

Preparation

We have now begun one of the most challenging sections of the Bible. Not because the language is difficult to understand, but because the intricate details regarding the sacrifices and feasts can easily become monotonous. Church Age believers mistakenly believe that Leviticus does not pertain to them because we no longer offer animal sacrifices or celebrate the Jewish feasts. However, God tells us that “All scripture... is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness” (2 Timothy 3:16). In Romans 15:4 God tells us that “whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning...” So what does Leviticus have to do with my life today? Consider the following:

- ← Leviticus contains more words spoken directly by God than any other book in the Bible (Leviticus 1:1).
- ← Leviticus is quoted more than 40 times in the New Testament. Apparently, there is something very important that God wants to communicate to us in the book of Leviticus!
- ← Without Leviticus we could never understand the New Testament book of Hebrews. Leviticus foreshadows New Testament truths regarding the person and work of Jesus Christ.
- ← David continuously and emphatically declared that he delighted in God’s “statutes” (Psalm 119:16, 54, 80). Many of God’s statutes are recorded in Leviticus (Leviticus 3:17). Apparently, David, the man after God’s own heart, DELIGHTED in the book of Leviticus!
- ← Leviticus reveals that God, through Jesus Christ, has prepared for us a SACRIFICE (Jesus Christ the Lamb of God – John 1:29), a PRIEST (Jesus Christ, the great High Priest – Hebrews 3:1) and a PLACE (Heaven, where Jesus Christ is enthroned – 1 Peter 3:22). Not only has God prepared these things for us, but He has also made each believer a SACRIFICE (Romans 12:1 – 2), a PRIEST (1 Peter 2:5) and a PLACE (Ephesians 2:22)!

The purpose of Leviticus is twofold: first, to show us that we must worship the LORD in holiness (the word “holy” appears 94 times in Leviticus!); and second, that worship is the only pathway to peace, rest and fruitfulness. God will not give you peace, rest or fruitfulness until you are worshipping Him in holiness.

Historically, the events recorded in Leviticus occur at the door of the tabernacle

(Leviticus 1:1) over a period of one month (compare Leviticus 1:1; Exodus 40:17; Numbers 1:1). Having delivered His children by the blood of the lamb (Exodus), God

plans to take them to a place of peace, rest and fruitfulness, but before they embark on their journey, they must first establish worship. Leviticus is Israel's instruction book on worship. The word Leviticus means "that which pertains to the Levites" and is so called because the tribe of Levi was chosen by God to be Israel's worship leaders. The word Levi means "joined to God" and because the Levites were joined to God they had no inheritance in the Promised Land; God was their inheritance. (Remember Moses' question in Exodus 32:26 and the Levites response as they "gathered themselves together unto him.")

Monday – February 6, 2017

TODAY'S READING: LEVITICUS 6-9

OVERVIEW:

Re-stating of the sacrifices in a new order and with an additional offering; Aaron and his sons consecrated for and instituted in service to God.

HIGHLIGHTS & INSIGHTS:

We can be certain that our all-knowing God doesn't suffer from short-term memory loss. When God repeats Himself, start digging because you're standing on buried treasure! In chapters 1-5, the sacrifices are listed in the following order: burnt, meat, peace, sin and trespass. This order shows God's transcendence toward man in the person of Jesus Christ. Jesus voluntarily offered (burnt offering) His sinless life (meat offering) to reconcile (peace offering) God and man by atoning for man's sin (sin and trespass offerings). In chapters 6 and 7, the sacrifices are listed in a new order and another sacrifice has been added: burnt, meat, priest's, sin, trespass and peace. This reveals man's ascension toward God only through Jesus Christ, the great High Priest. It's no accident that the priest's offering serves as a bridge between the burnt and meat offerings and the sin and trespass offerings for *there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all* (1 Tim. 2:5-6a). Jesus is our only bridge to God. The last offering listed is the peace offering because peace is the result of Jesus Christ standing in the gap between God and man; *"we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ"* (Rom. 5:1).

