



DAILY
B I B L E G U I D E

The Book of Leviticus

Days 34-44 of a Yearly Bible Reading Program

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Daily Bible Reading Plan

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Day 34	Leviticus 1-4	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 35	Leviticus 5-7	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 36	Leviticus 8-10	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 37	Leviticus 11-12	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 38	Leviticus 13	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 39	Leviticus 14-15	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 40	Leviticus 16-18	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 41	Leviticus 19-21	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 42	Leviticus 22-23	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 43	Leviticus 24-25	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 44	Leviticus 26-27	<input type="checkbox"/>

Welcome to the Book of Leviticus!

The Book of Leviticus is filled with the various regulations and commands of the Law of Moses. Its name basically means “pertaining to Levi”, referring to the many directions that would be handled by the priests of the tribe of Levi. In these verses God directs His people how to live and worship in a holy manner.

A few quick facts about Leviticus:

- It was written by Moses while Israel was at Sinai in 1491 B.C.
- The key verse is 19:2.
- A simple outline:
 - Regulation of Worship - Chapters 1-16
 - Regulation of Life - Chapters 17-27

Chapter 1 Notes

In this chapter we see the directions for the Burnt Offering. A.C. Gaebelien writes: “Every part of it typifies Christ offering Himself completely to God; the sweet odor is unto God and it is for the believer’s acceptance in Him.”

vs. 2-3 – The Burnt Offering is a voluntary offering. There are many animals that could be offered, such as a bull, goat, sheep, dove, or pigeon. The major restriction is that they had to be male and without blemish.

vs. 4 – The placing of hands on the offering was a means of identifying with the sacrifice. The sacrifice was understood to be a substitute for the offerer.

vs. 5-13 – The basic formula is the same if it is livestock. The animal is slain and its blood sprinkled around the altar. The animal is dressed but not completely cut into pieces. The carcass is burned on the altar, and its entrails are washed with water before also being burned on the altar.

vs. 14-17 – Special directions are given for the sacrifice of a bird. The priest wrings the bird’s neck, and its blood is poured out by the altar. Some portions of the bird, including its feathers and crop, are discarded in the ashes of the altar and not burned. The bird is torn open but not apart and burned on the altar.

vs. 17 – Note the description of this sacrifice as a “sweet savour”. This was a sacrifice that pleased the Lord. It represents the positive side of redemption. God is not just satisfied but He is pleased through the offering.

Chapter 2 Notes

In this chapter we see the directions for the Meal Offering. These are generally given alongside other offerings and tend to be overlooked. They consist of flour and grain.

Gaebelein writes: “The meal offering is the type of Christ in His perfect humanity and holy, devoted character. It was not for atonement even as the holy humanity of Christ and devotedness of His life could not atone for sins. It is called “most holy” for in His humanity He was ‘that holy thing.’”

vs. 1-3 - In the case of offering flour, oil and frankincense are added to the sacrifice. A handful is burned on the altar as a “sweet savour”. The rest is given to the priests. This was part of God’s plan to sustain the priesthood.

vs. 4-10 – The cases of flour prepared into bread or cakes is much the same as raw flour.

vs. 11,13 – There is a prohibition against offering leaven or honey in the sacrifices that are burned on the altar. Leaven represents sin. Honey is thought to represent something similar in how it reacts in the bread making process, or possibly it could speak against adding artificial stimulant to the offering. There is also the added command in vs. 13 that salt must accompany these offerings.

vs. 12-16 – The offering of First Fruits will be covered in greater detail in Leviticus 23:9-14. It is a celebration of the harvest. These extra instructions are likely because honey and leaven could be part of the offering collected, see Deuteronomy 26:2,12; II Chronicles 31:5.

Chapter 3 Notes

In this chapter we see the directions for the Peace Offering. These are celebratory offerings. Gaebelien writes: "It typifies the gracious results accomplished for the sinner by the death of Christ. The blood is sprinkled upon the altar, which is for propitiation. Fellowship therefore results with praise and thanksgiving." We will see more of their purpose in Leviticus 7:11-34.

vs. 1-5 – First is the case of offering cattle. The offerer lays hands on them before they are slain and their blood sprinkled around the altar. Portions of the sacrifice are burned on the altar.

vs. 6-11 – Similar directions are given for a sheep thus offered.

vs. 12-16 – Similar directions are given for a goat thus offered.

vs. 17 – We will see this better in chapter 7, but much of the sacrifice was not burned on the altar. Most of its meat went to the offerer and some to the priests. That is the major feature of this sacrifice. When you see Peace Offerings being made know that they are having a celebratory feast. Still God reserved some of the sacrifices for Himself, including the fat and blood.

Chapter 4 Notes

In this chapter begins the directions for the Sin Offering. These deal with sin judicially, acknowledging the death penalty of sin and the restoration that comes after atonement is made.

vs. 1-2 – The Sin Offering is prescribed for sins that are committed ignorantly or unwittingly. These are separated from “presumptuous” sins, as seen in Psalm 19:12-13 and Hebrews 10:26-27. The key difference in these two classes is that the first cause the soul to repent and the second cause the soul to rebel. It helps illustrate that it is repentance and not the offering of a sacrifice that is the true catalyst for forgiveness or restoration.

vs. 3-12 – The first case is the offering made for the High Priest. It is to be a bull. The High Priest lays his hands on the head of the sacrifice and kills it. Its blood is sprinkled seven times before the veil inside the Tabernacle, placed on the horns of the Altar of Incense, and then the rest poured out at the base of the Brazen Altar. The fat and prescribed portions are burned on the Brazen Altar. The rest of the sacrifice is burned outside the camp where the ashes from the Brazen Altar are disposed of.

vs. 13-21 – The second case is the offering made for the nation of Israel. The method is the same as for the priest, except the elders lay their hands on the sacrifice and not the priest.

vs. 22-26 – The third case is the offering made for a ruler of the Israel. A young male goat is offered. The leader lays his hands on the sacrifice’s head and kills it. The priest places blood on the horns of the Brazen Altar and pours out the rest at its base. Fat and prescribed portions are burned on the Brazen Altar. The rest of the sacrifice is given to the priests to eat.

vs. 27-35 – The fourth case is the offering made for the common person. A young female goat or lamb is offered, and the procedures are otherwise the same as above for a leader.

Devotional Thoughts for Day 34

The role of sacrifices in the Old Testament is often misunderstood. There was never any saving power in the blood of these sacrifices (Hebrews 10:4). Those sacrifices were made in obedient faith to God. The Bible is clear that Abraham was saved by grace through faith, just as we are (Genesis 15:6, Romans 4:3). It is also clear that David was saved the same (Psalm 32:1-2, Romans 4:6-8). Isaiah clearly states that God is more in repentance than outward rituals (Isaiah 1:11-18). We could go on and examine many examples of this. The sacrifices were objects lessons that pointed to the Old Testament saints to Christ (Isaiah 53). Do not get distracted by all the details of the Law if you do not see how it reveals our sin and our Savior!

Hymn for Day 34

Our hymn today was written by Isaac Watts in 1709. It was first published in 1709 under the heading "Faith in Christ our Sacrifice". It looks beyond the sacrifices of the Old Testament to the precious blood of Christ that redeems us.

