the Passover, and it lasted seven days until the passing through of the Red Sea. It pictured our redemption in Christ (Passover – His sacrificial death), and then our life of sanctification until we pass through death, and the rapture (Unleavened Bread), and are then brought into the Lord’s presence.

This feast is a parallel to that. It follows two other feasts in the seventh month. The first was the Day of Acclamation, picturing Christ’s birth where He came to dwell among us. Then came the Day of Atonement where He died among us, becoming our Sacrifice for sin. With our atonement behind us, we have a new life to live, pictured by Sukkoth, or Tabernacles.

The first thing to understand is that this feast is fulfilled for us in the work of Christ. This is made explicit in John 1:14 (YLT) –

“And the Word became flesh, and did tabernacle among us, and we beheld his glory, glory as of an only begotten of a father, full of grace and truth.”

There John uses the word *skénoó*, or dwelling in a tent. It is from the same word as that of the Greek translation of the Old Testament for “booths,” or “tabernacles” here in Leviticus 23. In other words, Christ came, put on a tent of flesh, and became a Man. What allows us to participate in this Feast of Tabernacles is that Christ first did so.

The seven days of Unleavened Bread pictured us as unleavened before the Father, living out lives purged of sin. The seven days of Tabernacles pictures us, living in temporary booths, or tabernacles before the Father, awaiting our permanent dwelling. It is the same time frame in both feasts – our life after receiving Christ Jesus. The two feasts simply portray two different aspects of this.

Both occur on the fifteenth day of the month, the time of the full moon. Our true life begins as the brightest moment in our life, represented by the brightly lit night which starts the new day. As the moon begins to wane, so our lives in Christ as mortals do as well, but we are not to despair as we approach the darkness.

The first day is a holy convocation, as is the eighth day. The two holy convocations bracket the feast. They stand as representative of the entire period of the feast. Like Unleavened Bread which is tied to the Passover, the feasts both last seven days. But with an additional day added, thus making eight. The last day for both are a new beginning.

The significance of the *sukkah*, or tabernacle, is tied into our position in Christ. He came and tabernacled among us. Now for those who are in Him, we are positionally new beings in Christ. Paul explains this in 2 Corinthians 5 –

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, *he is* a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.” 2 Corinthians 5:17

Paul uses this same terminology 4 more times to show us that if we are in Christ, we will be like Christ, and we are thus to live as Christ lived. This is our time of dwelling in Sukkoth – redeemed from spiritual Egypt (Passover), sins atoned for (Day of Atonement), and awaiting our new beginning. The mentioning of the required offerings and sacrifices for each day of the feasts, along with the other sacrifices, offerings, and so on, is to show us that the work of Christ was accomplished for us, but it continues to be effectual for us throughout our life in Christ. There is no lack in our spiritual needs, and our salvation is on-going and eternal.

After that, it again returned to the Feast of Tabernacles, also known as the Feast of Ingathering. As it says, “when you have gathered in the fruit of your land.” This doesn’t necessarily mean that all of the harvest is gathered in, and such was not the case in Israel at this time of year, but is reflective of the gathering in of the harvest of the church from beginning to end. Keep thinking of the church age leading to the rapture.

In Deuteronomy 16:15, it specifically says that they were to observe this feast, “...because the LORD your God will bless you in all your produce and in all the work of your hands, so that you surely rejoice.” It was a time of rejoicing because of the blessing of an abundant harvest.” Again, keep thinking of the church age.

The Jews use the term, “Ingathering,” to say that it is representative of the regathering of Israel to the land today. This is wholly incorrect, and it has nothing, zero, zip, nada to do with that. This is a Feast of the Lord, looking to His redemptive work in the church, be it for Jew or Gentile. It is a spiritual harvest, not a physical regathering of Israel. It is the abundance of life in Christ, terminating in our glorification, that is being anticipated here.

Next in verse 39, it said, “on the first day *there shall be* a sabbath-rest, and on the eighth day a sabbath-rest.” As the first and final days stand as representative of the entire feast, this then teaches us that our rest is in Christ and His work. The entire time of our life in Christ, we are free from working *for* salvation, because we have been saved.

After noting that, came the directive, that on the first day the people were to take “the fruit of beautiful trees.” They were to select specific named trees which would reflect the *hadar*, or majesty, of what the Lord would do in, and for, us. The word *peri*, or fruit, is used to signify the product of these beautiful trees in our lives. Paul explains this several times, but Philippians 1 gives a beautiful example of it –

“And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment, ¹⁰ that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, ¹¹ being filled with the fruits of righteousness which *are* by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.”

-Philippians 1:9-11

Next were named the *kapot temarim*, or hands of palm trees. This reflects a state granted to us by the hand of God, Christ’s righteousness, all because of our faith in Christ. That is seen many times in the New Testament, but Romans 4 speaks of it in exacting detail. We are granted in Christ’s righteousness; it was imputed to us.

After this were *anaph ets aboth*, or boughs of trees leafy. The leaves being so abundant, they form a cover. The New Testament parallel is obvious. Paul explains it in Romans 4 –

“But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness, ⁶ just as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works:

⁷ “Blessed *are those* whose lawless deeds are forgiven,

And whose sins are covered;

⁸ Blessed *is the* man to whom the Lord shall not impute sin.” Romans 4:6-8

And then next were noted *arve nakhal*, or willows of the brook. As I said, the *arav*, or willow, comes from the word *arav*, which means “pledge” or “surety.” That is connected to the word *aravon*, or pledge which is found transliterated three times in the New Testament. It means a pledge or guarantee. All three times in the New Testament, it speaks of the pledge of the Holy Spirit, given to believers who put their faith in Christ. In one of the three times, Paul directly ties our being in a tent with the *aravon*, or guarantee. In fact, the words of Paul here show us the complete fulfillment of the Feast of Tabernacles... all because of the work of Christ –

“For we know that if our earthly house, *this tent*, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. ² For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven, ³ if indeed, having been clothed, we shall not be found naked. ⁴ For we who are in *this tent* groan, being burdened, not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life. ⁵ Now He who has prepared us for this very thing *is* God, who also has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.” 2 Corinthians 5:4, 5

You talk about eternal salvation! Here it is in these Old Testament pictures! The second word used, *nakhal*, signifies an inheritance. That is used, in conjunction with *aravon*, in Ephesians 1:13, 14 –

“In Him you also *trusted*, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, ¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.”

It is more than amazing, but rather it is of divine perfection that the same Old Testament words that are joined together here in Leviticus are joined with their New Testament

counterparts in 2 Corinthians and Ephesians. The trees specifically named here were chosen because of what the root words they come from signify. In turn, what they signify is then used in the New Testament to then point us specifically to the work of Christ. This is all the more evident, because other trees could be used, but they go unnamed here. In Nehemiah, we read this –

And they found written in the Law, which the Lord had commanded by Moses, that the children of Israel should dwell in booths during the feast of the seventh month, ¹⁵ and that they should announce and proclaim in all their cities and in Jerusalem, saying, “Go out to the mountain, and bring olive branches, branches of oil trees, myrtle branches, palm branches, and branches of leafy trees, to make booths, as *it is* written.” Nehemiah 8:14,15

In the law, explaining the feasts, the trees are named for a reason, unlocking the reason leads us directly to the fulfillment in Jesus Christ.

Next in verse 40, the people are directed to rejoice. They are not asked to do so; it is an imperative – “you shall rejoice before the Lord your God,” and they are to do it for seven days, signifying the entire time of their dwelling in their temporary tent. That is literally fulfilled in the words of Paul in Philippians 4:4 –

“Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!”

There, the words are present, imperative, active. You shall rejoice, you shall do it now, and you shall continue to rejoice. We are to rejoice in the Lord, meaning Jesus – the Fulfiller of the Feast. Paul repeats the sentiment in 1 Thessalonians 5:16, the shortest verse in the Bible – *pantote chairete*, “Rejoice always!” Let us ever do so!

The word then tells us that we are to be feasting a feast to Yehovah for seven days in the year. In other words, in the prophetic plan of redemption, there is a moment in time when we exist. When we come to Christ, we are to feast our feast to Jesus during that moment in time. Again, let us ever do so!

The Feast of Tabernacles is fulfilled by Christ for us, just as the Feast of Unleavened Bread is. Even though we have not seen the consummation of it yet, it is His completed work which allows it for us. Israel of old was told to observe the feast as a statute forever throughout their generations. In Christ is the fulfillment of the shadow. Now we have the substance to keep for all our lives.

Verse 42 again said that they were to dwell in booths for seven days. We are to dwell in these temporary, and yet beautiful bodies in Christ, throughout our earthly lives. We are to live in anticipation of that great eighth day when we receive our “house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.” This is speaking of our permanent, glorified bodies. It will be on the eighth day, the day of new beginnings.

Verse 43 then ended with the thought that “All who are native Israelites shall dwell in booths.” I explained then that the term *ezrah*, or native, comes from *zarakh*, or rise. The meaning is that it is one who rises out of Israel. For those who are grafted into Israel, as Paul explains in Romans 11, we are included in this admonition. We have been circumcised not of the flesh, but of the heart, because Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us.

The last verse of the feast instructions, verse 43 was given as a reminder that we are to dwell in booths because when the Lord brought us out of Egypt, meaning spiritual bondage, He first delivered us to Sukkoth. We were made new creatures in Christ at that moment, and so we are to live as new creatures in Christ until we are brought to our final state of glorification.

The verse ended with the words, “I *am* the Lord your God.” In proclaiming His name and position in conjunction with these feasts, we are to know that Christ Jesus, who fulfilled these feasts, is the Lord our God. So ends the Feast of Tabernacles, and indeed all of the feasts of the Lord.

In the waving of the palm branches, and in the cries of “Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord,” Israel was proclaiming what this feast anticipates. But so few of them followed through with it. And so God turned His eyes to the Gentiles until the time when Israel would again be grafted into the olive tree. And in the millennial reign of Christ, the one feast which will be mandatory to be observed by all nations is this Feast of Tabernacles. That is recorded in Zechariah –

“And it shall come to pass *that* everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. ¹⁷ And it shall be *that* whichever of the families of the earth do not come up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, on them there will be no rain. ¹⁸ If the family of Egypt will not come up and enter in, they *shall have no rain*; they shall receive the plague with which the Lord strikes the nations who do not come up to keep the Feast of

Tabernacles. ¹⁹ This shall be the punishment of Egypt and the punishment of all the nations that do not come up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.”

-Zechariah 14:16-19

It will be a thousand year long reminder that the Lord who came to tabernacle among us, is there with them, dwelling in their midst. But that is not the end of the story. In the book of Revelation, the final chapter of this marvelous story is written. Young's Literal Translation of the Bible takes us to the glory which lies ahead for the redeemed of the Lord –

“...and I heard a great voice out of the heaven, saying, 'Lo, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will tabernacle with them, and they shall be His peoples, and God Himself shall be with them -- their God.” Revelation 21:3

Concerning the Feast of *Sukkoth*, or Tabernacles, in Christ we proclaim, “Feast fulfilled.” Concerning all of the Feasts of the Lord named in Leviticus 23, in Christ we proclaim, “Feasts fulfilled.” As I have said repeatedly through these Feast of the Lord sermons, they are fulfilled. They are done, and we are exhorted by Paul to not worry about observing them in a physical manner. In doing so, all that can do is put up a wall between us and our Creator.

Instead, we are to trust in Christ, rest in Christ, and be thankful to God for the finished work of Christ. And in fact, we are, if living properly as Christians, living out these feasts as they were fully intended to be by observing them in our spiritual walk. We are in a temporary booth, covered with the glory of Christ, and awaiting our final, eternal tabernacle.

If you have never taken the step of faith and received Jesus as Savior, you are not a part of what God is doing in this world, nor will you share in heaven's riches when Christ comes for His people. I would ask you today to consider what you have heard and to do the wise thing by being reconciled to God through the work of Jesus Christ.

Closing Verse: *Look upon Zion, the city of our appointed feasts;*

Your eyes will see Jerusalem, a quiet home,

A tabernacle that will not be taken down;

Not one of its stakes will ever be removed,

Nor will any of its cords be broken.

²¹ *But there the majestic Lord will be for us*

A place of broad rivers and streams,

*In which no galley with oars will sail,
Nor majestic ships pass by
22 (For the Lord is our Judge,
The Lord is our Lawgiver,
The Lord is our King;
He will save us); Isaiah 33:20-22*

Next Week: Leviticus 24:1-9 *Beautiful verses to fill your head...*(The Holy Oil and the Holy Bread) (43rd Leviticus Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if you have a lifetime of sin heaped up behind you, He can wash it away and purify you completely and wholly. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

Tabernacles

Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying
These are the words He was then relaying

“Speak to the children of Israel, saying:
‘The fifteenth day of this seventh month, hear now this word
Shall be the Feast of Tabernacles
For seven days to the Lord

On the first day there shall be a holy convocation, so I submit
You shall do no customary work on it

For seven days you shall offer an offering
Made by fire to the Lord, according to this word
On the eighth day you shall have a holy convocation
And you shall offer an offering made by fire to the Lord

It is a sacred assembly, according to the sacred writ
And you shall do no customary work on it

‘These are the feasts of the Lord
To be holy convocations which you shall proclaim
To offer an offering made by fire to the Lord

A burnt offering and a grain offering, each by its name

A sacrifice and drink offerings, everything on its day—
Besides the Sabbaths of the Lord, so hear the word
Besides your gifts, besides all your vows
And besides all your freewill offerings which you give to the Lord

'Also on the fifteenth day of the seventh month
When you have gathered in the fruit of the land
You shall keep the feast of the Lord for seven days
On the first day there shall be a sabbath-rest, please understand
And on the eighth day a sabbath-rest
As to you I now attest
And you shall take for yourselves
On the first day the fruit of beautiful trees
Branches of palm trees, the boughs of leafy trees
And willows of the brook; choose as many as you please
And you shall before the Lord your God rejoice
For seven days you shall raise a festive voice

You shall keep it as a feast to the Lord
For seven days in the year
It shall be a statute forever in your generations
You shall celebrate it in the seventh month
----- when the seventh month does appear

You shall dwell in booths for seven days as to you I tell
All who are native Israelites shall in booths dwell
That your generations may know
That I made to dwell in booths the children of Israel
When I brought them out of the land of Egypt:
I am the Lord your God, and so to you these things I tell
So Moses declared to the children of Israel
The feasts of the Lord; so to them these things he did tell

Lord God, you came and did tabernacle among us
You put on garments of flesh, and with us You did dwell
Praises to You for our Lord, the Lord Jesus
What an incredible story the Bible does tell

Now we too dwell in a temporary tent
Living out our lives with an eternal guarantee
And when our lives are over; our last breath is spent
We shall be glorified forever; throughout eternity

Hallelujah to the Lamb of God
Hallelujah to our atonement covering
Hallelujah, to Christ our King we applaud
And to His majesty we shall forever sing

Hallelujah and Amen...

LEVITICUS 24:1-9 (THE HOLY OIL AND THE HOLY BREAD)

One thing you can say about the Bible, is that it is always consistent. It uses things from nature consistently. It uses numbers consistently. It uses moral issues consistently. You can, for example, do a study on trees in the Bible, and you will find consistent patterns in the use of trees. Or, you can pick certain trees, and find consistent patterns in the use of those trees.

What about the number five? If you go through the Bible, a theme will develop based on the number five that is remarkable. It is the number of grace. If I didn't tell you that, and if you just did your own thorough study, you would figure it out all by yourself eventually.

What is more amazing is that these themes weren't all decided upon, written down, and then built upon by one person. Rather, unless you knew that God was directing these things, you would assume exactly the opposite was true. You would say, "These books were written eons apart, they were written in different countries, by various people, and yet coincidentally the patterns match. How can that be? This can't be coincidence at all!"

You would have to come to this conclusion, because for the most part, the patterns weren't discovered until *long after* they were written down. In fact, many of the patterns have only been discovered in recent years. It's a marvel and it is amazing. But it is one of those remarkable proofs that the Bible is what it claims to be – the word of God. No random chance could have come up with these patterns, time and time again.

Text Verse: *For the Lord has chosen Zion;*

He has desired it for His dwelling place:

¹⁴ *"This is My resting place forever;*

Here I will dwell, for I have desired it.

¹⁵ *I will abundantly bless her provision;*

I will satisfy her poor with bread.

¹⁶ *I will also clothe her priests with salvation,*

And her saints shall shout aloud for joy.

¹⁷ *There I will make the horn of David grow;*

I will prepare a lamp for My Anointed.

¹⁸ *His enemies I will clothe with shame,*

But upon Himself His crown shall flourish." Psalm 132:13-18

Today we will look at several things which form patterns in Scripture that are seen right in these six verses from the psalm. We will look at the dwelling place, rest, bread, the lamp, and quite a few others not in the psalm. All of them are found in just nine verses. And yet, if you were to do a study on any of them, you would find the same consistency running throughout Scripture.

Once something is introduced, it generally remains tied into the same concept all the way through to the end. I'm sure I'm like any one of you, in that at times I have doubts about things. Can it all be true? Can the Bible be relied upon? Am I sure about what I've read and what it means to my eternal future?

When I have doubts like this flicker through my mind, all I need to do is think about what I already have learned. The marvel of this book is that once you've really looked into it, and once you've really thought about all that it teaches, reveals, and details, you can once again feel confident that the doubts are all for naught. The Lord is a safe place because His word says He is.

As the psalmist said, "You are my hiding place and my shield; I hope in Your word." The word reveals, and that is all I need. Thank God for this marvelous treasure. Great things are to be found in His superior word. And so let's turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. Care of the Menorah (verses 1-4)

¹Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying:

Words of law, and words of instruction lie ahead. Therefore, the Lord speaks only to Moses. From there, Moses will relay the commands he receives to the people. The Lord has just given the instructions for the weekly Sabbath Feast of the Lord, and the seven annual Feasts of the Lord. With that accomplished, He will now give instructions for the daily and weekly services required for the Menorah and the Table of Showbread.

The importance of this placement cannot be understated, because the Lord has just said in verse 23:3 that the seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn rest, and it is a holy convocation. Because of this, the Lord directed, explicitly to the people, "You shall do no work *on it*, it is the Sabbath of the Lord in all your dwellings." And yet, in the next three verses, no exemption is given for performing the daily rituals on the Sabbath, and in

verse 8, Aaron and his sons, meaning the priests, are explicitly told to violate the Sabbath in order to honor the Lord.

In other words, in the temple, there is in essence no earthly Sabbath, but there is rest. There is work done, but it is work which is in the presence of the Lord who is at His place of rest. God rested on the seventh day, a day on which the Genesis account recorded no evening or morning. It is an eternal day. The priests, in type, enter that place of rest. And so whatever they do there may profane the Sabbath, but it does not profane God's rest, which the Sabbath only anticipates.

At the temple, the priests worshiped and served the Creator in a place of rest, which is exactly what man was originally created to do, and which is exactly what the final page of Scripture says man will do in heaven. In this, we can now see that the words of Jesus in Matthew 12 are referring directly to what is stated in Leviticus. There we read –

At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath. And His disciples were hungry, and began to pluck heads of grain and to eat. ² And when the Pharisees saw *it*, they said to Him, "Look, Your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath!"

³ But He said to them, "Have you not read what David did when he was hungry, he and those who were with him: ⁴ how he entered the house of God and ate the showbread which was not lawful for him to eat, nor for those who were with him, but only for the priests? ⁵ Or have you not read in the law that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and are blameless? ⁶ Yet I say to you that in this place there is *One* greater than the temple. ⁷ But if you had known what *this* means, 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the guiltless. ⁸ For the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath."

-Matthew 12:5-8

What Jesus was saying with the words, "The Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath," is that He is the anticipated Messiah. Because of this, His authority as the Messiah is superior to the law of the Sabbath, and so no guilt can be imputed to either Him, or to His disciples who have acted under His authority, just as the priests here in Leviticus are going to be directed to profane the Sabbath under the authority of the Lord.

The adjective used in the words "*One* greater than the temple" is neuter. The neuter is used to give a solemn, impressive sense of what He is referring to, which is Himself, His body, it is the temple which is greater than the temple in Jerusalem. If Yehovah of the

temple directed the priests to profane the Sabbath in order to conduct their duties, then such was allowed for One greater than the temple.

The temple is the sanctuary where Yehovah dwelt. In saying that He is greater than the temple, He is making an absolute claim to Deity. If the temple is God's dwelling place, and profanation of the Sabbath is conducted there to honor the Lord, it is because the Lord, meaning Yehovah, is greater than the temple. In His claim is an implicit, but absolute, claim to being Yehovah incarnate.

The corresponding account in Mark adds in the words, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." Man was created first, and only then was he given his rest. The rest was intended for man's good, and his happiness. The laws of the Sabbath were intended to promote that state in man, not feelings of misery or unhappiness.

But more, the Sabbath was intended to honor the Lord while in that happy state. As the Lord was among them, and He was pleased with their happiness at being filled, then no wrong could be imputed. The disciples were hungry, and so out of necessity, in order to actually meet the intent of the Sabbath, they plucked grain and ate. As they were with Jesus, who is the One greater than the temple, they were fulfilling His will in the process. The One who gave the Sabbath laws could dispense with those laws because He *is* the place of rest which the law pointed to.

There is nothing arbitrary in Jesus' words or actions. Rather, He is making a theological point concerning Himself, His nature, His Being, and His disciples' relationship to Him. As the priests of Leviticus could profane the Sabbath before the Lord and yet be blameless, so could His disciples likewise be blameless in His presence when doing the same.

With this understanding, we can see why the Lord placed these verses here in Leviticus. Serving the Lord in His place of rest is more important than the Sabbath laws which He had just given to Israel. This would be true even on the Day of Atonement, the most holy day of the annual calendar, and a Sabbath day all its own as is seen in the next verse...

² "Command the children of Israel"

These words go back to Exodus 27:20 & 21. Moses is instructed to "command" the children of Israel. This is one of only two times in Leviticus that the Lord tells Moses to "command" in this way. It is more direct and forceful than the normal words, "Speak to the children of Israel." The change is certainly given because of the obvious conflict with the Sabbath laws just presented in the Feasts of the Lord.

If the Lord gave those directives, and now He gives these commands, then there can be no contradiction between the two. His Sabbath laws are to be dispensed with according to His directives, just as any laws can be dispensed with when given by the proper authority. The US constitution may be amended according to the authority of the US constitution. Each initiator may amend or dispense with the laws which he has set forth.

² (con't) **that they bring to you pure oil of pressed olives for the light,**

The words, which have been given as a command to the people, are that they are expected to bring *shemen zayit zak kalith la'maor*, or "pure oil of pressed olives for the light." Everything about this anticipates Christ. First is the *shemen*, or oil. That comes from *shamen*, a verb meaning "to grow fat." That in turn comes from a root meaning, "to shine."

The oil of the *zayit*, or "olive," is designated. Oil can be derived from a multitude of sources, but in order to picture Christ, the olive is named. The olive is a symbol of religious privilege. It is the Spirit working through those who are included in this privilege. The olives receive their fatness from the roots. Those branches which are a part of the tree receive this fatness and produce olives which are then used to put forth light before the Lord.

The word "pure" is the adjective *zak*. This indicates "clean," "clear," or "pure." It has only been used twice so far, in Exodus to describe this same oil, and also the frankincense used in the incense to be burned on the altar of incense. This would be the finest oil possible.

The word "pressed" is not a good translation. Rather, it should say "beaten." It is the adjective *kathith* that comes from a root meaning to be crushed by beating. Rather than being pressed under heavy stones, it would probably be gently beaten in a pounding mortar, just enough to break the skin. The oil would usually come from unripe fruit. It would come out clear and without color and it would give a pure, bright light. It would have very little smoke.

After the gentle beating to break the skin, the full olives would be placed in a strainer of some sort, like a wicker basket in order to allow their juice to drip through by gravity alone. The liquid would simply run through that and into a bowl. From there, the purest oil would float to the top and be skimmed off. Out of this, the anticipated result would be oil with no impurities at all, and thus the very finest possible.

As I said, everything about this looks forward to Christ. First, He is the Source of the *shemen* or oil, and He is the one who makes the tree flourish through its increasing fatness. Paul speaks of this in Romans 11, using the olive tree as a metaphor for God's religious privileges being bestowed first upon the Jews of Israel, then upon the Gentiles, and which will again return to the Jews. The Lord promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that from them would spring the messianic promises. Paul explains this in Romans 11:16-18 –

“For if the firstfruit *is* holy, the lump *is* also *holy*; and if the root *is* holy, so *are* the branches. ¹⁷ And if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them became a partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree, ¹⁸ do not boast against the branches. But if you do boast, *remember that* you do not support the root, but the root *supports* you.”

The religious privilege which comes forth from the roots went from Jew to Gentile, but it is Christ from whom the promises spring and to Him that they belong. His body is the tree, and His life is the fatness. That is why the word *zak*, or pure, is used. Christ's purity is revealed in the olives which grow from the branches. Whether Jew or Gentile, the pure produce of the olives is what is used to cause the light to shine. For Jew, Jesus told them to, “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in Heaven” (Matthew 5:16).

For Gentile, Paul writes, saying, “that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world” (Philippians 2:15). The beating of the olives is reflective of the treatment of first Christ and then those who are in Christ. Peter explains this –

For what credit *is it* if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this *is* commendable before God. ²¹ For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps:
²² “Who committed no sin,
Nor was deceit found in His mouth” 1 Peter 2:20-22

This pure oil, from the fatness of the olive, all pointing to Christ, and those in Christ who bring forth their offering, was to be used...

² (con't) **to make the lamps burn continually.**

l'haalot ner tamid – “to cause to ascend the lamp perpetually.” In other words, to have the light of the lamp rise continually. It doesn't mean to burn as if to consume. Instead it is a word which is normally used to express an action such as the burning of a sacrifice which is offered to the Lord. It could thus be paraphrased to say, “...to cause the lamp to *ascend* to the Lord continually.”

There is debate as to whether the lamp was to burn continually, day and night, or if it was to burn every night continually. It appears from the Exodus 27:21, Exodus 30:8, and from the next verse that the lamp, meaning the menorah, only burnt throughout the night. The idea of a light is to illuminate, and that is only needed where there is darkness. Ultimately then, the light is reflective of the eternal nature of Christ which shines and dispels all darkness for all eternity. That is seen in Revelation 22 –

“There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light.” Revelation 22:5

This light was to shine and never go out. It is the eternal light of Christ which always shines before the Lord. But as we have seen, the olives are reflective of the produce of the people. Thus, we see the result of Christ *in one's life*. In Daniel 12, for example, it says this of the faithful Jews –

“Those who are wise shall shine
Like the brightness of the firmament,
And those who turn many to righteousness
Like the stars forever and ever.” Daniel 12:3

Paul uses a similar theme when speaking to Gentiles in Ephesus –

For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light ⁹ (for the fruit of the Spirit *is* in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), ¹⁰ finding out what is acceptable to the Lord. ¹¹ And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose *them*. ¹² For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret. ¹³ But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light. ¹⁴ Therefore He says:
“Awake, you who sleep,
Arise from the dead,
And Christ will give you light.” Ephesians 5:8-14

It is Christ who is the Light, and which He imparts to and through His people. It is the same idea as the incense reflecting Christ in every detail, and yet, the burning of the incense is the prayers of the people, sanctified to God by Christ.

³ Outside the veil of the Testimony, in the tabernacle of meeting,

These words are given after mentioning the bringing of oil. It is for the lamp which is in the tabernacle of meeting. In other words, the Lord is specifying the particular lamp. Because of the abrupt change in the subject – from the feasts of the Lord to the bringing of oil – this is being made clear to Moses. It is the lamp which was previously described and which is in the tabernacle, outside the veil, and before the Testimony.

In the use of the words, “Outside the veil of the Testimony,” we can see a truth which should not be missed. The Lord could have simply said, “In the tent of meeting,” or “In the Holy Place.” But He specifically mentions the veil of the Testimony. The veil, or *paroketh*, signifies a fracture exists in which on one side there is rest, and on the other there is labor and rigor. The Testimony, meaning the law contained in the Ark, is where rest is found. However, man is fallen, and is kept apart from God because of violations of the law.

However, Christ is the fulfillment of the law, and in Him is rest. The deeds of the people, and their light which shines, is only acceptable because of Christ. Again, we must think of the symbolism of the olive tree, the branches, and the fruit which the branches bear. Our deeds are only acceptable because of being in Christ. Our prayers, symbolized by the incense which burns in this same room, are only acceptable because of Him. In the end, only because of Christ is there anything in us acceptable to God.

^{3 (con't)} Aaron shall be in charge of it from evening until morning

“Aaron” here means, “Aaron and his sons” as was explicitly stated in Exodus 27. The lamp was to be tended to throughout the night. This suggests that it was not left burning during the day, but some commentaries disagree. No matter what, the symbolism of perpetual light is not diminished by having natural sunlight because Christ is called “the Sun of Righteousness” in Malachi 4:2.

^{3 (con't)} before the Lord continually;

The burning of the lamp is of particular interest to the Lord. The first thing that must be brought into a house for its inhabitants to function properly is light. And for light to

shine, there must be something to produce that light. In this case, it is the oil, signifying the Spirit in action, and thus life itself. It is reflective of the first command given after the creation of the universe –

“Then God said, ‘Let there be light’; and there was light.” Genesis 1:3

Here, after the calendar-driven Feasts of the Lord, and then more calendar-driven instructions to come in the next chapter, we have this chapter which commences with the care of the lamps and the table of showbread. In this, we can see that the light here is that which burns throughout the duration of the calendar. It is a reflection of the work of Christ from beginning to end, and throughout the ages. About 1500 years after this, we will see what this light pictures as it flows from John’s pen concerning Jesus –

“In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵ And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.” John 1:4, 5

And He is that same Light which we see shining on the last page of the Bible. It is Christ now, at all times, and throughout the ages. There is design, intent, and wisdom seen in this seemingly misplaced passage of Scripture.

³ (con’t) ***it shall be a statute forever in your generations.***

As always, these words must be taken in their proper context. As these things only picture Christ and His work, the statute forever means “until the time when they are revealed and fulfilled in Christ.” Now, that which was once physically given, is spiritually realized in Him and in His people.

⁴ **He shall be in charge of the lamps on the pure *gold* lampstand before the Lord continually.**

The verse is literally translated as, “Upon the menorah, **the** pure, he shall array the lamps before Yehovah continually.” The reason for using the definite article before “pure” is that it was made of pure gold, thus it symbolizes Christ in His Divine nature. What may also be inferred from this definite article, is that the menorah was kept pure by being cleaned from any ashes which might fall on it. It was always pure internally and externally. Thus it is reflective of Christ’s perfect purity in all ways – physical, moral, etc.

The use of the word *arak*, or array, is to signify that the lamps were always to be arranged as the Lord previously described in Exodus. To understand all of the symbolism

of this most important article, you should go back and watch the sermon from Exodus 25. It is an astonishing lesson. As far as the arraying of the seven lamps on it, it is reflective of the letters to the seven churches in Revelation, called “the seven lampstands.” The arranging of the lamps here is reflective of Christ’s arranging of the lampstands of the church.

*The purest of gold, fit for a King
Was used to make a seven-branch lampstand
Seeing its beauty makes my heart sing
The workmanship marvelous; stunning and grand*

*Every detail is so beautiful, each knob and flower
The glistening of the branches as they catch the light
It shines in the dark for hour after hour
Illuminating the holy place throughout the night*

*The glory of God is seen in each detail
Every branch speaks out a marvelous story
And in what it pictures, nothing will fail
As the Lord reveals to us His unending glory*

II. The Holy Bread (verses 5-9)

⁵“And you shall take fine flour and bake twelve cakes with it.

Now in Leviticus is introduced the actual bread of the Presence for the table of showbread which was first described in Exodus 25. The preparation for the bread was done by the priests as is recorded in 1 Chronicles 9, where it says –

“And some of their brethren of the sons of the Kohathites were in charge of preparing the showbread for every Sabbath.” 1 Chronicles 9:32

For the bread, *solet*, or “fine flour,” was to be used. This comes from an unused root meaning “to strip.” Thus it is fine flour, indicating purity. It is reflective of the purity of Christ. The word for “cake” is *khallah*. This comes from the word *khallal*, or “to pierce.” It is the word used to describe what happened to Christ when He was “pierced for our transgressions.”

From this, twelve cakes were to be made. The number twelve in Scripture denotes perfection of government, or of governmental perfection. Christ is the Bread of Life, but He has revealed Himself through His established government. First that of the twelve tribes of Israel who proclaimed His coming, and then through the twelve apostles who proclaimed His having come.

⁵ (con't) **Two-tenths of an ephah shall be in each cake.**

The two-tenths of each cake reveals Him as well. The amount for each equals two omers, the amount that two men could eat in one day. But, instead of saying that, it says "two tenths." Thus, there are 24 tenths total in the bread. Two is an indication of difference, that there is another. Ten is the perfection of Divine order. Thus we have a division of the divine order, reflected in the twelve tribes of Israel, and the twelve apostles. God's Divine order in Christ is worked out through these divisions, and it is seen in this bread.

⁶ **You shall set them in two rows, six in a row,**

The translation is not correct. They were arranged in two piles. The table is not big enough to place them in two rows. The word used is a new one in Scripture which will be seen just nine times, always in connection to the bread. It signifies an arrangement, whatever that arrangement may be.

Each pile is of six loaves. Six is the number of man. We are seeing a picture develop of men, representing all men before the Lord. In each pile, there are twelve tenths. In other words, one pile signifies the twelve tribes of Israel, the other signifies the twelve apostles. Together, they form the perfection of Divine order in God's perfection of government. It is this which led to, and which then revealed, Christ, the Bread of life. It is a picture of what is seen in Revelation 4:4 –

"Around the throne *were* twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads." Revelation 4:4

Nothing is said about whether the bread contained yeast or not. It could go either way as far as what is actually pictured. The Pentecost loaves had yeast because they reflected Jew and Gentile, acceptable to God despite their sin because of Christ's covering. Such could be the case here. Or, it could be that they were unleavened, and thus reflect only

Christ's purity. Jewish writers, such as Josephus, state that they were unleavened. What matters is that it doesn't matter. The Bible is silent on the matter.

⁶ (con't) **on the pure *gold* table before the Lord.**

The *shulkhan*, or table, is a word that indicates "stretch out," or "spread out." It is a place of expanse. Again, the wording is precise in the Hebrew, "on the table, the pure, before the Lord." The table was overlaid with pure gold, and it was certainly kept pure through constant maintenance. And again, it would be reflective of Christ – pure and undefiled internally and externally.

The details for this table are recorded in Exodus 25. If you didn't hear the sermon on its makeup, you missed a lot. You have your instructions for this afternoon. This table, like the menorah, is said to be "before the Lord." Because of its location, it is elsewhere called, *lekhem ha'panim*, or literally, "Bread (of) the Faces." Translations will then call it "the Bread of the Presence."

What we have is the idea of the Lord's eyes always being on those who are in Christ. He is the Bread, His people are of the same lump. As Paul says in Romans 11, "For if the firstfruit is holy, the lump is also *holy*."

⁷ **And you shall put pure frankincense on *each* row,**

levonah zakah, or "frankincense pure," was to be placed either on, or by, each pile. The word can indicate either. As there would have been room for the incense on the table, it was probably alongside of the bread. This *levonah*, or frankincense, comes from the word *lavan*, meaning "brick." The concept of a brick in the Bible is one of human work. At the tower of Babel, the people made bricks in order to work their way to heaven. In Egypt, the people were forced to make brick without straw and were unable to perform their duties. In both instances, pictures were being made of man's futile attempt at pleasing God through works. Their brick-making was tainted and unacceptable. This incense, however, is *zakah*, or pure. It is reflective of the pure works of Christ, or of those in Christ, which are deemed acceptable to God. This is then more fully explained with the words...

⁷ (con't) **that it may be on the bread for a memorial, an offering made by fire to the Lord.**

As it is for the bread as a memorial, it is specifically speaking of the acceptable works of Christ. The bread is a bloodless offering from the children of Israel representative of the

people of God who are diligent in sanctifying themselves to perform good works. It is the works of Christ, however, which makes them acceptable. Paul explains this in Romans –

“Nevertheless, brethren, I have written more boldly to you on *some* points, as reminding you, because of the grace given to me by God, ¹⁶ that I might be a minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.”

-Romans 15:15, 16

As can be seen, the Gentiles, like Israel, have also become an offering to God because of the work of Christ, sanctified through what He has accomplished. It is through this great work that the Holy Spirit is available to do exactly that, the part of sanctification. This is the very heart of the work of Christ. That together, Jew and Gentile, are found acceptable through Him. It is, therefore, His work, which is offered up to God “as an offering made by fire to the Lord,” pictured by this pure frankincense.

⁸ Every Sabbath he shall set it in order before the Lord continually,

The bread was changed out every Sabbath as prescribed here. Because of the words “before the Lord continually,” tradition says the Jews made this an exceptionally solemn service. As the old bread was being removed, the new bread was put in its place at exactly the same moment, one priest’s hands removing the old, while the other priest’s hands inserted the new.

For us, the symbolism here in Leviticus is pretty remarkable. The new bread was rested, on the day of rest, in the Lord’s presence, at His place of rest, on this table. It must be, at least partially, what David was thinking of when he wrote the 23rd Psalm –

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;

You anoint my head with oil;

My cup runs over.

⁶ Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me

All the days of my life;

And I will dwell in the house of the Lord

Forever. Psalm 23:5, 6

The people of God may be hemmed in by enemies, but there in the middle of it, right in the house of the Lord, a table is set where the people of God can stretch out in ease and

rest. It is the promise of a return to Eden and the presence of the Lord – all because of the work of Christ which makes us acceptable to God once again.

⁸ (con't) ***being taken from the children of Israel by an everlasting covenant.***

God required it of them, and they had agreed to the covenant. Therefore, whether in substance, or in money to purchase the substance, the items for the menorah and the table of showbread were provided from the children of Israel. In other words, these things are reflective of *the people*, and it is Christ who establishes His people. If you are a follower of Christ, you are reflected in the very things that we are looking at here today.