Another noteworthy truth is found in chapter 6 and verse 13: *The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar; it shall never go out.* The fire of the altar was forbidden to go out. This signifies that our God is always ready, willing and waiting for us to enter His presence through the appropriate sacrifice. Psalm 86:5 declares, *For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee.*

Once the path to God has been established and clearly marked (chapters 1-7), God prepares His children for consecration to His service and to experience His glorious presence. Chapters 8 and 9 show us the consecration of the priests and the preparation for God's glorious presence. At this point it's important to take note of a few things: first, that all priests are Levites, but not all Levites are priests. Only Aaron's sons could become priests. In other words, you must be

born a priest. The same is true in the New Testament: only those who have been born-again into the family of the great High Priest, Jesus Christ, can serve and worship God in holiness. Next, only the High Priest wears the holy crown (Lev. 8:9) teaching us that there is only one High Priest who is also a King, the Lord Jesus Christ, and only He holds the place of preeminence (Col. 1:18). Third, when Aaron and his sons were consecrated for service to God, blood was placed upon their right ear lobes, right thumbs and right toes symbolizing that all of their strength (denoted by the right hand side) was devoted to hearing and obeying God's holy word, carrying out God's holy work and continuing in a holy walk. And such should be the case with New Testament priests (Col. 1:10). Finally, in chapter 9, verses 6 and 7, Aaron makes atonement for himself and the people as a prerequisite to God's glory descending upon the tabernacle. Atonement precedes God's presence. Unless we are in a right relationship with God, completely consecrated to Him, we will never experience the glory of His presence in our lives (Lev. 9:24).

CHRIST IS REVEALED:

As our MEDIATOR and HIGH PRIEST who intercedes before God on our behalf.
-Lev. 9:7-24 (I Tim. 2:5; Heb. 7:22-26)

Tuesday - February 7, 2017

TODAY S READING: LEVITICUS 10-13

OVERVIEW:

Nadab and Abihu judged by God; the first kosher menu is created; post partum purification; leprosy is identified and addressed.

HIGHLIGHTS & INSIGHTS:

Tolerance and pluralism are common words in the vocabulary of our lukewarm society. Christians have been told that they should avoid making claims such as the Bible is the only source of absolute truth and Jesus is the only way to heaven . Such claims are impolite and divisive. And besides, all roads lead to heaven, right? Let s ask Nadab and Abihu. In Leviticus 10, we find two men, Nadab and Abihu, who were so caught up in the emotional excitement of experiencing God s presence (Lev. 9:23-10:7) that they were inspired out of the goodness of their heart to worship God in a new way. What s wrong with that? Think about it, here are two men with honest intentions and sincere hearts trying to please God. Surely God is overwhelmed with joy. Check out God s response to these truly sincere individuals: *And there went out fire from the LORD, and devoured them, and they died before the LORD* (Lev. 10:2). Is this really the response of a loving God? What s the big deal? Read vs. 1, *And Nadab and Abihu . . . offered strange fire before the Lord, WHICH HE COMMANDED THEM NOT.* The fire of judgment devoured them because they refused to worship God in accordance with God s Word. Sincerity of heart and good intentions will not lead anyone to eternity in heaven (Pro. 14:12). The fact is, all roads do not lead to heaven; there is only one road: Jesus Christ. In John 14:6, Jesus said, *I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me* . Jesus is the only road because only Jesus is God, only Jesus lived a sinless life, only Jesus paid the price for sins, only Jesus rose from the dead and only Jesus will return to take vengeance on them that know not God and obey not His gospel (II Thess. 1:7-10)! God demands that we worship Him precisely the way that He commands us to in His Word.