*Not all the Blood of Beasts,
On Jewish Altars slain,
Could give the guilty Conscience Peace.
Or wash away the Stain.*

*But Christ, the heav'nly Lamb,
Takes all our Sins away;
A sacrifice of nobler Name,
And richer Blood than they.*

*My Faith would lay her Hand
On that dear Head of thine,
While, like a Penitent I stand,
And there confess my Sin.*

*My Soul looks back to see
The Burthens thou didst bear
When hanging on the cursed Tree,
And hopes her Guilt was there.*

*Believing, we rejoice
To see the Curse remove;
We bless the Lamb with cheerful Voice,
And sing his bleeding Love.*

Chapter 5

In this chapter we continue with instructions on the Sin Offering and begin looking at the Trespass Offering.

vs. 1-4 – We have four circumstances given when a someone should offer a Sin Offering to God: withholding information (vs. 1), contacting unclean animal carcass (vs. 2), contacting unclean human discharge (vs. 3), and making rash oaths that prove untrue (vs. 4).

vs. 5 – Note that confession is required. This is evidence of repentance.

vs. 6-13 – Various options are given for this sacrifice to accommodate the ability of the offerer. It could be a lamb, goat, two doves, two pigeons, or 1 omer (~5 pints) of flour. The lamb or goat was offered as a Sin Offering. When two birds are used, one is for a Sin Offering and the one for a Burnt Offering. If flour, no oil or frankincense is added and it is offered as a Meat Offering.

vs. 14-19 – The Guilt Offering was to be made when someone had been defrauded. This could be failure to pay what was owed to God or man. Here it is the case where someone has failed to give God what He was due, such as in tithes. A ram is offered and restitution is paid with silver, adding an additional 20% to it.

Chapter 6

In this chapter we various directions for offerings and the priests.

vs. 1-6 – Here are the instructions for the Guilt Offering in the case of a person defrauding another person. A ram is offered and restitution is paid with silver, adding an additional 20% to it.

vs. 7-13 – The fire on the Brazen Altar was to be kept burning perpetually. When tending the fire, the priests were to wear their priestly garments to remove the ashes from the altar. They were to change into other clothes to remove the ashes and dump them outside the camp.

vs. 14-18 – When a Meat Offering was made, the priests were to burn only a handful on the altar. The rest was given to the priests to eat in the Tabernacle.

vs. 19-23 – A daily Meat Offering was to be made by the priests. It was to be made from 1/10 ephah (which is 1 omer = 5 pints) of flour mixed with oil and made into a loaf. Half was burned in the morning and half in the evening.

vs. 24-30 – When offering the Sin Offering the priests were allowed to eat their assigned portions of the sacrifice unless it was made on behalf of the priest or people (see 4:5-7 & 16-18 where these required applying blood in the Tabernacle). In vs. 27-28 are commands regarding the blood of the sacrifice contacting the priestly garments or earthen vessels. The garments were to be washed and the vessels broken. The idea seems to be that the garments could be cleansed from the blood, but the porous nature of pottery meant not all traces could be removed so it was destroyed lest the blood be defiled.

Chapter 7

In this chapter we see additional commands for the sacrifices we have already covered. Much of this focus is on what is done with portions of the sacrifice not consumed in fire.

vs. 1-7 – These are additional directions for the priests in offering the Trespass Offering we saw in 5:14-6:8.

vs. 8 – The skin of the sacrifice in a burnt offering was given to the priest.

vs. 9-10 – Regarding Meat Offerings, if they were baked, they were given to the priest who performed the sacrifice. If they were not baked, they were divided among the priests.

vs. 11-14 – In the case of Peace Offerings made in thanksgiving, the priest received whatever of the Meat Offerings he lifted as a heave offering.

vs. 15-21 – Here are various regulations for eating the meat of a Peace Offering. Remember that much of the meat was given back to the offerer. If it was offered in thanksgiving, it was to be eaten by the next morning. If it was offered voluntarily or in completion of a vow, it could be eaten on the second day also. On the third day whatever remained was to be burned. There was a sacredness to partaking in eating this sacrifice. Those ceremonially unclean were forbidden from taking part in it.

vs. 22-27 – The children of Israel were forbidden to eat two parts of any cattle, sheep, or goat. The reason is that God claimed the right to these. First was the fat of the animal. John Gill cites a rabbi when he writes “that which was not separated from the flesh, but mixed with it, might be eaten, but not that which was separated”. The second is the blood. This command is first seen in Genesis 9:4 and expanded on in Leviticus 17:10-16.

vs. 28-36 – Here it is established that the right shoulder and breast of sacrifices were to go to the priests.

vs. 37-38 – A summary to close this section on offerings.

Devotional Thoughts for Day 35

Admittedly, this section is a difficult section to read through. These opening chapters of Leviticus are filled with minute details of sacrifices that we are not bound to offer today. However, these are extremely important chapters as we move forward. I think it may actually be helpful to turn back to these chapters whenever we come across a sacrifice being offered. This helps you understand, for instance, the meaning of the Day of Atonement in chapter 16 and why the peace offerings made by Solomon at the dedication of the Temple in I Kings 8:62-66 tell us there was a festive atmosphere.

Hymn for Day 35

Our hymn text today is by Charles Wesley and generally titled by its first line, “My God, I Know, I Feel Thee Mine”, as was quite customary in the 18th century. We connect it to our reading today by the idea of fire on the altar burning always. This hymn is a rare one that keeps that picture of fire as judgment or refining, instead of it speaking poetically of passion within.

*My God! I know, I feel thee mine,
And will not quit my claim,
Till all I have is lost in thee,
And all renew'd I am.*

*I hold thee with a trembling hand,
But will not let thee go,
Till stedfastly by faith I stand,
And all thy goodness know.*

*Jesu, thine all-victorious love
Shed in my heart abroad!
Then shall my feet no longer rove,
Rooted and fix'd in God.*

*O that in me the sacred fire
Might now begin to glow!
Burn up the dross of base desire,
And make the mountains flow!*

*O that it now from heav'n might fall,
And all my sins consume:
Come, Holy Ghost, for thee I call,
Spirit of burning, come.*

*Refining fire, go through my heart,
Illuminate my soul;
Scatter thy life through ev'ry part,
And sanctify the whole.*

*Sorrow and sin shall then expire,
While enter'd into rest,
I only live my God t' admire,
My God for ever blest.*

*My stedfast soul, from falling free,
Shall then no longer move;
But Christ be all the world to me,
And all my heart be love.*

Chapter 7

Chapter 8

In this chapter we see the consecration of Aaron and the priesthood. This chapter parallels the commandments for the occasion found in Exodus 29.

vs. 1-5 – The nation is gathered to witness the consecration of the priesthood, and the required items are gathered – Exodus 29:1-3

vs. 6 – The priests are ceremonially cleansed with water – Exodus 29:4

vs. 7-9 – Aaron is clothed with the uniform of the High Priest – Exodus 29:5-6

vs. 10-11 – Moses takes the anointing oil and places it on the implements and furniture of the Tabernacle – Exodus 30:26-29

vs. 12 – Aaron is anointed – Exodus 29:7, 30:30

vs. 13 – The other priests are dressed in their uniforms – Exodus 29:8-9

vs. 14-17 – Moses offers the bull as a sin offering for the priests – Exodus 29:10-14

vs. 18-21 – The first ram is offered as a burnt offering – Exodus 29:15-18

vs. 22-30 – The second ram is offered as a burnt offering. Its blood is placed on each priests' ear, thumb, and toe. The parts of the ram that God had claimed (fat, kidneys, etc.) are put with two cakes of bread and one wafer and these are all burned on the altar. The blood of the ram is mixed with anointing oil and sprinkled on the priests. – Exodus 29:19-25

vs. 31-32 – The meat of the ram is eaten by the priests – Exodus 29:26-34

vs. 33-36 – This ceremony is repeated for seven days – Exodus 29:35-37

Chapter 9

In this chapter we God's confirmation of His acceptance of Aaron as High Priest.

vs. 1 – This takes place on the eighth day following the seven-day consecration ceremony.

vs. 2-6 – The sacrifices are prepared and the people gather.

vs. 7 - Aaron is commanded to perform his first sacrifice as High Priest.

vs. 8-11 – Aaron offers a calf as a sin offering for himself.

vs. 12-14 – Aaron offers a ram as a burnt offering.

vs. 15-22 – Aaron offers the sacrifices for the people.

vs. 23-24 – God signals his acceptance by sending a burst of flame to immediately consume the sacrifices on the altar.