⁹ **And it shall be for Aaron and his sons, and they shall eat it in a holy place;**

The bread of this passage is one of only a very limited number of things which were required to be eaten in a holy place by the priests. Despite this being for the priests, this is the same bread which was given to David when he was escaping from Saul. That is found in 1 Samuel 21 –

So David said to Ahimelech the priest, “The king has ordered me on some business, and said to me, ‘Do not let anyone know anything about the business on which I send you, or what I have commanded you.’ And I have directed *my* young men to such and such a place. ³ Now therefore, what have you on hand? Give *me* five *loaves* of bread in my hand, or whatever can be found.”

⁴ And the priest answered David and said, “*There is* no common bread on hand; but there is holy bread, if the young men have at least kept themselves from women.”

⁵ Then David answered the priest, and said to him, “Truly, women *have been* kept from us about three days since I came out. And the vessels of the young men are holy, and *the bread is* in effect common, even though it was consecrated in the vessel this day.”

⁶ So the priest gave him holy *bread*; for there was no bread there but the showbread which had been taken from before the Lord, in order to put hot bread *in its place* on the day when it was taken away. 1 Samuel 21:2-6

Only by a stretch of the law given here in Leviticus could this have come about. It says that the bread was only to be eaten by the priests, and only in a holy place, but the bread was given to David, and he took it with him. And yet Jesus cited this exact account in Matthew 12 indicating that the request of David, and the decision of the priests, was not unacceptable. The need of the man outweighed the precept of the law.

⁹ (fin) **for it is most holy to him from the offerings of the Lord made by fire, by a perpetual statute.”**

The bread offering was considered most holy, and therefore it was only to be eaten by males, and only in the sanctuary. Anything deemed most holy is, in itself, a picture of Christ. The bread reflects those in Christ, and thus those considered holy to the Lord. Therefore, it was restricted to the priests alone for consumption. The words, “offerings of the Lord made by fire” is speaking of the incense, not the bread.

The incense, being connected to the Lord, was burnt on the altar, while the bread was eaten by the priests. The symbolism is that of Christ being offered up to God, and the people being acceptable to God because of Christ’s mediation.

Each thing is logically presented to show us both the Person and work of Christ, and the acceptability of those in Christ to God. What is implied here, and what is stated explicitly elsewhere, is that only those who are in Christ are acceptable to God. Even the Jews, the people of God’s choosing, who do not receive Jesus, are as branches broken off. And those Gentiles who are not of the nation of Israel, are grafted into the people of God because of faith in Christ.

In the end, all matters between God and the people of the world come down to one issue alone, do you have faith in Christ Jesus, or do you not. The difference is eternal in scope. If you have never made a commitment to Christ, who has done all of the work necessary to restore us to a right relationship with God, today would be a good day for you to do so.

Closing Verse: *But I am like a green olive tree in the house of God;*

I trust in the mercy of God forever and ever.

⁹ *I will praise You forever,*

Because You have done it;

And in the presence of Your saints

I will wait on Your name, for it is good. Psalm 52:8, 9

Next Week: Leviticus 24:10-23 *What will you pay with? Dollars and Cents?* (Recompense for an Offense) (44th Leviticus Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if you have a lifetime of sin heaped up behind you, He can wash it away and purify

you completely and wholly. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

Oil and Bread

Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying:
These are the words He was then relaying

“Command the children of Israel
That they bring to you pure oil, so shall it be
Of pressed olives for the light
To make the lamps burn continually

Outside the veil of the Testimony, in the tabernacle of meeting
Aaron shall be in charge of it – this endeavor
From evening until morning before the Lord continually
It shall be a statute in your generations forever

He shall be in charge of the lamps, so shall it be
On the pure gold lampstand before the Lord continually
“And you shall take fine flour
And bake twelve cakes with it
Two-tenths of an ephah shall be in each cake
So you shall do, as to you I submit

You shall set them in two rows, six in a row
On the pure gold table before the Lord is where they shall go

And you shall put pure frankincense on each row
That it may be for a memorial on the bread
An offering made by fire to the Lord
It shall be accomplished as I have said

Every Sabbath he shall set it in order
Continually before the Lord
Being taken from the children of Israel
By an everlasting covenant, according to My word

And it shall be for Aaron and his sons

And they shall eat it in a holy place
For it is most holy to him from the offerings of the Lord made by fire
By a perpetual statute; such shall be the case

Wonderful pictures of Christ and His work for us
Are revealed in the holy oil and holy bread of Israel
Every word shows us more hints of Jesus
And of His marvelous works each does tell

Thank You, O God, for such a wonderful word
Thank You for the mysteries which are hidden there
Each that we pull out speaks of Jesus our Lord
Thank you that in His goodness we too can share

For all eternity we shall sing to You our praise
Yes, from this time forth and for eternal days

Hallelujah and Amen...

LEVITICUS 24:10-23 (RECOMPENSE FOR AN OFFENSE)

Today we come to a story which seems to abruptly appear out of nowhere, and for no logical reason. The Lord has identified a host of things, the last three of which were the Feasts of the Lord, then the care of the lamps, and then the bread in the tabernacle. Now, suddenly, it introduces this passage. This is not unlike a similar account in Numbers 15. There, a person who violates the Sabbath will be introduced, and eventually executed. That appears right in the middle of laws and instructions as well. The placement of these is not arbitrary, but rather intentional.

In this case, feasts being followed by the care for the lamps and the bread, are detailed in order to show attentiveness to the Lord, day in and day out, week in and week out, and even throughout the year. But the name of the Lord is what identifies who He is. To defile the name of the Lord is to bring dishonor to Him. To allow this to be done and not punished on the first recorded offense would make any future punishment arbitrary and vindictive.

Therefore, either His name will now be sanctified among the people, or it would always be open to defilement upon their lips and in their lives. After this will come more calendar events, but this account must precede it in order for those events to be considered in their proper light. The Lord is God, and He is to be regarded as holy – daily, weekly, yearly, and throughout the years to come. Always and forever, the name of the Lord is to be held in the highest sanctity.

Text Verse: *“Then he came to Derbe and Lystra. And behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a certain Jewish woman who believed, but his father was Greek. ² He was well spoken of by the brethren who were at Lystra and Iconium. ³ Paul wanted to have him go on with him. And he took him and circumcised him because of the Jews who were in that region, for they all knew that his father was Greek. ⁴ And as they went through the cities, they delivered to them the decrees to keep, which were determined by the apostles and elders at Jerusalem. ⁵ So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and increased in number daily.” Acts 16:1-5*

Was the Lord’s name only to be kept in honor and esteem by Israel, among those who were Israelites? Or was the honor of the Lord’s name to be sacred among all who dwelt among Israel as well, even if strangers? The answer is today’s lesson. In Acts, Paul saw something new in his young protege Timothy. He saw a person who was in the same category as the person in our sermon verses today, and yet he was to now be a

representative to his own people, Israel. How could they ever be expected to respond to an uncircumcised half-breed when they were the possessors of the law, and the defenders of the Name?

And so as an expediency, Paul circumcised Timothy. In this, it would make their ministry for Jesus, the Name above every name, more likely to succeed among the Jews. Such ironic twists flow like rivers of gold through the pages of Scripture, and they together form a marvelous tapestry of God's unfolding redemption of the people of the world. Jew, Gentile... we are all accountable to the Lord for who we are, for what we do, and for how we conduct our lives in His presence. This is a truth which is to be found in His superior word. And so let's turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. Out of Egypt, but Not of Israel (verses 10-12)

¹⁰ Now the son of an Israelite woman,

Verses 10 & 11 of this account are the only time that the feminine adjective *Yisreelith* or "Israelite" is used in the Bible. The patronymic adjective *Yisreeli*, or Israeli, is also used here, and one more time in 1 Samuel. Thus, there is a stress on this connection which is being highlighted. The term is being used in opposition to "Egyptian." It has been noted that the name of the mother is given, but that of the father is not, demonstrating that the son left Egypt with the mother, but that the father remained in Egypt. There is nothing to substantiate this. The name of the mother is given, as always, because it is relevant to the story. The name of the father isn't. Further, it is that she is the Israelite, which is being stressed.

Whether the father is back in Egypt, or with the camp now, alive or dead, young or old, or whatever else – those things are irrelevant and are left unstated. Jewish tradition says that the father was the Egyptian slain by Moses in Exodus 2:11. Again, even if that was true, it is irrelevant to the story. The Bible is providing specifics to focus on, and so they are where our thoughts are to be focused.

^{10 (con't)} whose father was an Egyptian,

v'hu ben ish mitsri – "and who son (of) man Egypt." The contrast here is made. There is Israel, and there is Egypt. He was of mixed race, but it is through the father that one's line is reckoned. He was not a circumcised Hebrew, just as Timothy was not circumcised, despite having a Jewish mother. His father was a Greek. Only when he traveled with Paul

among the Jews as an adult was he then circumcised. Having said this, what can be inferred is that this person chose to remain identified with Egypt even after the Exodus. How can we know this? Because in Exodus 12, it said –

“And when a stranger dwells with you *and wants* to keep the Passover to the Lord, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as a native of the land. For no uncircumcised person shall eat it. ⁴⁹One law shall be for the native-born and for the stranger who dwells among you.”

-Exodus 12:48, 49

Because of this, it is without a doubt, that the son did not get circumcised, and he did not observe the Passover. He was simply one of the mixed multitude who joined Israel as they departed. Otherwise, he would have here been reckoned as one native of the land. This is further seen with the next words...

¹⁰ (con't) **went out among the children of Israel;**

b'tok bene Yisrael – “among (the) children of Israel.” There are two different ideas of what is being said here. One is that it means he “went out of Egypt with the children of Israel.” The other is that he “went into the midst of the children of Israel,” meaning as a non-native, he came into an area of the camp where he was not allowed.

Those who were circumcised and accepted as a part of the congregation dwelt separately from the others. The latter seems the more likely. It is obvious that he went out of Egypt with Israel, but the opposition of the use of the terms Israeli and Egyptian seems to show that they were now identified as separate groups.

¹⁰ (con't) **and this Israelite *woman's* son and a man of Israel fought each other in the camp.**

The word for “fought” is *natsah*. It is generally used to indicate contention or strife. When Korah rebels against Moses in Numbers 26, this is the word used. We could think of a loud shouting match with fingers pointed and faces flushed. Again, there are several Jewish traditions about why they came to this point. It is not worth repeating them, because the Lord hasn't told us.

To insert something extra to the account would only muddy what we have been given. There are times when extra-biblical additions can be helpful, and there are times when they are not. There is nothing from those accounts which helps us to understand the

overall intent of the passage. It is simply the case that the two fought. One is only *the son of a Yisreelith*, and one is a *Yisreeli*.

There is a contrast between the two, just as there was a contrast between Timothy and those he would have to eventually dispute with. This account perfectly explains why Paul circumcised Timothy even though he argues against such a thing vehemently in Galatians for Gentile believers. The Jews could no more accuse Timothy of being a foreigner after being circumcised, than they could say that the words of Exodus 12 were untrue. If asked if he kept the Passover, he could truthfully say, “Yes,” even if he had never sat down to a Passover meal. He had observed the true Passover found in Christ.

¹¹ And the Israelite woman’s son blasphemed the name *of the Lord* and cursed;

The word translated as “blasphemed” is *naqav*. It means to bore or pierce. It is used elsewhere to “designate or express by name” – either honorably or by reproach. The word “cursed” is *qalal*. It signifies to make light, trifling, curse, and so on. The words “of the Lord” are inserted by the translators, but are not in the Hebrew.

All it says is “*ha’shem*, the name,” not *ha’shem Yehovah*. The only time that the term *ha’shem* is seen when speaking of the Lord is in Deuteronomy 25:58 when it is used in conjunction with the Divine name, Yehovah. In verse 16, it will say, *shem Yehovah*, or “name Yehovah,” not *ha’shem Yehovah*, or “the name, Yehovah.” And finally, the reason for his stoning, as given in verses 14 & 23 is not blaspheme, but because he had cursed.

And so, there is debate as to whether he blasphemed the name of the Lord, or if he exalted the name of an Egyptian god. Even if the latter, which is actually probably correct, he is fighting with a man of Israel, for whatever reason, and he has sworn by the name of an Egyptian god, and then cursed. It would be a high crime to come into the camp and challenge the Lord by invoking an Egyptian god who had done nothing but suffer disgrace at the hand of the Lord when judgment fell upon Egypt.

¹¹ (con’t) and so they brought him to Moses.

The plural indicates that the people understood that a major infraction had taken place. There may have been a discussion among the elders, or the people as a whole may have simply been so upset at what happened, that they manhandled him off to Moses. Moses’ name means, “He who draws out.” He will be the one to draw out from the Lord that which must be done through judgment.

11 (con't) **(His mother's name was Shelomith**

Names are always given for a reason, when given. Three more names are given now, asking us to translate them into meaning. We can know this, because the corresponding account for the Sabbath breaker in Numbers 15 doesn't give anyone's name except Moses and Aaron. Here, along with Moses, these are specified.

The name of the offender isn't given. The name of the man he strived with isn't given, only the name of the mother, Shelomith, is. The name finds its source in the word *shalom*. But one cannot get to *shalom*, or a state of peace, without correcting for any offenses. And an offense has been made. *Shelem*, a corresponding masculine noun, indicates a peace offering or a sacrifice for alliance or friendship. The name Shelomith looks to be the result of a feminine plural form of this. In this case, it would indicate intensity rather than a plural number. The only such feminine derivative found in the Bible is in Psalm 91 –

“A thousand may fall at your side,
And ten thousand at your right hand;
But it shall not come near you.
⁸ Only with your eyes shall you look,
And see the **reward** of the wicked.” Psalm 91:7, 8

In this then, Shelomith indicates a requital, recompense, or retribution. A close synonym would be, “To avenge.” At times in the Bible, the Lord is said to avenge while giving recompense. The name of the Lord has been challenged, and therefore, the name of the Lord will be avenged, while recompensing the offender. Only in this, can there be *shalom*, or peace, once again.

11 (con't) **the daughter of Dibri,**

Another name is given, and thus it is expected to be explained. The name Divri, is used just this once in the Bible. It is derived from the verb *davar*, or speak. The “i” at the end is either possessive, and so it would mean, “My word,” or it is a reference to Yehovah, and so it would mean, “Word of the Lord.” Either way, in picture the result is the same. The word of the Lord will lead to recompense for the offender.

11 (con't) **of the tribe of Dan.)**

The tribe of the individual is named, Dan. Dan means, “Judge.” The given names anticipate the sentence which will follow. The Lord will judge, the man’s life will be forfeit for his misdeed, according to the word of the Lord, and the Lord will recompense the man for his wickedness. However, Israel will be the agent of this action. Should they fail to follow through in making his life an offering of appeasement, there can be no peace. All of this is tied up in what is presented here.

¹² Then they put him in custody, that the mind of the Lord might be shown to them.

The verse literally says, “And they rested him in custody – to explain to them by (the) mouth (of) Yehovah.” The mouth is what speaks, and thus the spoken word will be the basis for judgment.

What shall be done to the offender of the Name?

What will Moses tell us to do?

Is the judgment for us and for an outsider the same?

Will he be allowed to live, or will we to him bid adieu?

Surely the Name is to be held as sacred

And in sanctity will the Lord hold His name

If not, then any who wishes, on His name they will tread

Ignominy will be the result, ignominy and not fame

We shall wait upon His word to reveal what to do

And what He decides will surely be just and correct

For the Lord is God, holy and true

In Him no unrighteousness will we ever detect

II. The Stone of Israel (verses 13-23)

¹³ And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying,

It goes unstated how the Lord spoke to Moses, so we can only assume that it was in the regular manner where he went into the Most Holy place, and there he spoke directly to the Lord, and the Lord spoke directly in return. The word of the Lord, from the seat of the Lord, is now given...

¹⁴ “Take outside the camp him who has cursed;

The same word, *qalal*, as in verse 11 is given as the basis for the judgment. The one who made a trifling, and thus brought the name of the Lord into contempt, is to be taken outside the camp. The sanctity of the camp meant that no such punishment as will be rendered could take place within it. Just as a leper or any other unclean person was sent outside the camp, so was this man to be taken out of it. He had no part in Israel, and he was to be removed from their sight. Things do not look good for this guy...

14 (con't) then let all who heard *him* lay their hands on his head,

The laying of the hands on the head is specified. In the case of the Sabbath breaker of Numbers 15, there is no such instruction given. But here, there is. Those who heard were to place their hands on the man's head. This seems to be another indication that the person invoked the name of another god. They are witnesses of this and are avowing the name of the Lord as the rightful Judge, and denying the name of the false god at the same time.

The Lord has rendered the judgment through His spoken word, and now recompense upon the individual must be made. Should this not occur, there could be no peace. Another god has been placed as a challenge to the name of the Lord, and this could not stand.

14 (con't) and let all the congregation stone him.

The word "let" doesn't do these words justice. It says, "And stone them him all the congregation." It doesn't say they could opt out if they wanted to. It simply says that all the people were to stone him. If this was literally carried out by all the people, the pile over him would be massive by the time they were done with the job. It would stand there as a testimony to the severity of the crime.

15 "Then you shall speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'Whoever curses his God shall bear his sin.'

The Lord has given the punishment for the offender, but now He gives a general law to ensure that there is no question in the people's minds concerning future violations of this type. There is again a dispute as to what is being referred to here. Some see this as not speaking about the true God at all, and this is probably correct. If someone were to curse the name of his god, he would bear the sin of an idolater.

Death is not mandated for such a thing, but sin is born by those who are, by default, not followers of the Lord. No death penalty is mandated for such a person because he is accountable to the Lord on a completely different level than those who are either followers of the Lord, or who would blaspheme the name of the Lord, even if not His follower.

¹⁶ And whoever blasphemes the name of the Lord shall surely be put to death. All the congregation shall certainly stone him, the stranger as well as him who is born in the land.

On the other hand, *any* person who blasphemes the name of the Lord, whether a follower or not, was to be put to death. The words are emphatic – “stoning, he shall be stoned.”

There is one God, and His name was not to be violated, ever. The words here also seem to confirm what was proposed earlier concerning the Egyptian. First, it says, “the stranger as well as the native.” The stranger could be any person following any religion. If he were to curse the name of his god, who would care? Only the Lord would, who is not considered his God.

And so the Lord would deal with him in due time. But if a stranger among the people blasphemed His name, then it would be an offense worthy of immediate consequences, lest His name be defiled among the people, and degraded in their eyes. Secondly, it says *v’noqev shem Yehovah* – “and he who blasphemes name Yehovah.” Unlike verse 11, there is no article, no “the,” in front of “name.” And this follows through to the next words...

¹⁶ (con’t) When he blasphemes the name *of the Lord*, he shall be put to death.

b’naqevow shem yumat – “When he blasphemes Name, put to death.” Again, the words “of the Lord” are inserted, and unlike verse 11 there is no article in front of Name. It simply says, *shem*. Thus, there is a stress on the very idea of His name. It is completely other, completely distinct, and without match or rival. The contrast between verse 11 & here clues us in to what was being referred to there.

¹⁷ ‘Whoever kills any man shall surely be put to death.

It seems curious at first that this, and the following commands, are suddenly placed here, especially as some are repeats of previous commands. But what is being done is

including anyone who would commit such crimes within the company of the Lord. The commands previously given pertained solely to Israel. However, it is now understood that anyone within the jurisdiction of Israel was bound to these same laws as well.

The words here say, “And he who strikes all the soul (of a) man.” The implication is murder. There are times when killing was prescribed by the Lord, such as in war, or in capital punishment, like the sentence which was just pronounced. That is not what this is speaking of. Rather, it is the intentional, unjustifiable murder of another. Nobody had the right to kill another without there first being a legal tribunal, even for a blasphemer.

¹⁸ Whoever kills an animal shall make it good, animal for animal.

Some laws concerning animals were given in Exodus 21. Those dealt with different matters than this. This is a provision of *lex talionis* or retaliation in kind (like for like), whereby a punishment resembles the offense committed in kind and degree. If someone purposefully killed another animal he was to replace it, in kind.

The obvious reason for this inclusion is to show that an animal is not in the same category as man. There can be no justification for anyone to find guilt beyond replacement for the killing of an animal. It is a precept which has become fashionably ignored in modern society where animals are placed in an unhealthy level of supposed dignity, at times bordering on that of humans.

The same punishment for blaspheming the name of the Lord was given to one who murders another, and rightfully so as the man is made in the image of God. But such was not, and is not, to be the case with an animal.

¹⁹ ‘If a man causes disfigurement of his neighbor, as he has done, so shall it be done to him—

The word *mum*, or defect, is used here. Should someone do something to another to cause a defect in him, then the law of *lex talionis* was to be enacted. Though seemingly harsh, this law is actually as much a curb *on retribution* as it is a means *of punishment*. No greater punishment was to be meted out than that which had been inflicted. Thus the punishee was not to be unduly or overly punished.

²⁰ fracture for fracture,

If Vic McGregg broke Sam’s leg

Then Sam could do the same in turn...but he could do no more.
If he were to instead, crack him on the head
Vic McGregg's punishment would have been overly sore.

And so to break Vic's leg is what the law says should be
And when that was over, Vic and Sam could make up
And they could together hobble home clumsily

20 (con't) eye for eye,

If Jim poked out Tom's eye... out of spite
We know that wouldn't be right
And so the law says that Tom could do the same to Jim in turn
And so, from this loss of his own sight
Jim would his lessen learn

20 (con't) tooth for tooth;

If Jay punched Alex and knocked out his tooth
Alex could not in turn break Jay's arm
Instead he got to knock out Jay's tooth too
But maybe Alex still suffered the greater harm
Because Jay's whistle became pronounced
And it incessantly announced
What Alex in retaliation to Jay did do

20 (con't) as he has caused disfigurement of a man, so shall it be done to him.

Any disfigurement, of any type, was to be paid in kind, but the punishment was to go no further. The Lord's decision in this was intended as a curb against any initial offense, and it was intended as a curb against excessive retaliation, either by the individual, or by an unjust court.

21 And whoever kills an animal shall restore it; but whoever kills a man shall be put to death.

Here we have a shortened repeat of verses 17 & 18. They are reversed as well. Here, the Hebrew simply says, "He who strikes a beast," and "...he who strikes a man." If one were to read this verse only, they might come to the conclusion that merely striking another

man, whether death occurred or not, was worthy of death. Therefore, the words must be considered in connection with the passage, and not alone. The intent is to strike and kill.

But the reason for the repetition is to again stress the difference between animals and humans. It cannot be considered murder to kill an animal, and it must be considered murder to kill a man. Further, the word for “man” here is *adam*, not *ish*. It is not speaking of a man, as in an adult male, but rather as a member of the human race – one of mankind.

Although the perverse would say there is a difference between a human in the womb, and a human born from the womb, the Bible does not make this distinction. Biblically, the life of the human is one which begins at conception. The logical, moral, and correct evaluation of this then is that to kill a human in the womb is murder, and it is worthy of death. What our society, and the world at large finds acceptable, will be judged by the all-righteous, always moral, and perfectly just God.

²² You shall have the same law for the stranger and for one from your own country; for I *am* the Lord your God.”

Again, the words here hearken back to verse 16, and that in turn takes us back to the account of the son of the Egyptian and the Israelite woman. There were two groups of people at the camp that were to be held to the same standard. Upon arrival in Canaan, the same would be true with any foreigner to the people of Israel.

If they received the benefits of residing in the jurisdiction of the people Israel, they were to be bound to these same laws as the people of Israel. What they did with and towards their own gods was not to be of concern to the Israelites as long as it was not otherwise forbidden by the Lord. But what they did, to and towards both the Lord, and the Lord’s people was. This was because...

²² (con’t) for I *am* the Lord your God.”

ki ani Yehovah elohekem – “for I *am* Yehovah your God.” They are the Lord’s people; He is their God; and so anything which affected either them in this capacity, or Him as being in this position, was to be considered equal for all people who dwelt within His boundaries. The emphasis stands because the offender of verse 11 was not a member of the covenant people, but he was within the jurisdiction of the Lord nonetheless. Because of this, Moses now has words for the people to hear...

²³ Then Moses spoke to the children of Israel;

Moses has drawn out from the Lord that which was needed to resolve the dilemma of the congregation. And with that, he speaks forth the word. Here, it doesn't say, "Then Moses spoke to all the people." Instead, it says that he spoke to *bene Yisrael* – the "children of Israel." Although it is a standard form of address, it is they who have been given the full authority, from this point forward, to deal with all cases of blasphemy. Such was the desire of the people towards Jesus as is recorded in John 8:54-59 –

Jesus answered, "If I honor Myself, My honor is nothing. It is My Father who honors Me, of whom you say that He is your God. ⁵⁵ Yet you have not known Him, but I know Him. And if I say, 'I do not know Him,' I shall be a liar like you; but I do know Him and keep His word. ⁵⁶ Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw *it* and was glad."

⁵⁷ Then the Jews said to Him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?"

⁵⁸ Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM."

⁵⁹ Then they took up stones to throw at Him; but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.

The same type of attempt against the Lord was made again in John 10. Thus we have another one of the ironies of the Bible before us. The Lord who gave the commandment of stoning for blaspheme against His name, was treated as a blasphemer. And the people, who bore the authority of His name, attempted to stone Him. Such was not to be the case however. Christ would die in fulfillment of Scripture, but it would not be by stoning at the hands of Israel. It would be by crucifixion on a tree.

²³ (con't) and they took outside the camp him who had cursed, and stoned him with stones.

The Hebrew reads, "and stoned him stone." It is singular. In Numbers 15, the corresponding account of the Sabbath breaker says, *ba'abanmin*, or with stones, but here it simply says, *aben*, or stone. The man has blasphemed the name of the Lord, and though the congregation is instructed to destroy the man, it is the Lord who is the Judge and who made the decision, and therefore it is by the Stone of Israel, the Lord Yehovah, that the man was destroyed.

He the Judge (Dan), spoke the word (Divri), and recompense (Shelomith) was made upon the man for his transgression. Surely the Bible is true when it says, "It is a fearful

thing to fall into the hands of the living God” (Hebrews 10:31). And surely we can see why the names of the people were specifically included in the account of this passage.

²³ (fin) **So the children of Israel did as the Lord commanded Moses.**

The offering of the violator’s life, if it can be so termed, has been made. The name of the Lord has been sanctified, and the obedience of the people has been proven. Though this is a remarkable example of such obedience, an abundance of examples of failure lie ahead. It is a chronic problem with Israel, and it is a chronic problem with us.

It is easy to find fault in others, and it is an easy thing indeed to execute judgment when a reward for doing so can be expected. But it is a much harder thing to find fault in our own actions, and it is a terribly hard thing to ferret out those who are offenders when there is no perceived benefit, and maybe even loss to do so.

How many churches turn a blind eye to sin because they would rather have the donations coming in! How many of us would turn a blind eye to sin because it involves a loved one, and thus the consequences for taking a stand against what they are doing will cause a disruption in our own lives?

Are we willing to put the word of God and His commands for our lives first? And even more, are we willing to defend the honor and sanctity of the Lord’s name above all else? He cherishes His name, and He safeguards it as the most precious thing – because it is. His name reveals who He is, and His name defines everything about Him. Is our relationship with Him in understanding of this? Is our reverence of Him in accord with this?

Let us endeavor to live with the thought in our mind that the Lord is indeed holy; He is indeed good; and He is indeed righteous and just. In keeping this understanding of who He is in our minds, we will then be in a better position to honor Him, to bring Him glory, and to be attentive to our lowly state in His magnificent presence.

Closing Verse: *“For I proclaim the name of the Lord:*

Ascribe greatness to our God.

⁴ He is the Rock, His work is perfect;

For all His ways are justice,

A God of truth and without injustice;

Righteous and upright is He.” Deuteronomy 32:3, 4

Next Week: Leviticus 25:1-7 *A provision marvelous and grand...* (The Sabbath of the Land) (45th Leviticus Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if you have a lifetime of sin heaped up behind you, He can wash it away and purify you completely and wholly. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

Recompense for an Offense

Now the son of an Israelite woman
Whose father was an Egyptian
Went out among the children of Israel
According to the account's description
And this Israelite woman's son and a man of Israel
Fought each other in the camp, so the word does tell
And the Israelite woman's son
Blasphemed the name of the Lord and cursed
And so they brought him to Moses
Because of his irreverent outburst

His mother's name was Shelomith the daughter of Dibri
Of the tribe of Dan was her family tree
Then they put him in custody, probably holed up alone
That the mind of the Lord to them might be shown

And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying
"Take outside the camp him who has cursed
Then let all who heard him lay their hands on his head
And let all the congregation stone him
----- for his unholy outburst
"Then you shall speak to the children of Israel, saying:
'Whoever curses his God shall bear his sin, so I am to you relaying

And whoever blasphemes the name of the Lord
Shall surely be put to death, be sure to understand
All the congregation shall certainly stone him
The stranger as well as him who is born in the land
When he blasphemes the name of the Lord

He shall be put to death, according to this word
'Whoever kills any man shall surely be put to death
So you shall extinguish his life, ending his breath

Whoever kills an animal shall make it good
Animal for animal; ensure this is understood

'If a man causes disfigurement of his neighbor
As he has done, so shall it be done to him, most certainly
Fracture for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth
As he has caused disfigurement of a man
-----so it shall be done to him, so shall it be

And whoever kills an animal shall restore it
But whoever kills a man shall be put to death, so to you I submit

You shall have the same law for the stranger
And for one from your own country as well
For I am the Lord your God
You shall do these things as to you I tell

Then Moses spoke to the children of Israel
And they took outside the camp him who had cursed
And stoned him with stones
So the children of Israel did as the Lord commanded Moses
-----for the man's unholy outburst

Thank You, O God, for this hope You have given to us
As sons of Adam we are dead in sin
But through Your Son we are made alive, yes, through Jesus
A new and eternal life we have been granted to live in

And so may we reverence Your name always, O Lord
And cling fast to the truths of Your superior word

Praise You! Praise You O God. Yes, hear our praise
That which our hearts will sing to You for eternal days

Hallelujah and Amen...

LEVITICUS 25:1-7 (THE SABBATH OF THE LAND)

The verses we will look at today are verses which require trust in the people of the land. They are being asked, even before entering into Canaan, to set aside one out of every seven years and not plant or reap anything at all. It sounds impossible to even consider.

It would be like the Lord telling any one of us that we were going to work six days and take off the seventh every single week. And then, we are expected to take off the entire seventh year as well. In essence, that comes out to almost two sevenths of one's productive life not being dedicated to any work at all. Throw in the three mandatory pilgrim feasts, and more productive time is removed from the ability to earn. This would require real trust. It fits well with something a friend emailed me a while ago, and which he said I could use to open a sermon. He said –

“A long time ago (no, not in a galaxy far far away) I decided to go for a walk to the store and thought I'd take my sweet little niece along. 7-11 was only about a quarter mile away, so not too far for a 3 year old. She put her little hand in mine and off we went. We began walking and got about a house or two from home and she points to the neighbor's house saying, “Is that the store?” I say “No, no honey. The store's way over that way,” pointing to where the store was. We get a few more houses along our way and again she points to the house we're passing by and says again, “Is that the store?” Again I tell her that the store's way over that way, pointing in the direction of the store. Instantly this VERY clear thought comes into my mind – It doesn't matter at all that she doesn't know where the store is. I do know where the store is. And due to love for her and a sense of responsibility I'm going to make sure she gets there. Also what occurred to me was that my grip on her hand is so much stronger and more committed to getting us there, that I could have dragged her there if need be. What came to me next was that God knows where I am, and His love for me is going to get me where He wants me. ... He knows where “the store” is. I've felt so terribly lost in life and couldn't understand why. With my best efforts I kept ending up with ashes. Frequently, a whole lot. I've simply prayed “God, please get me to the store.” It wasn't like some sort of magic wand that suddenly made the sun come up but it was a bit of comfort IN the storm. I hope this will bring hope and comfort to someone feeling as lost as I have. Lastly, always remember that you can get a real good root beer Slurpee at 7-11 for about a buck.”

Text Verse: *“My righteousness is near,
My salvation has gone forth,
And My arms will judge the peoples;*

*The coastlands will wait upon Me,
And on My arm they will trust.” Isaiah 51:4*

Israel was being asked to trust the Lord. As you will see, they failed at this, but had they simply trusted, all would have gone well with them. The Lord doesn't make idle promises, nor does He impose impossible standards. He is ever-faithful, and He will do right to those who trust Him as they should.

But more than just a set of odd laws which hardly seem relevant to anything that would concern us today, the laws of Leviticus 25 point to the Person and work of Jesus, and to His future kingdom. Because they do, we can look at these verses and see that the purpose of Israel was more than just following the rules of a now obsolete law. They were being used to show us that even better things lay ahead.

Like the Feasts of the Lord, and like so many other things which have been detailed thus far in the Bible, there is a greater meaning in the words and verses which we so often too quickly skim over. Rather, as always, wonderful things are to be found in His superior word. And so let's turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

The Sabbath of the Seventh Year

¹ And the Lord spoke to Moses

The words, “And the Lord spoke to Moses,” indicate a new train of thought will now be introduced. It is a separate set of instructions entirely than that which has been previously presented. That whole section included the care of the Menorah and the Bread of the Presence, and it was followed up with the incident of blasphemy resulting in stoning to death the one who cursed.

Now, the Lord begins directions on the Sabbath of the seventh year, the Year of Jubilee, the redemption of property, and so on. Some scholars have commented on the *error* of placing this chapter here instead of placing it after the Feasts of the Lord. This is because the Sabbath of the seventh year, and the year of Jubilee are closely connected with the laws concerning the feast days.

But that is an illogical argument when considering how many things in the law correspond to other passages within the law, and which are not placed side by side. To attempt to align the law in this manner would completely destroy the harmonious flow

which is revealed in a slow and methodical trip through it. We saw how well-placed chapter 24 actually was as we went through it.

Leviticus 25:1 begins a new Parashah, or reading of the law. In the synagogue, the Parashah is a weekly portion of Scripture which is read and commented on. Each Parashah has a corresponding passage from the prophets, known as a Haftarah. This Parashah's corresponding passage is from Jeremiah 32:6-37. It is a passage which deals with the redemption of property, something which is described in this chapter of Leviticus.

¹ (con't) **on Mount Sinai, saying,**

The Hebrew is *b'har sinai*, literally "in mount Sinai," but meaning, "in the region of Sinai." The tabernacle has already been raised, and it is from the Most Holy Place, not from on Mount Sinai, that the Lord speaks to Moses. This was explained in Leviticus 1:1 with the words, "Now the Lord called to Moses, and spoke to him from the tent of meeting, saying..." Moses would receive instruction from the mouth of the Lord who dwelt between the cherubim.

Mount Sinai is the same place as Mount Horeb, but the name Sinai is used because it is given in anticipation of the cross of Christ. Sinai means, "Bush of the Thorn." The name of the location is given in connection with the redemptive workings of God in Christ which look forward to the cross. As the things which will now be relayed to the people look forward to His sacrifice, the name Sinai is specifically given. Christ is the anticipation of everything we will see in the laws to follow.

² **"Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them:**

The instructions are not given only to Aaron, which would indicate words of priestly law. Nor are they given to the congregation in general, as if they were to be conveyed only to the elders who would then act upon them on behalf of the people. Instead, as is often seen, Moses is to speak to *bene Yisrael*, or "the children of Israel." They are words of law, and they are words intended for all of the people to know and carry with them.

In America, the laws for the transfer of property are maintained by the government, but they are generally known to all of the people. If the details need to be looked into, they are ready, available, and awaiting anyone who desires to view them. This is the idea of saying, "Speak to the children of Israel." Further, as they are under the Law of Moses, the term "children" is appropriate. With the coming of Christ, the law is fulfilled and

annulled. Those in Christ are termed not children, but sons. We have the full rights and inheritances that Israel did not possess. It is for this reason that the instructions of this chapter are so carefully recorded.

Children need direction in the matters contained here. Sons, because of the reception of their inheritance, have no such need for these earthly instructions which only anticipated Christ's completion of what they picture. This begins to be seen with the next words...

² (con't) **'When you come into the land which I give you,**

The words here do not yet apply to the people. It is the fourth and last instance in the book of Leviticus where a law anticipates entry into the land. It will come into effect only at that time. However, they are words of guarantee. The Lord does not make this a conditional statement, "If I bring you into the land which I am *thinking about* giving you..." Instead, the Lord will bring them in, and He has given it to them.

And yet, of the adults who are alive at this time, only two of them will actually come into the land. All of the others will die in the wilderness. The actual intent is that they will continue to receive the law until the Lord has finished speaking, and then they will immediately journey towards the land. Their arrival should be marked in weeks, not years.

However, such will not be the case. Therefore, the words, "the land which I give to you," speak of the nation of Israel, not merely the people whose ears happen to hear the promise. The land has been granted to Israel as a people unconditionally, but actually dwelling in it is conditional.

² (con't) **then the land shall keep a sabbath to the Lord.**

v'shabetah ha'arets shabbath l'Yehovah – "and shall Sabbath the land, Sabbath to Yehovah." The Sabbath, or "rest," every seven years is for the land, just as the weekly Sabbath is for the people. The weekly Sabbath reminded Israel that they were the Lord's people, and were to rest in honor of Him, trusting in His provision from the week's productivity. The seventh year Sabbath of the land was to remind the people that the Lord is the owner of the land, and they were to trust in His provision from the land. This Sabbath rest of the land was first mentioned to the people in Exodus 23 –

“Six years you shall sow your land and gather in its produce, ¹¹ but the seventh *year* you shall let it rest and lie fallow, that the poor of your people may eat; and what they leave, the beasts of the field may eat. In like manner you shall do with your vineyard *and* your olive grove.” Exodus 23:10, 11

There are no special sacrifices or convocations designated for these Sabbath years, but it could actually be considered that the entire year would be a sacrifice. To not cultivate the land for an entire year would be an incredible leap of faith in the provision of God. The entire system to be announced is theocratic in nature. God is God, and the people were to trust Him as their Sovereign.

Because of this, He has directed each seventh year as a Sabbath to the Lord. As far as entry into the land, it is recorded in Joshua that the nation engaged in war for seven years before they were at peace. Therefore, this law now probably did not include those seven years. Further, it was another seven years before the land was wholly divided among the tribes. It is believed those seven years were also excluded. Therefore, if Jewish tradition is right, it was not until the 21st year after their arrival that this law would have been fully enacted, if it ever was actually enacted.