God paints an incredible picture of sin, its working, and consequences in Leviticus 13. In this chapter we are introduced to leprosy which, like sin, is a disease that spreads throughout the body, often remains undetected by others, defiles everyone near to it, isolates the infected and is fit only for destruction by fire. Sounds like the life of someone trapped in sin. Such a situation is not hopeless, however, if we chose to separate ourselves from the sin, put off the

garment of the flesh (Col. 3:5- 17) and let our High Priest, the Lord Jesus Christ, apply the blood of the sacrifice (I Jn. 1:7) and anoint us with oil (a type of the power of the Holy Spirit). Through Christ, our faithful High Priest we can be restored to a right relationship with God and man.

CHRIST IS REVEALED:

As our HIGH PRIEST who identifies and cleanses the disease of our sin -Lev. 13 (Heb. 4:14, 15).

Wednesday - February 8, 2017

TODAY'S READING: LEVITICUS 14-16

OVERVIEW:

The purification of lepers; purification of those with unclean issues; instructions regarding the Day of Atonement.

HIGHLIGHTS & INSIGHTS:

God is invisible and many of His truths relate to an unseen realm. Hence the need for faith: *the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen* (Heb. 11:1). Though the spiritual realm is invisible, God is an expert at teaching spiritual truths through physical realities. Leviticus chapter 15 is a perfect example of this method of teaching. Clearly, God is very postmodern in that He recognizes that we all have issues. Without a doubt, God provides instructions regarding

unclean issues for the obvious reason of preventing the spread of infectious illnesses among the Israelites. However, God's stringent rules regarding unclean issues also teach us spiritual truths about unclean thoughts, attitudes and words that issue out of our hearts. Jesus reminded us that

those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: These are the things which defile a man . . . (Matt. 15:16-18). No wonder David prayed, *Set a watch, O LORD, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips* (Ps. 141:3).

In Leviticus chapter 16, God introduces a special holiday into the Jewish calendar: the Day of Atonement. On this day, both the sin nature and the individual sins of the entire nation of Israel are atoned for or covered. A simple way to remember the significance of this holy day is by breaking the word atonement into three hyphenated words: at-one-ment. This is the day when Israel's sin is covered, making them at-one-ment with God. The Day of Atonement is a very descriptive picture of the person and work of Jesus Christ. The high priest enters the holy of holies with the blood of a sin offering signifying our High Priest, Jesus Christ, entering the third heaven with His own blood as a sin offering. Hebrews states it like this: *For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us* (Heb. 9:24). With this offering

completed, the high priest lays his hands upon the head of the scapegoat and confesses the sins of the children of Israel (vs. 21) and the scapegoat carries away their iniquities. Isaiah prophetically described this portion of Christ's work saying, *the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all* (Isa. 53:6). He has carried our sins to a place as far as the east is from the west (Ps. 103:12). In other words, Jesus permanently eliminated the record of our sins; God remembers them no more. So through the Day of Atonement, God teaches us that He has effectually dealt with both our sin nature and our sinful actions. Though there are many parallels to the person and work of Jesus, two important differences must be mentioned. First, the Old Testament high priest had to make sin offerings for himself because he was as guilty as the rest of the children of Israel. Jesus Christ, our High Priest, never offered a sin sacrifice for Himself because He was completely sinless (Heb. 9:14; 7:22-28)! Secondly, the Day of Atonement was celebrated every year because *it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: But this man [Jesus Christ], after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool* (Heb 10:4,11-13). For those of us who have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, we can glory in the fact that our Saviour offered Himself one time to permanently and forever pay for our sins; we never need ask for His salvation again. Praise the Lord!

CHRIST IS REVEALED:

As our SIN OFFERING which effectually crucified our sin nature –Lev. 14:19-32 (Rom. 5:8) As our SCAPEGOAT which carried away our sins Lev. 16:5-34 (II Cor. 5:21) As our eternal HIGH PRIEST who intercedes for us Lev. 14:20 (Heb 7:24,25).

Thursday - February 9, 2017

TODAY S READING: LEVITICUS 17-20

OVERVIEW:

God forbids Israel from worshipping other gods and eating blood; laws protecting the sanctity of sex; the declaration of civil laws.