Chapter 10

In this chapter we see the swift punishment for the unfaithfulness of Aaron's sons Nadab and Abihu.

vs. 1 – Nadab means “liberal or generous” and Abihu means “God is my father”. Their sin was in not obeying the prescribed ordinances for coming before the presence of God in the Tabernacle. They had gone inside to offer incense on the golden altar before the veil. The issue seems to be that they did not use coals and fire from the brazen altar, but rather common fire from the camp – see 16:12.

vs. 2-3 – God is swift in judging these men that failed to honor His holiness. Jewish tradition is that this happened the same day as the previous chapter.

vs. 4-5 – The bodies of the two men are treated as refuse and carried outside the camp.

vs. 6-7 – The surviving sons, Eleazar and Ithamar, are commanded not to mourn for their brothers and remain in the Tabernacle.

vs. 8-11 – We must wonder here if alcohol played a role in the poor decisions of Nadab and Abihu. Priests were forbidden to drink wine when they served in the Tabernacle so that their minds stayed clear.

vs. 12-15 – Aaron and his surviving sons are commanded to continue their work and eat the portions allotted to them.

vs. 16-20 – The chapter ends with an event on the same day where Eleazar and Ithamar did not eat from a sacrifice they should have, instead burning it completely on the altar. Moses confronts them and Aaron responds that it was simply not proper to expect them to do so after the events of the day.

Devotional Thoughts for Day 36

It is noteworthy that at every turn humanity fails. We truly fall short of the glory of God in every aspect, even when we serve Him. A.C. Gaebelien comments on the failures of the priesthood right at its onset: “The earthly priesthood has failure stamped upon it.” From the very beginning the need is present of the True High Priest, Jesus Christ. See Hebrews 4:14-16 for example.

Hymn for Day 36

Our hymn today, “Aaron a type of Christ”, was written by John Newton and I think it was first published in 1799. It starts by describing Aaron but then shifts to the greater priest, Christ.

*See Aaron, God's anointed priest,
Within the veil appear,
In robes of mystic meaning dressed,
Presenting Israel's prayer.*

*The plate of gold which crowns his brows,
His holiness describes;
His breast displays in shining rows,
The names of all the tribes.*

*With the atoning blood he stands
Before the mercy-seat,
And clouds of incense from his hands
Arise with odor sweet.*

*Through him, the eye of faith decries
A greater priest than he:
Thus Jesus pleads above the skies,
For you, my friends, and me.*

*He bears the names of all his saints,
Deep on his heart engraved;
Attentive to the state and wants
of all his love has saved.*

*In him a holiness complete,
Light and perfections shine,
And wisdom, grace, and glory meet;
A Savior all divine.*

Chapter 11

In this chapter we see the dietary restrictions God placed on the Jews. F.B. Meyer writes about these:

“There were good and sufficient reasons for excluding certain animals from Israel’s dietary. Devout medical men insist that this is the finest sanitary code in existence, and that many of the diseases of modern life would disappear if it were universally adopted. God made these distinctions matters of religion, that the well-being of His people might be doubly assured. These restrictions were also imposed to erect strong barriers between the chosen people and the heathen. So long as they obeyed, it was clearly impossible to participate in the heathen festivals, where many of these animals were partaken of.

“We are not now bound by these enactments. Our Lord made all meats clean... Peter was bidden to kill and eat all manner of creeping things, and his protest was overborne by the assurance that God had cleansed all. See Acts 10:11-16. Religion consists not in outward rites, but in the inward temper. See Hebrews 9:10. Note that touching was forbidden, because the least contact with evil hurts the soul.”

I also want to note that there is some debate as to the particular species mentioned. We are for more scientific in our classifications than the Ancient Jews were, so sometimes it is difficult to determine exactly the animal referred to because of shifts in language over the centuries.

vs. 1-8 – Animals that both chew cud (ruminates) and have cloven hooves (ungulates) are pronounced clean.

vs. 9-12 – Fish that have both scales and fins are pronounced clean.

vs. 13-20 – Various birds are pronounced as unclean. The common characteristic is that they eat other animals. vs. 20 is often said to refer to insects but really it is speaking of flying animals such as bats that have claws on their wings and can maneuver with them like legs.

vs. 21-23 – An exception in the rule against animals that fly and go on four legs is given for leaping insects like the locust.

vs. 24-28 – Contacting the carcass of on an unclean animal renders a person unclean.

vs. 29-30 – Various rodents and reptiles are pronounced unclean.

vs. 31-40 – Various regulations regarding contact with unclean animals. These are practical and make sense when you consider the nasty bacteria and viruses such animals carry.

vs. 41-43 – Various snakes, amphibians, reptiles, and insects are pronounced unclean.

vs. 44-47 – While we may focus with our modern minds on the health implications of these regulations, God has a deeper purpose in them. They are object lessons. He wants His people to reflect His holiness. This means separation from things evil or dirty. This applies in the physical world as it does in the moral or spiritual.

Chapter 12

In this chapter we have the purification rituals following childbirth.

vs. 1-4 – A mother that gives birth to a son is considered unclean for 7 days. The son is then circumcised on the eighth day, which she is able to witness. She is then considered ceremonially unclean for worship purposes only for another 33 days, making a total of 40 days. This allows her body to heal.

vs. 5 – In the case of a daughter, the mother is considered unclean for 14 days, then ceremonially unclean for worship purposes only for another 66 days, making 80 days total. Various explanations are offered for why this is double that of a son. Some link it to Eden and the Curse. Others say that the boy's circumcision perhaps makes up for the extra time. I am unaware of any medical reason this would be necessary.

vs. 6-8 – After the prescribed time of uncleanness and impurity, the mother is to make an offering. It is to be a lamb and a turtle dove or pigeon if these can be afforded, but in cases of poverty two turtle doves or pigeons are acceptable. We note this is the case of Mary and Joseph in Luke 2:24.

Devotional Thoughts for Day 37

When we hit chapters such as these today, we often want to ask, “What in the world does this mean for me?!?” It is a good question. Practically speaking, they mean very little to us because we are not bound to follow them as the Ancient Jews were. I would add there is much wisdom behind them and God set them for good reasons. So, for instance, I think the healthiest diet we could follow is what is spelled out here.

If there is anything to be gleaned from these for us, it should be through the lens of the final verses of chapter 11. The regulations are reflections of God's holiness. Reverence for God's holiness in Bible times extended into what we might consider secular areas that have no bearing on the spiritual. But the Bible makes all things spiritual. We would do well to return to this mindset. We do not need legalism, but we do need a return to personal holiness.

Hymn for Day 38

Our hymn today, “Take My Life And Let It Be”, written by Frances Havergal in 1874, takes up the call to serve a holy God in holiness. It is a prayer of surrender that our all may be wholly God’s.