One of the reasons for exile of the people, is that they failed to honor their Sabbaths, including this Sabbath of the land. Jeremiah 25:11 & 12 said that the people would be exiled for seventy years to Babylon. This is then repeated in Jeremiah 29:10, and then Daniel refers to it in Daniel 9. This reason for these seventy years of exile is explicitly stated in 2 Chronicles 36 –

“And those who escaped from the sword he carried away to Babylon, where they became servants to him and his sons until the rule of the kingdom of Persia, ²¹ to fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her Sabbaths. As long as she lay desolate she kept Sabbath, to fulfill seventy years.” 2 Chronicles 36:20

Seventy years of Sabbaths comprises 490 years. Whether this is to be taken as literally that many missed Sabbath years, or whether it is cumulative for any and all that were missed, the one thing we do know is that no Sabbath-year observance is actually recorded in the Old Testament except in Nehemiah 10:31, a time after the return from Babylon. And that verse only promises that the Sabbath year would be observed henceforward. Nothing in Scripture after that is recorded as to whether it actually was observed or not. However, there are some extra-biblical references to this being conducted after the time of the return of the people from Babylon.

³ Six years you shall sow your field,

There was to be planting of crops for six years. The word “sow” here is *zara*, literally it is the sowing of seed. It is used when speaking of conceiving children as well, and so the sowing is in anticipation of a crop. A crop is in anticipation of a harvest. And a harvest is in anticipation of one’s daily bread. This cycle of sowing in order to have grain for bread was to be practiced for six years.

^{3 (con’t)} and six years you shall prune your vineyard, and gather its fruit;

Here is a new word, *zamar*, or “prune.” It will be seen just twice in verses 3 and 4 and only once more in Isaiah 5:6. It is identical in form to the word *zamar* which is used many times in Scripture, especially in the psalms, to indicate singing praises. The words probably meet in the thought of how it is used in Psalm 33 –

“Praise the Lord with the harp;
Make melody to Him with an instrument of ten strings.” Psalm 33:2

There the words, “make melody,” are translated from *zamar*. The idea then is that as one plays, striking the instrument with his hands, so the hand also strikes at the vine with a sort of clipping motion. It can be assumed then, that when the psalms speak elsewhere of singing praises to the Lord, it is normally inclusive of the playing of instruments.

In the words of this verse, there is the prescription that work is to be done – “You shall sow your field; you shall prune your vineyard and gather its fruit.” This is to be accomplished for six years. It is a positive mandate to actively work the land, sowing and reaping, as it produces. The word “fruit” here is intended to include anything which the land produces, whether it is grains, fruits, or vegetables. The people were to work towards their rest.

It is, like the week leading to the Sabbath, a picture of man working six thousand years towards his rest during the millennium. It was to be a time of productivity and diligence while waiting for a time of change in what is to be done. The land was given to them and it was to be used as they pleased, and with the intent of producing wealth and prosperity.

⁴ but in the seventh year there shall be a sabbath of solemn rest for the land,

This is the sixth and last time that the term *shabath shabathon*, or Sabbath of solemn rest is used in the Bible. Four times it speaks of the weekly Sabbath, once for the Day of Atonement, and now here concerning the seventh year of Sabbath rest.

The land was to be left completely at rest every seventh year, just as the people were to be completely at rest every seventh day. According to Exodus 23:11, the reason given says, “but the seventh year you shall let it rest and lie fallow, that the poor of your people may eat; and what they leave, the beasts of the field may eat. In like manner you shall do with your vineyard *and* your olive grove.”

No work of any kind was to be conducted in an agricultural sense for the entire year. Instead it was...

⁴ (con't) **a sabbath to the Lord.**

shabath l'Yehovah – “Sabbath to Yehovah.” Although it goes unstated here exactly when this year of Sabbath rest commenced, it would have been during the seventh month around the same time as the year of Jubilee would commence each 50th year. That will be seen in verse 9. Some traditions say the Sabbath year began on the first day of the month. Remembering that there are two calendars – the Creation and the Redemption calendar, this would mean it is aligned with the first day of the first month of the civil, or creation, calendar.

No matter what, the entire year was dedicated as a Sabbath to Yehovah. At then ending of this special year, the law was to be read to all of the people during the Feast of Tabernacles. This is noted in Deuteronomy –

“And Moses commanded them, saying: ‘At the end of *every* seven years, at the appointed time in the year of release, at the Feast of Tabernacles, ¹¹ when all Israel comes to appear before the LORD your God in the place which He chooses, you shall read this law before all Israel in their hearing. ¹² Gather the people together, men and women and little ones, and the stranger who *is* within your gates, that they may hear and that they may learn to fear the LORD your God and carefully observe all the words of this law, ¹³ and *that* their children, who have not known it, may hear and learn to fear the LORD your God as long as you live in the land which you cross the Jordan to possess.’” Deuteronomy 31:10-13

What we are seeing here is a marvelous reflection of the history of man’s time on earth as he works towards the millennium. Each of the redeemed of the Lord has his own

responsibility of sharing Christ – sowing and reaping. The care of the person and the field they minister in will reap according to their efforts. But, in the millennium – meaning the last thousand-year period where Christ reigns, there will be no need to labor in this fashion as in the past.

Rather, like the people of Israel ceasing their labors, the world will rest in the Lord and what He provides for the people throughout that final dispensation. And instead of hearing the words of the law, the people will have the law issue forth to them, directly from the throne of Christ from Jerusalem. Isaiah describes it –

“Now it shall come to pass in the latter days
That the mountain of the LORD’s house
Shall be established on the top of the mountains,
And shall be exalted above the hills;
And all nations shall flow to it.
³ Many people shall come and say,
'Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD,
To the house of the God of Jacob;
He will teach us His ways,
And we shall walk in His paths.'
For out of Zion shall go forth the law,
And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.
⁴ He shall judge between the nations,
And rebuke many people;
They shall beat their swords into plowshares,
And their spears into pruning hooks;
Nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
Neither shall they learn war anymore.” Isaiah 2:2-4

In type, this “Sabbath to the Lord” is an anticipatory look ahead to the rest which is coming after the first six thousand years of man’s history on earth. In the final thousand years, often called the millennium, there will be a different order of things. Again, Isaiah prophesies concerning this millennial reign of Christ –

There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse,
And a Branch shall grow out of his roots.
² The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him,
The Spirit of wisdom and understanding,

The Spirit of counsel and might,
The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.
³ His delight *is* in the fear of the Lord,
And He shall not judge by the sight of His eyes,
Nor decide by the hearing of His ears;
⁴ But with righteousness He shall judge the poor,
And decide with equity for the meek of the earth;
He shall strike the earth with the rod of His mouth,
And with the breath of His lips He shall slay the wicked.
⁵ Righteousness shall be the belt of His loins,
And faithfulness the belt of His waist.
⁶ “The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb,
The leopard shall lie down with the young goat,
The calf and the young lion and the fatling together;
And a little child shall lead them.
⁷ The cow and the bear shall graze;
Their young ones shall lie down together;
And the lion shall eat straw like the ox.
⁸ The nursing child shall play by the cobra’s hole,
And the weaned child shall put his hand in the viper’s den.
⁹ They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain,
For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord
As the waters cover the sea.
¹⁰ “And in that day there shall be a Root of Jesse,
Who shall stand as a banner to the people;
For the Gentiles shall seek Him,
And His resting place shall be glorious.” Isaiah 11:1-10

This millennial reign of Christ is also mentioned six times in Revelation 20. It will be a time when Satan is bound and the people of God will reign with Christ for a thousand years.

⁴ (con’t) **You shall neither sow your field nor prune your vineyard.**

The words here, as explained already, include all cultivation of any kind, including fruit trees, vineyards, crops, and etc. No such work was to be done during this entire seventh-year period. And in the millennium, there will be rest on earth as Christ provides all that is spiritually necessary for His people.

⁵What grows of its own accord of your harvest you shall not reap,

A new word, *saphiyakh*, is found here. It will be seen just five times. It comes from the word *saphakh*, which gives the sense of attachment, or cleaving to. Here it signifies that which fell out by itself, and then roots and grows of itself. Any such plant was not to be reaped by the owner of the land. In essence, the very soil of the earth was not really considered his own property, but it is the Lord's, and its produce was left for any and all to benefit from.

The same word is used in the memorable passage when the Lord spoke to Hezekiah. Jerusalem was hemmed in by Sennacherib, king of Assyria, and in order to reassure Hezekiah that he would be delivered, a portion of the Lord's words said –

“This *shall be* a sign to you:

You shall eat this year **such as grows** of itself,

And the second year what springs from the same;

Also in the third year sow and reap,

Plant vineyards and eat the fruit of them.

³¹ And the remnant who have escaped of the house of Judah

Shall again take root downward,

And bear fruit upward.

³² For out of Jerusalem shall go a remnant,

And those who escape from Mount Zion.

The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this. Isaiah 37:30-32

The idea there is one of Hezekiah trusting the Lord's word and accepting that His provision would be sufficient for the people. It is the same idea found here in Leviticus. The people were expected to trust the Lord and to not violate the precepts being laid down now.

^{5 (con't)} nor gather the grapes of your untended vine,

v'eth inebe nezirekha – literally it says, “and (the) grapes of your Nazirite,” and thus, “the grapes of your consecration.” It is the same word used to describe the Nazirite in Numbers 6. Just as the Nazirite was set apart, or consecrated to God with the sign of his consecration being hair which was uncut, so the vines were consecrated to the Lord, and remained uncut throughout the seventh year. Instead of being cut, all of the productive power of the hair, or the vine, was consecrated solely to the Lord.

^{5 (con't)} **for it is a year of rest for the land.**

Rest means “cessation from labor.” This is the intent of the passage. The land was to be at rest, and no works were to be employed to bring about the produce of the land. Rather, the land would yield naturally apart from man’s efforts.

Everything about this seventh year is emblematic of the coming millennial reign of Christ. The, *saphiyakh*, or grain which falls and grows of its own accord is the natural growth of humanity who are spiritually nourished by the Lord, directly and without the need of man’s intervention.

The Nazirite, or consecrated vine, is one which has been left to produce on its own. It is set apart to God, and what it bears is solely the produce of the Lord. Again, man’s efforts are excluded. So it will be in the millennium. It is the Lord who alone will plant, water, and give the increase in that wondrous age to come.

⁶ **And the sabbath produce of the land shall be food for you:**

What this means is that whatever is produced of itself during the seventh, Sabbath, year was to be food for all the people. This seems contradictory to verse 5 which said, “What grows of its own accord of your harvest you shall not reap.” However, what that was saying is that no owner was to go out and actively harvest his land, reaping as they would on any regular year, as if the land was especially his own.

Instead, anyone – owner or stranger – could use the land without consideration of ownership. All had rights to the produce which grew of itself, rich or poor, native or stranger. The owner had done nothing to cause the produce to grow, and therefore, the owner did not have the sole right to reap it as a harvest.

In what is one of several anomalies found in the grammar of this chapter, not all of which I will highlight, the verses have been consistently speaking in the second person, singular. Suddenly, and for just one word, it switches to the second person, plural. That now immediately changes back to the second person, singular...

^{6 (con't)} **for you, your male and female servants, your hired man, and the stranger who dwells with you,**

Taken with the previous clause, they together would read, “And the sabbath *produce* of the land shall be food for you (all): for you (singular), your (singular) hired man, and your stranger (singular) who dwells with you (singular).”

This could be dismissed as simply going from the general to the specific. In other words, first it is speaking of the general populace, and then the words are directed to the individual who is in a specific relation to what is being spoken of. But if we back up to verse 2, it is speaks to the people in the plural. From verse 3 until now, it is in the singular. And then suddenly it goes to the plural for one word, and then back to the singular.

This isn't unique in the chapter, and there are several such anomalies. In the next verse, it will say *b'artsekha*, “in your (singular) land.” But in verse 9, it will say *b'kal artsekem*, “in all your (plural) land.” As I said, I won't go through every such instance, but rather than dismiss this, I would personally find that it is referring to a prophetic look to the Lord's millennial reign, and His authority, rights, and responsibilities during that time.

If you look at the words in this light, it does appear to show that distinction as one would think of what will occur during the millennium. Until the work of Christ was (or even now is) understood, the grammatical changes require a lot of guesswork as to why they are made. But in understanding the dispensational model, and what Christ will mean to the world in the future, the changes seem to take on their proper sense.

Whether this is correct or not, the words are not well followed through with in most translations. Because of this, unless you study the Hebrew, there is no way to see that this is occurring, and a lot is missed that would otherwise excite the mind which longs for the secrets of this marvelous gift, given to us by God.

⁷ for your livestock and the beasts that *are* in your land—all its produce shall be for food.

The livestock are animals that are generally those tamed by man, and which are kept by man. The beasts are more specifically referring to the wild animals of the land. Not only was the produce to be the property of any person, it was also to be left for any animal. No person or beast was to be restricted from gathering or foraging from the Sabbath produce. What the Lord provided was to be for all alike.

That was already seen in the prophecy by Isaiah where he mentioned the wild and the tame beasts dwelling together and eating together. It will be a time of peace on the

earth where there will be abundance, and none will be afraid of what was once a source of fear.

Verse 7 ends our verses for today, but before we close, one point that should be considered is that the things we have been looking at, and the words used to detail this special Sabbath year, have been given to show us hints of what lie ahead in Christ's future reign on earth. However, Israel was actually asked to live this out year by year. As I said earlier, there is no record in Scripture that this was even done one time, but it appears to be implicitly stated in Joshua 24. There it says –

“Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua, who had known all the works of the Lord which He had done for Israel.” Joshua 24:31

There is no rebuke of Joshua for not meeting the law's requirements, and so it is likely that he was faithful to ensure the Sabbath years were observed. At other times words similar to this are stated, and so it is likely that, even if temporarily, Israel would have observed this special Sabbath year, but due to the words given as the reason for Israel's exile, it is certain that adherence to this would have been the exception rather than the rule.

Maybe the people simply distrusted the word of the Lord and couldn't imagine that things would be as He said. Maybe at times they simply forgot or neglected the word of the Lord. But for whatever reason, they failed to obey this marvelous precept which He had given them.

And the funny thing is that on any year that they did obey, the Lord certainly would have kept his end of the bargain. They would have had plenty as promised, and they could have done other things at the same time. There are no restrictions on any other activities. If they wanted to take up basket weaving or learning to build houses, they could do so. In the Sabbath year, there could have been an explosion of technology as people were freed from the labors of the field and given the chance to invent, develop, and produce.

What I am saying is that it is the Lord who created us, and it is He who knows what is best for us. In taking one thing away, He will always provide something else. There will never be a gap when we trust in His provision. Rather, there will be something even better. It may not seem so at first, but through faithful obedience, each step will show us this, even to our final step. He will someday even take away our life itself. But in that, He

will provide a life which is truly life. There are no lacks in God, except the lacks which we make when we fail to trust Him.

Faith in the Lord, means faith in His word. The two cannot be separated. We cannot say, "I have faith in Jesus," and then logically say, "I don't agree with that part of the Bible." It is the Bible, and no other source, that reveals the Lord to us. If we refuse to acknowledge His word, we have a complete disconnect from who He is. That is why the word of the Lord is so very important. And that is why, in order to know that we are saved, we absolutely must accept what the word of the Lord says concerning salvation.

Closing Verse: *"Behold, the days are coming," says the Lord,
"When the plowman shall overtake the reaper,
And the treader of grapes him who sows seed;
The mountains shall drip with sweet wine,
And all the hills shall flow with it." Amos 9:13*

Next Week: Leviticus 25:8-22 *Great stuff, I'm sure you will agree, my favored one...* (The Year of Jubilee, Part I) (46th Leviticus Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if you have a lifetime of sin heaped up behind you, He can wash it away and purify you completely and wholly. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Sabbath of the Land

And the Lord spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai, saying
There on Sinai, these words He was then relaying

"Speak to the children of Israel
And say to them: Yes, according to this word
'When you come into the land which I give you
Then the land shall keep a sabbath to the Lord

Six years you shall sow your field
And six years you shall prune
Your vineyard and gather its fruit
You can do this while whistling out a tune
But in the seventh year there shall be

A sabbath of solemn rest for the land, a sabbath to the Lord
You shall neither sow your field nor prune your vineyard
You shall do according to this word

What grows of its own accord
Of your harvest you shall not reap, please understand
Nor gather the grapes of your untended vine
For it is a year of rest for the land

And the sabbath produce of the land
Shall be food for you:
For you, your male and female servants
Your hired man, and the stranger who dwells with you too

For your livestock and the beasts that are in your land
All its produce shall be for food, so tasty and grand

O God, it is so good to come to Your word
To search it out for what You would of us expect
And in so searching we find our precious Lord
And in Him, only grace and mercy can we detect

For those who have trusted in Jesus
We have the surest hope of all
Magnificent, wondrous things He has done for us
Because upon His precious name, we did call

How can such love be, O God?
Surely it exceeds heaven's highest height
And so for sending Jesus we joyously applaud
Because through Him, all things are new –
-----Once again all things are right

Hallelujah and Amen...

LEVITICUS 25:8-22

(THE YEAR OF JUBILEE, PART I)

The Year of Jubilee as detailed in this chapter is filled with enough exciting details, and enough references pointing to a fulfillment of its precepts in Christ, that one would think what is detailed here would be sufficient to be a valid and remarkable passage all by itself. For the most part, everything about the year is recorded right in this chapter. There are a few references to it elsewhere, but there is little else about the year than what is found here in Chapter 25.

Unfortunately, like other passages which people manipulate in order to sell books or tickle the ears, the same is true with this passage as well. One of the popular teachings on this is the cycle of Jubilees going back to creation itself. This is based on a book known as The Book of Jubilees, otherwise known as “Little Genesis.” It is a pseudepigraphal book, written about the 2nd century BC, and which claims to follow sets of Jubilees, or periods of 49 years, from creation and which continue throughout history.

From this, modern writers have developed an entire theology on the years of Jubilee in order to predict when things will happen in the future. In other words, they are practicing divination and calling it Christianity. There are a few problems with this. First, among them is that the year of Jubilee was initiated by the Lord, through Moses for when the people entered the land of Israel. The Book of Jubilees has nothing to do with the truth of the Bible.

Secondly, nobody knows when the first Year of Jubilee was observed, or if it actually was ever observed. The Bible says nothing about its observance all through the rest of its pages. Third, as this Year of Jubilee cycle only pertains to the land of Israel, the question is, “Do years of Jubilee continue on during periods of exile?” No. It cannot be. The purpose of the Jubilees is restoration. That can’t occur during exile. For these reasons, it is absurd to try to attempt to guess what year a Year of Jubilee would be. We have no starting year, we have gaps in Israel’s time in the land due to exile, and Israel isn’t observing these cycles now that they are back in the land. If you’re curious about whether the books out there on this subject have even a hint of truth in them, I will tell you – they don’t. Save your money and try reading your Bible.

Forth, the year of Jubilee points to Christ and His work. It is fulfilled in what He has done. Therefore, the prophetic picture of what this year looked forward to is over. There is no expected future fulfillment of it scheduled, just expected results because of His completed work.

Text Verse: *“Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.” Galatians 5:1*

Paul says that the law is a yoke of bondage. Its principle sign was that of circumcision. The one thing, above all, that made a person show that he was an adherent to the law was that of circumcision. But in Galatians, Paul eviscerates the argument that we somehow need to be circumcised in order to be pleasing to God. In fact, he argues vehemently against it. In the very next verse he says that for those who get themselves circumcised in order to show off their religiosity, to them Christ profits nothing.

Instead of drawing nearer to God, they fall from grace, become a debtor to the entire law, and stand condemned before the law. In order to avoid that legalistic trap, he tells us to stand fast in the liberty by which Christ has made us free. He has freed us from all bonds and chains. The captives have been set free. Let us trust in this, and learn what it means to observe the Year of Jubilee in Christ, who is our freedom.

These are the things we will hope to accomplish in the next few sermons which comprise the rest of Leviticus 25. It is a great passage waiting to be unwrapped, and that is because it points to a great, great Savior. It’s all to be found in His superior word. And so let’s turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. Restoration – As It Was, So Shall It Be (verses 8-17)

⁸‘And you shall count seven sabbaths of years for yourself,

With these words, a new development is introduced, but it is still following the same overall theme which was initiated in verse 1. There, the Lord spoke to Moses. With no new introductory statement, what will be presented continues the same theme.

Here we have the same type of synecdoche which was found in verse 23:15. The term, *shabetot shanim*, or “sabbaths of years,” signifies “weeks of years.” The single Sabbath stands for the whole. And so the people are being instructed to build upon what was described concerning the Sabbath years in verses 1-7. There was to be a remembrance of the Sabbath years, because they were to lead to a greater event after the observance of seven of them.

This then finds a parallel in the Feast of Weeks of Leviticus 23. There was a particular Sabbath, after which came the Feast of Firstfruits. From the day after that Sabbath there

was a counting of “seven Sabbaths” which would bring the people to another particular day, thus commencing the Feast of Weeks. The same pattern, but in “sabbaths of years,” is to be seen here.

8 (con't) seven times seven years;

This explains the meaning of the previous words. A “sabbath of years” is a period of seven years. That amount is then to be multiplied by seven of these periods.

8 (con't) and the time of the seven sabbaths of years shall be to you forty-nine years.

The pattern here follows directly along with that of the Feast of Weeks. But instead of days leading to weeks of days, it is years leading to weeks of years. There was to be a counting of seven sets of sabbatical years, totaling forty-nine. At the end of this period of time, the Lord next directs Moses concerning what is expected...

9 Then you shall cause the trumpet of the Jubilee

The “trumpet” referred to here is the *shophar*. It signifies a cornet or a curved horn that gives out a clear sound. The word comes from *shaphar*, which signifies beautiful, as in fair or comely. It was first seen in the sounding of it in Exodus 19 & 20 at the giving of the law, and it has not been seen since. Further, this is the last time it will be seen in the Pentateuch. Curiously then, the *shophar* ushered in what began the law, and the *shophar* is used to signify that which reveals the ending of the law as well.

The word translated here as Jubilee is *teruah*. It was first seen in Leviticus 23:24, and it signifies a shout or blast of war, or of alarm, or of joy. In the case of this sounding, it is to be one of great joy. This in turn is from *rua*, which gives the idea of splitting the ears with sound, such as in a great shout or sounding. The note was to resound throughout the land. The Hebrew words are literally translated then, “Cause to resound the shophar of loud sound.”

9 (con't) to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month;

This time is one-half way through the year of the redemptive calendar which started each year in the springtime. However, it is the first month of the creation, or civil, calendar. It is on the tenth day of the seventh month, which is the same day as...

9 (con't) on the Day of Atonement

b'yom ha'kippurim – “in day the atonements.” It is plural. On the most sacred day of the annual calendar, the day which the people’s sins were atoned for, and full restoration with the Lord was granted for their many sins, they were to observe this special sounding of shophars. This rather clearly shows that the true liberty, which this year of liberty looks forward to, could only take place after the atoning sacrifice of the Lord.

^{9 (con't)} **you shall make the trumpet to sound throughout all your land.**

The blast of the shophar was to be heard everywhere, meaning that it was a directive for every locality to be prepared to sound. It may even be that every man would be asked to blow his own *shophar* if he possessed one. The reason for this will become obvious, but in short, the day would affect everyone, and so everyone should be reminded by hearing it.

¹⁰ **And you shall consecrate the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout *all* the land to all its inhabitants.**

One of the most difficult aspects of this observance to pin down is the meaning of “the fiftieth year.” Scholars note that it is the forty-ninth year, and therefore some say the cycle is actually only forty-nine years, and is simply rounded up to the number fifty. But that doesn’t square at all with the intent of the passage.

But the fiftieth year, if using the redemption calendar, doesn’t begin until the spring. So how could the freedoms mentioned be proclaimed here, and yet not take effect until the next spring? If the Sabbath year cycle was based on the creation/civil calendar, meaning beginning in this seventh month, then it would make more sense. But why then call it the seventh month? In short, it would be to maintain consistency of what each month was for the standard, redemptive calendar. If you’re confused, don’t worry. For 3500 years, this has confused the reader, and it remains a complicated part of the law.

Regardless, the fiftieth year was to be considered as one consecrated, or set apart, as one of liberty. The word *deror* is used here. It has only been seen once, in Exodus 30, to describe the liquid myrrh of the holy anointing oil. It means, “free flowing.” The myrrh flowed freely from the plant, rather than it being cut to induce flow. Such is the idea here – spontaneity of outflow, and thus liberty. The word won’t be used again in the books of Moses, but it will be referred to in Isaiah 61, Jeremiah 34, and Ezekiel 46 – all in relation to this chapter’s instructions.

^{10 (con't)} **It shall be a Jubilee for you;**

The word translated here as Jubilee is not the same as verse 9. It is *yobel*. It signifies the ram's horn as an instrument, and thus the festival which the ram's horn introduces. Literally, the verse reads, "It shall be a ram's horn for you." The horn stands in place of what it accomplishes. *Yobel* comes from *yabal*, meaning to bear along, or lead. As the ram's horn is given a long continuous blast, carrying along its message, so the Jubilee is introduced.

^{10 (con't)} **and each of you shall return to his possession, and each of you shall return to his family.**

Two separate aspects of freedom are given in these words. The first is freedom of land, and the second is freedom of person. This is to demonstrate to the people two fundamental truths: 1) It is the Lord who was the true owner of the land, and 2) that it is the Lord who is the true owner and possessor of their souls. Notwithstanding their temporary ownership of either land or person, in the end, the Lord is ultimately who all were accountable to – from the poorest inhabitant, to the king in Jerusalem.

In a greater regard then, it is a year of restoration. On the Day of Atonement, the people's sins and uncleanness were covered over, thus restoring them to a right relationship with Him. Likewise, this fiftieth year was intended to undue all of the entanglements of life which come through human interactions. By granting this year, things were brought back to the original state at the beginning of their time in the land. The verses from 11-34 deal with the first half of the equation, the land as the Lord's possession. From 35-55, the subject of people as the Lord's possession is then explained.

¹¹ **That fiftieth year shall be a Jubilee to you;**

It is again clear that this is not a number simply rounded up from forty-nine, but rather it is speaking of the fiftieth year. The forty-ninth year was a sabbatical year without sowing or reaping. That was made explicit in verses 1-7. Now that is to be repeated...

^{11 (con't)} **in it you shall neither sow nor reap what grows of its own accord, nor gather *the grapes of your untended vine.***

As in verse 5, the two commands are again given. The admonition to not reap what grows of its own accord means to reap for the sake of a harvest, including storage. Rather, they could reap it for individual consumption only. And further, anyone could do so. The land was totally freed up for any and all. Likewise, the grapes of the Nazirite, meaning the untrimmed vines were not to be gathered. Again, this means "gathered as

a harvest.” They were to be left as common food for any and for all. Here again we see the truth that Yehovah is the Lord of the land. Its soil, its growth, its harvests, the dwellings, the seasons it enjoys, the roads where people walked – everything ultimately belongs to Him. He has the final say, because He is the ultimate Authority to be deferred to.

¹² For it *is* the Jubilee; it shall be holy to you; you shall eat its produce from the field.

This is also a repeat thought as for that of the Sabbath year. As a *yobel*, or Jubilee, the produce of the ground was consecrated as holy. Therefore, people could go out to the fields and remove what was needed for the day, but they were not to store up the produce as one would in a year of harvest. The Lord had promised to provide, and the people were to trust in His provision, and to confidently gather that which they needed. It is almost a year long reminder of the times when the manna was given. The people were to gather and trust, and on the seventh day, to rest.

If we just stop here for a moment and contemplate what is going on, we can then see why this is so important. There is an amazing and intricate cycle of life which is being presented in these days and years of remembrance. They begin with the Sabbath day which is consistently held as the great reminder of God’s creative and redemptive hand among the people. Each time the Sabbath has been presented since Exodus 16, it has given us one insight after another into the accomplished work of the Lord, and in the coming work of Christ.

From the Sabbath day, came the Sabbath-month, the seventh month, which detailed the three fall feasts. Christ’s birth into humanity, His atoning death, and His dwelling among and in His people were highlighted in these feasts. And then from there came the Sabbath year. It looks forward to a time when the Lord would tend to the people’s needs apart from any work. They could rest in Him and find that He will provide for them apart from their effort.

And those Sabbath years were to accumulate into the great year of Jubilee where debts would be released, properties would be restored, the land would produce on its own, and captives would be set free. A total restoration of all things was prefigured in this great year of Jubilee. It is reflective of the words of Paul concerning our position in Christ now –

“Therefore, if anyone *is* in Christ, *he is* a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.” 2 Corinthians 5:17

But our position in Christ now is only an anticipatory taste of what will be realized in its fullness at the restoration of all things. Christ Jesus' words found in Revelation 21:5 reflect this –

Then He who sat on the throne said, “Behold, I make all things new.”

If we look at the Sabbath year as picturing the Millennium where man rests from his striving with God, we can look at the Year of Jubilee as a step beyond that, where total restoration of all things is realized. Each step of the Sabbath cycle is intended to elevate the people of Israel to an understanding that the Lord has something better awaiting His redeemed. The process must go through to its completion, but when it is accomplished, it will be glorious.

Think it through now with these sevens. The seventh day Sabbath acknowledges the Lord's Creation and Redemption. The seventh month is an acknowledgment of His incarnation, atoning death, and dwelling in His people. The seventh year Sabbath anticipates His millennial reign. And the year of Jubilee anticipates total restoration of what was lost at the beginning. All of it, every detail looks to the Lord and His work in the grand plan of redemption. From the creation and fall, each step is fulfilled in Jesus, until we are again in the presence of God.

¹³ ‘In this Year of Jubilee, each of you shall return to his possession.

Though seemingly a verse about reacquisition of land, the words here point directly to Christ. How so? It is because of this law of entailment that the people's rights could never be taken away from them. The government or king had no authority to do so, the banks had no authority to do so, and the priests themselves had no authority to do so. The land belonged to the one, or his representative, to whom it originally landed.

The wisdom of the law led to meticulous preservation of the family registers as evidence to establish ancestral lines, and thus rights. And so, both the tribe and family of Christ were readily discernible at His coming. Pick up the scroll, look for the name, check the inheritance... walah! A potential for messiah can be confirmed –

And it came to pass in those days *that* a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ² This census first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria. ³ So all went to be registered, everyone to his own city.

⁴ Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, ⁵ to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was with child. ⁶ So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered. ⁷ And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. Luke 2:1-7

The ancestral scrolls would be used for many things, but they were maintained most especially because of the exacting and ingenious provisions of Leviticus 25. With these records destroyed along with the temple in AD70, a truth must readily be discerned from that fact... Messiah has come. No other biblical conclusion is possible.

¹⁴ And if you sell anything to your neighbor or buy from your neighbor's hand, you shall not oppress one another.

Four times in this chapter, the *amith*, or "neighbor" will be seen. The term doesn't literally mean a neighbor, but a fellow of Israel in general. It is used only thirteen times total, and this is the last time it will be used until the book of Zechariah where its final use will be found in a prophecy about the Shepherd Savior, Christ. It is a word which is always used concerning dealings between two people which should be kept fair, and honorable.

To oppress one another would be to over-value the property by the seller, or to undervalue it by the buyer. There was to be only straight dealing between the parties as they agreed to a fair sale of the land. To avoid such a thing as much as possible, the Lord gives clear guidance for such sales...

¹⁵ According to the number of years after the Jubilee you shall buy from your neighbor,

When Israel finally gets back to the Land of Promise, they will divide it up by lot, and within territories set apart for each tribe. No land was to pass permanently from one tribe to the next. It was to forever remain a part of the tribe to which it was granted. However, if Al from Asher bought a plot belonging to Ned from Naphtali, unless it went back to its owner at the Jubilee, there would be mixture, and thus confusion in the land.

The possession of each family then was an inalienable right. But it could be sold temporarily. Therefore, the value would begin to be set based on the number of years

since the last Jubilee. Thus Al would say, “The Jubilee was 21 years ago, and so I am buying the next 29 years of owner’s rights.

¹⁵ (con’t) **and according to the number of years of crops he shall sell to you.**

In turn, Ned would say, “Ok Al, my new friend and pal. There are 29 years left, and so I am going to sell you the land based on that.” But Al, knowing the law says, “Yes, Ned, but I can’t sow and reap on a Sabbath year. You need to first deduct those, I fear.”

The word for “crops” in this verse is *tebuah*. It signifies the produce of the land. As no produce was harvested on a Sabbath year, it was not to be counted in the reckoning of the sale. That was seen in Exodus 23, where *tebuah* was used to explain this –

“Six years you shall sow your land and gather in its **produce**,¹¹ but the seventh *year* you shall let it rest and lie fallow, that the poor of your people may eat; and what they leave, the beasts of the field may eat. In like manner you shall do with your vineyard *and* your olive grove.” Exodus 23:10, 11

The amount of expected produce, and the years when produce could be gathered were a part of dealing fairly and not oppressing a neighbor. Ned was looking like he might be taking advantage of things, but Al was not one to be easily misled. Unless Al can overestimate the size of the expected crop each year, the land will go for exactly what it is worth. Al refrains from any such fish stories, and a fair deal is transacted.

¹⁶ **According to the multitude of years you shall increase its price, and according to the fewer number of years you shall diminish its price; for he sells to you *according* to the number *of the years* of the crops.**

The sales price is not based on the land, but on what the land produces. Therefore, the number of, and expected size of, crops is what the sale is to be based on. In the end, the land belongs to the Lord. He has given it to a tribe and a family. Therefore, they only have the right to sell it for what it produces, and the buyer may only purchase those years of produce. If each year was worth 10 units, and there were 20 years left after deducting Sabbath years, then the price would be 200 units. If there were 30 left, the price would be 300 units, and so on.

What must be considered then, is that in buying the crops, there is the truth that if the Lord blesses the land, there will be an abundance of crops; a great deal for the buyer. If there is a famine, there will be minimal crops; a loss to the buyer. As it is the Lord who

ultimately directs these, then one is actually placing his faith in the provision of the Lord. What is this picturing? Think it through – crops are a harvest. What are you willing to sew into the harvest which the Lord has set before you? How many will come to Christ because of your efforts?

¹⁷ Therefore you shall not oppress one another,

A completely different word is used than in verse 14. Rather than “oppress,” it should say “mistreat.” This then shows the gravity of the Lord’s words. In essence, “You have oppressed, and you have mistreated, and Me you did not fear.” The varying of the verb is its own type of warning that there will be consequences for violating a precept which should be held as sacred. And the reason for this is...

¹⁷ (con’t) but you shall fear your God; for I *am* the Lord your God.

Despite the rather long chapter, it being 55 verses long, the name of the Lord is used rather sparingly, only six times. And only three of them are in this declaratory form. Therefore, when He declares it, the words He speaks are to be taken to heart and carefully acted upon. This is especially true here where He begins with stating their God was to be feared, and that He is Yehovah their God.

Everything about the sale of the property is based upon the year of release. And the year of release is based upon the sounding of the trumpet on the Day of Atonement. The Lord’s forgiveness and covering is the key to initiate the entire process. Hence, to mistreat one another is to fail to recognize the Lord’s goodness over one’s own wrongdoing.

And yet, we as Christians have the full realization and the complete forgiveness of every debt in our lives in Christ, but we still mistreat one another, and we are unwilling to overlook being mistreated. If there is one truth seen time and time again, it is that Christians do a much better job of oppressing and mistreating one another than the world at large could ever hope to attain.

*The Year of Jubilee, when all is restored
A time when things past are brought back again
Come and see, look to the workings of the Lord
What He has done for the sons of men*

What was lost is now open for His redeemed

*The marvel of Paradise stands before us
We were shut out forever, so it seemed
But then God sent... yes, God sent – His Son Jesus*

*And in His life and work all is made new
Heaven's access for us is safely secured
Marvelous things for us God did do
In the sending of His Son, Jesus our Lord*

II. Providing for the Sabbath Year (verses 18-22)

¹⁸ 'So you shall observe My statutes and keep My judgments, and perform them;

Although these words are certainly inclusive of all of the Lord's statutes and judgments, they are more specifically intended to refer to everything in this chapter since verse 2. The people have been given specific commands, and the Lord expects them to be adhered to. Having said that, like the Sabbath year observance, there is nothing in Scripture to show that the people ever observed a Year of Jubilee. Like the failure to give the land its Sabbath rest, failing to observe the fifty year Jubilee was probably another of the multitude of reasons for the people's punishment and exile. This can almost be inferred from the next words...

¹⁸ (con't) and you will dwell in the land in safety.

This is something that rarely occurred. Times of peace are noted, but times of being hemmed in by enemies are as frequent as the next turn of the page. The people failed to heed the Lord, and the land was a very unsafe place. As a major land bridge between great nations, Israel's only hope of not being entered and crushed was to act in accord with God who carefully placed them there.

When Israel danced, it was always on the edge of a very sharp sword, and this was intentional. There is a price for obedience, and there is a price for disobedience. The Lord need do nothing but withdraw His hand of restraint, and the enemies would come flooding in. And He withdrew His hand frequently over years and generations as a means of bringing them back to their senses, or as a way of punishing them for their failures. But when they were sensible and obedient, the Lord was faithful to perform His end of the bargain...

¹⁹ Then the land will yield its fruit, and you will eat your fill, and dwell there in safety.

Israel isn't just dependent on border security. As a land bridge, this is surely true, but it was, and remains to this day, wholly dependent on the favor of the winds and rains as well. Unlike Egypt which received water all year long, and which can be drawn into canals for use during the low flow season, Israel is a mountainous land. When the rains come, they quickly flow down the hills and towards the lowest elevations, eventually heading out to the seas.

For crops to grow, rains would need to be on time and consistent. The obedience of the people implied conditions would be favorable for the land to yield its fruit, even to abundance. The people would eat their fill, and they would be content and safe as they did. In fact, this is one of the promised blessings found in the next chapter for obedience, the very first one in fact. The Lord promises by Himself that this will be true. But when a contrary attitude and a stiff neck was seen, correction came in fields which lay barren and unproductive.

Reading the Bible only from an agricultural aspect, at times one can almost tell when the people were obedient, and when they weren't. But they could never say they weren't warned. The law was received, the books were written, and Moses' writings stood as a witness to them, and against them, that the Lord had spoken through him. What the Lord sought from them was faith leading to faithful obedience...

²⁰ 'And if you say, "What shall we eat in the seventh year, since we shall not sow nor gather in our produce?"