HIGHLIGHTS & INSIGHTS:

In these chapters, God teaches us that the character of a society is a reflection of the character of her people. In other words, our private lives determine our public welfare. For example, how could HIV have become a worldwide pandemic if every human being would have obeyed God s commands regarding the sanctity of sex? Our nation is a chaotic cauldron of contradictions. We sit in shock when the nightly news tells us of a mother who has drowned her own children, or a man who has shot his wife in the chest five times on the steps of a public library, while at the same time, we sit idly by while our judges undercut our legal system and their own power by denying the presence of the Ten Commandments in the courtroom. If morality is relative then upon what basis does a judge pronounce someone guilty? The foundation of our society s laws is the Bible and the absolute truth declared therein. If the foundation be destroyed how will our society stand? God guarantees that it won t! If we pursue other gods (money, sex, pleasure), then we will be cut off from our biblical heritage and lost in ambivalence (Lev. 17:1-7). If we demote life to nothing more than a chemical composition (abortion, cloning) God will set His face against us (Lev. 17:10-14). If we ignore the sacredness of sex, we are, by default, attacking the sacredness of humanity (see I Cor. 6:18; consider how pornography, in the mind of those addicted to it, turns women into something subhuman, a tool or toy without a mind or feelings). In general, when we reject God s call to personal holiness, our society can go nowhere but down.

The moral of the story is that all of us are holy (holy means set apart) to someone or something. We are either holy to God or holy to sin. You cannot serve two masters (Matt. 6:24). *“And ye shall be holy unto me: for I the LORD am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine (Lev. 20:26).*

CHRIST IS REVEALED:

As the HOLY WORD OF GOD that protects our private and public lives from rampant wickedness. Lev. 20:8 (Jn. 1:1, 2, 14; Rev. 19:13)

TODAY S READING: LEVITICUS 21-24

OVERVIEW:

The qualifications of priests; God sets the dates of the Jewish feasts; the death penalty instituted and carried out.

HIGHLIGHTS & INSIGHTS:

In I Peter 2:5, we learn that God has set Christians apart as *an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ*. Every born-again believer is a priest, not in the Old Testament (OT) sense or the Roman Catholic sense, but in a biblical sense. A New Testament (NT) priest teaches unbelievers to worship God properly (evangelism) and offers up spiritual sacrifices pleasing to God. Some of the spiritual sacrifices that a Christian offers to God are faith (Phil. 2:17), money (Phil. 4:18), praise and giving (Heb. 13:15, 16), people led to Christ (Rom. 15:16) and finally, his/her life (Rom. 12:1,2; II Co. 2:15). All of these spiritual sacrifices are symbolically represented by physical offerings in the Old Testament.

Priests are ambassadors for God, and as such, have been called to God s standard of holiness. Since God is a holy God, we must approach Him in holiness. In Leviticus 21, we find a list of physical blemishes that prevent an OT priest from offering the bread of God (Lev. 21:16,17). These blemishes represent spiritual blemishes (Eph. 5:27) in the life of a Christian, a NT priest. When we are spiritually handicapped by these sinful actions or attitudes, we are hypocrites and we cannot offer the Word of God (bread of God) to a lost world. Let s examine a few of these blemishes to discover their spiritual applications.

1. A blind man (vs. 18). In the NT, a blind man is one who is not maturing spiritually (II Pet. 1:5- 9).
2. A blemished eye (vs. 20). A blemished eye prevented the OT priest from seeing his reflection in the bronze laver where he was to wash himself (Ex. 30:18) in preparation for service. In the NT, a blemished priest is one who hears the Word of God, but does not obey it (James 1:22-25).
3. A flat nose (vs. 18). A flat-nosed OT priest cannot smell the incense on the golden altar (a picture of prayer). A flat-nosed NT priest neglects prayer, and therefore experiences no power in his walk with God.