*Take my life and let it be
Consecrated, Lord, to Thee;
Take my hands and let them move
At the impulse of Thy love.*

*Take my feet and let them be
Swift and beautiful for Thee;
Take my voice and let me sing,
Always, only for my King.*

*Take my lips and let them be
Filled with messages from Thee;
Take my silver and my gold,
Not a mite would I withhold.*

*Take my moments and my days,
Let them flow in endless praise;
Take my intellect and use
Every pow’r as Thou shalt choose.*

*Take my will and make it Thine,
It shall be no longer mine;
Take my heart, it is Thine own,
It shall be Thy royal throne.*

*Take my love, my Lord, I pour
At Thy feet its treasure store;
Take myself and I will be
Ever, only, all for Thee.*

Chapter 13

In this chapter we see the regulations regarding leprosy. Leprosy is an infectious disease caused by bacteria that causes the body to basically rot. I will quote B.H. Carroll to introduce the topic:

“Now we come to the case of leprosy. Why was leprosy and no other form of sickness selected? The commentaries discuss much whether the leprosy of Leviticus is the leprosy of modern times as we understand it. I say to you that it is. I have not time to prove it, but you may just take my assurance that when Leviticus says leprosy it means leprosy in its most loathsome form. Why, now, was leprosy put along beside the bodies of dead men? Simply because one declared to be leprous was as one dead. It was a living death. As it progressed and disfigured the body, it would eat away the nose and the different parts of the body. In other words, -the soul was confined in the charnel house of corruption. He must be segregated, he must hide himself, must not allow other people to come near him. The law commanded him to cover his upper lip, and when he saw any one coming toward him he must cry out, ‘Unclean, unclean, unclean!’ Therefore we find leprosy selected both in the Old and the New Testaments as expressive of sin, and the healing of leprosy as the exercise of the power of God. Medicine cannot cure leprosy when it gets to a certain stage.”

I will caution that the technical aspects are difficult to discern in light of modern medicine. We understand so much more today about such things as viruses and bacteria. Focus instead on the religious and symbolic picture of sin.

vs. 1-2 – Step one in the diagnosis is that a suspected case of leprosy is brought to the priests to examine.

vs. 3 – This is the sign they are to look for that the infection is leprosy. It affects the color of the hair and goes deeper than the skin. This diagnosis may be made over time watching the development of the infection.

vs. 4-8 – Suspected cases of leprosy are quarantined and watched for 2 one-week periods. The development of the infection is monitored to see if it spreads and worsens.

vs. 9-11 – In this case we find someone with an obvious infection of leprosy. They are not quarantined but immediately pronounced unclean.

vs. 12-17 – In this case we see someone how has had leprosy and is scarred by it. Flesh that is raw and reddened indicated active infection. Whitened flesh meant that the infection had already run its course. Thus, someone could survive the rampage of leprosy in their body and be restored to normal life and pronounced clean. This was extremely rare.

vs. 18-23 – Here is the diagnosis of leprosy from a sore or boil. Such a wound might allow the bacteria to enter the body and cause leprosy. It could show leprosy immediately or be re-evaluated after a seven-day quarantine. Depending on its development it may be diagnosed as leprosy or a plague, or if it did not spread it could be diagnosed as just a sore and the person declared to be clean.

vs. 24-28 – Here is the diagnosis of leprosy from a burn wound, another way the bacteria could perhaps enter the body. It could show leprosy immediately or be re-evaluated after a seven-day quarantine. Depending on its development it may be diagnosed as leprosy, or if it did not spread it could be diagnosed as just a sore and the person declared to be clean.

vs. 29-37 – Here is the diagnosis of leprosy that is hidden under the thick hair on a person's head. The priest watched for discolored hair and spread of the scab. Again, we see 2 one-week quarantines used. After the first the person's head was shaved except for the infected area. At the end of the second the scab was judged to see it had spread or caused hair to be discolored.

vs. 38-39 – These verses show that natural features such as freckles or birthmarks are not to be confused with leprosy.

vs. 40-44 – Even bald men are not immune!

vs. 45-46 – Lepers were expected to clearly display their state. Their clothes are to be torn as if in mourning. They were to keep their head uncovered so as not to hide their condition. They were to cover their mouth when around healthy people to prevent the spread of leprosy. They had to cry out and identify themselves as unclean to prevent others from contacting them. They were forced to live outside of normal civilization, often settling with others in leper colonies. It is a lonely and miserable condition to be in, a living death.

vs. 47-59 – The final section deals with handling the clothes worn by someone that may have leprosy. If it was leprosy, the garments had to be burned to prevent spread. If it was a lesser infection, it may be washed out or cut out of the garment. It did not matter what the material was or where the contact was made.

Devotional Thoughts for Day 38

I borrowed the reading schedule we have been using from The Sword of the Lord. It varies somewhat from the standard “three chapters a day” model that will get you through the Bible in one year. Some days there are more chapters assigned and some less, which I think is based on the number of verses in the chapters. Today, it has only given us one chapter, but it is 59 verses that are not the easiest reading. I think we all appreciate the attempt to ease our reading today!

Leprosy is a picture of sin. Those that caught it were walking dead men in the eyes of society. There was no more feared diagnosis in ancient times than this. If we want to see how repulsive, putrid, and repugnant sin is to God, look at the picture here. Sin is a serious business. It carries a death penalty (Romans 6:23). It starts small but spreads and grows. It spreads from person to person, infecting all of humanity. Thank God that we have hope in Christ who can thoroughly cleanse us from sin!

Hymn for Day 38

Our hymn today, published under the heading of “A Leaper Healed”, was written by John Newton and based on the story of the healed leper in Matthew 8:1-4. It beautifully links the pictures of leprosy as sin and healing as salvation, making it a personal story.

*Oft as the leper's case I read,
My own described I feel;
Sin is a leprosy indeed,
Which none but Christ can heal.*

*Awhile I would have passed for well,
And strove my spots to hide;
Till it broke out incurable,
Too plain to be denied.*

*Then from the saints I sought to flee,
And dreaded to be seen;
I thought they all would point at me,
And cry, "Unclean, unclean!"*

*What anguish did my soul endure,
Till hope and patience ceased?
The more I strove myself to cure,
The more the plague increased.*

*While thus I lay distressed, I saw
The Savior passing by;
To Him, though filled with shame and awe,
I raised my mournful cry.*

*"Lord, Thou canst heal me if Thou wilt,
For Thou canst all things do;
O cleanse my leprous soul from guilt,
My filthy heart renew!"*

*He heard, and with a gracious look,
Pronounced the healing word,
"I will, be clean." And while He spoke
I felt my health restored.*

*Come lepers, seize the present hour,
The Savior's grace to prove;
He can relieve, for He is power,
He will, for He is love.*

Chapter 14

In this chapter we see the directions for the ceremonial cleansing of a leper who has been healed.

vs. 1-3 – The priest goes to the leper outside the camp to verify that he has been cleansed.

vs. 4-7 – Since the leper cannot come to the Tabernacle, the sacrifice must begin where he has been exiled outside the camp. Two birds are used. The first is killed in a vessel to catch its blood while held above running water. The living bird and the bundled wood, scarlet, and hyssop are dipped in the blood of the slain bird. The former leper is sprinkled seven times with the bundle, and the living bird is set free.

vs. 8-9 – The former leper cleanses himself by washing his clothes and himself. He shaves the hair from his body. He stays outside the camp for 7 days and then repeats the cleansing and shaving.

vs. 10 – The leper is now able to reenter society. He takes two males lambs, one ewe lamb, 3 omers (6 quarts) of flour mingled with oil, and one log ($\frac{1}{2}$ pint) of oil. J. Vernon McGee notes: “There are all the offerings which the average Israelite would normally make in his lifetime. It indicated the full acceptance of the cleansed leper.”