Here the Lord, through Moses, anticipates the most obvious question one could imagine. Though it is a question of very little faith, it is a valid one nonetheless for someone who simply had no comprehension of who the Lord really is. Thus, they are surely bound to ask, "What shall we eat in the seventh year?"

If there is no plowing and sowing because the Lord had forbidden these things, then where will the food for all the people come from? And even more, what about the animals, and the eighth year when seed would be so desperately needed for sowing that crop? If the people were restrained from sowing and gathering, how would these needs be met?

²¹ Then I will command My blessing on you in the sixth year, and it will bring forth produce enough for three years.

This verse shows either the utterly ridiculous nature of the writings of Moses... or they show that what he wrote was relayed from a Divine source. No other option is even credible to consider. The people were to enter Canaan in just a few week's time. It would be a short time after that for the first Sabbath-year cycle to begin. In due time, the proverbial proof would be in the pudding.

Really, only a lunatic or a democrat would promise a triple portion of something they had absolutely no control over at all. If this were not true, the result would be selecting a new leader while Moses lay at the bottom of a cliff, and there would not even be one Sabbath year observed. And so to make this claim, the Lord puts His own stamp of credibility on the leader he has selected. The fact that it would actually be forty years before they entered, and without Moses at that, makes no difference at all at this point in time.

The Lord has spoken, He has made the claim, and it was Moses who would have had to face the consequences if things did not progress as was originally assumed that they would. The promise then is actually a step greater than that of the giving of the manna to the people. In that, the people were told they would receive a double portion each Friday. They were further told that it would not fill with worms and stink like that of the other five days.

The miracle of the manna proved reliable, but this would require not just an extra portion. It would require one above that. It would have to be enough to carry the people through the Sabbath year, and into the next as well. To show the exemplary nature of the promise, the Lord says He wouldn't just provide enough to get them started in the eighth, but it would carry them all the way through the eighth, a true and full triple portion...

²² And you shall sow in the eighth year, and eat old produce until the ninth year; until its produce comes in, you shall eat *of the old harvest*.

Throughout the entire eighth year, there would be no need to eat what was harvested during the season. Instead, they would still be eating the grain of year six as the entire harvest of year eight was fully and finally being finished and gathered in. Here in this verse is a new word to close us out, *yashan*, or old. So, even though it's a new word, it's an old one at the same time. It indicates "old things" and it is rather rare, being seen a total of just six times, two of them being in this verse.

The miracle of this promise is so great, that the Lord will use the same precept again in the time of Hezekiah, king of Judah. When Sennacherib, king of Assyria came against Jerusalem, threatening to destroy it, the Lord gave a long and beautiful reply to Hezekiah's prayers for deliverance. In that reply, He promised to handle the situation, and to give a sign to prove that His word was what accomplished the task. A portion of that reply said –

'This *shall be* a sign to you:

You shall eat this year such as grows of itself,
And in the second year what springs from the same;
Also in the third year sow and reap,
Plant vineyards and eat the fruit of them.

³⁰ And the remnant who have escaped of the house of Judah
Shall again take root downward,
And bear fruit upward.

³¹ For out of Jerusalem shall go a remnant,
And those who escape from Mount Zion.

The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.' 2 Kings 19:29-31

Like the crops which had taken root downward, and which would bear fruit upwards for two full years, the people of Israel would likewise not be cut off. They would take root and bear fruit, all for the sake of the Lord's glory, which Hezekiah had sought in his time of great distress.

And this is the point of the entire body of Scripture – the glory of God. Everything He did in creation and since creation is to proclaim His glory to His creatures, and to invite them to share in that glory as observers of His magnificence. The Year of Jubilee was given to Israel to demonstrate this glory to them, but it was also given to anticipate the coming of Christ who would take the shadow and make it substance.

Christ Jesus did just that. He gave release of the land, and He gave release to those held in captivity. The only bondage that remains is that of time. The redeemed of the Lord are, in fact, set free. But we must still await the time when that is realized. The sounding of that trumpet isn't far off, and it is the blessed hope of those who eagerly await His appearing. May that day be soon.

The one thing about that Day though, is that there will be some who aren't going. There is a dividing line in who will hear the sound of the shophar and go, and who will be

ignorant of it and be stuck behind. The dividing line is what each individual has done about Jesus. It is, after all, all about Him.

Closing Verse: *“The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me,
Because the Lord has anointed Me
To preach good tidings to the poor;
He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted,
To proclaim liberty to the captives,
And the opening of the prison to those who are bound;
2 To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord,
And the day of vengeance of our God;
To comfort all who mourn, Isaiah 61:1, 2*

Next Week: *Leviticus 25:23-32 More great things about the Jubilee to sort through...*
(The Year of Jubilee, Part II) (47th Leviticus Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if you have a lifetime of sin heaped up behind you, He can wash it away and purify you completely and wholly. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Year of Jubilee

‘And you shall count seven sabbaths of years for yourself
Seven times seven years
-----just think of all the good times and tears!
And the time of the seven sabbaths of years
Shall be to you forty-nine years

Then you shall cause the trumpet of the Jubilee
To sound on the tenth day of the seventh month, let it resound!
On the Day of Atonement you shall make
The trumpet throughout all your land to sound

And you shall consecrate the fiftieth year
And proclaim liberty
Throughout all the land to all its inhabitants
It shall be for you a Jubilee

And each of you shall return to his possession, so shall it be
And each of you shall return to his family

That fiftieth year shall be a Jubilee to you
In it you shall neither sow nor reap
What grows of its own accord
Nor gather the grapes of your untended vine
-----Whether just a few, or a whole whopping heap

For it is the Jubilee
It shall be holy to you
You shall eat its produce from the field
This is what you are to do

'In this Year of Jubilee, please do heed and learn
Each of you shall to his possession return

And if you sell anything to your neighbor
Or buy from your neighbor's hand
You shall not oppress one another
Rather in peace with him you shall stand

According to the number of years
After the Jubilee you shall from your neighbor buy
And according to the number of years of crops he shall sell to you
By the number of crops you shall classify

According to the multitude of years you shall increase its price
And according to the fewer number of years
-----you shall its price diminish
For he sells to you according to the number
Of the years of the crops, until they finish

Therefore you shall not oppress one another
But you shall fear your God
For I am the Lord your God
Walk circumspectly therefore on this land that you trod

'So you shall observe My statutes

And keep My judgments, so you are to understand
And perform them
And you will dwell in safety in the land

Then the land will yield its fruit, so to you I tell
And you will eat your fill, and there in safety dwell

And if you say
“What shall we eat in the seventh year...
Since we shall not sow nor gather in our produce?
Pshaw, I am the Lord, so have no fear

Then I will command My blessing on you in the sixth year
-----despite your fears
And it will bring forth produce enough for three years
And you shall sow in the eighth year
And eat old produce until the ninth year, so I attest
Until its produce comes in
You shall eat of the old harvest

Lord God, we look ahead as yet
To the day when Christ comes for those already released
The moment is ahead, the hour is set
And we wait until the ticking clock has ceased

Until then, we thank You for our Lord Jesus
Who has restored the land and opened heaven’s door
Great things through Him, O God, You have done for us
And we shall exalt and praise You forevermore

Hallelujah and Amen...

LEVITICUS 25:23-38

(THE YEAR OF JUBILEE, PART II)

The many systems set in place in Israel for land, property, the produce of the land, and the like, and which are set up for the care of the people are amazing. In studying these laws in order, and one at a time, we learn all kinds of intricate details about how things operated. But it's hard to actually place ourselves into the story and really see how it all fits together. The people of Israel, though, would have lived them out, not one at a time, but all the time.

The feasts of Israel were lived out in a continuous fashion each year. The seventh Sabbath year would be a regular part of this cycle. Within that cycle, there would also be the annual tithe which the people set aside year by year. And from that, the tithe would be given away once every third year. This means that there would be two such tithe-years for each seven Sabbath year cycle, or even a third if the tithe-year fell on a Sabbath year.

But... if the two happened on the same year, then there would be no reaping of the land, and so how the tithe was collected is rather difficult to determine. And yet, the Lord set each one of these things down as a precept for the people to follow. If they simply followed what was required, and did as they were instructed, the amount of blessing that would come upon them would have been truly remarkable.

We can't place our society into what the Lord mandated for Israel, and we cannot take the precepts of Chapter 25 and apply them to the functioning of our lives today. But it is such a unique system of ensuring stability that it is hard to simply ignore without giving a great breath of awe at what the Lord did for them.

In Israel, anyone who became poor had numerous ways of at least staying at a basic level, and even the ability to slowly work himself out of his pit if he was industrious enough. And eventually, even if that was just not possible, at the Year of Jubilee, he could once again reclaim his land and make a clean start of life all over again.

The laws of Israel found here would help considerably in relieving highs and lows of economic issues. Everything would be kept on a much more even keel because of the ingenious laws which are presented here. And someday, an even more perfect system will be introduced for the redeemed of the Lord. How good that will be.

In today's world, we are all just one economic collapse away from disaster, and there is no true security to be found. Wealth is a house of cards that could come tumbling down with the next major correction. So let us not put our hope in a failed system of digital readouts and shaky land deals.

Text Verse: *...that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, ¹⁸ the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints... Ephesians 1:17, 18*

Israel is being told what they are to do with their inheritance once again in today's verses. There are all kinds of interesting provisions to be looked into, and these are the laws that the people were bound to all their days. It was a regular part of life for them, just as it is for us when we go to buy a house. We don't think of it, we just do as the law requires and that's that.

But, if we consider buying land in another country, there is a lot of checking on what can and cannot be done. Failure to understand what one is getting into could end with a rather sad result. But such is not the case with the inheritance of the saints. There will be no catches, no hidden deals, and nothing that will bring about buyer's remorse. When we receive our inheritance, we will be eternally grateful for the unmerited grace which has been poured out on us through the work of Another, through the work of the Lord.

How Israel could complain about the deal they got is a bit hard to imagine. They were given land, they were given it forever, and they need do nothing to keep it. If they sold it off, it would eventually come back to them. There was never a permanent lack for those in the land.

And so how much greater is our eternal inheritance! The possibilities of the universe itself are awaiting us. So don't have fear that the future won't be bright. It will, in fact, be dazzling. Until then, we are here, and we can look at what God did for Israel as an ingenious hint into what lies ahead for us. Let us be confident of our inheritance, grateful to our Lord, and willing to be attentive to the many lessons about such things which are found in His superior word. And so let's turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. Redemption of Property (verses 23-34)

²³ ‘The land shall not be sold permanently,

The Lord now reverts to the instructions from verses 14-17. He had explained that the exchange of property was based upon the number of crops to be expected until the next year of Jubilee. This counting was exclusive of any Sabbath years where crops could not be harvested for profit. To ensure that this was an understood precept, the laws of the Sabbath year were then expanded on in verses 18-22. Now the property laws continue to be explained.

Here, a special word is given which is translated as “permanently,” *tsemithuth*. It will only be used here and in verse 30 in the whole Bible. It comes from a root meaning “to destroy.” The idea then is that the people are not to excise themselves from what has been ordained in the original granting of land. In so doing, there would be a destruction of what was originally intended. In both uses of the word, it is prefixed by “to.” In other words, “The land shall not be sold to extinction.” And this is not without reason...

^{23 (con’t)} for the land is Mine;

ki li ha’arets – “for to Me the land.” This sets the basis for all of the dealings with Israel, and any other group of people who would enter into the land. The Lord claims sovereign ownership over the land, and therefore, they have no right to permanently sell what is not theirs. They only have the rights to deal with the land as He lays out, but their rights go no further.

The words being placed here are a logical and necessary step in order for the next chapter to be introduced – that of the blessings and curses. The people had already bound themselves under the law, to include all such blessing and curses, but the issue of exile from the land becomes clear and understandable because of the placement of this chapter, and this statement – “for the land is Mine.” Israel is granted the land, but only so far as the Lord allows them to live in it. He is the Lord of the soil, and therefore, all land dealings are ultimately at His will, not Israel’s.

A beautiful example of fundamentally misunderstanding this precept by the people is found in Ezekiel. The only time Abraham is mentioned in the entire book, it is in connection with the land –

Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying: ²⁴ “Son of man, they who inhabit those ruins in the land of Israel are saying, ‘Abraham was only one, and he

inherited the land. But we *are* many; the land has been given to us as a possession.’ Ezekiel 33:23, 24

They remembered that their father, Abraham, had possessed the land despite being just one man. How much more then did they figure they had a right to possess it when there were many of them who had inherited the right to the land! But they failed to accept the whole scope of this tapestry. The land was given to Israel. When they were obedient, it was theirs and they could live in it. When they were disobedient, the land was theirs and they could not. It was theirs to possess, but not as an unconditional right.

²³ (con’t) **for you *are* strangers and sojourners with Me.**

As Lord of the soil, Israel was (and is) a group of tenants at will. In failure to meet the requirements of this state, they gave up their right to dwell in their allotment. Again, all of this was with the intent of securing a set, and continuing, inheritance which would someday lead the people to the Messiah. It is a giant fabric of intricate weavings intended for that one, ultimate purpose.

²⁴ **And in all the land of your possession you shall grant redemption of the land.**

With the things already addressed in mind, the concept of *geullah*, or redemption, is now introduced. It is a word which will be seen 14 times, but 9 of them will be in this chapter. To see the practice in action, the Lord will provide two examples of it – one in Ruth 4, and one in Jeremiah 32. Because the land is the Lord’s, and because the people are but temporary dwellers with right of use, redemption of the property was expected. This then works into the greater theme of redemption as is found in Christ Jesus. Here in Leviticus, truths are being relayed which go backward to the fall of man, and forward to the work of Christ.

²⁵ **‘If one of your brethren becomes poor,**

One of the very purposes of the land return in the Year of Jubilee was to avoid a permanent state of exactly what is detailed here, which is that a fellow Israelite become *muk*, or poor. This is a unique word, found only four times in this chapter, and once in Chapter 27. It comes from a root meaning “to become thin,” and thus it signifies being impoverished. By having a return of the land, it would balance out extremes of poverty and wealth. However, poverty could come between the Jubilees, and so provisions are made for such times.

²⁵ (con't) **and has sold *some* of his possession,**

When times of thinness arise, a man could sell some, or all, of his possession in order to alleviate his plight. In fact, it is the only reason given for actually doing so. Outside of poverty, the law presumes that each would retain his land. However, in such a case, it was not automatically lost until the Jubilee. Instead, the provision of *geullah*, or redemption, was to be adhered to by the new owner...

²⁵ (con't) **and if his redeeming relative comes to redeem it,**

A relative of the poor man had the full right to redeem the land which was sold. This wasn't optional, as if the new owner could say, "No, I want to hold onto it." Rather, when a near relative presented the fee, the present owner was under obligation to sell back that which he held. This is the meaning of verse 24, "you shall grant redemption of the land."

²⁵ (con't) **then he may redeem what his brother sold.**

The near relative had full right to reacquire that which had been sold away. In this is seen the germ of what is later explained by Paul concerning the work of Christ. Dominion over the earth had been granted to Adam, but he had lost his right. But Christ came, taking on flesh and becoming our near relative in humanity, in order to perform the redemption for us. In Luke 4 the devil said to Jesus –

...“All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for *this* has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish. ⁷ Therefore, if You will worship before me, all will be Yours.” Luke 4:6,7

Jesus didn't question the truth of the devil's claim. Instead, He went about, using this very law given to Israel, to reclaim what had been lost. In the end, He prevailed –

“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.” Matthew 28:18

The heavenly scene itself is found in the book of Revelation –

And I saw in the right *hand* of Him who sat on the throne a scroll written inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals. ² Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, “Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?” ³ And

no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll, or to look at it.

⁴So I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open and read the scroll, or to look at it. ⁵But one of the elders said to me, “Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals.” Revelation 5:1-5

²⁶ Or if the man has no one to redeem it, but he himself becomes able to redeem it,

If a man found sufficiency to redeem the property on his own, then the law gave provision for that as well. This verse here presupposes that any human could have potentially reclaimed the title to what Adam lost, but the sad words of Revelation 5 show that such was not actually to be. No one was found worthy to open and read the scroll, or to look at it. The law gave the option nonetheless.

²⁷ then let him count the years since its sale, and restore the remainder to the man to whom he sold it, that he may return to his possession.

The idea here is one of simple mathematics. How many years had passed since the sale, how many had it been in the purchaser’s hands, and how many years of crops were yet ahead until the Jubilee. In figuring these in, the mandatory sale price could be determined. There was no haggling, and there was no actual dispute. The rightful owner would receive the property back based on the law itself, and his ability to meet his requirements under it.

²⁸ But if he is not able to have *it* restored to himself, then what was sold shall remain in the hand of him who bought it until the Year of Jubilee; and in the Jubilee it shall be released, and he shall return to his possession.

The words are obvious, but the beauty of them may be missed. The buyer of the land lost nothing. He paid for the crops which lay ahead, and nothing more. Therefore, he had received full for his purchase – be it five years or forty-five. And the one who had sold the land had received full compensation for the use of the land which he lost his right to during the time of absence.

However, with the coming of the Jubilee, meaning the sounding of the ram’s horn, the land returned to his hand once again. The playing field was level, and any time of poverty was potentially gone forever. Nobody became overly wealthy, nobody was

permanently poor, and the government could not usurp the rights of the people because the law held final say over the entire matter.

²⁹ 'If a man sells a house in a walled city, then he may redeem it within a whole year after it is sold; *within* a full year he may redeem it.

As all Israel was given an inheritance of land, those who either built or purchased a house within a walled city had merited the right to that property. Human effort was involved in the process, apart from the grace of an inheritance. This is true with a house built on inherited land, but it is the land, not the house, which the Lord considers.

A city with walls was a place specifically designed to promote a different type of industry than that of agriculture. There are artisans, business dealers, smiths, and all of the other things life in such a city included. The walls are man made protection, and it is a place of human effort and endeavor. If a person owned a house within such a place, a set time of redemption could take place; one year. After that, the property would be forever transferred to the new owner without further encumbrance.

³⁰ But if it is not redeemed within the space of a full year, then the house in the walled city shall belong permanently to him who bought it, throughout his generations. It shall not be released in the Jubilee.

As the dwelling was never a gift of God in the first place, then it did not bear the mark of a permanent inheritance. Further, there was no danger in the confusion of tribes or families in the ownership of houses in walled cities. Because of this, such a transfer was given a set period of time to be reclaimed by the seller, but not a day beyond that. If after one year it was not bought back, the matter was settled forever. This verse has the Bible's last use of *tsemithuth*, introduced in verse 23. Its use is permanently ended, and so with finality, we can bid it adieu.

³¹ However the houses of villages which have no wall around them shall be counted as the fields of the country.

A village without walls presupposes that the houses would be connected to the surrounding land for the purpose of agriculture. Instead of building a house on each piece of land like often occurs, some villages are started with the set purpose of community where the inhabitants daily went out to work the land of one's inheritance. It is generally accepted that the later addition of walls, for protection or for some other reason, would not change the nature of the tie between the house and its acreage.

³¹ (con't) **They may be redeemed, and they shall be released in the Jubilee.**

Such houses were a part of the landed property which was given as grace at the original inheritance, they were necessary for reasonable cultivation of the land, and they were therefore released along with the land at the Jubilee, reverting to the original owner.

³² **Nevertheless the cities of the Levites, and the houses in the cities of their possession, the Levites may redeem at any time.**

Despite the book bearing the name of Levi, the only time that the tribe is mentioned by name in the entire book of Leviticus is here in verses 32 & 33. Their homes, even in walled cities, are a special exception to the rule for the redemption of houses. The reason for this is because the Levites were to have no inheritance of land among the people.

They were given forty-eight cities, scattered around Israel, as their dwellings. And instead of land to work, they were to be given the tithes of the common people as their inheritance. Thus their livelihood was far from being a guaranteed abundance. Instead, it was one which depended on the obedience of the people to the precept of the law which mandated the tithe. Further, if the crops of the land failed, the Levites would bear the weight of that loss as heavily as anyone, maybe more so.

As these things were true, this was as much a protection from permanent poverty as is the redemption/release of land for the common people in Israel. The Levite's homes, despite being in walled cities, were considered just as landed property to all others. They possessed the full right of redemption at any time.

³³ **And if a man purchases a house from the Levites, then the house that was sold in the city of his possession shall be released in the Jubilee; for the houses in the cities of the Levites *are* their possession among the children of Israel.**

Talk about a complicated verse – both in Hebrew, and in scholarly commentary. The Hebrew of this verse is so difficult, that the variety of translations which come from it are numerous. The first clause is not speaking of a purchase, but of the ability to redeem. It's hard to be dogmatic, but of all of the translations, the Holman Christian Standard appears to have caught the intent –

“Whatever property one of the Levites can redeem--a house sold in a city they possess--must be released at the Jubilee, because the houses in the Levitical cities

are their possession among the Israelites.” HCSB

The sale of land in Israel is tied to the produce of the land. Because the houses of the Levites are tied to the produce of the land, meaning the reception of tithes, then for the Levite the house itself is what possesses the value. It might logically follow that the sale of the house of a Levite would be based on the same criteria as for that of land – how many years until the Jubilee, how many Sabbath years should be deducted, and so on.

The division of the tithes among the Levites would be according to the amount received from the surrounding farms of the Israelites. Remember, the Lord is their inheritance, and all land belongs to the Lord. We must always consider how verses point to Jesus.

³⁴ But the field of the common-land of their cities may not be sold, for it *is* their perpetual possession.

Here comes a new word *migrash*, or common-land, which will henceforward be quite common. It signifies pasture land. Numbers 35 will detail the measurement of land reserved outside of every city of the Levites to be used as common land. This land belonged to the city and its inhabitants in perpetuity.

Because it belonged to all within, no individual had the right to sell a portion of it. Nor could the city as a whole opt to sell any or all of it, because it didn't belong to them any more than it belonged to their posterity. Therefore, it could not be sold in part or in whole. The word *migrash* comes from another word, signifying driving, or casting, something out. Therefore, this land was for the driving of herds which belonged to the Levites within.

*The land is mine, and I give it to you
It is for your use, for life and prosperity
In following My laws, you are to remain true
You are to deal with this land in all sincerity*

*Each precept given is done so with intent
You are to adhere to My word in all dealings of the land
Under My care is found this special arrangement
Each precept is pure, and so follow each command*

*In the redemption of the land there is much more
There are hints of the Messiah promised long ago*

*What He will do has been anticipated since ages before
But in the days yet ahead, through Him, redemption I will bestow*

II. Care for the Poor Brother (verses 35-38)

³⁵ ‘If one of your brethren becomes poor,

The law of slavery, including Hebrew servitude, follows on to the end of the chapter, but before the commands concerning that are given, we have these four verses which are provided to preclude that from being necessary if at all possible. The words are speaking of Hebrews only, and if following this verse in the KJV, a pen and ink correction of their translation is required.

In this first clause, the individual is identified as “one of your brethren.” It is referring to the redeemed people of Israel. If one of them becomes poor, the Lord would desire that they have their plight corrected. He further defines what this means...

^{35 (con’t)} and falls into poverty among you,

The Hebrew here is idiomatic, bringing in a new word, *mot*, or “waver.” A literal rendering would be, “and wavers his hand with you.” It gives the pitiful sense of someone who has lost the strength of his hand to simply support himself. Everything he touches falls into ruin. It seems obvious that such a person would have already attempted to rectify his lot by selling his inheritance until the time of redemption in the Year of Jubilee, but even that didn’t pan out.

Such a person is a perfect candidate for next selling himself into servitude in order to simply survive. If such occurred, he would be in that position until the time of release as well. In hopes of avoiding such misfortune and loss, a different course is sought out by directing the Israelites to be merciful to him...

^{35 (con’t)} then you shall help him,

The Hebrew reads, “then you shall strengthen in him.” His hand has wavered without strength, and that is to be corrected by strengthening him with one’s own hand – building him up and meeting his needs. It is a verse of expected mercy towards the poor, wavering soul.

^{35 (con’t)} like a stranger or a sojourner,

ger v'toshav – “stranger and sojourner.” The KJV incorrectly inserts the words, “though he be a stranger or sojourner.” The first clause has identified him as brother, meaning an Israelite. It should only say, “as a stranger and a sojourner.” In other words, in Leviticus 19 it said –

‘And if a stranger dwells with you in your land, you shall not mistreat him. ³⁴The stranger who dwells among you shall be to you as one born among you, and you shall love him as yourself; for you were strangers in the land of Egypt:
I *am* the Lord your God. Leviticus 19:33, 34

The law has already shown that Israel was to provide for the stranger or sojourner among the people. How much more willing then, should the people be to help out a brother who has fallen on great misfortune. His loss of land has put him in the same state as any stranger among the people, and maybe even in a worse state. Israel is being instructed to open their hand to such a person. To fail to do so would be a flagrant disregard for the high moral principles of the law towards one’s fellow man.

³⁵ (con’t) **that he may live with you.**

To keep him from unnecessary servitude, and to ensure that he could live among the people and be a productive citizen, every means of help possible should be made available.

³⁶ **Take no usury or interest from him;**

Two words are used in this clause – *neshek* and *tarbuth*. *Neshek* has already been seen in Exodus 22:25. It indicates interest on money, and literally means “to bite.” Just as a snake bites, causing pain, so interest is something which bites at another. This was forbidden in any amount on money lent to a fellow Israelite, and it was allowed in any amount when lent to a non-Israelite.

The second word, *tarbuth*, is introduced here and will only be seen one more time. It signifies “increase.” It comes from *ravah*, which means “to multiply.” Hence this is a multiplication of something. What is generally believed is that unlike usury which is interest on money, this is a type of interest on goods. In essence, “I will give you a bushel of wheat, but you must return one and one half to me when return payment is made.”

A passage which deals with exactly what is forbidden here is found in Nehemiah 5:1-13. The people mistreated one another, charged usury, and caused great consternation to

arise in those who returned from exile, and who had hoped to start anew in the land of Israel.

36 (con't) **but fear your God,**

v'yareta me-eloheka – “and fear your God.” The meaning of this phrase should be obvious, but because of the fallen world, we all have misconceptions about father figures, we all have misconceptions about our relationship with the Creator, and we all have misunderstandings about what it means to have a reverential fear of something.

An electrician, from the first day of training, is taught to fear electricity. And yet, from the first day of training, he is told that electricity is our friend. Both are true at the same time. It all depends on how one treats their friend. As an enemy, a guy here in Sarasota was working close to a high tension wire with a hammer. He lifted his arm back in order to make a strike and touched the wire with the hammer. The electricity went through him, and blew off his opposite hand.

As a friend, electricity gives us light, heat, cooling, fun on the internet, and a million other helpful things which make life convenient and more productive. And yet, if one lets his guard down, electricity can bring a quick end to it all. Had the electricity not blown that guy's opposite hand off, it would have destroyed his internal organs and killed him.

The Lord is God. He redeemed Israel in order to show them good. He set them apart with many glorious promises and assurances. He also gave Israel these laws and precepts, to ensure they pay heed to what is right and good. The Lord is a friend to Israel, but the Lord is to be feared by Israel. To fear one's God then, is to admit that He is in control, that He works by certain laws, and when those laws are violated, only disaster can be the expected result.

Even to this day, Israel has failed to see the significance of this truth. The simple lesson of electricity which they seem to understand and apply with all care, is held in higher esteem than the far weightier lesson of fearing God and holding reverence to His being. But not to be too down on Israel, the same is true with the church at large as well. Our lack of respect for the Lord, and His word, places us in a very scary position as a group of people.

³⁶ (con't) **that your brother may live with you.**

The words of verse 35 are repeated here again. The intent is that Israel would care for their financially weakened brother so that he could continue to live among them, and not under them. Should this course of action not be taken, the Lord would be displeased, and the man would become subject to the humiliating state of Hebrew servitude. For this reason...

³⁷ **You shall not lend him your money for usury, nor lend him your food at a profit.**

The two areas of increase which are explicitly forbidden are again noted. *Neshek*, or usury, and a new word which is very similar to *tarbut* of the previous verse, *marbith*, again meaning “increase,” are both forbidden. No profit was to be made off silver or other commodities when helping out one’s neighbor. Instead, the people were to lend freely, and expect nothing extra upon return of the principle. And so, with a clear and precise statement as to why this was to be, the Lord closes out this short set of verses with a statement of perfect justification, beginning with...

³⁸ **I am the Lord your God,**

In all of our verses today, the only time that the word “God” has been seen is in these four verses about the poor, three times. And the name Yehovah, or “Lord,” likewise is only seen here. It is a clear indication that the Lord is tying in respect for His sovereignty over the people with tending to the poor among them. He begins this verse with *ani Yehovah elohekem*. He is Yehovah, and He is their God. They had agreed to this some time earlier when He appeared while giving the law. They had continued to agree to this at several times and in several ways. They had placed themselves under His authority and agreed to comply with His will for them – even in advance of all that would be said.

³⁸ (con't) **who brought you out of the land of Egypt,**

Therefore, after stating His name, He relays to them again the reason for obedience which he has given several times now. He says it is He, “who brought you out of the land of Egypt.” He ties His redemptive act of bringing the people out of bondage in with their need for full compliance on this. They were slaves, and He redeemed them from that slavery.

Now He is petitioning the people to act in a manner which reflects that same goodness through tending to those who have become poor. They were in double distress, and He

gave them relief. When a brother among them is facing his own distress, they are to act in a manner which emulates their God. They are to extend to him a hand of relief. This is actually reflected in his next words...

38 (con't) to give you the land of Canaan

Not only did he redeem them out of slavery, but he did it with a goal in mind. He would lead them from slavery to Canaan. This is the third and last time that Canaan is to be seen in Leviticus.

The name Canaan has several possible meanings. One is “a merchant.” Another is “servant.” But the word itself is derived from the word *kana*, which signifies to humble. It comes from a primitive root signifying “to bend the knee.” This gives the sense of bringing into subjection. Therefore, at least for the immediate context, we can see that a hint is being given with His mentioning the name of the place here.

A brother been humbled, and the Lord is asking those of His people who see this to act in a humble manner and show him kindness. In humbling themselves, it is a sign of agreement that they were once humbled, and they are now looking favorably upon one who has found himself, once again, in such a lowly state.

They had done nothing to merit redemption from Egypt, and they had done nothing deserving of entering the land promised to them. Each step has been an act of grace, and so they were to acknowledge this, and to display every level of kindness to one another, thus reflecting that which they had been granted.

38 (fin) and to be your God.

Not only *is He* their God, but He promised *to be* their God. His care over them would not end at the border of the land, but it would extend into the land itself, and it would extend for all times from that land. To be their God signifies prosperity, blessing, protection, security, and so much more. The promises of the Lord would all be realized for Israel when they paid heed to His word. In these verses are some of the most fundamental words of what it means to reflect His kind and gracious nature, and this is what He expected of them.

The Lord’s care for the poor of Israel extends today for His attentive care for the people of His beloved church. Though at times, the Lord may appear distant or uninterested in

our affairs, that is the furthest thing from the truth. He didn't come and walk among Israel in order to simply experience what it felt like to walk, talk, and laugh.

God knows all things, and so He already knew what it meant to do those things. He doesn't need experiential knowledge in order to know, He just knows. Every smell of every flower was designed by Him, because He knows. The reason He came to dwell among us, is because without Him doing so, there would be no redemption of man. It was theologically necessary for Christ to come as a Man in order to redeem us.

And, it was necessary that when He did, that He would need to die as a man in order for the redemption to come about. Otherwise, there would never be access to God's paradise. Instead, there would be only separation and condemnation. The coming of Christ shows us that God is not at all uninterested in us. Instead, He is minutely interested in us – to the finest detail of our existence.

If you come to Leviticus, and find anything but absolute attention to the plight of fallen man, you have missed the big picture. This chapter on the Year of Jubilee, and every other chapter found in this book as well, keeps showing us the wonderful truth that God is there, that God cares, and that He has it all figured out. Be of good cheer, and know that what Leviticus points to is one very good end for the people of God. But each step is given in order to get us there. The Year of Jubilee and all that it entails is a marvelous part of that walk.

I would hope that if you are out there struggling with theology, burdened with trying to cross every t and dot every i, that you will step back and take a breather. There is one gospel, it is very simple to understand, and its effects in your life are eternal. Let me tell it to you now. Then, you can work on all the t's and i's you want. But first, know that the necessary ones have already been handled for you by God. He sent Jesus.

Closing Verse: *“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.” Revelation 2:7*

Next Week: Leviticus 25:39-55 *It's all about freedom and liberty, you see...* (The Year of Jubilee, Part III) (48th Leviticus Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if you have a lifetime of sin heaped up behind you, He can wash it away and purify

you completely and wholly. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

Of Property and the Poor

'The land shall not be sold permanently, for the land is Mine
For you are strangers and sojourners with Me
-----please understand
And in all the land of your possession
You shall grant redemption of the land

'If one of your brethren becomes poor
And has sold some of his possession, so you are told
And if his redeeming relative comes to redeem it
Then he may redeem what his brother sold
Or if the man has no one to redeem it
But he himself becomes able to redeem it
-----No longer facing depression
Then let him count the years since its sale
And restore the remainder to the man to whom he sold it
-----that he may return to his possession

But if he is not able
To have it restored to himself, so you see
Then what was sold shall remain in the hand
Of him who bought it until the Year of Jubilee

And in the Jubilee it shall be released
And he shall return to his possession
-----His time apart from it shall be ceased

'If a man sells a house in a walled city
Then he may redeem it, so I submit
Within a whole year after it is sold
Within a full year he may redeem it

But if it is not redeemed within the space of a full year
Then the house in the walled city shall belong permanently
To him who bought it, throughout his generations

It shall not be released in the Jubilee
However the houses of villages which have no wall around them
Shall be counted as the fields of the country
They may be redeemed
And they shall be released in the Jubilee
Nevertheless the cities of the Levites
And the houses in the cities of their possession, so I say
The Levites may redeem at any time
It shall always be this way

And if a man purchases a house from the Levites
Then the house that was sold in the city of his possession
-----shall be released in the Jubilee
For the houses in the cities of the Levites
Are their possession among the children of Israel
-----as stated by Me
But the field of the common-land of their cities may not be sold
For it is their perpetual possession; so you have been told
'If one of your brethren becomes poor
And falls into poverty among you, sad but true
Then you shall help him, like a stranger or a sojourner
That he may live with you

Take no usury or interest from him, this you shall not do
But fear your God, that your brother may live with you
You shall not lend him your money for usury
Nor lend him your food at a profit; such shall not be

I am the Lord your God
Who brought you out of of Egypt the land
To give you the land of Canaan and to be your God
So these things you are to understand

Lord God, in Christ the world has been redeemed
Our faithful Brother came and dwelt among us
When all hope was lost, or so it once seemed
You sent Your Son to purchase us back; thank You for Jesus
And so help us to remember this thing that You have done
Help us stretch forth our own willing hand

Help us to be gracious to each and every one
Soften our heart, and help us to understand

When the need is seen, may we not be slack
But give willing hearts to every one of us
Not because we must pay some debt back
But because of gratitude for our full redemption, found in Christ Jesus

And may this bring You glory now and forevermore
While we praise You here, and also upon that heavenly shore

Hallelujah and Amen...

LEVITICUS 25:39-55
(THE YEAR OF JUBILEE, PART III)

Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy *our* brother,
To Philemon our beloved *friend* and fellow laborer, ² to the beloved Apphia, Archippus
our fellow soldier, and to the church in your house:

³ Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴ I thank my God, making mention of you always in my prayers, ⁵ hearing of your love and
faith which you have toward the Lord Jesus and toward all the saints, ⁶ that the sharing
of your faith may become effective by the acknowledgment of every good thing which is
in you in Christ Jesus. ⁷ For we have great joy and consolation in your love, because the
hearts of the saints have been refreshed by you, brother.

⁸ Therefore, though I might be very bold in Christ to command you what is
fitting, ⁹ *yet* for love's sake I rather appeal *to you*—being such a one as Paul, the aged,
and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ— ¹⁰ I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, whom I
have begotten *while* in my chains, ¹¹ who once was unprofitable to you, but now is
profitable to you and to me.

¹² I am sending him back. You therefore receive him, that is, my own heart, ¹³ whom I
wished to keep with me, that on your behalf he might minister to me in my chains for
the gospel. ¹⁴ But without your consent I wanted to do nothing, that your good deed
might not be by compulsion, as it were, but voluntary.

¹⁵ For perhaps he departed for a while for this *purpose*, that you might receive him
forever, ¹⁶ no longer as a slave but more than a slave—a beloved brother, especially to
me but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord.

¹⁷ If then you count me as a partner, receive him as *you would* me. ¹⁸ But if he has
wronged you or owes anything, put that on my account. ¹⁹ I, Paul, am writing with my
own hand. I will repay—not to mention to you that you owe me even your own self
besides. ²⁰ Yes, brother, let me have joy from you in the Lord; refresh my heart in the
Lord.

²¹ Having confidence in your obedience, I write to you, knowing that you will do even
more than I say. ²² But, meanwhile, also prepare a guest room for me, for I trust that
through your prayers I shall be granted to you.

²³ Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, greets you, ²⁴ *as do* Mark, Aristarchus,
Demas, Luke, my fellow laborers.

²⁵ The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with your spirit. Amen. – Philemon 1

Text Verse: “For he who is called in the Lord while a slave is the Lord’s freedman.
Likewise he who is called while free is Christ’s slave. ²³ You were bought at a price; do not
become slaves of men.” 1 Corinthians 7:22, 23

In last week's sermon, we ended with a passage on lending to a poor brother Israelite. No interest was to be levied on him, and he was to be treated properly in the Lord's eyes. The Lord had redeemed them, and they were thus the Lord's possession. It was therefore ultimately a self-defeating prospect to harm another of the Lord's redeemed. The law would be violated, the Lord would be displeased, and the loss would ultimately outweigh any gain.

Further, in causing greater trouble to the poor, he would ultimately have to sell himself off as a slave to another. In such a situation, the law would again require certain things to be done in order to ensure proper treatment of this poor soul. To not follow through with those things would then lead to the law being further violated, to the Lord being more displeased, and thus only greater trouble would arise for those who so conducted their affairs.

The Lord wasn't just breathing hot air when He gave these laws, and He eventually followed through with judgment on the people because of not heeding them. Jeremiah 34:17-20 specifically deals with the issue of the inappropriate treatment of fellow Israelite slaves. The details of what He promised to do are not pretty.