4. A lame man (vs. 18). A lame man cannot walk. A lame NT priest is a believer who does not walk in obedience to God's Word or in the fullness of the Spirit (Gal. 5:16, 17, 22, 23).
5. A superfluous or extra body part (vs. 18). An extra body part is numb, not functional, and interferes in service. A NT priest who carries superfluous bitterness, unforgiveness, malice, or anger interferes with the worship of God (Eph. 4:31,32).
6. A brokenfooted or brokenhanded man (vs. 19). A brokenfooted priest cannot walk straight, he has no balance, and he cannot run. A brokenfooted NT priest constantly wanders in and out of sin and worldliness (James 1:8). A brokenhanded man cannot hold a knife, censer, bread, sacrifices, etc. A brokenhanded believer does not hold fast to the profession of the faith (Heb. 10:23) or the Word of God (II Tim. 1:13).
7. A man with broken stones (vs. 20). A man with broken stones cannot physically reproduce. A NT priest with broken stones is someone who does not spiritually reproduce, i.e. make disciples (II Peter 1:8).

Please understand that if you have any of these blemishes, it doesn't mean that you have lost your salvation; you are still a son of the High Priest by birth. However, it does mean that you have sinful blemishes in your life that need to be repented of and corrected. Otherwise, you are a hypocrite when you offer the Word of God to the lost world. Remember that Jesus healed the lame, the blind, the deformed, etc. and He is willing and able to do the same for you.

CHRIST IS REVEALED:

As our PERFECTLY SPOTLESS HIGH PRIEST –Lev. 21:16-23 (Heb. 8:1). As the UNREVEALED REALITY of the eternal feasts of Israel –Lev. 23:2,21,42 (Col. 2:16,17).

Saturday – February 11, 2017

Reflection

We have nearly made it through this book of Leviticus; this book of laws for offerings, purifications, cleansings, feasts and atonement. As we have read through this Book, we should be able to acknowledge the fact that we have so very much to be thankful to God for. Through perhaps gaining a better understanding of what this Book entails, and furthermore reveals, our Lord Jesus Christ should be made that much more incredible in the sacrifice He offered as He “thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” (Philippians 2:6-8). Let’s all be reminded that His plan was not necessarily to bring us to Heaven when we die, but rather to make us holy while we are here. For remember, “God is light, and in him is no darkness at all” (1 John 1:5). Therefore, it is impossible for God to dwell with darkness, or unholiness, for He is light. That being said, for us to have the relationship we can have with God Almighty, it takes the blood of a spotless Lamb. It took “the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God,” therefore purging “your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?” (Hebrews 9:14) Let’s be reminded today of 1 Peter 2:9-12 “But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy. Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.” Because God loved us, and set us apart (sanctified) for His eternal purpose, our lives should be reflective of exactly that which Jesus Christ Himself exemplified in coming to this earth: a living sacrifice.

In reflecting on all that we read and learned this week, perhaps some blemishes are realized that need to be removed. It is important to address these, if you haven’t already, by remembering that the word of God simply says, “Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee” (Acts 8:22). We can be encouraged that God has allowed all of us to be here, this very moment, for a purpose. Paul tells us in

Ephesians 4:17 that “henceforth (from this point forward) walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind”. We can all begin today in living the life God desires to see in all of us, the life of His “only begotten Son”. Because of the sacrifice He offered, it’s really the very least we all can do.

SCRIPTURE REFLECTION:

Leviticus 9:6 “And Moses said, This is the thing which the LORD commanded that ye should do: and the glory of the LORD shall appear unto you.”

Leviticus 11:45 “For I am the LORD that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy.

Leviticus 16:30 “For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the LORD.”

Leviticus 18:3 “After the doings of the land of Egypt, wherein ye dwelt, shall ye not do: and after the doings of the land of Canaan, whither I bring you, shall ye not do: neither shall ye walk in their ordinances.”

Leviticus 22:32-33 “Neither shall ye profane my holy name; but I will be hallowed among the children of Israel: I am the LORD which hallow you, That brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: I am the LORD.”