vs. 11-20 – The male lambs are offered as a trespass offering and a sin offering. The female lamb is offered as a burnt offering. The blood of the trespass offering is put on the right ear, thumb, and big toe. The oil is sprinkled seven times before the Lord. The oil is also placed on the ear, thumb, and big toe and the remainder poured on the man’s head.

vs. 21-32 – An alternative offering is allowed in the case of poverty. Two turtledoves are substituted for lambs in the sin offering and burnt offering and only 1 omer (5 pints) of meal is used.

vs. 33-38 – Here begins instructions for dealing with a house that has become tainted with leprosy. Leprosy is caused by bacteria, which was unknown at this time. The prescription here sounds to me like it would cover things like bacteria or mold. The first thing that is done is the house is cleared out and examined. The house is shut up for seven days and then reevaluated.

vs. 39-42 – If it is determined to be leprosy, the tainted materials are removed and rebuilt. The plaster in the house is removed and new plaster applied.

vs. 43-45 – If the leprosy returns, the house is to be destroyed.

vs. 46-47 – Various directions made for those that enter the unclean house.

vs. 48-53 – The sacrifice made for a cleansed house is the same as for a cleansed leper. One bird is slain, another dipped in its blood and released, and the blood is sprinkled seven times on the house.

vs. 54 – The closing emphasizes the importance of these regulations.

Chapter 15

In this chapter we deal with some issues regarding bodily emissions. The Bible is franker on such subjects than many Christians are comfortable. If you want a bit more information on the contents of this chapter, I recommend starting with <https://www.gotquestions.org/bodily-discharge.html>

vs. 2-12 – Here is dealt with the case of man with an infection that is either sexually transmitted or of the urinary tract. This infection causes him to emit bodily fluids. Many precautions are taken to stop its spread, much of which is washing or waiting.

vs. 13-15 – In the case above, the man waits a week, bathes himself, washes his clothes, and offers two birds as offerings.

vs. 16-18 – Here is dealt with the case of a man's sexual discharge. It is not dealt with as a bad thing but requires bathing and being unclean until the evening. Some try to make this only about such cases involving sexually transmitted diseases, but the language does not seem to allow it.

vs. 19-24 – Here is dealt with the case of a woman's menstrual discharge.

vs. 25-30 – Here is dealt with the case of a woman with abnormal discharge. There is a prescribed sacrifice to be made once the woman is made well. We are reminded of the woman Christ healed in Luke 8:43-48).

vs. 31-33 – The closing emphasizes the importance of these regulations.

Devotional Thoughts for Day 39

I will close with a quote from James M. Gray concerning these chapters:

“Of course, one reason for the enunciation of these laws concerned the health and the morals of the people, and to this day, notwithstanding their imperfect obedience thereto, the Hebrews remain the healthiest and most moral of all races. But a broader reason points to the design of God to keep the nation separate from every other (20:25, 26). This applies to all the laws of this book, and has a bearing on what was said in an earlier lesson as to God's purposes in calling Israel to be His special people. They were to be peculiar for the world's sake, as a source of blessing to the whole earth. Nor should it be overlooked that there is a deep spiritual and special significance to many, if not all, of these distinctions and prohibitions. Of those concerning leprosy is this particularly so. It is a striking representation of sin, and will well repay a careful study as the basis of a Bible reading on that subject.

“Amid so many things to be specifically noticed, it is difficult to distinguish. But notice the allusion to these laws in Acts 10:11-16, and see how God raises the thoughts of the apostle, and through him the whole church, far above their Levitical application. See how he teaches that the true cleanness these things typified, was that accomplished through being washed in the blood of the Lamb.”

Hymn for Day 39

Our hymn today is another one that was difficult to pick out because there just are not many (if any...) hymns written on these two chapters. I am not saying that is a bad thing. So, I have chosen another hymn celebrating the cleansing of the leper and linking it to salvation in Christ. It comes from a Lutheran songbook from the early 1800's.

*The leper in his painful case
Trusts to the Saviour's pow'r and grace;
He soon was made to feel, and know
What Jesus by his word could do.*

*The pain and anguish he did feel,
Which none on all the earth could heal;
Was soon remov'd, and done away:
Soon as to Jesus he did pray.*

*When my whole state of mind I view,
I find I am a Leper too;
A Leper of the vilest kind,
And no relief or cure I find.*

*I am defil'd in ev'ry part,
And pain and anguish fills my heart:
My very soul is fill'd with sin
And I must cry, unclean, unclean.*

*But as my Saviour passes by,
Then like the Leper I will cry:
Lord! thou can'st cure me if thou wilt!
O! cleanse my soul from sin and guilt.*

*My great Physician Christ shall be
To cleanse my soul, and set me free,
And I shall know his love and pow'r,
And praise and thank him ever more.*

Chapter 16

In this chapter are the directions for the Day of Atonement. I would advise special attention to this chapter as it contains some of the most powerful imagery of Christ's sacrifice and our salvation.

vs. 1-2 – I do not think that this special day came only because of the sin of Nadab and Abihu, but that tragedy led to its revelation. God is holy and must be approached carefully on His terms.

vs. 3-5 – The preparations for the day. The high priest acts alone on this day. He is dressed in the white uniform of a common priest as he begins. There are a bull and two rams prepared for sacrifice.

vs. 6 – The high priest must first atone for his own sins before he can minister on behalf of the people.

vs. 7-10 – Lots are cast to determine the use of the rams. One will be a sin offering for the people. The other, one of the unique features of this day, is the scape goat and will be released into the wilderness.

vs. 11-14 – The blood of the bull is taken into the Tabernacle. The high priest burns incense which produces a cloud of smoke before the vail. He goes beyond the vail – something done only on this day – and sprinkles the blood of the bull on the Mercy Seat as an atonement for his own sins.

vs. 15-16 – The process is repeated with the blood of the ram that was offered as a sin offering. This was to provide atonement for the sins of the people.

vs. 17 – The High Priest acts alone on this day. This is a wonderful picture of how Christ alone provides our salvation.

vs. 18-19 – The blood of the bull and goat are combined, placed on the horns of the Golden Altar of Incense within the Tabernacle, and then sprinkled seven times upon it.

vs. 20-22 – The High Priest ceremonially places the sins of the people on the scape goat. It is then taken and released in the wilderness. In the sin offering, the blood pictures the atonement or covering of sin. In the scape goat is pictured the removal or forgetting of sin.

vs. 23-25 – The High Priest bathes in the Tabernacle and puts on his usual uniform. He exits and burns the fat of the sin offering on the Brazen Altar.

vs. 26 – The man who handled the scape goat is unclean and must wash before returning to camp.

vs. 27-28 – The carcasses of the bull and ram that were sacrificed are burned outside the camp. This is not a sacrifice, but a removal of something unclean. We see this in how the man who burns the carcasses must also bathe himself. See Hebrews 13:11-12 for how this ties to Christ.

vs. 29-34 – The Day of Atonement, called Yom Kippur, takes place yearly on the tenth day of the seventh month. It is a Sabbath day but not a joyous celebration. It was a day for deep introspection on the guilt of man and the need for a Savior.