Paul, writing to Philemon on behalf of the slave Onesimus, did not appeal to the law, but he appealed to the spirit of the law. What is mandated for Israel was given to show us hints of the greater work of Christ, our Redeemer. The Year of Jubilee in Israel points ahead to the full, final, and forever redemption which is guaranteed to us because of what He has done. In the meantime, though redeemed, we are asked to act in a way which is honoring of the Lord who has accomplished the redemption. Such will be seen again as we finish up this beautiful chapter on the Year of Jubilee. It's all to be found in His superior word. And so let's turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. Israelites as Masters (verses 39-46)

³⁹ ***'And if one of your brethren who dwells by you becomes poor,***

For the third time in one chapter, the word *muk*, or poor, is brought to our attention by the Lord. It was first seen in verse 25, and the context remains the same. It is speaking of a fellow Israelite who becomes poor. The word comes from a root meaning to be thin, and thus it is figuratively applied to one who becomes impoverished.

The Lord's attention is on such a person, and it completely dispels the notion that He favors a person because of his wealth, status, or position. How important this is to remember as we sit in church, having come in a nice car, from a nice house filled with our life's treasures, and after having eaten all we needed before we came. There is a feeling of satisfaction in such a state that "God must really favor me." This is a dangerous mental trap which belies the truth of biblical favor. The Lord's attention is carefully directed to all of His people, even the poorest, and His favor upon our physical prosperity cannot be equated to His favor on us as humans living in His presence. How evident this is from the next words...

39 (con't) and sells himself to you,

There are several ways this could happen. Exodus 22:3 showed that a person could steal, and if he could not repay according to the law, he could be sold for his theft. In 1 Kings 4, is another example –

A certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets cried out to Elisha, saying, "Your servant my husband is dead, and you know that your servant feared the Lord. And the creditor is coming to take my two sons to be his slaves."

-2 Kings 4:1

Other passages give more details on Israelites who had been sold into bondage. For them, the law has specific guidelines...

39 (con't) you shall not compel him to serve as a slave.

lo ta'avod bo avodat aved – "no shall you compel in him to serve as a bondservant." These words follow after verses 35-38 where the Israelite has already been instructed to aid and assist one who has become *muk*, or poor. There should have already been an effort to stem his poverty, including loans without interest of any kind. Nothing more than what was given – be it money or goods – was to be expected in return.

Now, this impoverished person, who obviously couldn't even pay back the principle, is obliged to sell himself to simply survive. The Lord specifically commands that if it is an Israelite, he is not to be taken on as a bondservant, meaning a slave or a servant who works for nothing. The onus is on the richer of the two. If he fails to act as the law requires, then who is it who is out of favor with God? Wealth is not a *protection for the wealthy* because of God's favor, it is a *responsibility intended for the poor*, upon whom God favors.

As the Pulpit Commentary says about this state, “All alike, master and bondsman, were the slaves of God, and therefore not only were they, so far, on an equality one with another, but the master would be encroaching on the right of God if he claimed God's slaves for his own inalienably.”

⁴⁰ **As a hired servant *and* a sojourner he shall be with you,**

The hired servant's rights have already been outlined, such as the Lord instructing the people to not withhold the wages of a hired servant. The sojourner's protections have likewise been detailed. The Lord expected the treatment of such to be exemplary by the covenant people. In like manner, the bonded Hebrew was to also be treated. He was to be cared for, rather than manipulated. He was to be recompensed for his labors, not subjugated and oppressed. In this, the scholar Oehler rightly states that, “Through this principle slavery was completely abolished, so far as the people of the theocracy were concerned.”

⁴⁰ (con't) ***and shall serve you until the Year of Jubilee.***

Those who attack and challenge the Bible at every word come to these words and claim the Bible contradicts itself. It has already been seen in Exodus 21:2 that a Hebrew servant was to be released after six years of service. This is repeated in Deuteronomy 15. However, this verse says that he shall serve until the Year of Jubilee, an occurrence only once every fiftieth year. There is no contradiction at all here.

A bonded Hebrew could serve no more than six years, ever. If the Year of Jubilee occurred before that, he was to be released, even if it was but one year. The Year of Jubilee, which is the highlight of this chapter, was to take precedence over all other such laws. Total freedom was to be proclaimed, and total freedom was to be given, regardless of any other set times. The land was to revert to its original owners. It would thus require the care of that owner, even if he were serving as a bonded servant. With the reacquisition of his land, he would then be able to work towards the future on an even level with every other person in the society.

⁴¹ **And *then* he shall depart from you—he and his children with him—and shall return to his own family.**

The family of the bonded Hebrew was his, and could not be deprived him. However, Exodus 21 clarifies this law. If the master gave him a wife *during* his time of servitude, she was not to go out with him, and any children born to the union were likewise not to

go out with him. To understand why this was, you can refer back to that sermon. It is just, fair, and proper when rightly considered.

In that passage, the bonded Hebrew could renounce his right to freedom and remain a permanently bonded servant. As a sign of this allegiance to his master, he was to be brought to the judges, and then taken to a door or doorpost and the master was to pierce his ear with an awl. In that act, he was bonded forever. The year of Jubilee would not override this sign of allegiance. Every detail of that points to Christ. If you don't remember it, go brush up. Other than that exception, however...

⁴¹ (con't) **He shall return to the possession of his fathers.**

In *sh'nat ha'yobel*, or "Year the Jubilee," the bonded Hebrew was to be released, and he was to be granted full rights, including his father's land, once again. No government law, no edict of man, and no other arrangement under the Mosaic law could override this.

⁴² **For they *are* My servants, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt; they shall not be sold as slaves.**

This verse corresponds directly to verse 23 which said, "The land shall not be sold permanently, for the land is Mine." These two verses form a link and are clues to the intent of the entire passage. The land is the Lord's, and therefore it could not be considered as a weapon against another Hebrew. Likewise, the people were the Lord's, and therefore they could not be mistreated. He delivered all of Israel, and therefore all of Israel was on an equal footing in His eyes. In this Adam Clarke rightly states, "It was in being his servants, and devoted to his work, that both their religious and political service consisted. And although their political liberty might be lost, they knew that their spiritual liberty never could be forfeited except by an utter alienation from God." Therefore...

⁴³ **You shall not rule over him with rigor,**

Here, a word is given that has not been seen since the first chapter of the Bible, *radah*, or rule. It comes from a root meaning "to tread down." Thus it is to subjugate another. Man was given dominion over all the fish, birds, and land creatures. He is also, to a point, given dominion over other men. But the Lord specifically says that it is not to be with *perek*, or rigor.

This is the same word seen only so far in Exodus 1. There it said that the Egyptians ruled over the people of Israel with *perek*, or rigor. As Egypt is symbolic of the world of sin,

and thus bondage to the devil, we are being asked to look deeper than just a surface mistreatment of one Hebrew over another.

In what should point us to the Lord Himself, this word, *perek*, is the root of the word *paroketh*, meaning the veil which hung between the holy place and the most holy place. The veil thus signified that on one side there is cruelty and rigor of life, and on the other side there is peace with God. The veil was that point of division. That veil is the body of Christ which was torn for our transgressions. In His redemptive act, the rigor of His earthly life was fulfilled. Because of this, no servant of His was to be treated in that way. He took upon Himself what we are to be exempted from.

⁴³ (con't) **but you shall fear your God.**

To fear God is to respect His position as Sovereign, and to acknowledge both His work for the people with gratitude, and His right to judge the people with justice. Considering the picture of the veil signifying the rigor which is prohibited to be laid upon the bonded Hebrew because Christ has taken that from us, the words of Ephesians 6 show that the precept of verse 43 only looked forward to Christ and His work –

“Bondservants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ; ⁶ not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, ⁷ with goodwill doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men, ⁸ knowing that whatever good anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord, whether *he* is a slave or free.

⁹ And you, masters, do the same things to them, giving up threatening, knowing that your own Master also is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him.”

Ephesians 6:5-9

⁴⁴ **And as for your male and female slaves whom you may have—from the nations that are around you, from them you may buy male and female slaves.**

Permanent slaves could be obtained from the surrounding nations. This could be through regular transactions, conquering them in war, and the like. These would not be released after a set time, nor even in the Year of Jubilee. Instead, they became a part of the property of the Hebrew owner. The term, “the nations that are around you” excludes any of the nations who were devoted to destruction who are named in Deuteronomy 20:16-18, with the reason for their being destroyed. The Lord had been

patient with the inhabitants of Canaan for 400 years, their wickedness had reached its fullness, and they were to be destroyed.

However, in the conquest of Canaan, some of those devoted to destruction did become slaves of the Israelites anyway. The most noted example is that of Joshua 9 concerning the Gibeonites.

⁴⁵ Moreover you may buy the children of the strangers who dwell among you, and their families who are with you, which they beget in your land; and they shall become your property.

The *toshav*, or stranger, among Israel would be someone who had taken up residence in the land. They were among the Hebrew people, and they had submitted to various requirements, but had not been circumcised or embraced the faith of Israel. They could be bought and sold as property, with no chance of release unlike the bonded Hebrews. However, if they were bought as slaves, they were then required to be circumcised according to the law given to Abraham in Genesis 17 which said –

“...every male child in your generations, he who is born in your house or bought with money from any foreigner who is not your descendant. ¹³ He who is born in your house and he who is bought with your money must be circumcised, and My covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant.” Genesis 17:12, 13

And so in a unique way, the slaves of the Hebrews were given this unique sign as a way of identifying them permanently with the covenant people.

⁴⁶ And you may take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit *them* as a possession; they shall be your permanent slaves.

The purpose of these words is to show, without any debate, that these non-Hebrews were not provided with the rights of the Jubilee. Instead, they were permanent possessions of the Hebrews, even to bequeathing them as an inheritance to the next generation. Their status as slaves was permanent.

Within this seemingly unfair standard, there are still provisions for the slaves, including freedom itself. The slaves were to be treated without excessive force. If this was violated, they could demand their freedom. In Exodus 21 it said –

“If a man strikes the eye of his male or female servant, and destroys it, he shall let him go free for the sake of his eye. ²⁷ And if he knocks out the tooth of his male or female servant, he shall let him go free for the sake of his tooth.” Exodus 21:26, 27

Further, it is implied in Exodus 12 that if any person were to assume the requirements of joining the people of Israel, they were to be treated henceforth as natives of the land. This must apply to the slave as well as the free man. Great allowances for these slaves are seen, and are made explicit in the law itself.

⁴⁶ (con't) **But regarding your brethren, the children of Israel, you shall not rule over one another with rigor.**

These words seem to imply that a non-Israelite could be ruled over with rigor, but we have seen that this went only so far, and no further. And more, the same words, *radah* and *perek*, of verse 43 are seen in this verse. We are being shown pictures of the Hebrew's rights and privileges that are reflective of the rights and privileges of those who have been redeemed by Christ. He is our Sovereign and the One who has dominion over us. We have been brought out of bondage to sin, and we are given an exalted status because of it.

*These people whom you see, each is My servant
Whom I brought out of Egypt the land
And so to My word concerning them, you shall be observant
Yes, you shall pay heed and understand*

*It is I who have redeemed, and I to whom they belong
With rigor you shall not over them rule
You shall not mistreat them, nor do them wrong
Surely over them you shall be kind, never shall you misrule*

*And on the Year of Jubilee
There shall be a release, final and forevermore
On that day, the riches of heaven you shall see
When at last you are conducted through heaven's door*

II. Israelites as Slaves (verses 47-55)

⁴⁷ ‘Now if a sojourner or stranger close to you becomes rich, and *one of your brethren who dwells by him* becomes poor, and sells himself to the stranger or sojourner close to you, or to a member of the stranger’s family,

Every possible case of servitude is covered in the law, including what is now proposed. The Hebrew here is idiomatic. It literally says, “And if becomes sufficient *the hand of a* foreigner settled among you, and becomes poor your brother with him.” There is then the sense of the one reaching up to wealth while the Israelite becomes low and depressed.

In such a case, the Israelite might decide to sell himself off to this non-Israelite, figuring his lot will be better under the stranger’s wealth than he will be in his own poverty. Or, he may even sell himself off to someone in the foreigner’s family. The word used is found only here in Scripture, *equer*, or literally, an offshoot. In this case it is a non-Israelite related to another non-native in the land. He has rooted himself in the land, and possibly even among the people of God, having been incorporated into the commonwealth. Regardless of the status of the buyer, if a native Israelite were to take this course of action and sell himself off, then...

⁴⁸ after he is sold he may be redeemed again. One of his brothers may redeem him;

Regardless as to what the non-native desired in this matter, or even his status in regards to the Israelites, if he dwelt in the land, he had no say in this law. The law of a non-Israelite being sold to an Israelite is reversed here. The Israelite slave, like the land of original possession in Israel, was always redeemable. The Lord ultimately is the Owner of both, and therefore, there was no authority higher than the law which covers such redemption.

In this is seen the continued germination of the idea of what Messiah would come to do. Israel had been redeemed. They belonged to the Lord, but they could be sold off temporarily. However, it was never a permanent arrangement. The people could be redeemed at anytime by a redeemer. And even if that did not occur, the once-redeemed Israelite was to still be given total freedom in the Year of Jubilee.

This forms a picture of the absolute and eternal salvation found in Christ. We may be sold off to whatever possesses us, be it drugs or some other addiction, but there is no time that we cannot be bought back from that. And further, even if we are not bought back, in what is the true Jubilee, we shall be forever set free in our final release in Christ.

The brother ere in this verse points directly to Christ Jesus where in Hebrews 2:11, it says, He is not ashamed to call us brothers.

The temporary ownership of our bodies by the world cannot negate the eternal ownership of our souls in Christ. Because Christ assumed a human nature, we are as brothers in humanity to Him, thus the brother is mentioned first as a possible redeemer. For now, and in the immediate context, any Israelite could be redeemed by his brother...

⁴⁹ or his uncle or his uncle's son may redeem him;

The brother has already been mentioned, but then it curiously goes to the uncle in this verse. The Hebrew word for "uncle" is *dod*, literally meaning "beloved." Then it says *ben dodo*, or "son of his uncle." The letters used here form an anagram of *ben David*, or "Son of David." Thus, we have hidden references to Messiah.

Christ is called the Beloved by Paul in Ephesians 1:6, in a passage where he speaks in detail of our redemption in Christ, thus connecting Him to one who can redeem here in Leviticus. He is also called the Son of David countless times in the gospels and epistles. In this, Christ Jesus is again the Redeemer. He is the Son of David, descending from Judah. He is the One who is qualified to provide the eternal redemption of the people of God. As John Gill notes –

"...they through the fall, and in a state of nature, are become poor and helpless, and in a spiritual sense have neither bread to eat, nor clothes to wear, nor money to buy either; and are in debt, owe ten thousand talents, and have nothing to pay, and so are brought into bondage to sin, Satan, and the law; nor can they redeem themselves from these by power or price; nor can a brother, or the nearest relation redeem them, or give to God a ransom for them; none but Christ could do this for them, who through his incarnation, whereby he became of the same nature, of the same flesh and blood with them, and in all things like unto them, is their 'goel', and so their Redeemer, and has obtained eternal redemption for them, not with silver and gold, but by his own precious blood." John Gill

⁴⁹ (con't) or anyone who is near of kin to him in his family may redeem him;

The Hebrew uses two words which essentially both mean "flesh." It speaks of anyone who is *mi'sheer besaro*, or "from flesh of his flesh." Although nearly synonyms, the first is flesh as in nearness – "I am of the same flesh as my father." The second is flesh in substance – "We are all made of human flesh." The catchall phrase here again speaks of Christ, who took on the *substance* of humanity, and likewise through that act also came

into a *family nearness with us* in order to redeem us. And finally there is one more option for this Hebrew slave...

⁴⁹ (con't) **or if he is able he may redeem himself.**

The question is, how could a person so poor that he had to offer himself as a slave in the first place find sufficiency at hand to redeem himself? The answer is certainly, "Through an inheritance." Therefore, the person hasn't directly redeemed himself, but it has happened through a granted inheritance. This again looks to the work of Christ. Paul in Ephesians 1 carefully writes out what is the inheritance of the saints. In particular, he says of Christ, "In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will" (v. 11). It is Christ who works, and it is because of His works that we can receive the inheritance. The law, again, has pointed us to a greater spiritual truth for the redeemed of the Lord in Christ.

⁵⁰ **Thus he shall reckon with him who bought him: The price of his release shall be according to the number of years, from the year that he was sold to him until the Year of Jubilee; it shall be according to the time of a hired servant for him.**

What we have here is a calculation comparable to the redemption of property in verses 15 & 16. As the sale and redemption of the land is based not on the actual land, but on the number of crops available until the Jubilee, so the sale and redemption of an Israelite is based not on his person, but on his work and productivity. This does not take into account any speculation. For example, one cannot say, "Hey our brother here is 62 years old, and the Jubilee is 40 years away. We will pay only until the average age of death which is 70, and so we will pay you for 8 years."

Instead, the payment is made solely based on the year of Jubilee, regardless of any extenuating circumstances. The favor of the deal goes to the owner of the slave, giving the greatest regard that it was handled in a perfectly fair manner.

And isn't this what has happened in our redemption? Christ now possesses us. He has given us the guarantee of that redemption in the sealing of the Spirit. And yet, the payment rendered for our redemption, the blood of Christ, was the full amount required, meaning even to His death, to carry us through until the final time of release. We are not partially redeemed, but fully redeemed. No further claim can be laid upon us ever again. So much for "loss of salvation." This continues to be explained...

⁵¹ If *there are still many years remaining*, according to them he shall repay the price of his redemption from the money with which he was bought.

The calculation is given in a standard form. If he sold himself for thirty pieces of *keseph*, or silver, and there were 20 years until the Jubilee when he did so, then if he is to be redeemed after 10 years, the master was to be paid fifteen pieces of *keseph*. More years till the Jubilee would mean a higher proportion to be paid, and less would mean a smaller proportion. This is seen in the next words...

⁵² And if there remain but a few years until the Year of Jubilee, then he shall reckon with him, *and* according to his years he shall repay him the price of his redemption.

Everything is based on the original sale, and the years until the Jubilee. That is the entire basis for redemption. Nothing is said here, however, concerning seventh-year Sabbath years. As a slave is not limited to agricultural work, one would logically *not* deduct those years which are deducted for land-rest each seventh year in the sale of property.

Further, nothing is said about the slave being released after six years, which would be the case if he had sold himself to another Israelite. That law of Exodus 21 does not apply to foreign masters, and thus it would be a *very strong inducement* for an Israelite to sell himself not to an outsider, but to another Israelite. The entire tenor of these laws is given to avoid, as much as possible, becoming entangled with non-Israelites in such matters.

⁵³ He shall be with him as a yearly hired servant,

What this means is that he is to be reckoned as a servant who could obtain his freedom at any time, and that his time of bondage was for a specified time, even if not sooner. He was never to be counted as a personal, permanent slave whom he could mistreat at will. And to ensure that this precept was held as absolute...

⁵³ (con't) and he shall not rule with rigor over him in your sight.

The people of Israel were to individually keep watch over such an arrangement, carefully observing that the sacred care of one Israelite over another was not violated by a foreigner over an Israelite. The same high standard of care for him was to be maintained regardless as to whom he had sold himself to. This was a specific obligation, carefully recorded to avoid any chance of it being dismissed by the people.

This is now the last time that this word, *perek*, or rigor, will be seen until the book of Ezekiel where it will be seen just once more. As the Israelite had been redeemed by the Lord, the cruelty which the Lord would face for man's full redemption is to be excluded from the treatment of the enslaved Israelite. The Lord took upon Himself what He will not allow in those He has redeemed in the process.

⁵⁴ And if he is not redeemed in these years, then he shall be released in the Year of Jubilee—he and his children with him.

The word “years” is not in the original. It simply says, “And if he is not redeemed in these.” It is not referring only to the years before the Jubilee, but of the process of being redeemed by another as well. Regardless as to whether he was redeemed by man, or in a set period, he had been redeemed by the Lord, and he was to be released as the Lord's property in the Year of Jubilee. And then it adds in a note of exceptional grace, “he and his children with him.”

The Israelite belonged to the Lord, and those who issued from him did as well. The master could not claim that because they may have been born in his house, that they were his property. Rather, they were by blood, and thus by right, children of Israel and therefore by extension children of the Lord.

⁵⁵ For the children of Israel are servants to Me; they are My servants whom I brought out of the land of Egypt:

In type, we are to look at these words, and we are to insert ourselves into what they merely picture. The Lord redeemed Israel out of Egypt; Christ Jesus redeemed us out of the bondage of sin and the yoke of the devil. In this, we belong to Christ, and we are now His servants. He did the work, we are to be obedient to the calling. To mistreat another Christian is a self-defeating prospect.

The Lord has given us our instructions, and to not pay heed is to only violate His word, and to grieve His Spirit. Paul explains this for us in Ephesians –

“And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. ³¹ Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. ³² And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.” Ephesians 4:30-32

As with Israel, so with the church. And the reason for these things centers on one overarching concept...

^{55 (fin)} **I am the Lord your God.**

ani Yehovah elohekem – “I am Yehovah your God.” The Lord proclaims His name and position. In essence, what we are being told with these words is, “I am the self-existent Creator, and I am your Redeemer. You are my possession, and I am Your God. I am Yehovah your God; you are My redeemed. Treat one another well, watch out for one another, and do so with zeal as you await the final blast of the trumpet on that great day of Jubilee.”

In the final analysis of what has been seen in Leviticus 25, the highest and greatest significance of the Year of Jubilee is to be found in the restoration of all things which Peter refers to in Acts 3. It is the restoration of the kingdom of God which has been, through man’s disobedience and fall, left unrealized to this day. Israel’s fifty-year Jubilee was a call to restore to what was originally given, to level the playing field, to encourage and lift up the downtrodden, to free the captive, and to reflect that which was originally established and blessed.

We live now in anticipation of what that only pictured. We have been redeemed from spiritual Egypt, and all things have been restored in guarantee, but not yet in reality. Eden was lost, but in Christ it is, and it shall be, found. Our bodies grow old and die, but they shall be remade to last forever. Our wealth can be diminished or lost, but eternal gain lies just ahead. Brothers and sisters in Christ are held captive, but they shall be released. God fellowshiped with man, and soon enough He will do so again.

The Kingdom of God and of His Christ is prepared, the table is set, and the final day of Jubilee is just around the corner. Let us not be discouraged with the temporary woes we face, but let us rejoice and exult in the magnificent guarantee that we hope for. Christ has come among us, and through His work, our redemption is secured. Let the trumpet sound loudly, and let the people proclaim liberty throughout the land. May it be so, and may it be soon.

Closing Verse: *“The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me,
Because the Lord has anointed Me
To preach good tidings to the poor;
He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted,
To proclaim liberty to the captives,*

*And the opening of the prison to those who are bound;
2 To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.” Isaiah 61:1, 2*

Next Week: Leviticus 26:1-13 Good things will come. They are written down, so no need for guessings... (Promised Blessings) (49th Leviticus Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if you have a lifetime of sin heaped up behind you, He can wash it away and purify you completely and wholly. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

Of Masters and Slaves

‘And if one of your brethren who dwells
By you becomes poor, his riches he does not preserve
And sells himself to you
You shall not compel him as a slave to serve

As a hired servant and a sojourner with you he shall be
And shall serve you until the Year of Jubilee
And then he shall depart from you
He and his children with him as well
And shall return to his own family
He shall return to the possession of his fathers; so to you I tell

For they are My servants
Whom I brought out of Egypt the land
They shall not be sold as slaves
In this you shall pay heed and understand

You shall not with rigor over him rule
But you shall fear your God; to him you shall not be cruel

And as for your male and female slaves
Whom you may have, this I will not deny
From the nations that are around you
From them you may male and female slaves buy

Moreover you may buy the children

Of the strangers who dwell among you, this is allowed to be
And their families who are with you, which they beget in your land
And they shall become your property

And you may take them as an inheritance
For your children after you, it may be this way
To inherit them as a possession
They shall be your permanent slaves, as I tell you today

But regarding your brethren
The children of Israel
You shall not rule over one another with rigor
In tender care of them you shall dwell

‘Now if a sojourner or stranger close to you becomes rich
And one of your brethren who dwells by him, so you construe
Becomes poor, and sells himself
To the stranger or sojourner close to you
Or to a member of the stranger’s family
After he is sold he may be again redeemed
One of his brothers may redeem him
If in his eyes he is esteemed

Or his uncle or his uncle’s son may redeem him
Or anyone who is to him near of kin
In his family may redeem him
Or if he is able he may redeem himself again

Thus he shall reckon with him who bought him:
The price of his release shall be
According to the number of years
From the year that he was sold to him until the Year of Jubilee

It shall be for him according to the time of a hired servant
In this matter all shall be observant

If there are still many years remaining
According to them he shall repay
The price of his redemption from the money

With which he was bought on his redemption day

And if there remain but a few years
Until the Year of Jubilee, on that day
Then he shall reckon with him
And according to his years the price of his redemption him he shall repay

He shall be with him as a yearly hired servant, as is right
And he shall not rule with rigor over him in your sight

And if he is not redeemed in these years
Then he shall be released in the Year of Jubilee—
He and his children with him
For the children of Israel are servants to Me
They are My servants whom I brought out of Egypt the land
I am the Lord your God, and so these things you shall understand
Heavenly Father, through Christ we have been redeemed
We are Your possession, and to You we belong
Our times of bondage now are to be lightly esteemed
As we sing in our hearts our final redemption song

Restoration is sure to come, and all will be restored
No longer will access to heaven be inhibited
The truth of this is recorded in Your word
And in the life of Christ, this certainty is exhibited

And so, our King, we give joyful shouts to You
As we await the trumpet blast, to receive our heavenly due

Hallelujah, we shall say it once again!
Hallelujah and Amen...

LEVITICUS 26:1-13 **(PROMISED BLESSINGS)**

Chapter 26 of Leviticus details the blessings and the curses which were to come upon the people of Israel based on obedience or disobedience to the words of law which have been laid down so far, and which will continue to be laid down as the law continues to be relayed to the people.

Because these promises have been so exactly fulfilled in the later pages of Scripture, objections have been raised by naturalistic and rationalistic critics of the Bible that Moses could not be the author of this chapter. Instead, they claim that the words were written during the times of the kings of Israel, as late as the 8th or the beginning of the 7th century BC.

They have done this, because they do not accept prophetic revelation as something which is possible, and therefore what is presented must have been written at a much, much later date. In other words, to them neither God nor man can tell the future except as far as logical deductions can be made.

For example, we can logically deduce that a team will win tomorrow's game because their opponents are simply not in the same league as those they will be facing. We can logically deduce that the stock market will crash in X number of months or years based on repeatable patterns which have been documented in the past. And so on.

But, for these scholars the words of Leviticus 26, like many of those of the prophets, are so exact and specific – and the fulfillment of them is so exactly detailed, and in line with what is written here – that it is simply not possible that they could have been penned by Moses. No amount of logical deduction could bring the two into such absolute harmony.

If one holds to a naturalist view of the world, the prophecies contained here can have no other possible explanation than having been written at a later date. However, the stupidity of this view is all the more evident – even apart from both logic concerning God's nature, and mere faith itself – when one understands that the words of Chapter 26 presuppose not one, but two or more exiles for the people of Israel. There is no doubt, by anyone in reasonable schools of biblical scholarship, that Leviticus predates the second exile of Israel by many hundreds of years.

Even if it wasn't penned by Moses, and it was instead penned in the 8th or 7th century BC as claimed by these knuckleheads, their logic breaks down completely in that a second exile did take place. The words of Leviticus 26 continue to describe exactly what has occurred to Israel during this second exile, and even more, that the return of Israel to their land in 1948 more exactly reflects the promises of the Lord contained in this chapter.

This is one reason, among others, that the modern state of Israel is considered an aberration by many supposed scholars. Claims are even made that the people occupying the land are not the same people being addressed in Leviticus 26. But if one honestly looks at Israel of today, in the land of Israel today, no other conclusion can be realistically reached except that the prophetic words of Leviticus 26 are, in fact, realized in Israel, and are thus the words of the Lord, given as a prophetic basis for what has come about.

Text Verse: *“Indeed you are to them as a very lovely song of one who has a pleasant voice and can play well on an instrument; for they hear your words, but they do not do them. ³³ And when this comes to pass—surely it will come—then they will know that a prophet has been among them.” Ezekiel 33:32, 33*

Prophecy, especially future prophecy, is an exceptionally tricky and complicated thing. Far too often, people claim they know what lies ahead based on what the Bible says about certain issues. However, it is an extremely rare thing that someone in the past would read Scripture and know exactly what would come to pass, and in the way and matter it in fact actually occurred.

Bible prophecy is given normally as a general outline of what lies ahead, and piecing together all of what is given on a future event is certainly both a challenge, and something which will be shown in error most of the time. In other words, the Bible is not intended for divination about what lies ahead. It is given in broad brushstrokes of what is coming, but not in minute detail.

However, when the event comes to pass, one can then look back on what has been prophesied and come to a truly “Aha” moment. All of the verses which pointed to what was coming suddenly come into crystal clear focus. In this, the prophet who relayed the words is seen to have been a true prophet, and the Lord who inspired the prophet, is seen as beyond the realm of the naturalist. Instead, He is the omniscient, sovereign Lord who transcends space and time.

In Leviticus 26, there are explicit prophecies which are obvious on the surface, and which were simply awaiting their obvious fulfillment. There are also portions of this chapter which, when taken together with other portions of Scripture, were only realized as prophetically fulfilled *after* the events took place.

Understanding this, for us in the church today, there are certain future prophecies which are obvious on the surface. We know they are coming, and we can simply await their fulfillment, fully trusting that they will come about because they are of the same reliable Source as other prophecies which have been exactly fulfilled already. And then, there are things which are coming which will only be known as fulfilled *after* the events have taken place. The importance of not mixing the two types of prophecy together cannot be overstated. The Bible is not a tool for divination. Predictions about certain dates, and specific events occurring at specific times, are to be rejected outright. But those things which are said to be ahead, and which are carefully recorded for us to understand the broad outline of the future, are fair game to know that the future is set, and that those things will come about. As one example of hundreds, the Bible says there will be a rapture. That is open, explicit, and guaranteed.

However, the Bible does not tell us when that will occur. Therefore, no amount of study or speculation will ever bring us to an understanding of the timing of the event. Let us be wise in how we handle prophecy, and let us never set ourselves in the position where we claim to know what is reserved to God alone. These truths are to be found in His superior word. And so let's turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. Promised Blessings to Israel

This chapter begins with no new introduction, such as, "The Lord spoke to Moses saying." Thus, what is found here is a continuation of the discourse to Moses which has been ongoing since verse 25:1. Despite this, the chapter division here is appropriate because it will deal with the blessings and the curses which Israel can expect based on obedience to the Lord, or disobedience to Him.

The placement of the first two verses, however, are said by some scholars to be wholly inappropriate for starting this new chapter. Instead, it is claimed that they belong to the previous chapter. Charles Ellicott, in particular, finds this placement to be detrimental to our study of what is occurring. He says –

“The first two verses of this chapter are still a part of the previous section in the Hebrew original. By separating them from their proper position, and making them begin a new chapter, both the logical sequence and the import of these two verses are greatly obscured.” Charles Ellicott

He provides his logical reason for the claim by saying that the idolatry of verse 1, and the Sabbath law of verse 2, are tied into being a Hebrew slave in Chapter 25, warning them to abstain from idolatry and to keep the Sabbath, despite their indentured status.

This is a wholly unrealistic analysis. Both idolatry and Sabbath observance laws are given to all the people, regardless of their status as free men or slaves. Rather, the warnings of these two commands *set the stage* for all that will follow. In Leviticus 19, these same precepts are given at the beginning of the chapter, but the order of them is reversed. It first speaks of keeping the Sabbaths of the Lord in verse 3, and then not turning to idols in verse 4. From there, the rest of the chapter dealt with commands, statutes, and judgments for the people to follow.

The same is true here. The Lord is highlighting these particular commands at the outset of what is to follow, and then He will give the consequences for not following them. In other words, these two commands are being relayed again to call to mind all of the other laws which have been given. As Joseph Benson rightly says, “The substance of their religious laws are here recapitulated in two chief articles, on which all the rest very much depended; and God, by Moses, inculcates upon them.”

These two major precepts, along with reverence for the sanctuary which is also found in verse 3, are given to keep the Israelites from corrupt and superstitious practices. Further, the reversal of the order of these commands – idolatry and Sabbath-keeping between Chapter 19 and here is highlighted in the fact that back in Exodus 20, in the Ten Commandments, the commands are reversed from those in Chapter 19. Like here in Chapter 26, idolatry precedes the observance of the Sabbath in the Ten Commandments.

And so, not to beat the point to death, but so that you understand what is going on, the Lord is giving the first two verses of this chapter as a summary of all of the laws and precepts given to Israel. From this solemn reminder, He will then give them magnificent promises of blessing for obedience, and terrifying promises of curses for disobedience. The words of this chapter are exactly revealed in the rest of the pages of the Old Testament, and in the second exile of Israel after their rejection of their Messiah, Jesus – just as the Lord promises here in Leviticus 26.

¹ **'You shall not make idols for yourselves;**

lo taasu lakem elilim – “no shall you make to you nothings.” The word *elilim* comes from the word *al*, or “no,” and thus it literally means “nothings.” These “nothings” then are set in contrast to that which is of the highest value, Yehovah, the One true God. Paul, understanding this nuance, repeats it in 1 Corinthians 8:4 –

“Therefore concerning the eating of things offered to idols, we know that an idol *is* nothing in the world, and that *there is* no other God but one.”

To make a nothing, and then to attribute value to it, reduces the maker of the nothing to the same level as the nothing they have made. In other words, to reverence the name of the Lord, is to bring glory to the Lord, who then returns His favor to that person. But to exalt a nothing will result in exactly the opposite. Psalm 115 explains that those who do such things hold the same value as what they produce. They become nothings –

“But our God *is* in heaven;
He does whatever He pleases.
⁴ Their idols *are* silver and gold,
The work of men’s hands.
⁵ They have mouths, but they do not speak;
Eyes they have, but they do not see;
⁶ They have ears, but they do not hear;
Noses they have, but they do not smell;
⁷ They have hands, but they do not handle;
Feet they have, but they do not walk;
Nor do they mutter through their throat.
⁸ Those who make them are like them;
So is everyone who trusts in them.” Psalm 118:3-8

¹ (con’t) **neither a carved image nor a *sacred* pillar shall you rear up for yourselves;**

The *pesel*, or image was first mentioned in the giving of the Ten Commandments, and it has not been seen since. It comes from *pasal* which means “to cut or hew into shape.” Thus, this is specifically a carved image. Such an image could be of either a false god, or an attempt to represent the true God. Both of these were forbidden. A false god would be a challenge to Yehovah, and an image claiming to be His likeness would be an affront to Him. Nothing in creation could represent His infinite glory and being.

The pillar, or *matstsebah*, was first seen when Jacob set up such a pillar when he had his dream of a stairway rising to heaven in Genesis 28. In this case, it is any sacred pillar which is used for worship and/or fertility rites. Such pillars will be seen throughout the times of the kings of Israel, including those to Baal.

^{1 (con't)} **nor shall you set up an engraved stone in your land, to bow down to it;**

Here is a new word which will be seen six times in the Bible, *maskith*, or imagination. It is from *sekvi* which signifies the mind, and thus it is speaking of the imaginations of the mind in forming a carved image. Any carved stone image formed by a man's mind, whether of something real like a bear, or something imagined, like a unicorn or a Sphinx, is surely included in this concept. This would be inclusive of images carved into stone as well, such as depictions in walls and the like. To have such images could, and would, inevitably lead the people to idolatry. This is made explicit with the words, "to bow down to it."

^{1 (con't)} **for I *am* the Lord your God.**

The reason for the commands concerning the conduct of the people, which has been given to them countless times already, is that Yehovah is their God, they committed to this fact, and they are accountable to Him as such. This remains unchanged to this day. Though the law is set aside in Christ, they have – as a collective group of people – not come to Christ. They are thus as accountable today to this law as they were when these words were spoken.

This precept is not to be missed. What is said in this chapter concerning His anticipated treatment of them did not end with the coming of Christ. The blessing and the burden remains. This is revealed explicitly in Daniel 9 where seven more years are given to Israel, under this law, to come to Christ as the fulfillment of it. In the meantime, the words of Leviticus 26 have continued to be revealed in and through Israel, even for the last 2000 years.

² **You shall keep My Sabbaths and reverence My sanctuary:
I *am* the Lord.**

These words are an exact repetition of Leviticus 19:30, word for word, and even letter for letter. These two laws were given to draw the people near to Him. The intent was that in especially following these precepts, they would be more likely to guard against idol worship, and instead focus on the Lord.

Unfortunately, Sabbath observance, and even the honor of having the Lord's sanctuary among them became markers of perceived self-goodness and acceptability because of who they were, not because of who the Lord is. Ezekiel shows that this is true, even from their inception as a people. He says that they profaned the Lord's sabbath from the start, and they did it by allowing their hearts to go after idols, a thing which profaned the very reason for the giving of the Sabbath –

So I also raised My hand in an oath to them in the wilderness, that I would not bring them into the land which I had given *them*, 'flowing with milk and honey,' the glory of all lands, ¹⁶ because they despised My judgments and did not walk in My statutes, but profaned My Sabbaths; for their heart went after their idols.

-Ezekiel 20:15, 16

Likewise, the prophet Jeremiah makes this perfectly clear to the people concerning their regard of the Lord's sanctuary –

"Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: "Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place. ⁴ Do not trust in these lying words, saying, 'The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord *are* these.'

⁵ "For if you thoroughly amend your ways and your doings, if you thoroughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbor, ⁶ *if* you do not oppress the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and do not shed innocent blood in this place, or walk after other gods to your hurt, ⁷ then I will cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers forever and ever. Jeremiah 7:3-7

³ 'If you walk in My statutes and keep My commandments, and perform them,

Verse 3 now begins what verses 1 & 2 prepared the people's ears to hear. They were given the instructions on what to do in those verses as a summary of all of the laws they have thus far been presented, and of all the laws that are yet to be proclaimed. With that behind them, and yet as a reference for each section of what the Lord will now proclaim, the conditional statements of Leviticus 26 now begin with, "If you walk..." The Pulpit Commentary rightly says of these words, "The free will of man is recognized equally with God's controlling power." The statement is conditional – "IF." It presupposes free will among the people. However, what follows will demonstrate that God will take those choices, and He will control the outcome of the people based on what they chose to do.