Chapter 17

In this chapter we deal with regulations concerning the butchering of animals for food and consuming blood. There are many reasons for these, including prevention of idolatry and cleanliness. We find in Acts 15 that these principles were still considered relevant in early Christianity, certainly for the same reasons they were implemented.

vs. 1-9 – We must consider the setting for these commands. The nation of Israel was in the wilderness and God provided them manna. Slaughtering animals for food was not very common. Most likely it was only done for a feast or celebration. While Israel was camped before entering the Promised Land, any animals that were slaughtered for food were required to be brought to the Tabernacle to ensure they were properly handled. A major reason for this is to prevent pagan or alternative sacrifices. They were to serve one God in one way. Another reason is to make sure they are not eating the blood which comes in the next section. Those who refused to follow these rules were to be outcasts. Again, this was only for their sojourn in the wilderness and did not carry on into the Promised Land.

vs. 10-12 – The blood was to be considered sacred. It represented life itself and God put a special claim to it. Even today the kosher rules followed by the Jews have to have their meat specially butchered and prepared to remove as much blood as possible.

vs. 13 – Briefly stated is the case of hunting wild animals for food. These were not used for sacrifices and were not required to be brought to the Tabernacle. The blood still had to be removed.

vs. 14 – This verse links to vs. 10-12.

vs. 15-16 – Two cases are presented where the blood had not been properly removed from the carcass. First, an animal that died on its own, whose blood would have coagulated. Second, an animal that was attacked by wild beasts but not yet dead. This was also covered in Exodus 22:31.

Chapter 18

In this chapter we deal with holiness in sexual relations.

vs. 1-5 – God knew the perversion that was in Egypt and Canaan. Archaeologists testify to the unspeakable debauchery that occurred in these ancient cultures. God desired His people to be different, to be holy in their actions. This includes sexual relations.

vs. 6-13 – To “uncover nakedness” is to have sexual relations with someone. God’s intention is for sex to be confined between a husband and a wife – a faithful, monogamous relationship. But even these relations needed to have guidelines, as we even see in the church at Corinth in I Corinthians 5:1. Relations with someone of near kinship are forbidden. I think God knows the wickedness of man’s hearts and is careful to spell out as many situations as possible in this passage.

vs. 14-17 – Here are forbidden relations with close relations not of blood.

vs. 18-23 – Various other restrictions are given, including bestiality and homosexuality. In vs. 21 we have a command to not offer infants as sacrifices, a very common practice in that world.

vs. 24-30 – God acknowledges the wickedness of the pagan nations and calls for His people to be holy. There are grave consequences pronounced if they do not follow these commands.

Devotional Thoughts for Day 40

The Day of Atonement is one of my favorite topics to study. The rabbis called it “The Day” or “The Great Day”. Once a year, the High Priest went beyond the veil and entered the Most Holy Place. There he stood before the Ark of the Covenant amid the smoke of the burning incense. He sprinkled the shed blood on the Mercy Seat to be a covering for the sins of the nation. Symbolically, it that blood blotted out sin and restored the broken relationship between a Holy God and sinful man. “At-one” is the way to remember this, and surprisingly exactly how the English word came to be according the etymologists. This is the reconciliation that comes through Christ, as Paul writes in Romans 5:10.

Hymn for Day 40

Our hymn today, “Faith in Christ Our Sacrifice”, was written by Isaac Watts in 1709. It reminds us that the sacrifices, such as we see on the Day of Atonement, are mere shadows of Christ’s death and resurrection.

*Not all the blood of beasts
on Jewish altars slain
could give the guilty conscience peace
or wash away the stain.*

*But Christ, the heav'nly Lamb,
takes all our sins away;
a Sacrifice of nobler name
and richer blood than they.*

*My faith would lay her hand
on that dear head of Thine,
while like a penitent I stand,
and there confess my sin.*

*My soul looks back to see
the burden Thou didst bear
when hanging on the cursed tree;
I know my guilt was there.*

*Believing, we rejoice
to see the curse remove;
we bless the Lamb with cheerful voice
and sing His bleeding love.*

Chapter 19

This chapter contains various regulations.

vs. 1-2 – This introduces the reason for this chapter. The nation of Isarel was supposed to represent the holiness of the God they served. What follows is practical expressions of this holiness in life.

vs. 3 – The Fifth Commandment, see Exodus 20:12

vs. 4 – The Second Commandment, see Exodus 20:4-6

vs. 5-8 – The Peace Offering is discussed in Leviticus 3 and 7:11-21

vs. 9-10 – Here is provision made for the poor of the land. Some of the harvest is purposefully left that they may glean from it. This is famously seen in the Book of Ruth.

vs. 11-14 – The Fourth, Eighth, and Ninth Commandments, see Exodus 20:7, 15-16

vs. 15-16 – Protections are made for the handicapped and the poor.

vs. 17-18 – Here is the deeper Law that Christ speaks of in the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5:21-26, 43-48.

vs. 19 – A.C. Gaebelin writes: “In verse 19 the raising of hybrid animals is forbidden. Anything ‘mingled’ God despises. His people are to avoid this, even in the smallest things.”

vs. 20-22 – This is not permission for the abuse of enslaved women. This is the punishment for the crime.

vs. 23-25 – The direction here is for newly planted fruit trees. The first three years the buds are to be removed (“circumcised”). This is a common practice with fruit trees to help them mature and eventually produce more fruit. The fourth year is counted as the “first fruits” and given to the Lord. The fifth year the fruit is to be eaten by the people.

vs. 26 – The eating of blood is linked thematically to soothsaying and divination. This amplifies God’s hatred of both.

vs. 27-29 – These verses, like the one preceding, are directed at pagan customs in Canaan that God did not want His people to adopt.

vs. 30-31 – Separation is both from evil and to God. Both sides are seen here. The Jews were to keep the sabbaths and revere the Tabernacle but were supposed to shun divination and pagan rituals.

vs. 32 – God commands us to honor the aged among us.

vs. 33-34 – The Israelites were to have learned by the injustices done to them in Egypt to show kindness on outsiders that dwelt in the land with them.

vs. 35-37 – The chapter closes with commands to be fair and just in business dealings and to obey all the commands God had given them.

Chapter 20

In this chapter we see punishments attached to the restrictions God has been pronouncing.

vs. 1-5 – God condemns child sacrifice in the most severe terms. If the people did not punish the perpetrators, God says He will step in and see that justice is performed. A sobering thought.

vs. 6 – Another prohibition against witchcraft.

vs. 9 – Note that this verse is linked in seriousness to child sacrifice and witchcraft. This is not referring to someone saying something in anger a time or two. This is the case of someone who does the opposite of 19:3. They fail to love and honor, instead they hate and despise.

vs. 10-21 – Various death penalties are pronounced for various sexual sins. There are various phrases to describe the death penalty: put to death, cut off, and die childless.

vs. 22-26 – Again God emphasizes that His chosen people, the Jews, were to be a holy people reflecting their holy God.

vs. 27 – The death penalty is pronounced against practitioners of witchcraft.

Chapter 21

In this chapter we deal with holiness in the lives of the priesthood.

vs. 1-4 – Priests were not to defile themselves by contacting a dead body except for close relatives.

vs. 5 – These customs are supposed to be part of pagan mourning rituals.

vs. 7,9 – The wives and daughters of the priests were held to high standards.

vs. 10-15 – Additional regulations for the High Priest. They were to be protected from reproach.

vs. 16-24 – Priests with deformities were barred from service in the Tabernacle/Temple. In vs. 22 they are permitted to eat of the priests' portions.

Devotional Thoughts for Day 41

It is important to remember that we are not under the Law so these regulations are not necessarily for us. However, like the sacrifices and Temple, there is a deeper meaning behind them. We are seeing the morality of God on display. We may learn much about the holiness of God in the Law and discern many practical principles to live by.

Hymn for Day 41

Our hymn today, “Take Time To Be Holy”, was written by William D. Longstaff around 1882. Longstaff was converted after hearing a sermon on I Peter 1:16, “Be ye holy, for I am holy”, which is quoted from Leviticus. Years later he wrote these words which were put to music by George Stebbens. While we are not bound to follow the stipulations of the Mosaic Law, we too are called to be holy as our God is holy.