In this verse, the words are spoken to all of the people. In other words, the subject of the matter is not what *individuals* would do concerning their conduct, but what the people *collectively* would do in keeping the words of the covenant and adhering to the precepts of the Lord. If a miscreant was found among the people, would the people handle him in accord with the given law? It is the *collective group* to which these words are given.

The Lord will begin with explaining the blessings of what lay ahead if the choice was obedience to Him and to His word. The germ of this blessing was initially promised in the giving of the Ten Commandments. In Exodus 20:6 and 20:12 He gave promises of blessing for obedience to His word.

In Exodus 23, He continued with promises of what He would do for the people if they remained faithful and obedient to Him. These early references will now be fully developed and explained to the people. They are words of surety, they are words of encouragement, and they are words of warning. Israel must pay heed, or Israel will discover what it means to fail to pay heed.

⁴ then I

An important point right here at the giving of the first promise is that it is stated in the first person. This will continue all the way through the chapter. The Lord personally claims that He will fulfill His word in and towards the people – “I will do this,” and “I will do that.” This is in contrast to the comparable passage of blessings and curses noted in Deuteronomy 28. There Moses reiterates the main idea of what is stated here, but he does it in the third person – “The Lord will do this, and the Lord will do that.”

^{4 (con't)} will give you rain in its season,

Beginning the blessings with *geshem*, or rain, is not a word to be taken lightly. Without rain, everything else in the land would come to ruin. With rain, there would be the possibility of abundance and satisfaction. Unlike Egypt where they had left, the land of Israel did not have a massive river running through it which could then be diverted onto the flat surrounding countryside. Instead, it is a land of hills and valleys. Without rain, it would be a barren waste.

But in obedience to Him, and to His word, He promises the rain to come in its season. For Israel under ideal conditions, there are two major rains – the former and the latter rains which are noted in Deuteronomy 11:14. The former rains are those which come at

the time after the autumnal equinox, normally around late October to early November. That is when the winter crops of wheat and barley would be sown. After this, heavier showers would fall in November and December.

The latter rains begin to fall in March, before the winter crops are harvested, but at the time when the summer seed is sown. These rains last a few days, or even a period of hours. The clouds which told of the coming of this latter rain were so welcomed to the people, that Solomon equates it to the favor of the king –

“In the light of the king’s face *is* life,
And his favor *is* like a cloud of the latter rain.” Proverbs 16:15

Joel 2 speaks of both of these rains, and the blessing of them –

“Be glad then, you children of Zion,
And rejoice in the Lord your God;
For He has given you the former rain faithfully,
And He will cause the rain to come down for you—
The former rain,
And the latter rain in the first *month*.
²⁴ The threshing floors shall be full of wheat,
And the vats shall overflow with new wine and oil.” Joel 2:23, 24

James, in the New Testament, does so as well. He equates the coming of the former and latter rains in the land of Israel to the return of the Lord. As the cycle of rains in Israel was disrupted for 2000 years during their exile, and as these rains have returned to their normal cycle since their return in 1948, we find in the words of James comfort. The return of Christ is, in fact, near –

“Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See *how* the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain. ⁸ You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.” James 5:7, 8

⁴ (con’t) **the land shall yield its produce, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit.**

Here the word *yebul*, or produce is introduced. It signifies that which is brought forth out of the land, and thus we would say “produce.” Along with such things, the Lord promises that the trees would likewise be fruitful. One can see in this fields of tomatoes, rows of

apple trees, and every type of abundance in every field. The words of all of verse 4 closely match Ezekiel 34:26, 27 –

“I will make them and the places all around My hill a blessing; and I will cause showers to come down in their season; there shall be showers of blessing. ²⁷ Then the trees of the field shall yield their fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase.”

-Ezekiel 34:26, 27

⁵Your threshing shall last till the time of vintage, and the vintage shall last till the time of sowing;

Here is a unique word in Scripture, *dayish*, or “threshing time.” That is derived from *dush*, or the act of threshing. Another new word, *batsir*, or vintage is introduced. That signifies the clipping off of clusters of grapes, and thus the time of vintage. The idea here is that there will be such abundance that the productivity of the field will simply go on and on. There will always be work, and it will always be abundantly productive and fruitful. This will be so much the case that while they are still tending to one harvest, the next would be calling out for their attention to tend to it.

These words closely match Amos 9:13. But even more than matching, just after that, in verse 9:15 as the book comes to a close, is a passage which is predictive prophecy, and which has never been fulfilled in history. Thus, it is something which belongs to our future, and which points to Israel’s return to their land in 1948 –

“Behold, the days are coming,” says the Lord,
“When the plowman shall overtake the reaper,
And the treader of grapes him who sows seed;

The mountains shall drip with sweet wine,
And all the hills shall flow *with it*.

¹⁴ I will bring back the captives of My people Israel;
They shall build the waste cities and inhabit *them*;
They shall plant vineyards and drink wine from them;
They shall also make gardens and eat fruit from them.

¹⁵ I will plant them in their land,
And no longer shall they be pulled up
From the land I have given them,”
Says the Lord your God. Amos 9:13-15

There has never been a time which Israel was planted and not pulled up. But the restoration of Israel in 1948 has made this prophecy possible. Other prophecies show us that before these promised blessings come about, many troubles and much loss of life will come to Israel, but the word of God states that they shall never again be uprooted. The word is faithful, and Israel will stand.

^{5 (con't)} **you shall eat your bread to the full,**

These words correspond to Ezekiel 34:29, "I will raise up for them a garden of renown, and they shall no longer be consumed with hunger in the land." Again and again Ezekiel promises that which was promised by Moses. The people had rebelled, but the people would receive grace. For those at the time of Moses, however, when they left Egypt and were still on their way to Sinai, they complained against the Lord saying that in Egypt they ate bread to the full. It was at that time that the Lord gave them manna to sustain them. The Lord promises that in Israel, and in their obedience to His precepts, the people would be filled with bread, just as they were in Egypt. But they would be free, and they would be cared for in a better way. This is seen in the next words...

^{5 (con't)} **and dwell in your land safely.**

These words are again reflected in Ezekiel 34. There the prophet says, "They shall be safe in their land;" (v 27). As Israel was delivered from the bondage of Egypt, the Lord sent them into bondage again for their transgressions, but he promised that like Egypt, their time for this would also end.

⁶ **I will give peace in the land, and you shall lie down, and none will make you afraid;**

Once again, Ezekiel 34 repeats the beautiful promises of Leviticus 26 to the downtrodden of his day with, "I will make a covenant of peace with them, and cause wild beasts to cease from the land; and they will dwell safely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods" (v. 25). For obedient Israel, there was, and there is, the promise of safety in the land. Even with the immense abundance which overflows from the harvests, the Lord promises them safety. There was to be no terror at night that someone would come and steal their efforts away, or harm them as they peacefully lay sleeping.

^{6 (con't)} **I will rid the land of evil beasts,**

And again from the same verse as before, Ezekiel's words are a restatement of the original promises of Leviticus 26. There we read, "I will make a covenant of peace with

them, and cause wild beasts to cease from the land” (v. 25). The promise here is one of security, but the term “evil beasts,” means more than simply lions, bears, and jackals. Rather, the term *khayah*, or living, is used to describe the formation of man in Genesis 2:7. Therefore, this promise to Israel is to be taken euphemistically to include wicked men of the land who form plans and schemes against Israel.

The reference to Ezekiel’s prophecy of the future seems obvious when considering the many factions who are intent on Israel’s destruction, and who make them live in fear today – be they Fatah, Hamas, Hezbollah, or countless others who invade their land, terrify their souls, and swallow up the Lord’s people. Until Israel has set its heart on the Lord, meaning Jesus, this will not cease.

⁶ (con’t) **and the sword will not go through your land.**

The words of this clause are seen substantially repeated in Ezekiel 34 as well. There in verse 28 he says, “And they shall no longer be a prey for the nations, nor shall beasts of the land devour them.” The Lord has tied the “evil beasts” in with “the sword” going through the land. Thus, Ezekiel’s words concerning the “beasts of the land” is speaking of the enemies of Israel euphemistically. They are as evil beasts, come to destroy the flock of the Lord.

But the flock of the Lord can only be considered as such when they are right with the Lord. Today, the evil beasts within the land, and the evil beasts of the surrounding lands, do come and destroy. A day lies ahead when this will no longer be the case. Israel was the Lord’s, and they betrayed Him. They have now received grace and have been returned to their ancient land, but their lot for the immediate future is one of uncertainty and sure grief. When they return to Him, He will be waiting with open arms.

⁷ **You will chase your enemies, and they shall fall by the sword before you.**

The words here are fulfilled throughout the times of the judges and kings. When Israel was in favor with the Lord, they fell upon their enemies and destroyed them mightily. At one time, the power of Israel was so great that the Bible records this in 1 Kings –

“So Solomon reigned over all kingdoms from the River *to* the land of the Philistines, as far as the border of Egypt. *They* brought tribute and served Solomon all the days of his life.” 1 Kings 4:21

This had come about by the great battles won by Saul, and then his own father David. By the time Solomon reigned, there was peace on all sides because the enemies of Israel had been chased and destroyed by the hungry sword of Israel.

⁸ Five of you shall chase a hundred, and a hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight; your enemies shall fall by the sword before you.

The words here are proverbial and signify that a small number would be able to defeat a large multitude. The Hebrew word is *revavah*. It means a multitude. The Greek translation of the OT says *urias*, or a myriad. It is an unspecified number. At other times, different numbers are used to express the same thought. Further, they are given in relation to Israel defeating their enemies, and in Israel being defeated by their enemies. However, the precept, though proverbial, is found realized several times in Scripture. In Joshua 23:10, Joshua cites this precept as an assured promise of the Lord in order to spur on his people to battle. He says there that one could chase a thousand.

In Judges 3:31, Shamgar, the son of Anath had killed six hundred men of the Philistines with an ox goad. In Judges 15:15, Samson is said to have killed a thousand men with the jawbone of a donkey. In 1 Samuel 14, Jonathan and his armor bearer came against a Philistine garrison, killed many, and this led to Israel seizing the initiative and wiping out many Philistines. In 2 Samuel 23:8, Josheb-Basshebeth is said to have raised his spear against eight hundred men, whom he killed in one encounter.

Finally, when Gideon and 300 men came against a camp of 135,000, they led the enemy into such panic that they killed one another while Gideon pursued them, encouraging other Israelites to join them, and killing as they went. It says that at the end of the battle, over 120,000 warriors had fallen. These and other stories show that while this is a proverbial saying, it is also one which holds more than a grain, but a bucketful, of truth.

⁹ For I will look on you favorably

The words literally say “And I will turn unto you.” It signifies a sign of grace from the Lord. This sentiment is seen in Psalm 25 –

“Turn Yourself to me, and have mercy on me,
For I *am* desolate and afflicted.” Psalm 25:16

In turning to them, he promises three positive things. The first is...

⁹ (con't) **and make you fruitful,**

This is not merely multiplication, but abundant health, continuance, brilliance, renown, etc. It is one thing to have a whole brood of regular children, but another to have children who are warriors, kings, and the like. One cannot be considered a curse, but the other can be considered a blessing. This is the intent of these words.

⁹ (con't) **multiply you**

In addition to being fruitful comes the second promise, that of multiplication. Not only would Israel flourish in brilliance, renown, and so on, but these would be many in number. When people came to the land, they would say, "Every man is a giant among men." Such is the intent here. But these first two merely lead to the third...

⁹ (con't) **and confirm My covenant with you.**

The Lord's word to Israel refers back to His promises to Abraham. In Genesis 15:18, the first of such terminology is used –

"On the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying:
"To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates." Genesis 15:18

After that, the covenant was solidified with the sign of circumcision, and the promises which went along with it. That was recorded in Genesis 17:4-8 –

"As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, and you shall be a father of many nations. ⁵No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you a father of many nations. ⁶I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. ⁷And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and your descendants after you. ⁸Also I give to you and your descendants after you the land in which you are a stranger, all the land of Canaan, as an everlasting possession; and I will be their God."

The scholar Keil notes rightly that the words now in Leviticus are not merely the preservation of this covenant, "but the continual realization of the covenant grace, by which the covenant itself was carried on further and further towards its completion."

The promises are intended to keep the people in the land and increase them as they continued toward the coming of Messiah. The curses, though negative in nature, are intended for the same purpose. Israel would be controlled by God, but it would be a controlling of their own making, for good or evil, as they moved into a future where Christ would someday be revealed.

¹⁰ You shall eat the old harvest, and clear out the old because of the new.

The words here are necessary. He has already promised this type of blessing, but after doing so, He said that He would multiply the people. At what point would that turn south and mean lack? The answer is, "At no point." As they multiplied, the Lord would continue to provide. There would be no lack, even in great multiplication of the people.

This would be so much so, that even as they ate the old store of food, they would eventually have to remove the old on account of the new. One can imagine great stores of older grain being carried over to the herds and given to them. The food of kings would become fodder for the beasts because of the abundance.

¹¹ I will set My tabernacle among you,

Two promises are made in this verse. The first is that the Lord will set His *mishkan*, or tabernacle, among the people. This is the greatest promise of all, and it is one which gives the idea of reposing. He will dwell among the people. The Greek translation of this word is used in the New Testament when speaking of Jesus –

“And the Word became flesh, and did tabernacle among us, and we beheld his glory, glory as of an only begotten of a father, full of grace and truth.”

-John 1:14 (YLT)

The coming of Christ was to be the fulfillment of this for Israel, but they rejected Him. From there, Christ went to the Gentiles and has dwelt among them for 2000 years, dwelling in those who have called out to Him for salvation. The second promise is that...

^{11 (con't)} and My soul shall not abhor you.

The word *gaal*, or abhor, is introduced here. It is only used ten times in the Bible, but five of them are in this chapter. Four of those show an action by Israel, and a response by the Lord. If the people abhor His laws, He in turn will abhor them. The Lord, right at

the beginning gave them the choice, and that choice is first given in the positive – “Obey Me, and I shall not abhor you.” Instead...

¹² I will walk among you and be your God, and you shall be My people.

To abhor is to take that which is vile and cast it away. But the Lord promised Israel that if they obeyed His precepts, He would do just the opposite. He would set up His dwelling place among them, and He would walk among them and be their God. To walk with someone is to be in agreement with them. This is seen in Amos 3:3 where the question is asked, “Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?” The answer is, “No.”

The Lord did walk with Israel while they were obedient, and they were His people when this was true. However, in exile, the Lord was not among them, and they were separated from Him as His people. Instead, the promises given to Israel went to the Gentiles. In 2 Corinthians 6, we read this coming to pass –

For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said:
“I will dwell in them
And walk among them.
I will be their God,
And they shall be My people.” 2 Corinthians 6:16

Paul cites Hosea with this same sentiment in Romans 9:25 to show that the Gentiles would replace Israel during their time of exile and punishment. However, Peter picks up on Paul’s words for the Jews of the end times, and he reapplies them to Israel saying that they were once “not a people, but *are* now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy” (1 Peter 2:10). A time lies ahead when the favor of God will turn from Gentile to Jew once again. The rapture will occur, and then His eyes will be fully and entirely on completing His redemptive plans for them, and for the world at large.

¹³ I *am* the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, that *you* should not be their slaves;

The Lord has, on several occasions thus far, reminded Israel that He has brought them out of Egypt. They were brought *from* slavery *to* freedom, leaving a land of distress and heading to a land of peace and security. They had lived the former life and cried out in anguish because of it. Now they would be given a new direction and were admonished to take heed to the Lord’s word and live in that freedom; not return to bondage.

¹³ (fin) **I have broken the bands of your yoke and made you walk upright.**

Here we have terminology which shows how highly oppressive life in Egypt was. The Lord uses a new term, *motah*, or bands, of a yoke to describe their previous plight. These were poles or rods which were laid upon the necks of animals as a type of yoke, or inserted into a yoke, to fasten their heads together to keep them level. In this, they would render the animal completely helpless to resist, and they would be incapable of straightening up.

The idea is that Israel was so oppressed with labor, that it was a yoke which bent their backs, and kept them from upright freedom of movement. The Lord had broken those yokes from the people, and this allowed them to walk in freedom. Our verses today finish with a word which is used only here in the Bible, *qomemiyuth*, or upright. Where there was bondage, there was now to be freedom. Where there was affliction, there would now be blessing.

Israel has been given the choice, and the promises based on obedience are magnificent in the extreme. Unfortunately, as we see in the rest of Scripture, they failed to obey. Eventually, they went back under a yoke, and they have continued under it for millennia. But returning one more time to Ezekiel 34:27, we see that someday that will change –

“and they shall know that I *am* the Lord, when I have broken the bands of their yoke and delivered them from the hand of those who enslaved them.”

Their time of freedom lies ahead, and as always, these physical truths, which really occurred, have a greater spiritual meaning in Christ. Israel being brought out of Egypt pictures man’s being brought out from the power of sin and the devil. The yoke upon their necks is that which bound us. Some of us had afflictions of drugs, sex, or alcohol. Some have been addicted to work.

Anything we put above God is a source of idolatry, and it is a source of separation from God. But Christ can and does free us when we come to Him. He resolves the sin problem the moment He redeems us. From there, if we will allow Him to work in us, He resolves the other issues in our lives as well. The yoke is already broken, but too many of us continue to carry it.

And there is another yoke which many Christians continue to carry as well. It is the yoke of the law. Paul warns us to not get entangled again with a yoke of bondage, meaning the Law of Moses. Christ has fulfilled it, and thus He is the end of the law for all who

believe. Instead, we are to put our faith, our trust, and our hope in the completed work of Christ.

Let us keep ourselves from falling back into sin, pictured by Egypt, which Christ has redeemed us from, and let us keep ourselves from falling back into bondage to the law which Christ has fulfilled for us. Instead, we are to now live our lives in holiness and in intimate fellowship with God, through Christ our Lord. If you have never been freed from the yokes of this world, today is the day, good friend. Call on Christ, and live in Him, for Him, and in anticipation of Him always.

Closing Verse: *“Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”*

-Matthew 11:28-30

Next Week: Leviticus 26:14-39 *Surely worse than needle-poking nurses...* (Assured Curses) (50th Leviticus Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if you have a lifetime of sin heaped up behind you, He can wash it away and purify you completely and wholly. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

Promised Blessings

‘You shall not make idols for yourselves
Not even of your favorite pup
Neither a carved image nor a sacred pillar
Shall you for yourselves rear up
Nor shall you set up an engraved stone in your land
To bow down to it
For I am the Lord your God
And so to you this rule I do submit

You shall keep My Sabbaths and reverence My sanctuary
I am the Lord; so shall it be

‘If you walk in My statutes and keep My commandments
-----and perform them

Then I will give you rain in its season, the right amount to suit
The land shall yield its produce
And the trees of the field shall yield their fruit
Your threshing shall last till the time of vintage
And the vintage till the time of sowing shall last
You shall eat your bread to the full
And dwell in your land safely, nor shall you be downcast
I will give peace in the land, and you shall lie down
And none will make you afraid, so understand
I will rid the land of evil beasts
And the sword will not go through your land
You will chase your enemies; so you shall do
And they shall fall by the sword before you
Five of you shall chase a hundred
And a hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight
Your enemies shall fall by the sword before you
Such shall be your might

“For I will look on you favorably and make you fruitful
Multiply you and confirm My covenant with you
You shall eat the old harvest
And clear out the old because of the new
I will set My tabernacle among you
And My soul shall not abhor you
I will walk among you and be your God
And you shall be My people; to this word I will be true

I am the Lord your God
Who brought you out of the land of Egypt; that marvelous sight
That you should not be their slaves
I have broken the bands of your yoke and made you walk upright
Lord God, surely you have broken our yoke and set us free
And now You dwell in us and walk among us too
Such marvelous love! How can it be?
That we have received such blessing from You!

Thank You that You are our God because of Jesus
Thank You that we are now your people also
Such marvelous things You have done for us

Such gifts of love and mercy upon us You bestow

Hallelujah to You for Your kind and gracious hand upon us
Hallelujah to You, O God, for our King! Our glorious Lord Jesus!

Hallelujah and Amen...

LEVITICUS 26:14-39 (ASSURED CURSES)

Palestine sits in sackcloth and ashes. Over it broods the spell of a curse that has withered its fields and fettered its energies. Where Sodom and Gomorrah reared their domes and towers, that solemn sea now floods the plain, in whose bitter waters no living thing exists—over whose waveless surface the blistering air hangs motionless and dead—about whose borders nothing grows but weeds, and scattering tufts of cane, and that treacherous fruit that promises refreshment to parching lips, but turns to ashes at the touch. Nazareth is forlorn; about that ford of Jordan where the hosts of Israel entered the Promised Land with songs of rejoicing, one finds only a squalid camp of fantastic Bedouins of the desert; Jericho the accursed, lies a moldering ruin, to-day, even as Joshua's miracle left it more than three thousand years ago; Bethlehem and Bethany, in their poverty and their humiliation, have nothing about them now to remind one that they once knew the high honor of the Saviour's presence; the hallowed spot where the shepherds watched their flocks by night, and where the angels sang Peace on earth, good will to men, is untenanted by any living creature, and unblessed by any feature that is pleasant to the eye. Renowned Jerusalem itself, the stateliest name in history, has lost all its ancient grandeur, and is become a pauper village; the riches of Solomon are no longer there to compel the admiration of visiting Oriental queens; the wonderful temple which was the pride and the glory of Israel, is gone, and the Ottoman crescent is lifted above the spot where, on that most memorable day in the annals of the world, they reared the Holy Cross. The noted Sea of Galilee, where Roman fleets once rode at anchor and the disciples of the Saviour sailed in their ships, was long ago deserted by the devotees of war and commerce, and its borders are a silent wilderness; Capernaum is a shapeless ruin; Magdala is the home of beggared Arabs; Bethsaida and Chorazin have vanished from the earth, and the "desert places" round about them where thousands of men once listened to the Saviour's voice and ate the miraculous bread, sleep in the hush of a solitude that is inhabited only by birds of prey and skulking foxes. Palestine is desolate and unlovely. And why should it be otherwise? Can the curse of the Deity beautify a land? Mark Twain, 1869

Text Verse: *"For the promise that he would be the heir of the world was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴ For if those who are of the law are heirs, faith is made void and the promise made of no effect, ¹⁵ because the law brings about wrath; for where there is no law there is no transgression."*

-Romans 4:13-15

Where there is no law, there is no transgression. Thank God for those marvelous words. The law was given, it was agreed upon, and penalties for its violation are clearly stated. Nothing could be more dramatic than reading the words of Leviticus 26, and then comparing them to the words of Mark Twain. It is as if one was penned simply to confirm the other.

I attended a Jewish funeral where the rabbi who spoke mentioned Leviticus 26, and its many punishments. He dismissed what it said as if it was completely irrelevant to the Jewish people, and to the state of the world in which they have lived, and still live. And yet, Leviticus 26 exactingly explains their state now, and what has occurred to them as a people, in every possible detail.

Instead of dismissing what it says, they should be terrified by it, remorseful over how it has been proven true, and repentant in their actions of heart and deed. And even more, they should look to why these things came upon them the second time. It's been staring them in the face for these past 2000 years. From time to time, one will realize and understand.

That rare soul is mentioned by Paul in Romans 11:5 as one of the "remnant according to the election of grace." This means, he or she has come to Christ. That soul is now no longer under law, but under grace. For the rest, they are still bound to what has afflicted them all along. And sadly they will be judged by that same law when they stand before their God.

When you say your prayers each day, remember to include Israel. They are back in the land, but they are not right with God. Such truths are to be found in His superior word. And so let's turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. If You Do Not Obey Me (verses 14-17)

¹⁴ 'But if you do not obey Me, and do not observe all these commandments,

Verses 3 through 8 gave the assurances of blessing for obedience to the Lord in keeping His statutes and commandments and performing them according to the law. A contrast to those verses is now given. The horrifying consequences for disobedience are now forthcoming. What will be presented as punishment to be inflicted upon those who stubbornly refuse to comply, is documented as having come about in the remaining pages of Scripture. The Lord promised blessing, and it came upon the people when they

complied. The Lord now promises curses, and they have come upon the people when they refused to comply.

¹⁵ and if you despise My statutes, or if your soul abhors My judgments, so that you do not perform all My commandments, *but* break My covenant,

A new word, *ma'as* is brought in here. It signifies to despise unto rejection. It comes from a root meaning "to spurn." It will become common in Scripture as the people reject the Lord and His word, and He in turn rejects them, individually (such as in King Saul) or collectively (such as in the people rejecting the law). It is used in the 118th Psalm when speaking of the Stone which the builders rejected, a prophecy of the coming Messiah.

What was a passive indifference noted in verse 14, is now an active attitude here. The words used, *ma'as* (despise), *gaal* (abhor), and *parar* (break) are purposeful and active, but they must be taken in their proper light. Individual sins, although regrettable, are not what is being spoken of here. The law provided for the atonement of such sins. Instead, the state of the people as a collective group is what is being addressed. As the overall attitude of the people came to despise the statutes, abhor the judgments, and willingly fail to perform all of the commandments, thus breaking the covenant, then the anticipated curses would be poured out upon them –

Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read in the hearing of the people. And they said, "All that the Lord has said we will do, and be obedient." Exodus 24:7

They had agreed to it as a collective group, and thus they would be collectively punished for failure to comply as they had promised. One might ask though how this could be collective when Paul says this in Galatians –

For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, "Cursed *is* everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them." Galatians 3:10

The answer is that all who failed to do the things of the law were under a curse, but the Day of Atonement was there to cover those individual sins. As the nation moved away from accepting the need for national atonement for these individual sins, they collectively brought on the national curse. This is why even the individuals who were mournful over their sins were caught up in the national guilt.

¹⁶ I also will do this to you:

The word *aph*, translated as “also,” is not uncommon, but it hasn’t been seen since Genesis 40. Now, it will be used 9 times through the end of the chapter. It indicates addition. One might think of, “This, therefore, that.” The Lord will use this word in the negative six times until verse 41, and then he will use it in the positive three times in verses 42 through 44. There is a sense of increase in punishment due to Israel’s rejection of the covenant, and then an increase in the Lord’s faithfulness in keeping that same covenant.

16 (con’t) I will even appoint terror over you, wasting disease and fever which shall consume the eyes and cause sorrow of heart.

The word “appoint” is *paqad*. It comes from a root meaning “to visit.” In the words here, the Lord, in the first person, promises a purposeful, divine visitation upon the people. What will be described is from His hand and He is the Source of the calamity which will be described. The first curse is a new word *bahalah*, or terror. That is then defined by two more new words, translated as “wasting disease and fever.”

Those two words will be seen again in Deuteronomy 18:22 and then never again in Scripture. But the Lord promises the result will be *mekalot enayim u-medivot naphesh*, or literally “consume the eyes and pine away the soul.” The idea of this phrase is that the eyes – meaning the light of life – will extinguish, and the soul – meaning life itself – will pine away. Though different Hebrew words are used, these same troubles are recorded as having come upon the people in Lamentations. For those who follow these things, the word *doov*, or pine away, is found only here.

16 (con’t) And you shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it.

This is probably speaking of the people laboring in the field, and others eating what is produced. However, the Hebrew says something that may be more terrifying. It more literally says, “you shall sow your seed to no purpose, and your seed will be eaten by your enemies.” The question is, “Why doesn’t it say “harvest” or “produce” instead of seed?” The other four times that *zarakem*, or your seed, is used in Scripture, it is speaking of descendants. As the first part of this verse is speaking of the dying of the individual, it makes more sense that this is speaking of one’s posterity, being eaten – either literally or figuratively – by the enemy. This would then be fulfilled in Jeremiah 10:25 –

“Pour out Your fury on the Gentiles, who do not know You,
And on the families who do not call on Your name;

For they have eaten up Jacob,
Devoured him and consumed him,
And made his dwelling place desolate.” Jeremiah 10:25

¹⁷ I will set My face against you, and you shall be defeated by your enemies.

For the Lord to set His face against Israel, means that He will direct His attention towards them in anger, and that will be poured out on them in indignation. Their enemies, the tool of His anger, will defeat them. The first person shows that the Lord determined and is acting, even if it is really their enemies who accomplish it. The defeat of Israel before her enemies is found throughout the OT.

¹⁷ (con't) Those who hate you shall reign over you, and you shall flee when no one pursues you.

Israel was subjected to foreign powers on numerous occasions – in both testaments. After the close of Scripture, this continued, even until modern times. An instance of them fleeing when not pursued is found in Jeremiah 43.

*The choice is yours, and it is clearly laid out
Will you choose life and walk closely with Me?
No, you will choose another path, there is no doubt
Time will tell, just wait and see*

*I have spoken in advance, and showed what lies ahead
There could be abundance, mixed with peace and life
But that will not be the case; you have chosen the “instead”
This will lead to nothing but sadness, trouble, and strife*

*Oh Israel! If you would just pay heed
Oh My people! If you would just cling closely to Me
But your hearts are wicked, lustful, and filled with greed
And great trouble for You is your woeful destiny*

II. Seven Times Over (verses 18-39)

¹⁸ ‘And after all this, if you do not obey Me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins.

The Lord now promises a second level of punishment, seven-fold punishment upon the people for failing to pay heed. This will be repeated four times. Each time there will be an increase in severity. Here, the word *yasar*, to chasten or punish, is used for the first time. It will be used three more times in this chapter.

The seven-fold punishment looks first to the meaning of seven, divine perfection. There will be a perfect execution of the anticipated punishment. As it is the sabbatical number, it is also to be a reminder of the breaking of the covenant by the people.

Also, if the punishments of verses 14-17 are an indication of punishment leading up to, and including, the first exile, then the number seven here would be a seven-times multiplication of punishment leading up to and including a second exile. Though the words of verses 14-17 are not nearly all that is recorded elsewhere as punishment before the first exile, they may simply be given as an all-encompassing thought. Now the terrors of verses 18-39 would reflect the absolute horror of what not obeying after the first exile would mean.

¹⁹ I will break the pride of your power;

The term *geon uzekem*, or “pride of your power,” is found here and in Ezekiel 24:21 where it speaks of the sanctuary of the Lord. It is debated if that is what is being referred to, but there is no reason to assume it is not. In destroying the temple by the Babylonians and then the Romans, the land was also destroyed. This led naturally to the plagues which follow...

^{19 (con't)} I will make your heavens like iron and your earth like bronze.

In the destruction of the cities, which included Jerusalem and the sanctuary there, the Romans built up siege works. In doing so, they cut down the trees of the land. In this, the natural rain cycles of the land were disrupted. If any rains fell, they were not enough to support crops and produce. This continued on until the return of Israel to the land. In their return, they began planting trees, and the cycle of former and latter rains returned to the land.

Two metals are named here, iron and bronze. Iron has only been mentioned once, in Genesis 4:22. It represents strength, be it in binding together, in government, in hard service, in bondage, etc. Bronze represents judgment. What is being said here is that the Lord will firmly fix up the heavens so that they will not rain. From that, judgment will be realized in the unproductive earth. This same punishment is restated in Deuteronomy

28:23, where the metals are reversed. Thus, judgment in the sky, meaning no rain, would lead to an unyielding earth. In the end, the result is the same as seen in...

²⁰ And your strength shall be spent in vain;

The word *riyq*, or vain, was introduced in verse 16. It means vain, empty, of no purpose. The people would work in the field, but the result would be completely wasted effort.

²⁰ (con't) for your land shall not yield its produce, nor shall the trees of the land yield their fruit.

What was promised as a blessing in verse 4, the yield of produce and the yielding of fruit, is now a resulting curse. The land fails to produce, and the trees fail to bear. Exactly the opposite of verse 4 is realized here. This sad state is recorded in Habakkuk 3:17 –

“Though the fig tree may not blossom,
Nor fruit be on the vines;
Though the labor of the olive may fail,
And the fields yield no food;” Habakkuk 3:17

²¹ Then, if you walk contrary to Me, and are not willing to obey Me, I will bring on you seven times more plagues, according to your sins.

A third level of punishment is now promised. The Lord uses a new word, *qeri*, translated as “contrary” here. It comes from *qarah*, meaning “to happen.” And so this gives the sense of people simply allowing life to happen without a care, and thus acting contrary. It will be used seven times; all are found in the verses to come in this chapter. It signifies opposition, and even hostility. If the Lord’s corrective measures are not heeded by the people, He takes it as a hostile act, and thus punishment seven times over is to be expected.

²² I will also send wild beasts among you, which shall rob you of your children, destroy your livestock, and make you few in number;

The term here is *khayat ha’sadeh*, or “life of the field,” and thus it is any living creature of the field, be it beasts or vipers. In Deuteronomy 32:24, this is described as “the teeth of beasts” and “the poison of serpents.” In 2 Kings 17, the Lord sent lions among the people. Such words are found elsewhere in Ezekiel. What is more the case though, is that wild animals of all kinds are specifically spoken of as evil people, wicked rulers, and

so on. Thus, the wild beasts referred to here are as much to be equated with people as they are actual animals. This then explains...

22 (con't) and your highways shall be desolate.

The word *shamem*, meaning to make desolate or astonish is new here. It will become a rather common word after this, but it is notable that it will be seen seven more times in this chapter alone. The emptiness of roads and highways are noted several times in later books such as Judges 5, Isaiah 33, and Zephaniah 3. Such desolate highways are to be attributed more to human foes than actual wild animals.

23 'And if by these things you are not reformed by Me, but walk contrary to Me,

If the previous remedial efforts are found ineffective, then a fourth elevation of punishment is needed. Such was the case at Jeremiah's time. The people were chastened, and they still did not heed –

“In vain I have chastened your children;
They received no correction.
Your sword has devoured your prophets
Like a destroying lion.” Jeremiah 2:30

The Lord promises that if such is the case...

24 then I also will walk contrary to you, and I will punish you yet seven times for your sins.

Now the word *qeri*, introduced in verse 21, is used as an action by the Lord instead of by the people. If you remember, it comes from a word meaning “to happen,” and thus it seems as if bad, or hostile, things are simply happening – as if God just gave up caring for them. But the truth is that the Lord is attentively punishing the people for their transgressions.

Despite not being a popular view of Jewish history, especially terrors such as the pogroms and the holocaust, Israel has only itself to blame for what has occurred. They have not been obedient to the Lord, and their punishment has come upon them seven times for their sins. Until they come to this realization, there can be no cure for what will continue to come upon them.

25 And I will bring a sword against you that will execute the vengeance of the covenant;

The sword here is a devouring instrument. This is not merely the sword of the enemy being brought against them, but it is inclusive of it. What is being said here is that for their violation of the covenant, the Lord would bring vengeance on them by first bringing the enemy with their sword to destroy. In this, the people would then retreat into the fortified cities as is seen next...

25 (con't) when you are gathered together within your cities I will send pestilence among you;

This is then the second sword, the *deber*, or pestilence. In 1 Chronicles, this is exactly what the pestilence is called, *kherv Yehovah*, or the sword of Yehovah.

25 (con't) and you shall be delivered into the hand of the enemy.

Due to the famine and plague which results from a city-besieged, the strength and numbers of the people would finally result in being forced to give up and surrender. This is seen in the fall of Jerusalem in Jeremiah, and it is recorded in detail by Josephus concerning the fall of Jerusalem to the Romans.

26 When I have cut off your supply of bread, ten women shall bake your bread in one oven, and they shall bring back your bread by weight, and you shall eat and not be satisfied.

b'shivri lakem matteh lekhem – “When I have broken *the* staff of your bread.” It is a proverbial expression indicating that the supply of bread, represented by the staff which supports man, no longer is enough to feed the people. Instead, the bread of ten families, represented by the women who bake it, would be baked in one oven. From there, the single loaf would be divided by weight, every crumb being precious to those who would share it at home. But what is brought to be eaten by the woman would not satisfy those who received it. This is literally recorded as coming upon Jerusalem in Ezekiel 4:16 and elsewhere.

27 'And after all this, if you do not obey Me, but walk contrary to Me,

If after such terrible times as have been described, no change in the people's contrary walk is noted, then a fifth level of punishment is to be meted out upon them...

28 then I also will walk contrary to you in fury;

In verse 24, when the people continued to walk contrary to the Lord, He said he would also walk contrary to them. Now He says He will do so, but in fury. There is an elevation to His judgment.

28 (con't) and I, even I, will chastise you seven times for your sins.

There is a stress here on the personal nature of the punishment. It is not a by-happenstance thing which would occur to Israel, but rather a purposeful infliction of punishment, directly from the Lord. And the elevation of the punishment is again seven times for their sins.

29 You shall eat the flesh of your sons, and you shall eat the flesh of your daughters.

The horrifying details of this warning are further described in Deuteronomy 28. And the warning became reality as is seen in the captivity of Samaria in 2 Kings 6, and again in the captivity of Jerusalem in Jeremiah, Lamentations, and Ezekiel. The horrifying practice then occurred again during the Roman siege of Jerusalem.

30 I will destroy your high places, cut down your incense altars, and cast your carcasses on the lifeless forms of your idols;

Three actions against the Lord are promised to be corrected. The first is the destruction of their *bamah*, or high places. People would go to elevated locations to worship deities, including the Lord, even though they were only to worship the Lord in this way at the temple. The Lord promised these would be destroyed.

The next are the *khaman*, here translated as “incense altars.” The word comes from *khamah*, meaning “sun,” or *chamam*, meaning “hot.” Some translations thus call them “sun-pillars,” as if dedicated to the sun; others “incense altars,” because of the heat of burning incense to false gods. Surely they did both.