*Take time to be holy,
Speak oft with thy Lord;
Abide in Him always
And feed on His Word.
Make friends of God's children,
Help those who are weak;
Forgetting in nothing
His blessing to seek.*

*Take time to be holy,
The world rushes on;
Spend much time in secret
With Jesus alone.
By looking to Jesus
Like Him thou shalt be;
Thy friends in thy conduct
His likeness shall see.*

*Take time to be holy,
Let Him be thy guide,
And run not before Him
Whatever betide;
In joy or in sorrow
Still follow thy Lord,
And looking to Jesus,
Still trust in His Word.*

*Take time to be holy,
Be calm in thy soul;
Each thought and each motive
Beneath His control;
Thus led by His Spirit
To fountains of love,
Thou soon shalt be fitted
For service above.*

Chapter 22

This chapter contains various directions for the priesthood.

vs. 1-3 – The penalty for a priest ministering while ceremonially unclean was death.

vs. 4-7 – Various situations are dealt with that render the priest unclean temporarily but can be made clean.

vs. 8-9 – Again the sanctity of the priesthood is emphasized.

vs. 10-16 – Regulations concerning who could eat of the priest's portion taken from the sacrifices.

vs. 17-20 – Acceptable sacrifices for the freewill offerings, see 7:16.

vs. 21-25 – Acceptable sacrifices for the freewill offering made after a vow.

vs. 26-30 – Acceptable sacrifices for the peace offering and the eating of the portion given to the offerer.

vs. 31-33 – Again God exhorts His people to be holy.

Chapter 23

In this chapter the major feast days are outlined.

vs. 1-2 – Introduces the subject of the chapter.

vs. 3 – Israel was to observe the weekly sabbath rest on the seventh day of the week.

vs. 5 – The Feast of Passover. It was observed on the 14th day of the first month (called Abib in Exodus and later called Nisan). For more details on this feast, see Exodus 12; Numbers 9, 28:16-25

vs. 6-8 – The Feast of Unleavened Bread. It was observed for seven days following Passover (the 15th-21st of Abib/Nisan). For more details on this feast, see Exodus 12:15-20, Exodus 13:3-10, Exodus 34:18, Numbers 28:17-18, Deuteronomy 16:8.

vs. 9-14 – The Feast of Firstfruits. This is the least studied of all the feasts and this passage is the most information we have on it. It occurs “on the morrow after the sabbath”, which is usually thought to be the day following the second day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread (16th of Abib/Nisan). It is a celebration of the beginning of harvest. The main feature is the waving of a sheaf made of the Seven Species (see Deuteronomy 8:8 and 26:1-11).

vs. 15-22 – The Feast of Pentecost. This occurs on the 50th day after the Feast of Firstfruits. The modern Jewish calendar has it on the 6th of Sivan. It has many names: Pentecost (Greek for “fifty”), Shavuot (Hebrew for “weeks”), feast of weeks, feast of harvest, and day of firstfruits. It is associated with the wheat harvest and the giving of the Law. For more details on this feast, see Numbers 28:26-31.

vs. 23-25 – The Feast of Trumpets. This is on the 1st day of the seventh month, Tishri. It is the New Years Day in the Jewish calendar. Today it is called Rosh Hashanah. It is marked by sounding trumpets throughout the land to announce the new year. For more details on this feast, see Numbers 29:1-6.

vs. 26-32 – The Day of Atonement. It occurs on the 10th day of the seventh month, Tishri. It is marked by special sacrifices in the Tabernacle/Temple to atone for the sins of the priesthood and nation. For more details on this feast, see Leviticus 16, Numbers 29:7-11.

vs. 33-43 – The Feast of Tabernacles. Called Sukkot today. It lasted for seven days, beginning on the 15th day of Tishri. It is a celebration of the end of harvest. There are special offerings, but the most notable feature is that the Jews would dwell in temporary “booths” during the feast. For more details on this feast, see Numbers 29:12-40, Deuteronomy 17:13-17.

Devotional Thoughts for Day 42

For deeper study on the feast days, see my notes in the Tabernacle series at <https://www.baptistbasics.org/notes/#tabernacle>

I believe there is a prophetic outline in the order and meaning of the feast days. It starts with Passover, which corresponds with the Crucifixion and death of Christ. The Feasts of Unleavened Bread and of Firstfruits typify the results of Christ's resurrection, the removal of sin (pictured in the leaven) and the promise of life beyond death. The Feast of Weeks represents the current era, from Pentecost to the return of Christ. The Feast of Trumpets is the closing of the present era with Rapture of believers and the regathering of Israel. The Day of Atonement pictures the restoration of Israel at the end of the Tribulation. The Feast of Tabernacles pictures the glory of the Christ's Millennial Kingdom.

Hymn for Day 42

Our hymn today, "To Thee, O Lord," was written by W. Chatterton Dix in 1864. It is written a song of thanksgiving for God's provision in harvest with any eye toward Heaven were all the saints will be gathered in. I think it is a suitable hymn for today's reading because of the various feast days we covered that are associated with the harvest and God's blessing.

*To thee, O Lord, our hearts we raise
in hymns of adoration,
to thee bring sacrifice of praise
with shouts of exultation:
bright robes of gold the fields adorn,
the hills with joy are ringing,
the valleys stand so thick with corn
that even they are singing.*

*And now, on this our festal day,
thy bounteous hand confessing,
upon thine altar, Lord, we lay
the first-fruits of thy blessing:
by thee the hungry soul is fed
with gifts of grace supernal;
thou who dost give us earthly bread,
give us the bread eternal.*

*We bear the burden of the day,
and often toil seems dreary;
but labour ends with sunset ray,
and rest comes for the weary:
may we, the angel-reaping o'er,
stand at the last accepted,
Christ's golden sheaves for evermore
to garner bright elected.*

*O blessed is that land of God,
where saints abide for ever;
where golden fields spread far and broad,
where flows the crystal river:
the strains of all its holy throng
with ours today are blending;
thrice blessed is that harvest-song
which never hath an ending.*

Chapter 24

This chapter contains directions for the priests and a case of blasphemy.

vs. 1-4 – The people were to supply pure olive oil made from beating olives with a mortar. The High Priest would see that this oil was used for the Golden Candlestick in the Tabernacle/Temple, checking the state of the Candlestick every morning and evening.

vs. 5-9 – Here are the directions for the shewbread placed in the Tabernacle/Temple. There were twelve loaves to be made and placed in two stacks on the Table of Shewbread. Each loaf was made from 2 omers of flour, which is about a dry gallon. According to the rabbis, each loaf was 10 fingers (8 inches) x 5 fingers (4 inches) by 7 fingers (5.6 inches). New cakes were placed each Sabbath, and the old ones were eaten by the priests.

vs. 10-16 – Here is a real case and subsequent commandment regarding blasphemy. A man that was born to a Jewish woman, but whose father was an Egyptian, fought with an Israelite man and amidst their combat he blasphemed God. Blasphemy is defined as speaking evil against God. The penalty is pronounced as death, and the accusers were to solemnly attest to the guilt of the man.

vs. 17-22 – Further punishments are listed according to the *lex talionis*. Punishment was to match the crime.

vs. 23 – The execution of the blasphemer is performed.