The third action is to cast their carcasses on the carcasses of their idols. The *gilul*, or idol is now first seen here. It comes from *galal*, meaning “to roll,” and so these are probably circular stones or logs. The irony is not to be missed in how the Lord compares the dead bodies of the people to the dead idols they served. The utter contempt of the Lord for both idols and idolaters is to be noted and remembered. Ezekiel 6 describes the Lord’s promise to bring these words about –

“Indeed I, *even I*, will bring a sword against you, and I will destroy your high places. ⁴Then your altars shall be desolate, your incense altars shall be broken, and I will cast down your slain *men* before your idols. ⁵And I will lay the corpses of the children of Israel before their idols, and I will scatter your bones all around your altars. ⁶In all your dwelling places the cities shall be laid waste, and the high places shall be desolate, so that your altars may be laid waste and made desolate, your idols may be broken and made to cease, your incense altars may be cut down, and your works may be abolished. ⁷The slain shall fall in your midst, and you shall know that I *am* the Lord.” Ezekiel 6:3-7

The bodies of the people would be so thoroughly mixed with those of the idols, that it would form one putrid pile of garbage. What is to be especially noted about this verse, is that it presupposes that these things will probably be made. They have not even entered into the land yet, but the Lord identifies what they would make, and how they would prostitute themselves with those things.

³⁰ (con’t) **and My soul shall abhor you.**

This is exactly the opposite of the words of verse 11, “I will set My tabernacle among you, and My soul shall not abhor you.” Instead of the tabernacle and fellowship, there are idols and abhorring.

³¹ **I will lay your cities waste and bring your sanctuaries to desolation, and I will not smell the fragrance of your sweet aromas.**

The Lord promises to bring the cities to *khorbah*, or waste. It is a new word, indicating desolation or ruin. But the promise is on “your sanctuaries.” The word is plural, which could mean the several sanctuaries within the Lord’s house. It is used this way in Jeremiah 51:51. However, it doesn’t say, “the Lord’s house” or “My sanctuary” here. It says “your sanctuaries.” Thus, it is probably what is referred to in Amos 7 –

“Behold, I am setting a plumb line

In the midst of My people Israel;

I will not pass by them anymore.

⁹The high places of Isaac shall be desolate,

And the sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste.

I will rise with the sword against the house of Jeroboam.” Amos 7:8, 9

Even though these were false sanctuaries, they still burnt incense to the Lord at such places. Eventually, they would no longer even do this. He would utterly destroy them so that the incense would no longer burn.

³² I will bring the land to desolation, and your enemies who dwell in it shall be astonished at it.

The land itself was to be so completely destroyed that even their enemies who dwelt among them would be utterly astounded at what had occurred. Exact words to match this are found in Jeremiah and Ezekiel.

³³ I will scatter you among the nations and draw out a sword after you;

The Lord promises to *zarah*, or scatter, the people among the nations. This word has only been used so far to describe what Moses did to the golden calf that the people had made. Like that, which was crushed to powder and scattered upon the waters, so Israel would be scattered upon the nations. And there, the Lord promised to continue to draw out His sword against them, further scattering, and further destroying. There could be no turning back as the sword followed closely upon them. These words are the exact opposite of what was said in verse 6, “and the sword will not go through your land.” Instead of safety in the land, there would be terror outside the land. Can anyone not see this as fulfilled these past 2000 years?

^{33 (con't)} your land shall be desolate and your cities waste.

With the destruction and dispersion would come desolation. The land would be ruined and it would turn to further ruin during its time of being unattended. But in this, there is also good seen...

³⁴ Then the land shall enjoy its sabbaths as long as it lies desolate and you *are* in your enemies' land;

The land was to be given a sabbath rest every seventh year and every fiftieth year. It has been calculated by one scholar that from the entry into Canaan by Joshua, until the Babylonian captivity, there were approximately 863 years. In this, there should have been about 123 Sabbath years, and around 17 years of Jubilee. There is no record to say actually how many, or if any, of these were observed or not. But one specific reason for the exile is recorded in 2 Chronicles 36 –

“And those who escaped from the sword he carried away to Babylon, where they became servants to him and his sons until the rule of the kingdom of Persia, ²¹ to fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her Sabbaths. As long as she lay desolate she kept Sabbath, to fulfill seventy years.” 2 Chronicles 36:20, 21

Seventy years then may be simply be a multiplication of the sacred number seven, decided upon by God as sufficient for what was lacking in the observance by the people. Regardless, we are told...

³⁴ (con't) **then the land shall rest and enjoy its sabbaths.**

This is the second time in the verse this is stated, and it is almost therefore a note of bitter sarcasm. The land was burdened by the people, and now the land would enjoy rest apart from the people. While they were in captivity, the land would rest in freedom.

³⁵ **As long as it lies desolate it shall rest—
for the time it did not rest on your sabbaths when you dwelt in it.**

There is a note of patient waiting in these words. The assumption is that the sabbaths would be ignored. And yet, the punishment was delayed. Instead of acting on each failed Sabbath observance, the Lord would make a tally. As the people continued to assume that He would never act, another addition would be made to the ledger, but the promise is that action would come.

An arrears of Sabbath years had accumulated for the land while the greed of the people had led them to work when they should not have. Therefore, the land received its days of rest based on the years it was deprived, and the Israelites were deprived of their work based on the rest they had neglected. Justice was served *for* the land, and judgment was served *upon* the people.

³⁶ **‘And as for those of you who are left, I will send faintness into their hearts in the lands of their enemies;**

A unique word is given here, *morek*, or faintness. It comes from a word meaning soft, and thus the heart would either be one which was cowardly, or it would not be able to withstand the pressures which troubled it, so much so that...

³⁶ (con't) **the sound of a shaken leaf shall cause them to flee;**

they shall flee as though fleeing from a sword, and they shall fall when no one pursues.

Two more new and rare words are introduced here, *nadaph* (shaken), and *menusah* (flight). It is a sign of the horrifying nature of the events that Moses uses words that are wholly unique, or extremely limited in their use, in order to reveal the magnitude of what lay ahead for the people if, and when, they disobeyed.

It is sure that a single driven leaf makes almost no sound at all, and yet it would produce a thunderous, deafening noise in the ears of those who had failed to honor the Lord. That single leaf would be as a sword slashing by the ears, causing them to get up and run as if it would cut them to pieces. And so flee they would...

³⁷ They shall stumble over one another, as it were before a sword, when no one pursues;

The sense here is that when terror strikes, the people would simply run over one another like soldiers breaking ranks in a retreat, or a gathering of people running from an oncoming avalanche. Nobody would care about the next person, one would stumble and others would simply run them over. Such would be the terror, even when nobody was actually pursuing. The faintness of the heart would have each on such edge that they would constantly be in fear. As this was so, how much more fearful when facing a real challenge...

³⁷ (con't) and you shall have no power to stand before your enemies.

The terror of the ordeal would leave few willing to fight, and none able to win. When the Lord stood against Israel, the enemies would have little trouble destroying their target.

³⁸ You shall perish among the nations, and the land of your enemies shall eat you up.

The sense here is that either through life or death among the Gentiles, those who were dispersed would remain so. They would be lost among the peoples, and most would either lose their identity there, or they would die there. This is the sense of the term, "the land of your enemies shall eat you up." It is a phrase used in Numbers 13, when the twelve spies went to search out Canaan, and it is used in Ezekiel 36:13 where the land of Israel is said to devour men. For the majority of the ten northern tribes, this was literally fulfilled. Most were absorbed into the nations and their identity was lost. Eventually, they died in those foreign lands while only a remnant of each tribe was left.

³⁹ And those of you who are left shall waste away in their iniquity in your enemies' lands;

One final new word today is *maqq*, meaning to rot or fester. It will be seen twice in this verse and then not again until the Psalms. The idea here is that most of those who go into exile will simply rot away there without ever returning to the land of Israel. In saying they will waste away in their iniquity, it is referring to the punishment of the iniquity. In other words, the same word in Hebrew carries both the idea of sin, and punishment, because sin is its own punishment. As James says, "...when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full grown, brings forth death." Paul explains this in Romans as well.

^{39 (fin)} also in their fathers' iniquities, which are with them, they shall waste away.

As I said earlier, the Lord doesn't simply punish the people for every missed Sabbath year. Instead, the fathers sinned, and eventually a time came when the people were punished in the sin of their fathers. The cumulative wrath of disobedience eventually has to be punished. This is the idea of the flood of Noah, and it is the idea of the coming time of Jacob's trouble, or the tribulation period. The world is storing up wrath, but people keep sinning. Nobody thinks, "Oh boy, we really deserve to be punished." And so the sin continues, and the wrath grows.

If nothing else has shown you this, a short and quick sermon on these 26 verses today should do so. As terrible as the content has been at some points, the magnitude of what was promised to Israel will be poured out on a global scale at some point. It will be wrath leading to punishment, including abundant death. For those who die apart from God's grace and mercy, there will be the continuing eternal punishment which follows. All debts will be settled at that time.

If one looks at the verses today in a broad way, they can see standing out in the words the very cross of Christ. Though he was without sin, terror was appointed over Him. He suffered, as it were, carrying the diseases of the world, His light was extinguished, and His life wasted away. While on the cross, the Lord's face was set against Him – against He who never sinned, but who bore our sins. Those who hated Him ruled over Him, judged Him, and sentenced Him.

Wild beasts surrounded Him, the vengeance of the covenant was poured out on Him, He was delivered into the hands of His enemy. He was deprived of bread; He the Bread of life. In Him is rest, and yet He was deprived of rest. We could go on, verse by verse

looking at what Israel was promised for disobedience, and what Christ Jesus suffered in place of their (and our) disobedience.

Leviticus 26 shows us the penalties for violation of the covenant which Israel had agreed upon. There is nothing unfair in what occurred to them over the years, and there is nothing unfair which will come upon the world when it is judged for its own wickedness. But there is mercy because Jesus Christ accepted the punishment of the covenant for us. He received the pain, the agony, and the shame that others deserve. And in exchange, He has offered us a New Covenant. It is one of peace, fellowship with God, and forgiveness of sin committed.

Next week we will look at the faithfulness of God in keeping His promises to Israel, even in their guilt. In this, He will remember not this covenant at Sinai when He speaks to them, but the covenant to their ancestors – to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. It is not for the sake of the Law of Moses, but for the sake of the everlasting promises to the patriarchs that He will speak out those verses.

The importance of this is not to be missed. The Law of Moses has a termination point. That termination is in the cross of Christ. We will all be judged by that law. It will either be judged *in us* and we will be condemned, or it will be judged *for us* in Christ, and we will be saved. Let us understand this, and let us call out now accepting Jesus' sacrifice for our misdeeds. By faith, we can once again be restored to God, fully and completely, and without fear of failure.

Closing Verse: *"But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, ²² even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe."* Romans 3:21, 22

Next Week: Leviticus 26:40-46 (I Will Remember the Covenant) (51st Leviticus Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if you have a lifetime of sin heaped up behind you, He can wash it away and purify you completely and wholly. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

Assured Curses

'But if you do not obey Me
And do not observe all these commandments

And if you despise My statutes
Or if your soul abhors My judgments

So that you do not all My commandments perform
But break My covenant, then hear the words I warn
I also will do this to you:
I will even appoint terror over you, wasting disease and fever
-----So I do submit
Which shall consume the eyes and cause sorrow of heart
And you shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it

I will set My face against you
And you shall be defeated by your enemies; My word is true
Those who hate you shall reign over you
And you shall flee when no one pursues you

'And after all this, if you do not obey Me
Then I will punish you seven times more for your sins
-----so shall it be

I will break the pride of your power, thus ending your mirth
I will make your heavens like iron
-----and like bronze shall be your earth

And your strength shall be spent in vain
For your land its produce shall not yield
Nor shall the trees of the land yield their fruit
Barren shall be the trees of the field

'Then, if you walk contrary to Me
And are not willing to obey Me
I will bring on you seven times more plagues
According to your sins shall it be

I will also send wild beasts among you
Which shall rob you of your children
-----a horrible state
Destroy your livestock, and make you few in number
And your highways shall be desolate

'And if by these things you are not reformed by Me
But walk contrary to Me; such are your crimes
Then I also will walk contrary to you
And I will punish you for your sins yet seven times

And I will bring a sword against you
That will execute the vengeance of the covenant
When you are gathered together within your cities
I will send pestilence among you; until you are spent

And you shall be delivered into the hand of the enemy
Surely this will come to pass; so shall it be

When I have cut off your supply of bread
Ten women shall bake in one oven your bread
And they shall bring back your bread by weight
And you shall eat and not be satisfi-ed

'And after all this, if you do not obey Me
But walk contrary to Me; such are your continued crimes
Then I also will walk contrary to you in fury
And I, even I, will chastise you for your sins seven times

You shall eat the flesh of your sons for your meat
And the flesh of your daughters you shall eat

I will destroy your high places
Cut down your incense altars, so I shall do
And cast your carcasses on the lifeless forms of your idols
And My soul shall abhor you

I will lay your cities waste
And bring your sanctuaries to desolation
And I will not smell the fragrance of your sweet aromas
You who were to be My holy nation

I will bring the land to desolation
And your enemies who dwell in it shall be astonished at it
I will scatter you among the nations and draw out a sword after you

Your land shall be desolate and your cities waste
-----for the crimes you did commit

Then the land shall enjoy its sabbaths
As long as it lies desolate and you are in your enemies' land
Then the land shall rest and enjoy its sabbaths
Then shall the nations understand

As long as it lies desolate it shall rest, so I submit
For the time it did not rest on your sabbaths when you dwelt in it

'And as for those of you who are left, so to you I address
I will send into their hearts in the lands of their enemies faintness

The sound of a shaken leaf shall cause them to flee
They shall flee as though fleeing from a sword
And they shall fall when no one pursues
According to My solemn word

They shall stumble over one another
As it were before a sword throughout the land
When no one pursues
And you shall have no power before your enemies to stand

You shall perish among the nations
And the land of your enemies shall eat you up; so shall it be
And those of you who are left shall waste away
In your enemies' lands in their iniquity

Also in their fathers' iniquities, which are with them
They shall waste away, like a branch broken at the stem

Lord God, Israel was warned, and yet they did not obey
They received what was just, right, and due
And we too have walked in a contrary way
We have neglected our duty and responsibility to You

But in Christ there is mercy, and in Christ there is grace
Through Him we are freed from the guilt we bore

And through Him we receive a smile from Your face
And that favor will last forever, and evermore

Thank You for Christ, our Lord Jesus!
Thank You for all, through Him, that You have done for us

Hallelujah and Amen...

LEVITICUS 26:40-46

(I WILL REMEMBER THE COVENANT)

Who is the Lord referring to in today's verses? Israel, or the church? Obviously Israel. And yet, the church at large for the most part denies that the people of Israel, who are back in the land of Israel, are entitled to the land that they now possess. Israel is out, and the church has replaced them – that is the thinking. This is the standard thought of the Catholic Church, the Reformed churches, and a host of other churches, sects, and cults in the world today.

In fact, by acknowledging that Israel is entitled to the land, it means that their theology has been wrong for the past many, many centuries. In the early church, which consisted of only Jews, they expected the messianic promises to be fulfilled in Christ and for them. In fact, it was the very last question proposed to Jesus by them before He ascended into heaven.

In Acts, it was with awed surprise that Gentiles were to become a part of the church. At first, it was an exclusively Jewish entity, and it was observant Jews who filled its meeting places. The Samaritans, a mixed race of Jews and outsiders, were brought into the fold. That could be expected. At least they had a copy of the Pentateuch, even if it identified Samaria, not Jerusalem, as their place of worship. That was easy enough to correct. Jesus had come, the plan was now obvious, and they could be brought into the fold with little difficulty.

But Gentiles? They never could have imagined such a thing. Any Gentile would have to first become an observant Jew, right? But then came Acts 10. Wrong! Gentiles received the same gift of the Spirit as did the Jews, without converting, and without giving up their bacony delicious diets. They simply believed and received. It was so incredible to imagine, that Acts 11 finds the Jews accusing Peter of wrongdoing for going into a Gentile home to speak with them.

But by the end of the passage, they exclaimed, "Then God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life." If you notice, here and throughout the New Testament, even to the book of Revelation, the term "Gentile" is used. The difference remains, even if there is no distinction in Christ. A Gentile is no less a Gentile when coming to Christ than a woman is no less a woman when doing so. Positionally, we are all one in Christ, but as to nature, we remain Jew and Gentile, male and female.

Text Verse: *Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, "Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?"⁷ And He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority." Acts 1:6, 7*

What was the very last thing that these men asked the Lord? "Will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" They had no idea, at all, that there was a "church age" coming. They had no idea that this church would include Gentiles, and that eventually it would become a Gentile-led church. They had no idea, because Jesus never spoke of such things. All they knew is that a New Covenant had been initiated through His shed blood, and in the book of Jeremiah, that New Covenant was to Israel and the Jewish people. They didn't even understand at this point that the Old Covenant, meaning the Law of Moses, was annulled through this act.

And what was Christ's response to these Jewish men? He didn't say, "You have misunderstood all of the promises through the prophets. There will be no kingdom age. There will be no return to the Davidic throne. There will be no literal fulfillment of any of those things. Rather, they are spiritually fulfilled in the church, which will be led by Gentiles." No, Christ Jesus, the Lord, didn't say those things. He simply told them to get about His business of sharing the gospel, something which they did... to their own people. It took divine intervention for them to go outside of their own people Israel and tell the Gentiles about Jesus. Philip was told by an angel of the Lord to speak to the Ethiopian. Peter was told in a vision to go to the house of Cornelius. And Paul, Paul had to be first called out of what he believed, and then he was instructed to go out to the Gentiles in particular, in order to get things going.

Not a single Jew anticipated anything that occurred. And how could they? It was all about them. This was true, but with an exceedingly long exile ahead, the Lord would not waste a moment of the precious time man has been granted on this earth. And so during Israel's time of calamity – self-inflicted calamity – the Lord did something wonderful among the Gentiles. It is still on-going today, but that time is drawing to a close. Leviticus 26 is given to us to understand this.

And yet, we have – like Israel – failed to understand. The word is written. All we need to do is keep it in context, not mix dispensations, and simply pay attention to the world around us. If we do these things, we may still have some marvelous surprises, but the overall picture should not escape our attention. Israel. It is Israel who is being addressed, and it is Israel to whom the Lord will return to set up His millennial kingdom. This is a certain truth which is to be found in His superior word. And so let's turn to that precious

word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. The Prayer of Daniel (verses 40-43)

When seventy years for the punishment of Israel had been accomplished, Daniel prayed for the restoration of Israel. He knew this was undeserved, but he also knew that the Lord had promised, in advance, that they would be returned to the land after seventy years. Daniel was just one man, but he prayed for the Lord to act, and he did so in accord with what is stated here in Leviticus 26. Israel as a nation has not yet repeated Daniel's prayer, acknowledging their guilt in the rejection of Christ Jesus, but they will someday. For now, we will use Daniel's prayer to see the pattern of what the Lord promised here in Leviticus. Daniel prayed, "O Lord, to us *belongs* shame of face, to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, because we have sinned against You" (Daniel 9:8).

⁴⁰ ***But if they confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their fathers,***

There is no "if" in the Hebrew here. Some scholars, and obviously translators also, say that it is implied in the words. But this is not correct. The Hebrew reads, "And they shall confess their iniquity." There is nothing conditional about this. The entire point of all of the horrifying curses which came upon Israel was to correct them. Until that occurred, and it would certainly occur, the punishments were given and would continue.

However, the severity of the punishments would finally break the stubborn rebellion of Israel, and it would further lead them to confession. Although we are not at verse 44 yet, the Lord says there that He would remain faithful to the covenant despite their rebellions, and He would not utterly destroy them in order to remain faithful to His word.

As He would ensure they were not utterly destroyed, then it shows that those who were not destroyed would continue to suffer, but not be wiped out completely, until they were completely broken, with no one but the Lord Himself to turn to. Again, we have to go back to the personal nature of the words in this chapter. "I will," "I will," "I will." The words are in the first person, and it is the Lord who is speaking.

The Lord would continue to doggedly pursue the living, even to the ends of the earth, not to destroy them, but to bring them back to Himself. This is the entire intent and purpose of what is being relayed here. He began the chapter with commands intended to maintain the relationship between Himself and Israel. He then immediately told what

the blessings for adhering to these commands would be. It is a promise of care, concern, love, and affection. “This is what I offer, if you are faithful to Me.”

After that came the assured curses. “This is what you will bring on yourself if you are unfaithful to Me. All of this will be self-inflicted, and all of it will cause you to confess your unfaithfulness.”

Let us step back and put ourselves into the picture for a minute. Verse 29 said that, “You shall eat the flesh of your sons, and you shall eat the flesh of your daughters.” Would anyone here consider it evil that we would be forced to eat our own children in order to survive? If we saw someone else doing that, would we call it evil? But the passage is in the first person – “I will.”

Can we then ascribe this evil to the Lord? No! Israel brought these curses upon themselves. The Lord simply told them what would occur, and He followed through with His promises, but it is Israel, not the Lord, who has done iniquity. That is why He begins with, “And they shall confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their fathers.” He includes the “fathers” here to indicate to them that this is an on-going, corporate punishment. Each Israelite is not a stand-alone unit who can separate himself and his actions from the corporate body. The same is true with man. We cannot say, “I am separating myself from the sins of Adam.” We are in Adam, and we are corporately guilty before the Lord. Without the Lord’s intervention, we cannot become a new species and say, “I don’t bear Adam’s guilt.” Nor can Israel remain in Israel and say, “I don’t bear the guilt of my fathers.” They are a corporate body.

It is Israel who will confess. The evil they face is because of the evil they have wrought. It is they who have broken the covenant, and they will be pursued until they confess what they have done. This is then made explicit with the next words which reflect the words of Daniel 9:7, “because of the unfaithfulness which they have committed against you” ...

⁴⁰ (con’t) **with their unfaithfulness in which they were unfaithful to Me,**

Israel had committed *avon*, or iniquity, as the first clause noted. But who is the offended in their actions? The Lord now tells them that it is He. The Hebrew word *maal* used in this clause, translated as “unfaithfulness,” gives the sense of inflicting on the rights of another. *Avon* is a transgression against the divine law, and it is an act of unfaithfulness to the divine Lawgiver. He takes their transgressions of His law as a personal offense. Daniel understood this when he said, “We have not obeyed the voice of the Lord our

God, to walk in His laws, which He set before us by His servants the prophets” (Daniel 9:10). This repeats the Lord’s words...

⁴⁰ (con’t) **and that they also have walked contrary to Me,**

v’aph asher haleku immi beqeri, or “and also which they have walked to Me contrary.” This is in contrast to verse 3 where the Lord said, “If you walk in My statutes and keep my commandments and perform them.” They failed to do as stated. The people Israel are the offenders; The Lord is the offended; He acts to correct the offenses. There is no wrongdoing in the Lord. But such *is* the case with Israel, and such is the case with us today.

We cannot impute wrongdoing to the Lord. We humans are the offenders; He is the offended; and He will act to correct the offenses. If it must be accomplished on a global scale against the sons of Adam, then that is His right. Man looks to find fault in God when calamity strikes, but as humans, we should rather pull out a mirror and look closely at those who are reflected in it. For Israel, Daniel understood this and said, “...therefore the curse and the oath written in the Law of Moses the servant of God has been poured out on us” (Daniel 9:11). The Lord promised it would occur...

⁴¹ **and *that* I also have walked contrary to them and have brought them into the land of their enemies;**

These word are given in fulfillment of verses 27, 28, and 33. Taken together they would say, “And after all of this, if you do not obey Me, but walk contrary to Me, then I will also walk contrary to you in fury ... I will scatter you among the nations and draw out a sword after you.” The Lord said He would do this, and now He is saying that it would occur, and yet even in the occasion, He would still be watching for the sure change in them.

His punishments were intended to bring it about. They were not to destroy them completely, they were not to disband them as a people, they were not merely to show the church a lesson in Israel that was to be avoided by us. All of the years of punishment were intended to bring *them* to the day when there would be a change in them. It would be an internal change, meant for restoration. Daniel led that prayer for His people with the words, “...we have sinned and committed iniquity, we have done wickedly and rebelled” (Daniel 9:5). This is what the Lord’s punishment was intended to accomplish...

⁴¹ (con’t) **if their uncircumcised hearts are humbled,**

The change that the Lord had directed Israel to is a humbling of their “uncircumcised hearts.” The word *kana*, or “to humble” is introduced here. What this then implies is two things. The first is that Israel was prideful in their hearts, and the second is that their hearts were not circumcised to the Lord. One leads naturally to the other. If one has a circumcised heart, they will not be prideful. This is reflected in Paul’s words of Romans 2-

“For he is not a Jew who *is one* outwardly, nor *is* circumcision that which *is* outward in the flesh; ²⁹ but *he is* a Jew who *is one* inwardly; and circumcision *is that* of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise *is* not from men but from God.” Romans 2:28, 29

A true Jew is one whose heart is circumcised, meaning humble before the Lord, and obedient to what He commands. This does not mean that a Gentile who is circumcised in the heart becomes a Jew – a category mistake made by replacement theologians. It means that only a Jew who is circumcised in the heart is a true Jew. We need to recognize this giant error in replacement theology.

The Israelite looked at the circumcision of their flesh as that which made them special, but here in Leviticus, they are given the first of such hints that this is not so. Circumcision of the heart is noted twice in Deuteronomy, and it is noted in Jeremiah 4:4 as well. Uncircumcision of the heart in Israel is mentioned in Jeremiah 9, Ezekiel 44, and Acts 7.

The theme is repeated often enough in Scripture that it was commonly known among the people. The last instance, that in Acts, was spoken by Stephen to the leaders of Israel. Thus, it is seen that Israel was without excuse. Circumcision of the flesh profits nothing. Circumcision of the heart must accompany it. That was what the punishment was intended to bring about, and that is what is effected in the people. And that in turn leads them to what Daniel knew was required. He thus prayed, “O Lord, righteousness *belongs* to You, but to us shame of face” (Daniel 9:7) He had admitted the nation’s guilt, as the Lord expected...

⁴¹ (con’t) **and they accept their guilt—**

The word translated as “accept” here, *ratsah*, is the same as “enjoy” in verse 43, and that is how it is more correctly translated. It is how the Greek translation of this passage reads – *kai tote eudokesousai ta amartias auton*, “and then they will rejoice in the (punishment of) their sins.” It is reflective of the words of Psalm 119:71 – “*It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I may learn your statutes.*” Although the concept

doesn't translate well into our idea of rejoicing, what is being said is that the repentant Israelites will take it *joyfully* when they realize that the punishment they have received is less than what was deserved.

Daniel fully understood this and petitioned the Lord based on mercy, knowing that they deserved much more punishment than they had received – "...for we do not present our supplications before You because of our righteous deeds, but because of Your great mercies" (Daniel 9:18).

In understanding these things, Daniel departs from what will next be said in verse 42. Instead of directly appealing to the covenant which the Lord mentions, he appeals to the honor of the One who established the covenant by saying, "O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and act! Do not delay for Your own sake, my God, for Your city and Your people are called by Your name" (Daniel 9:19).

Instead of saying, "You owe us because of the covenant You made with our fathers," Daniel appeals to the fact that His name is at stake, and that Name is tied in to both His city (Jerusalem) and His people (Israel). Understanding this, does anyone here think that this has somehow changed in today's world? Is the Lord's name any less at stake of being profaned now if He were to not defend Jerusalem and Israel? Of course not! Regardless of Israel's actions, the *name of the Lord*, and His honor, demand He uphold His covenant with them.

⁴² then I will remember My covenant with Jacob, and My covenant with Isaac and My covenant with Abraham I will remember;

Pay heed, O Replacement Theologian! The Lord does not appeal to the Mosaic Covenant at all here. The words of this verse are a part of the Mosaic Covenant as it is being compiled. Instead, the Lord appeals to His promises to the patriarchs. And yet, it is in the Mosaic Covenant that the promised remembrance of the covenant to the patriarchs is recorded. Let us again think logically about this. Is the church under the Mosaic Covenant? No!

But, it is the Mosaic Covenant which is given to provide the blessings and the curses upon Israel. If the church is not under that covenant, then the blessings and curses are *not directed* to the church at all! And further, the appeal to the covenant with the fathers, which is recorded in the Mosaic Covenant, is not intended for the church. Though those in the church are sons of Abraham by faith, they are not included in what is stated here. The boxes are set and defined. Let us not mix up the boxes.

42 (con't) I will remember the land.

The land, desolate during Israel's first and second exiles – forgotten by the world, neglected of any care, despised by the surrounding nations, but longed for by Israel, and seemingly rejected by the Lord – is called to remembrance by Him. It is as if He has awoken from a slumber, calling it to mind once again.

Here, the land is tied into the covenant with the patriarchs. The covenant with the patriarchs, including the land which is now being remembered, is included as a promise to Israel in the Mosaic Covenant. The church is *not* a part of the Mosaic covenant – we have established that. The land is the Lord's and He has given it to Israel as an everlasting possession. The boxes are set and defined. Let us not mix up the boxes.

43 The land also shall be left empty by them,

Bible scholar John Gill, born 1697 and died 1771, long before the modern dispensationalist and Zionist movements began, said the following about this verse –

“This seems to refer to a second time, when this should be the case of the land of Judea again, as it was when subdued by the Romans, and the Jews were carried captive from it, and so it was left by them, as it has been ever since: ... and thus the land of Canaan, though once so very fruitful, is now desolate and barren, being without its former inhabitants, and so it is like to be until it is restored to them again.” John Gill

Oh, unbelieving world! Even in antiquity before it could have been dreamed possible, a man knew and understood. A man wrote what has been ridiculed and mocked by those who reject the surety of the covenants, and the word of the Lord. Thank God for such a faithful soul, and such a lone voice among his colleagues.

43 (con't) and will enjoy its sabbaths while it lies desolate without them; they will accept their guilt,

The same phrase as in verse 41 is given again, “and they will rejoice in the (punishment of) their sins.” The two ideas are not disconnected. The land would enjoy its sabbaths, being readied for the people's return. Year by year, the land would enjoy rest in desolation, as if *desiring* the day it would be productive again. At the same time, the people would rejoice in knowing that they had been punished less than they deserved. Their return to the land would mean the land would again yield for their efforts. Both

lead to the same good end, the productivity of the land of Israel at the hand of Israel. Sounds like the world we today live in, does it not!

⁴³ (con't) **because they despised My judgments and because their soul abhorred My statutes.**

The words begin with *yaan u-b'yaan* – “because and even because.” The stress tells us that the people were punished because they had despised the Lord’s judgments, and their souls had abhorred His statutes, for which they were deserving of being completely cut off. And yet, the Lord was faithful to *His word* and spared them.

Thus, they could rejoice in the punishment of their iniquity, knowing that it was far less than deserved. To think of what has occurred to Israel in the past 100 years or so with the pogroms and the holocaust, one might think that impossible, but in understanding that what they received is less than what they deserved, we can begin then to contemplate the absolute holiness of the Lord. And yet, in this passage, we can also see the great mercy of the Lord, and the fidelity He has toward His word. We will see that after a short poetic break...

*We have set our face before the Lord our God
To make request by prayer for what we do not deserve
We have sinned in our walk that we have trod
And the Lord our God we have failed to serve*

*O Lord, righteousness belongs to You
But to us belongs only shame of face
We have acted wickedly in all that we do
And upon Your glorious name, we have brought disgrace*

*And so the curse and the oath has come upon us
But now we turn our hearts back to You
We call out for mercy through the Lord Jesus
And He will respond, because He is faithful and true*

II. The Faithfulness of the Lord (verses 44-46)

⁴⁴ **Yet for all that, when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, nor shall I abhor them, to utterly destroy them and break My covenant with them;**

The Lord speaks through His word, and His word becomes His signature of assurance. Does this passage speak of one exile and then all hope is lost? Does this passage speak of accepting or rejecting Christ, who is their Lord as a justification for His breaking the covenant? Is not Christ Jesus the Lord Yehovah come in human flesh? And so, if Israel rejected Jesus, is that at all different than of their having rejected Yehovah? Absolutely not. None of these things apply. The Lord made a covenant and it *must stand*. Again, the appeal is to the patriarchs, and it is then noted in the Mosaic Covenant. It has *nothing* (zip, zero, nada) to do with the church age, except that we have been grafted into the promised salvation by faith. O! Faithless Replacement Theologian!

Should I speak of dispensationalism without scholarly support? Have I not cited John Gill who could never have fathomed what occurred in modern times concerning Israel? But should I leave him as a sole voice of lunacy. No, not at all. Of verse 44, Adam Clarke, born 1760 and died 1832, still years before the modern dispensationalist and Zionist movements, says this –

“Though God has literally fulfilled all his threatenings upon this people in dispossessing them of their land, destroying their polity, overturning their city, demolishing their temple, and scattering themselves over the face of the whole earth; yet he has, in his providence, strangely preserved them as a distinct people, and in very considerable numbers also. He still remembers the covenant of their ancestors, and in his providence and grace he has some very important design in their favor. All Israel shall yet be saved, and, with the Gentiles, they shall all be restored to his favor; and under Christ Jesus, the great Shepherd; become, with them, one grand everlasting fold.”

While the land laid utterly desolate so that Mark Twain stood shocked at the curse which befell it, while the people of Israel were so scattered and so diminished that the world almost entirely ignored them as anything other than a nuisance, and while the Lord seemed completely absorbed with blessing the church and cursing the few remaining and scattered Jews, the word of God still remained the word of God, and it has stood while the faith of those who read it faltered. The disbelieving Christian spiritualized its content and neglected its intent, but the word remained nonetheless. And why should it be otherwise when the word bears the mark of a Divine Signatory...

44 (con't) **for I *am* the Lord their God.**

ki ani Yehovah elohehem – “for I (am) Yehovah their God.” Who is speaking? Yehovah, the God of Israel. He is the covenant keeping God. Their *faithlessness* does not in any way negate His *faithfulness*. His word is unconditional to the patriarchs, and it cannot be

violated. His words of verse 44 are unconditional in what they proclaim. And yet, let us cast them to the wind. Let us spiritualize them. Let us reject the sure and everlasting promises of Yehovah – because we are faithless Replacement Theologians. Let us accept the words of those who waffle in the Sea of Scripture instead. From the Pulpit Commentary of the 1800s –

God's pardon will, even yet, as always, follow upon confession of sin and genuine repentance. They must recognize not only that they have sinned, but that their sufferings have been a punishment for those sins at God's hand. This will work in them humble acquiescence in God's doings, and then he will remember his covenant with Jacob, and also his covenant with Isaac, and also his covenant with Abraham, and for the sake of the covenant of their ancestors, he will not cast them away, neither will he abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break his covenant with them. Whether Jewish repentance has been or ever will be so full as to obtain this blessing, cannot be decided now. Perhaps it may be the case that all the blessings promised by Moses and by future prophets to repentant and restored Israel are to find their accomplishment in the spiritual Israel, the children of Abraham who is "the father of all them that believe" ... seeing that "God is able of stones to raise up children unto Abraham" ... Pulpit Commentary

How stupid. This commentary, which is somewhat reflective of replacement theology, with a minor caveat questioning if this could still apply to the Jews, mixes four dispensations in one. They started with God's pardon being based on repentance. That is speaking of the verses we are looking at now; the dispensation of the *law*.

It then defers back to the dispensation of *promise* which was given first to Abraham, and then to Isaac, and then to Jacob. In that dispensation, of which we participate in the spiritual blessings, was the land promise – a promise meant for Israel, not for the church. They then refer back to the *law* – given to Israel, not the church – while mixing in the dispensation of *grace*, by saying, "Perhaps it may be the case that all the blessings promised by Moses and by future prophets to repentant and restored Israel are to find their accomplishment in the spiritual Israel," meaning the church and speaking of the dispensation of the *millennium* at the same time.

The covenant promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is truly what the Lord is referring to. But adherence to, or violation of, the Mosaic Covenant is what brought about the promises of blessings, and the promises of punishment. These had *nothing* to do with the covenant spoken to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And more, they have *nothing* to do with the church.

Are we under the law, or are we under grace? We are under grace! And further, Paul says to those in Christ, “that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation” (2 Corinthians 5:19). How can what is in Leviticus 26, which is the Law of Moses, be speaking to the church? The church is certainly looking for promised blessing, but are we also looking for assured curses? No!

We aren't even imputed our trespasses, so how can we be assured of curses based on a violation of the law that we are not even under? Are we in Christ or not? The unthinking nature of the Replacement Theologian, or those who are unsure about exactly what God means when He says, “I will not break My covenant with them,” is almost unimaginable to contemplate.

⁴⁵ But for their sake I will remember the covenant of their ancestors,

The Lord's words in this passage are spoken as an accomplished fact. Everything is present in the Lord's mind – from what *was*, to what *will be*. It is as if we are looking at a train leaving a station, arriving at another station, and everything in between, all at the same moment. This verse here is not speaking of the covenant referred to in verse 42. It is speaking of the covenant that is now being given, and which will continue to be given and built upon through Deuteronomy.

Therefore, the “covenant of their ancestors” in this verse is speaking of the Mosaic Covenant, and it is about a people far in the future to Leviticus 26, but looking back to this time. He will execute to them the words of this covenant which was made to their ancestors, meaning that which is being executed with Israel via Moses and those with him. This is certain because of the next words...

^{45 (con't)} whom I brought out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the nations,

It is Israel, now in the wilderness, and now receiving the words of the covenant, who was “brought out of the land of Egypt.” The Lord has appealed to the covenant to the patriarchs, but He has solidified His word, and thus His actions, towards that covenant by bringing them out of Egypt and in initiating this covenant. He had promised to give the land in which the patriarch's dwelt to their descendants. He is now confirming that, and He is stipulating everything associated with that covenant in this covenant. And there is a specific reason for doing this. It is...

^{45 (con't)} that I might be their God:

This was stated explicitly in Exodus 6:7, prior to the exodus –

“I will take you as My people, and I will be your God. Then you shall know that I *am* the Lord your God who brings you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.” Exodus 6:7

The Lord did bring them out, and then the Lord offered to them the covenant which He is now speaking of. They agreed to its precepts and thus, He is their God. The deal is done. And who is their God? He tells us – meaning all people of the world (including replacement theologians)...

⁴⁵ (con’t) **I *am* the Lord.”**

ani Yehovah – “I (am) Yehovah.” Yehovah is their God. Does this change with Jesus’ incarnation? Is He any less God, or any less Israel’s God? Not at all! Nothing has changed between Israel and the Lord. They remain under His authority – to be punished, or to receive mercy and blessing – according to their acceptance of His statutes and judgments.

And those statutes and judgments include heeding the One He will send to fulfill this covenant and to initiate a new one. They have seven years left to them, under this covenant, in order to accept Christ and be restored to God through Him. This was confirmed to them through the words of Daniel 9:24. The covenant is fulfilled and annulled in Christ, but they have not received Christ. Thus, the covenant is binding on them as a people until they come to Christ.