Chapter 25

In this chapter are introduced the Sabbatical Year and the Year of Jubilee, along with various regulations regarding enslaved Israelites.

vs. 1-7 – Here is established the Sabbatical Year. Every seventh year the land was to be left fallow. More directions are later in this chapter and in Deuteronomy 15.

vs. 8-22 – Here is established the Year of Jubilee. Its name comes from the Hebrew word for ram, referring to the blowing of the shofar (ram's horn trumpet). This occurred every 50th year and was also a Sabbatical Year for the land. Various customs went along with this year, including the freeing of Jewish slaves and the return of plots of land to their original owner's family.

vs. 23 – Land transactions were not to be permanent. The families of Israel were to have their ancestral lands returned to them at some point, usually the Year of Jubilee. Because of this land was not truly to be sold, but rather “leased” until it was returned to its original owners.

vs. 24-25 – Here is the introduction of the kinsman redeemer. A near kinsman could buy back the land that was sold, returning it to the family earlier than the Year of Jubilee.

vs. 26-28 – Here is how land that was sold was to be returned in the Year of Jubilee.

vs. 29-30 – Houses in walled cities could only be bought back after one year, after that they became permanent property of the new owners and did not revert back during the Year of Jubilee.

vs. 31 – Houses outside of walled cities were subject to return to their ancestral owners at the Year of Jubilee.

vs. 32-34 – Because of the unique arrangement made for the Tribe of Levi to be spread throughout the other tribe, special regulations are given for their property. Houses in cities could be redeemed at any time and were to be returned in the Year of Jubilee. The fields surrounding the cities could not be sold.

vs. 35-38 – Special kindness and aid was to be given to fellow Israelites that fell into financial problems. Israelites could not charge each other for interest on loans.

vs. 39-43 – Israelites that are sold into slavery to other Israelites were to be treated as hired servants and not slaves.

vs. 44-46 – Slaves that were not Israelites were not subject to be released at the Year of Jubilee. They were held by their owners in perpetuity.

vs. 47-54 – Israelites that were sold into slave to non-Israelites could be redeemed by a kinsman at any point. They would then serve their new master until the Year of Jubilee.

Devotional Thoughts for Day 43

I think the Sabbatical Years and Year of Jubilee are two of the most amazing commands in the Law. The Sabbatical Year prevented the land from being overused. The Year of Jubilee helped families maintain their ancestral possessions in the land. They were also tests of faith in that God promised to supply enough food preceding them to last the year without a harvest. Rest and restoration are good both for the land and for man.

Hymn for Day 43

Our hymn today, “The Jubilee”, was written by Charles Wesley in 1750. It links the Year of Jubilee with the proclamation of the Gospel, tying together the shared pronouncement of freedom for the enslaved.

*Blow ye the trumpet, blow
The gladly solemn sound,
Let all the nations know,
To earth's remotest bound,
The year of jubilee is come;
Return ye ransom'd sinners, home.*

*Jesus, our great High Priest,
Hath full atonement made;
Ye weary spirits rest,
Ye mournful souls be glad:
The year of jubilee is come;
Return, ye ransom'd sinners, home.*

*Extol the Lamb of God.
The all-atoning Lamb;
Redemption in his blood,
Throughout the world proclaim,
The year of jubilee is come;
Return, ye ransom'd sinners, home.*

*Ye slaves of sin and hell,
Your liberty receive,
And safe in Jesus dwell,
And blest in Jesus live,
The year of jubilee is come;
Return, ye ransom'd sinners, home.*

*Ye, who have sold for nought
Your heritage above,
Shall have it back unbought,
The gift of Jesu's love,
The year of jubilee is come;
Return, ye ransom'd sinners, home.*

*The gospel-trumpet hear,
The news of heav'nly grace,
And sav'd from earth, appear
Before your Saviour's face.
The year of jubilee is come;
Return, ye ransom'd sinners, home.*

Chapter 26

This chapter tells the fates of Israel's faithfulness or lack thereof.

vs. 1 – This section opens with WHO the Israelites were to serve. Reiterates the First and Second Commandments.

vs. 2 – Now we see HOW the Israelites were to serve God.

vs. 3-13 – Here are the blessings bestowed if Israel would be faithful to God. Prosperity and peace would fill their land. God's presence would be among them.

vs. 14-39 – Here are the curses pronounced if Israel did not remain faithful. Famine, fear, and failure would fill the land. We will see these very things happen when we get into Judges and then throughout the kingdom period. God is holy and God is just. He cannot allow sin to go unpunished, even among the people He had chosen unto Himself.

vs. 40-45 – Here is the promise of restoration. Even if Israel were punished because of their sin and rebellion, God would restore them if they would but repent. We see this playout from Judges to the return after the Babylonian Captivity. God is just, God is holy, but God is also merciful and gracious to those that confess their sin and humble themselves before Him.

Chapter 29

In this chapter there are commands regarding vows made to the Lord. Vows were promises to God based on a condition. A common form of these would be “If God does _____ for me, in return I will _____.”

B.H. Carroll writes about this chapter: “It is really a treatise on persons, animals, houses, and lands vowed to God, and the commutation of these vows. You know that the word ‘commutation’ means, if you vow a certain house, you may substitute for that house a valuation that the priest will put upon it. That is a commutation of the vow, or taking an equivalent in the place of the vow. So that it consists of a treatise of persons, animals, houses) and lands vowed to God and the commutation of them.”

vs. 2-8 – Here are prescribed values that could be paid in cases where a vow promised to dedicate a person to the Lord.

vs. 9-13 – Here are instructions for valuing animals vowed to the Lord. To ensure the proper value is made there is 20% premium added to the valuation.

vs. 14-15 – Here are instructions for valuing a house vowed to the Lord. A 20% premium is added to the valuation.

vs. 16-24 – Here are instructions for valuing a field vowed to the Lord. The price was determined by the amount of barley seed it would take to sow it. This amount is then multiplied by the years remaining until the next Year of Jubilee, then a 20% premium added to that. If the original owner does not redeem it by Jubilee, it becomes property of the priesthood, and he loses the ability to redeem it.

vs. 25 – God knows mankind will try to find loopholes to get a better deal. It is declared that the standardized weight of the shekel at the Tabernacle was to be used in these transactions.

vs. 26-33 – The focus of this final section is regarding things that are already claimed by God, such as tithes and the firstborn animals. The firstborn clean animals were claimed by God in Exodus 13:2, 12-13 and could not be redeemed. Unclean animals could be redeemed at valuation plus 20%. Things already devoted could not be devoted again. Things condemned could not be devoted. The tithe of the increase could be redeemed at valuation plus 20% with no allowance for substitution or cherry-picking.

Devotional Thoughts for Day 44

Chapter 26 is a critical passage in the Bible. God is holy and just. He cannot let sin go unpunished, especially among His own people. He woos us to follow Him by blessing obedience and shoos us from evil by cursing rebellion. It all is working to bring His people to Him. Even when we fail, He is still seeking to restore us. God does not punish His own out of hatred, but rather corrects us out of love.

Hymn for Day 44

Today's hymn, "God of Mercy, God of Grace" by Henry Francis Lyte, opens with two beautiful verses that exemplify the truest spirit of giving. They acknowledge that all we have truly belongs to God in the first place and that we are but stewards of it all.

*We give Thee but Thine own,
Whate'er the gift may be;
All that we have is Thine alone,
A trust, O Lord, from Thee.*

*May we Thy bounties thus
As stewards true receive,
And gladly, as Thou blessest us,
To Thee our firstfruits give.*

*O hearts are bruised and dead,
And homes are bare and cold,
And lambs for whom the Shepherd bled
Are straying from the fold.*

*To comfort and to bless,
To find a balm for woe,
To tend the lone and fatherless
Is angels' work below.*

*The captive to release,
To God the lost to bring,
To teach the way of life and peace—
It is a Christ-like thing.*

*And we believe Thy Word,
Though dim our faith may be;
Whate'er for Thine we do, O Lord,
We do it unto Thee.*