⁴⁶ **These *are* the statutes and judgments and laws which the Lord made between Himself and the children of Israel on Mount Sinai by the hand of Moses.**

This verse looks back immediately to verse 26:3 which appealed to the people to walk in His statutes and keep His commandments. But it goes back further, to verse 25:1 which said that “the Lord spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai.” As I said then, it actually reads, *b’har sinai*, literally “in mount Sinai,” but meaning, “in the region of Sinai.” Because the term “Sinai” has been used, the entire passage has anticipated the cross of Christ. Sinai means, “Bush of the Thorn.” The name of the location is given in connection with the redemptive workings of God in Christ which look forward to the cross.

In other words, the laws have been given, the promised blessings and curses have been identified, and the promises of restoration have been named. Israel failed and was

exiled, twice. But God did not neglect His other promises in the meantime. Throughout the Old Testament, the promise of a Messiah is given.

When He came, He fulfilled what Israel had failed at. And in His fulfillment, He offered them a chance to be included in His New Covenant. They rejected that, as He knew they would, and they went into a punishment seven times over for their sins. With the promise of seven more years of the Old Covenant in order to come to Christ, Israel is now again in the land, being prepared for that to occur.

Those seven years will be a time of great trial and tribulation, but they will end with the Lord Jesus returning to *them*, rescuing *them*, and setting up the millennial kingdom among *them*. It is what they had anticipated in Acts 1, and it is what is promised in Revelation 20, but which is described in detail among the prophets of old. While still under the Old Covenant, they foresaw the glory which lay ahead in the New.

Israel has been on a journey which has taken thousands of years to come to its fulfillment, but God, who is ever faithful to His word, is bringing them – His people Israel – back to Himself, slowly but surely, and despite their continued rejection of Him. This is the Lord who is ever faithful and who is ever true.

While He is working towards mending that bridge, He has been tenderly caring for the Gentiles of the world. Israel failed to see the glory of what occurred at the cross of Calvary, but they are starting to see it now each day, more Jews are realizing what they had missed.

Together, Jew and Gentile are offered the same marvelous grace of God. It is that which says, “Come to Me and your sins will be forgiven. I will no more remember them, and I will cast them further than they could ever be brought back to mind.” Each step of what God has done has been for us to see and realize our desperate need for God’s grace and His mercy.

That is the purpose of the cross. Jesus has done the work, and Jesus has paid the penalty. All we need to do is receive that, and all will be well between us and God.

Closing Verse: *For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. ²⁶ And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written:*

*“The Deliverer will come out of Zion,
And He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob;
27 For this is My covenant with them,
When I take away their sins.” Romans 9:25-27*

Next Week: Leviticus 27:1-34 This will be the last sermon in Leviticus; I hope you have so noted... (Things Vowed and Things Devoted) (52nd Leviticus Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if you have a lifetime of sin heaped up behind you, He can wash it away and purify you completely and wholly. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

I Will Remember the Covenant

‘But if they confess their iniquity
And the iniquity of their fathers, who acted unfaithfully
With their unfaithfulness in which they were unfaithful to Me
And that they also to Me have walked contrary

And that I also have walked contrary to them
And have brought them into their enemies’ land
If their uncircumcised hearts are humbled
And they accept their guilt; when they understand
Then I will remember My covenant with Jacob
And My covenant with Isaac, by my raised hand
And My covenant with Abraham I will remember
I will remember the land
The land also shall be left empty by them
And will enjoy its sabbaths while it lies without them desolate
They will accept their guilt, because they despised My judgments
And because their soul abhorred My statutes, which they did forget

Yet for all that, when they are in the land of their enemies
I will not cast them away, nor shall I them abhor
To utterly destroy them and break My covenant with them
For I am the Lord their God; yes even forevermore
But for their sake I will remember
The covenant of their ancestors, their early family relations

Whom I brought out of the land of Egypt
In the sight of the nations

That I might be their God, so stands My word
I am the Lord
These are the statutes and judgments and laws
Which the Lord made between Himself, as we now understand
And the children of Israel
On Mount Sinai by Moses' hand
Lord God, we all like Israel have gone astray
And as a vile cloth we should be cast out
But in Christ, You have granted us a new way
And in Christ there is peace and surety, not strife and doubt

Thank You for bringing us back to Yourself through Jesus
Thank You that there is reconciliation, complete and whole
We praise You for all You have done for us
All is well with the redeemed soul

Hallelujah and Amen...

LEVITICUS 27:1-34

(THINGS VOWED AND DEVOTED)

One of my friends takes a different stand on vows than I do. There is actually no real information on making oaths and vows in the New Testament epistles. Christians are supposed to say what they mean, and mean what they say.

Jesus said in Matthew 5:7, “But let your ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes,’ and your ‘No,’ ‘No.’ For whatever is more than these is from the evil one.” This was telling Israel that they were not to swear, but to be people of integrity in what they said. This is essentially repeated by Paul for those in the church. James repeats it in his epistle as well. However, this really has nothing to do with making oaths or vows. The Old Testament explicitly speaks of making vows, such as in our passage today.

As the New Testament doesn’t explicitly deal with either oaths or vows, we must use common sense in how we deal with them. In an oath or vow to another person, we are committing to perform based on our words, and in our circumstance of being Christians. Their perception of our integrity, and our allegiance to Christ, is at stake. If we make such a vow, we are to perform it.

Secondly, in making a vow, we are doing so in the name of the Lord. To do so in any other name or capacity, such as “I vow on my mother’s grave...” is idolatry. Because we are vowing in the name of the Lord, we are expected to perform what we say.

Having said this, if we made a vow which is contrary to our life in Christ, before coming to Christ, it cannot be something we are expected to perform. First, it is contrary to our commitment to Christ. It is not to be done. Secondly, we were in a completely different state before we came to Christ. If we made a vow which was inappropriate, the sin of that vow is forgiven in Him.

However, not all vows are abrogated in coming to Christ. A vow of marriage between a man and a woman must stand. It is legal, it is appropriate under the New Covenant, and therefore we are bound to it. If a guy, however, made a vow of marriage to another guy (perish the thought), before coming to Christ, that vow cannot stand. It is illegitimate in the eyes of the Lord, and it must be ended in a legal fashion in the society in which we live. In other words, common sense needs to be used when considering vows which we made before coming to Christ.

Text Verse: *“When you make a vow to the Lord your God, you shall not delay to pay it; for the Lord your God will surely require it of you, and it would be sin to you. ²² But if you abstain from vowing, it shall not be sin to you. ²³ That which has gone from your lips you shall keep and perform, for you voluntarily vowed to the Lord your God what you have promised with your mouth.” Deuteronomy 23:22-23*

I think, probably, my friend and I would agree on the issue of vows up to this point. However, he mentioned to me one time, “What if someone made a stupid vow to never drink coke again. Would that be binding?” I would say, “Yes.” If you have vowed to the Lord that you will do, or not do something, then it is binding.

He says, that is putting us back under the law. I say, it is submitting to our vow made to the Lord. At what point is our word to be taken as anything less than as we speak? If our Yes is to be Yes, and our No is to be No – even apart from vows – then how much more should our vows be held as sacred!

Understanding this, Paul says in 2 Corinthians 5, “Now all things *are* of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, ¹⁹ that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.”

If this is so; if sin is not being imputed to us, then one’s logic might be that, “I cannot be sinning if I break my stupid vow of not drinking coke again.” In this, there is the assumption that the non-imputation of sin means one is not doing wrong. That is a category mistake. One may not be imputed sin, but one can still do wrong.

The non-imputation of sin means that we will not die. The wages of sin, after all, is death. What this means is that we will never again lose our salvation, because we are not imputed sin for our wrongdoing, and thus we will not die. We have been (past tense) granted eternal life, and that will not change. Sin is no longer imputed. But wrongdoing is still reckoned. This is what then falls under the category of rewards and loss. We will all stand before the Bema seat of Christ and receive our judgment for deeds done in the body, whether good or bad. To vow a stupid vow which one will break because it is stupid is wrongdoing. To vow a vow which will lead to one doing wrong is to then commit wrongdoing. Either way, wrong has been done.

The sanctity of keeping vows is found in the books of wisdom – Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Job. These cannot be regulated to merely a part of the Old Covenant. The books of wisdom speak of that which is right on a basic level. They speak of that

which is fundamentally right – apart from the law. Let us be wise and circumspect both in making oaths and vows, and in performing them. In the end, sin will not be imputed to you for your failure to perform your vows, but you will be held accountable for failing to perform them nonetheless.

Understanding this, it's time that we get into our verses of the passage before us. It's been a wonderful trip through this book, and we are almost at its end as we begin Chapter 27. Great things are to be found in His superior word. And so let's turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. That Which is Vowed (verses 1-27)

¹ Now the Lord spoke to Moses, saying,

The words here indicate that an entirely new section of instruction from the Lord lies ahead. It is the standard phrase to indicate this, and so these words are to be taken as a completely separate section within the book. Before closing out this marvelous book called Leviticus, the Lord has one more item to be included in it, and without this chapter, there would be a lack in the book's content.

² “Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them:

The word “appendix” is used by many scholars to describe the contents of this chapter. This is for a few reasons. First, the final words of Chapter 26 appear to close out “the statutes and judgments and laws” which were made between the Lord and the children of Israel there at Sinai. Secondly, it is because this chapter deals with vows, and vows are a free-will expression by an individual who is under no obligation to make the vow in the first place. Thus, they lay outside the law.

Although this is true, calling this chapter an appendix is not the best way to look at it. First, *neder*, or vows, are referred to five times in Leviticus. These are given in conjunction with the details of other temple sacrifices. The legal acknowledgment of these vows within the sacrificial laws thus requires that commands concerning them be carefully laid out. Secondly, the verses end acknowledging that the chapter details commandments given by the Lord while still at Mount Sinai. Thus, this is not an appendix.

The reason for placing it last in Leviticus, however, is because it deals with voluntary offerings. Though not mandatory to be made, once made, they become mandatory in keeping them. There would be a void without including these directions. As the Lord's word was considered inviolable, so the words of the people were to be considered as well. The spoken word from the man resulted in a command from the Lord, and a command from the Lord became something which was to be obeyed. This is referred to later –

“When you make a vow to the Lord your God, you shall not delay to pay it; for the Lord your God will surely require it of you, and it would be sin to you. ²² But if you abstain from vowing, it shall not be sin to you. ²³ That which has gone from your lips you shall keep and perform, for you voluntarily vowed to the Lord your God what you have promised with your mouth.” Deuteronomy 23:21-23

Solomon, in both Proverbs and Ecclesiastes speaks of the importance of keeping one's VOWS –

“When you make a vow to God, do not delay to pay it;
For *He has* no pleasure in fools.
Pay what you have vowed—

⁵ Better not to vow than to vow and not pay.” Ecclesiastes 5:4, 5

² (con't) **‘When a man consecrates by a vow**

Here, the verb *pala*, or wonder, is translated as “consecrates.” The idea is that as a wonder, or miracle, is something out of the normal, so a vow is something out of the normal. It is above and beyond what is considered regular. Even today, when someone does something above and beyond, we will proclaim, “Well, isn't that wonderful.” This carries the idea being conveyed.

² (con't) **certain persons to the Lord, according to your valuation,**

There is a debate as to whether the vows concerning people were intended to mean that these people became the property of the Lord unless redeemed, or if the *purpose* of making the vow was to redeem the person based on the valuation. The scholar Keil says, “This implies clearly enough, that whenever a person was vowed, redemption was to follow according to the valuation. Otherwise what was the object of valuing them? Valuation supposes either redemption or purchase.”

If that is the case, then why vow someone to the Lord? If the purpose is to redeem, then why vow at all? Why not just give the money to the priests? Secondly, the vowing of animals and land will be mentioned next, and they too could be redeemed, but it was not the expectation that they would be.

What seems to be the case is that when a vow is made to consecrate a person to the Lord, that person belonged to the Lord permanently. Unless redeemed, they would be devoted to the service of the sanctuary for the duration of their lives.

We might ask, “Why would someone do this?” But we do it in our own society, even if with different means, the intent would be the same. We give children up for adoption in hopes of them, or us, having a better life. We give ourselves up to employers, even signing work contracts, in order to secure a more positive future. Someone at the sanctuary would be under the care of the sanctuary.

This practice may explain the term *nethinim* which is used in Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah to describe a class of people who served at the temple, but who were of a lower class than that of the Levites. *Nethinim* comes from *natan*, to give, and thus they may be people given over to the temple service, whether those of foreign birth as slaves, or those of Israel who are consecrated by vow.

The purpose of the valuation, then, would be to redeem a person who was devoted to the Lord if their future looked brighter outside the temple. If this was the case, then they could be redeemed to live out their lives as the Lord had prospered them apart from the temple service. Again, this is conjecture, but it makes logical sense.

³ if your valuation is of a male from twenty years old up to sixty years old, then your valuation shall be fifty shekels of silver, according to the shekel of the sanctuary.

The valuations of the people to follow are based on ability to serve, and skill in service, not on intrinsic value of the person. Serving the Lord is what is being valued. In the case of a man between twenty and sixty, they are in the prime of life, and the expected service would be considerable. To redeem them then would require a large amount, fifty shekels. It is silver which is specified, and throughout Scripture, redemption is pictured in silver.

⁴ If it is a female, then your valuation shall be thirty shekels;

Again, ability to serve, not intrinsic value of the person, is being seen here. Peter calls women the weaker vessel in his first epistle. The amount of physical productivity expected from a woman was a bit more than half of that for a comparable male. This was the value set for a male or a female slave who had been gored by an ox in Exodus 21:32. It was also the value the Lord was priced at when Judas betrayed Him to the chief priests.

⁵ and if from five years old up to twenty years old, then your valuation for a male shall be twenty shekels, and for a female ten shekels;

The value set here is less than half that set for those between twenty and sixty. This shows us that skill, knowledge, and ability are all factors which are considered. The age of twenty is when the congregation was considered acceptable for war, as Numbers repeatedly states. Before that, those nineteen and younger were still considered as not ready for the challenges of adult life.

In this one category, the value of the female is exactly one half of the male, rather than 3/5, or 2/3 percent. This indicates that the service of females of this age is not considered to be of the same proportion as at other ages, probably because of the issues females especially face between these ages.

⁶ and if from a month old up to five years old, then your valuation for a male shall be five shekels of silver, and for a female your valuation shall be three shekels of silver;

A child of such an age would be almost a liability as one who is considered for service. The prospects would be of a future worker only, and thus the price is very small for redemption value.

⁷ and if from sixty years old and above, if *it is* a male, then your valuation shall be fifteen shekels, and for a female ten shekels.

The value of an elderly man is less than a male between five and twenty. However, the value of an elderly woman is the same as a female between five and twenty. Thus, her proportional value is greater at this age than at the younger age. During the second temple period, they had a proverb concerning this, "An old man in the house is always in the way; an old woman in the house is a treasure; she manages all household affairs."

⁸‘But if he is too poor to pay your valuation, then he shall present himself before the priest, and the priest shall set a value for him; according to the ability of him who vowed, the priest shall value him.

This verse contains the last use of the word *muk*, or poor, in the Bible. It signifies someone who has become thin; thus figuratively to be impoverished. Scholars point to this verse and say that this entire section on vows presupposes redemption of the individual, and this is a ceremonial rite, not an actual vow to service. Otherwise, the person would be obligated to service to the Lord.

But I would argue the opposite. Their logic must be that they consider such a vow as permanent. But nothing here says it is. The Nazirite vows of Numbers 6 are made for amounts of time chosen by the one vowing. If a person vowed to serve the Lord, a price for redemption from that service is set. If it is not paid, the service continues. But a person may be so poor that he simply wanted to serve the Lord for a specified time. He could then appeal to the priest for a reduction in his redemption value with the intent of paying his redemption fee when things looked up for him. He is offering himself as a gift of service to the Lord, but doing it from a position of poverty. Paul repeats the sentiment in 2 Corinthians –

“For if there is first a willing mind, it is accepted according to what one has, and not according to what he does not have.” 2 Corinthians 8:12

Paul is saying that the disposition of the individual is what makes an offering acceptable or not, regardless of the size of the gift. If one eagerly, and with a right heart, gives just thirty cents, they are doing well. However, if someone gives one million dollars with the wrong intent, why would they be credited with an acceptable gift? The world focuses on the size of the gift, but God focuses on the intent behind it.

Understanding this, we can see that a gift is based on the heart of the giver and it is “according to what one has.” The poor man with little can still give a grand gift. It is accepted then “not according to what he does not have.” If it was, then only the gifts of the wealthy would be acceptable regardless of the amount given in comparison to the amount they possess.

This precept appears to be what is being relayed by the Lord here. A person who consecrated himself by oath to serve the Lord should not be prohibited from doing so because he was too poor. Rather, he should be given the chance to do so, and then to be able to redeem himself based on his state of poverty. If this were merely a way of giving

a gift to the Lord, there would be no need to make a vow of consecration. There were other things that could be vowed to the Lord, as we will next see...

⁹ ‘If *it is* an animal that men may bring as an offering to the Lord, all that *anyone* gives to the Lord shall be holy.

These words now refer to any animal that was considered as an acceptable sacrifice to the Lord, as already detailed within the law – bulls, goats, rams, lambs, and so on. Any such animal that was brought to the Lord became holy. This means that it was henceforward set apart for sacred use – either for sacrifice on the altar, or for the maintenance of the priests and sanctuary. It could also be put with the animals intended for later sacrifice.

¹⁰ He shall not substitute it or exchange it, good for bad or bad for good;

Anything which had been consecrated to the Lord as an offering became, at that moment, holy. Thus it belonged to the Lord for sacred purposes. Adam Clarke notes that, “to change which was impiety; to withhold it, sacrilege.”

A new word, *mur*, is brought into the Bible to make the point. It means essentially the same thing as the other verb. Both convey the idea of changing one for another. By using two words, it is giving an emphasis that this would be wholly unacceptable. Further, it might be inferred that one verb is speaking of exchanging one animal for another like animal, whereas the other verb would then mean one animal for a different kind. This seems right because...

^{10 (con’t)} and if he at all exchanges animal for animal, then both it and the one exchanged for it shall be holy.

One might ask, “Why would someone want to exchange what they have vowed?” The reason might be that at first he promised a lamb and decided that he had a better lamb. Or, he might have vowed a lamb and decided that to give an ox would be a better gift. In making such a change, or exchange, both animals became holy. On the other side, the person may have devoted an ox, and then his other ox died. He may say, I need an ox, so I am going to exchange it for a lamb. If he decided to do this, then both animals were holy. He would not receive back his lamb, and he would not receive back the ox either. The lesson is, “One must always be careful when making vows.”

¹¹ If *it is* an unclean animal which they do not offer as a sacrifice to the Lord, then he shall present the animal before the priest;

There are two possibilities as to what this means. The first is an unclean animal according to sacrificial law, such as a donkey. The second is any clean animal with a defect. The first is probably the case, but either way it is to be presented to the priest...

¹² and the priest shall set a value for it, whether it is good or bad; as you, the priest, value it, so it shall be.

It is an obvious verse. The quality of the animal is set by the priest, and from that determination, a price is then set.

¹³ But if he *wants* at all to redeem it, then he must add one-fifth to your valuation.

The animal's price was set at a certain amount, and it is for that amount that it could be sold to another. But the one who brought it forward originally would have to pay 1/5 more for it than anyone else. This was intended to avoid people making rash vows. There would be a penalty imposed for having so dedicated and then decided to have again what was dedicated.

¹⁴ 'And when a man dedicates his house *to be* holy to the Lord, then the priest shall set a value for it, whether it is good or bad; as the priest values it, so it shall stand.

This is probably pertaining to a house in a city. It is not that which is granted by original inheritance of the land. One commentary says that the ordinary practice here is to redeem. That makes no sense. Like the animals of verse 12, if one were to redeem his own house, he would be penalized for doing so...

¹⁵ If he who dedicated it *wants* to redeem his house, then he must add one-fifth of the money of your valuation to it, and it shall be his.

The same penalty for the redemption of an unclean animal is found here. It would make no sense for the usual practice to be the redeeming of the property by the original owner.

¹⁶ 'If a man dedicates to the Lord *part* of a field of his possession, then your valuation shall be according to the seed for it. A homer of barley seed *shall be valued* at fifty shekels of silver.

This speaks of land of original inheritance. It belongs to the family and tribe forever, and so only the produce could be dedicated. The amount is set based either on how much barley seed the land would require to seed it, or how much the land was expected to produce, it is debated which is correct. Probably it is for sowing. After that though, then a set value of silver for that amount of seed was set.

¹⁷ If he dedicates his field from the Year of Jubilee, according to your valuation it shall stand.

This would be land dedicated immediately after the Jubilee. In such a case, the full valuation applied. This then covered 49 years.

¹⁸ But if he dedicates his field after the Jubilee, then the priest shall reckon to him the money due according to the years that remain till the Year of Jubilee, and it shall be deducted from your valuation.

This speaks of the years remaining until the next Jubilee. A standard calculation was to be made based on the number of years left, and then the amount of corresponding seed was then to be converted into silver, and that would be the set value.

¹⁹ And if he who dedicates the field ever wishes to redeem it, then he must add one-fifth of the money of your valuation to it, and it shall belong to him.

Again, the same 1/5 penalty is imposed upon anyone who desired to receive back his vowed offering. It would be a lesson that would be remembered by the one who vowed and then reconsidered.

²⁰ But if he does not want to redeem the field, or if he has sold the field to another man, it shall not be redeemed anymore;

This is an *exceedingly complicated verse*. What it probably means, is that the man has done one of two things. He 1) vowed the land which he owns, as an offering to the Lord, and he has not redeemed it before the Jubilee, or 2) he had sold the land to someone else and decided after selling it that he vowed that it should be the Lord's. As the land is his in perpetuity by landed inheritance, it should revert to him, but because he vowed it to the Lord *after selling it*, then his intention is that it should revert not to him, but to the Lord. Either way he is making an absolute claim that He wished the land to be the Lord's forever, which will now happen...

²¹ but the field, when it is released in the Jubilee, shall be holy to the Lord, as a devoted field; it shall be the possession of the priest.

The intent of the man, with his landed inheritance, was that it would forever be the Lord's. It would never return to the land of the tribe from which he came. We might think this odd, until we see what people do with land they once possessed, giving it to the state or county in which they live as a memorial park, arboretum, etc. It is taking the land out of the family's possession, and it is taking it out of the possession of anyone else as well. Thus it becomes a testimony of love by the one who has parted with it.

²² 'And if a man dedicates to the Lord a field which he has bought, which is not the field of his possession,

This would be landed property purchased by someone from its permanent owner as described in Chapter 25. The individual has actually not bought the land, but the crops of the land.

²³ then the priest shall reckon to him the worth of your valuation, up to the Year of Jubilee, and he shall give your valuation on that day as a holy offering to the Lord.

The priest was to then make an evaluation of the seed of the land which would occur till the year of Jubilee, and when that amount was set, the one vowing was to give the money to the priest for the care and maintenance of the sanctuary. But no 1/5 would be added to it as it was not his landed property to be redeemed, and so only the money of the vow would ever be exchanged.

²⁴ In the Year of Jubilee the field shall return to him from whom it was bought, to the one who *owned* the land as a possession.

As it wasn't the buyer's actual property, he had no right to sell it, or have it transferred out of the possession of the landed owner. Thus it went back to the landed owner at the Jubilee.

²⁵ And all your valuations shall be according to the shekel of the sanctuary: twenty gerahs to the shekel.

The shekel is defined as twenty *gerahs*. It comes from *garar* which means "to drag away." The *gerah* literally means "a bean" or "a kernel" which is round, as if scraped.

Thus, it is a portion of a shekel which has been taken away. This is the same idea as our use of “grain” when speaking of money, gun powder, etc.

The reason for including this statement is to ensure that the sanctuary shekel, which was the standard, was to be used, and the silver was to be according to that 20-*gerah* standard. The number 20 in Scripture signifies “expectancy.” There was to always to be the expectancy that the shekel used was appropriate to the standard.

²⁶ ‘But the firstborn of the animals, which should be the Lord’s firstborn, no man shall dedicate; whether *it is* an ox or sheep, *it is* the Lord’s.

Exodus 13:2 expressly stated that all firstborn belonged to the Lord. Because of this, they could not be used as a vow of offering. They were already His to begin with. A firstborn man could be vowed though because they were redeemed when the Lord took the Levites as His in place of the firstborn.

²⁷ And if *it is* an unclean animal, then he shall redeem *it* according to your valuation, and shall add one-fifth to it; or if it is not redeemed, then it shall be sold according to your valuation.

The subject of this verse is very hard to pin down. Is it a clean animal with a defect that cannot be presented to the Lord? Is it an unclean animal according to sacrificial laws? Is it even still speaking of the firstborn of animals referred to in verse 26? It has already been prescribed in Exodus 13 that the firstborn of a donkey was to be redeemed with a lamb or have its neck broken. Does that principle apply to all unclean beasts, or only donkeys?

Probably, this is speaking of the firstborn of an unclean animal other than a donkey, but being dogmatic here, especially when dogs are unclean animals, is probably the wrong course of action. The price of a dog is forbidden to be brought to the house of the Lord for any vowed offering according to Deuteronomy 23:18.

*I have spoken with my lips and made a vow
I shall not delay in keeping what I have said
To the sanctuary! I am headed there now
My heart was prompted, and so I shall go where my heart has led*

*My praise shall be of You in the great assembly
I will pay my vows before those who fear Him, this I shall do*

*The Lord will be pleased, so it shall certainly be
To the Lord I will be faithful and true*

*Following in the footsteps of Christ my Lord
Who paid His vows to the Lord; those He had spoken
As the psalm has said, in His sacred word
And like Jesus, my vows shall never be broken*

II. That Which May Not Be Vowed (verses 28-34)

²⁸ ‘Nevertheless no devoted *offering* that a man may devote to the Lord of all that he has, *both* man and beast, or the field of his possession, shall be sold or redeemed; every devoted *offering* is most holy to the Lord.

A new word, with an awesome and terrifying meaning, is introduced into Scripture here, *kherem*. The word is also translated as a net. The idea is that as a net closes and drags away its catch, so it is to be with something devoted to the Lord. *Kherem* signifies something placed under a ban and devoted to destruction.

A man had the right to devote anything under his possession to be dedicated to the Lord. He would do this with a curse upon himself if not obeyed. This included property, slaves, and even children. No reason is given, and no further explanatory details come later. All we have is that if such a pronouncement was made, the thing could not be sold or redeemed. Instead, it became devoted and most holy to the Lord. For property and assets, they become solely the property of the priests. For people...

²⁹ No person under the ban, who may become doomed to destruction among men, shall be redeemed, *but* shall surely be put to death.

Though scholars attempt to separate the words of verse 29 from verse 28, it is hard to see how they can justify this. Verse 28 explicitly gives a person the power to declare a man under his possession *kherem*. Verse 29 immediately follows and says that all *kherem* who are devoted as *kherem* shall be put to death. As melancholy as the passage is, this verse seems to explain the intent of the account of Jephthah’s daughter in Judges 11, and it shows the severity of speaking rashly. Though that was a vow and not a *kherem*, the result was the same as if it was. Further, it shows the disobedience of Saul who made a similar vow in 1 Samuel 14 which his son was implicated in, and which he did not carry out.

³⁰ And all the tithe of the land, *whether* of the seed of the land *or* of the fruit of the tree, *is* the Lord's. It *is* holy to the Lord.

Everything which came from the agricultural work of the people was to have a tithe, or a tenth portion of it, removed. This was to be considered "holy to the Lord." At this point, what that means is not explained, but that is coming later in the law. For now, one tenth of the land's produce was considered as holy.

³¹ If a man wants at all to redeem *any* of his tithes, he shall add one-fifth to it.

The tithes were excluded from vows because they already belonged to the Lord, but they could be redeemed by adding a fifth of the value to them.

³² And concerning the tithe of the herd or the flock, of whatever passes under the rod, the tenth one shall be holy to the Lord.

What this means is explained in more detail later, but for now, the animals would pass under a rod. As each passed, it would be counted. Each tenth would be set aside as *qodesh l'Yehovah*, or holy to the Lord. That animal could not be sold or kept for working or for anything else. It was set apart to the Lord.

³³ He shall not inquire whether it is good or bad, nor shall he exchange it; and if he exchanges it at all, then both it and the one exchanged for it shall be holy; it shall not be redeemed.'"

When the tenth animal passed under the rod, its fate was sealed. It was not to be exchanged for a better or worse animal. If an exchange was attempted, then both were to be considered holy. What can be inferred from the words, "It shall not be redeemed," is that they could neither be bought nor sold. They were set to be dedicated to the Lord, and that was their purpose henceforth.

As an additional note: The tithe will continue to be explained and defined after this point, and throughout the law. Some scholars will point to those clarifications as being "second" and even "third" tithes. There is no such thing. The subject of tithing is one of the most misunderstood, and most abused principles in the church. The tithe, or tenth, is a precept found in the law, and it is never repeated under the New Covenant. Further, what is done with the tithes, even under the Mosaic Covenant, is wholly ignored by preachers.

This precept, now named here, is the first time that tithing is mandated under the law. Two other times, the setting aside of tenths are mentioned before this. Both are in *descriptive* passages, and they mandate nothing. Some, however, will point to those two passages and claim that because they precede the law, the tithe is an eternal standard for man. They claim that it falls under the “law of first mention,” meaning that something mentioned for the first time is to be upheld after that.

There is no such law in Scripture. If there were, anyone could have multiple wives and concubines, we would have to marry our oldest daughters off before our younger ones could marry, and if our son died, we would be giving his widow to our next son to raise up children in the first son’s name, we would be paying dowry’s for our wives, giving our firstborn a double portion of the inheritance, observing the weekly Sabbath, and the seventh-year Sabbath. We would also be observing those pilgrim feasts mentioned in Exodus. On and on and on it would go.

Understand now that the tithe is *not* a New Testament principle, and even when preachers teach tithing, they don’t do it according to the standard of the law. Remember this simple rule: No tithing. There is one precept in the New Testament for giving, and that is to give as one may prosper. That is it. Out of that prospering, Paul then says to share in all good things with the one who teaches you.

³⁴ These *are* the commandments which the Lord commanded Moses for the children of Israel on Mount Sinai.

The words here simply and elegantly close out the book of Leviticus. They immediately speak of the contents of this chapter, but they are an overall summary of the entire book. And though this chapter has lacked much of the Christological symbolism that most of the book of Leviticus has shown us, it is an important ending to the book. Without it, there would have been a void in several important aspects of the lives of the Israelites.

What would be the result of making vows? What would have been the consequences for renegeing on those made? Who was to be the deciding voice in such things? And so on. It was necessary to put these here, to ensure a smooth transition out of Leviticus. Further, though its placement is often called a mistake, it is more than appropriate. Rather than closing out the general Sinatic laws with blessings and curses, it ended on a more positive note of what could and could not be vowed to the Lord.

And finally, things like the tithe are spoken of here, but what to do with them is not revealed. Thus, it gives an anticipatory taste that more is to come before all is complete in regards to such things. In all, the Chapter serves as a marvelous conclusion to the book of Leviticus.

Before we close out the chapter though, because we are dealing with vows, it is right that we tie this in to a passage from Mark 7. There we read the following words of Jesus to the Pharisees –

“*All too well you reject the commandment of God, that you may keep your tradition.* ¹⁰ For Moses said, ‘Honor your father and your mother’; and, ‘He who curses father or mother, let him be put to death.’ ¹¹ But you say, ‘If a man says to his father or mother, “Whatever profit you might have received from me *is Corban*”—’ (that is, a gift *to God*), ¹² then you no longer let him do anything for his father or his mother, ¹³ making the word of God of no effect through your tradition which you have handed down.” Mark 7:9-13

The word He uses, Corban, is found in Leviticus 27:9. It is an offering to the Lord. What the people were doing, was getting around the law of tending to their parents by taking what should have been used for their care, and making it a *qorban*, or offering, to the Lord. By doing this, it meant that it could not be used for any other purpose. And the parents would rather do anything, even perishing, than to interfere with such an offering and rob God.

Eventually, the person could reclaim their offering by adding the standard 1/5 to the value. Thus instead of tending to the parents with a great portion of the asset, they would supposedly be honoring God. The 1/5 value would be a minimal loss compared to spending it all on their care. The priests would profit off the deal, and all would be well with the world. But Jesus knew their deceit and laid it out for all to see and understand.

The law was intended to bless the people, protect the poor and needy, and glorify God all at the same time. It was never intended to be used as the leaders of Israel did. They manipulated its precepts for gain, and they harmed the people in the process, both in the hardening of the hearts of the people, and in the mistreatment of those who should have been cared for.

As we continue through the law, we can see where it constantly failed to do what it was given to do, which is 1) to sanctify the people – “...you shall be holy; for I am holy” (11:44), and 2) to grant them life – “You shall therefore keep My statutes and My

judgments, which if a man does, he shall live by them” (18:5). The people failed to be sanctified, and the people died. Leviticus shows us that something more was needed than the law itself. This beautiful, marvelous treasure of 27 chapters was given to lead us to a better understanding that we need Jesus.

Closing Verse: *“I will go into Your house with burnt offerings;
I will pay You my vows,
¹⁴ Which my lips have uttered
And my mouth has spoken when I was in trouble.” Psalm 66:13, 14*

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if you have a lifetime of sin heaped up behind you, He can wash it away and purify you completely and wholly. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

Things Vowed and Devoted

Now the Lord spoke to Moses, saying
These are the words He was then relaying

“Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them:
‘When a man consecrates by a vow
Certain persons to the Lord
According to your valuation, then this is how

If your valuation is of a male
From twenty years old up to years old sixty
Then your valuation shall be fifty shekels of silver
According to the shekel of the sanctuary

If it is a female, so shall it be
Then your valuation shall be shekels thirty

And if from five years old up to twenty years old
Then your valuation for a male, yes for one of the men
Shall be twenty shekels
And for a female shekels ten

And if from a month old up to five years old

Then your valuation for a male shall be
Five shekels of silver, and for a female
Your valuation shall be shekels of silver three

And if from sixty years old and above
If it is a male, then your valuation shall be for one of these men
Fifteen shekels
And for a female shekels ten
'But if he is too poor to pay your valuation
Then he shall present himself before the priest
-----so he shall do
And the priest shall set a value for him
According to the ability of him who vowed
-----the priest shall him value

'If it is an animal that men may bring
As an offering to the Lord
All that anyone gives to the Lord shall be holy
According to this word

He shall not substitute it or exchange it
Good for bad or bad for good, such it shall not be
And if he at all exchanges animal for animal
Then both it and the one exchanged for it shall be holy

If it is an unclean animal
Which they do not offer as a sacrifice to the Lord
Then he shall present the animal before the priest
According to this word

And the priest shall set a value for it
Whether it is good or bad, as seen plainly
As you, the priest, value it
So it shall be

But if he wants at all to redeem it, according to my narration
Then he must add one-fifth to your valuation

'And when a man dedicates his house to be holy to the Lord

Then the priest shall set a value for it
Whether it is good or bad; as the priest values it
So it shall stand; just as he does submit

If he who dedicated it wants to redeem his house
Then he must one-fifth of the money add
Of your valuation to it
And it shall be his; if that is what makes him glad

'If a man dedicates to the Lord
Part of a field of his possession, so he does do
Then your valuation shall be according to the seed for it
A homer of barley seed shall be valued at fifty shekels of silver
-----as I am now instructing you

If he dedicates his field from the Year of Jubilee, yes this land
According to your valuation it shall stand

But if he dedicates his field after the Jubilee
Then the priest shall reckon to him the money
Due according to the years that remain till the Year of Jubilee
And it shall be deducted from your valuation, so shall it be

And if he who dedicates the field
Ever wishes to redeem it
Then he must add one-fifth of the money of your valuation to it
And it shall belong to him, as to you I submit

But if he does not want to redeem the field
Or if he has sold to another man the field
It shall not be redeemed anymore
His rights to it he did yield

But the field, when it is released in the Jubilee
Shall be holy to the Lord; its commons status has ceased
As a devoted field
It shall be the possession of the priest

'And if a man dedicates to the Lord

A field which he has bought
Which is not the field of his possession
It was not his inherited plot

Then the priest shall reckon to him
The worth of your valuation, up to the Year of Jubilee
And he shall give your valuation on that day
As a holy offering to the Lord, so shall it be

In the Year of Jubilee
The field shall return to him, please understand
From whom it was bought
To the one who as a possession owned the land

And all your valuations shall be
According to the shekel of the sanctuary:
Twenty gerahs to the shekel, as prescribed by Me

'But the firstborn of the animals
Which the Lord's firstborn should be
No man shall dedicate; whether it is an ox or sheep
It is the Lord's; it belongs to Me

And if it is an unclean animal
Then he shall redeem it according to your valuation, as you set
And shall add one-fifth to it
Or if it is not redeemed, then it shall be sold
-----according to your valuation, so the price shall be met

'Nevertheless no devoted offering
That a man may devote of all that he has to the Lord
Both man and beast, or the field of his possession
Shall be sold or redeemed, according to this word

Every devoted offering is to the Lord most holy
This is how it is and how it shall be
No person under the ban
Who may become doomed among men to destruction
Shall be redeemed

But shall surely be put to death, according to this instruction
And all the tithe of the land
Whether of the seed of the land
Or of the fruit of the tree, is the Lord's
It is holy to the Lord, please understand

If a man wants at all to redeem any of his tithes, so I submit
He shall add one-fifth to it

And concerning the tithe of the herd or the flock
Of whatever passes under the rod
The tenth one shall be holy to the Lord
Yes, to the Lord your God

He shall not inquire whether it is good or bad
Nor shall he exchange it; such shall not be
And if he exchanges it at all
Then both it and the one exchanged for it shall be holy

It shall not be redeemed
It is holy and so it shall be esteemed

These are the commandments
Which the Lord commanded Moses, and which we have heard
For the children of Israel on Mount Sinai
These are the commandments of the Lord

Lord God, thank you for this wonderful book
Leviticus! What a marvel to have studied it
Into every detail possible we took a look
And to You our thanks and praise we now submit!

Hallelujah to Christ our Lord!
Hallelujah for Leviticus, a marvelous part of Your superior word!

Hallelujah and Amen...