

# LEVITICUS

## LEVITICUS — INTRODUCTION

### THE PLACE AND PLAN OF THE BOOK

How does the opening verse of this book show its close connection with the preceding book? This connection is seen among all the books of the Pentateuch, and not only shows that they are placed in proper order for an intelligent grasp of their history and meaning, but also that their spiritual use and purpose should be apprehended in the same order.

They form the A-B-Cs of religious knowledge. Genesis represents the first lesson of man's lost estate, Exodus unfolds the second step of the divine redemption and way of salvation, while Leviticus provides the immediate consequence of those two steps in the revelation of God's way of holiness and communion.

The practical purpose of Leviticus can never be tested in any life unless the lessons of Genesis and Exodus have been mastered. Only as we learn that we are lost souls do we desire redemption, which is the central topic of Exodus following the revelation of the former in Genesis. And so is the next step as personal as these two. When the lesson of Exodus is experienced, when God's redemption is yours, and you thus are His, then only are you prepared for the lesson of Leviticus. This book is entirely occupied with the condition of those who are redeemed and brought nigh to God, and for all others it is a closed book as far as grasping it spiritually is concerned.

### THE DIVINE AUTHORITY OF THE BOOK

How does the first verse show the divine authority of what follows? And also the human authorship?

There are twenty-seven chapters in this book, and in these chapters a similar formula to that employed in verse 1 recurs fifty-four times. How does this strengthen the claim of the Mosaic authorship of Leviticus?

Indeed, while all Scripture is given by inspiration of God yet this portion of it records more of the exact words of God than any other in the Bible.

Of course it is not necessary to affirm that Moses wrote absolutely every word as we now have it, and we may admit that different sections of the book may have been combined in their present form by inspired men at a later date.

But nevertheless in a true and proper sense Moses is the human author. Observe how Christ corroborates this statement in ~~<4180>~~ Matthew 8:4, compared with ~~<8448>~~ Leviticus 14:3 and 10; and ~~<4172>~~ John 7:22-23 compared with ~~<8128>~~ Leviticus 12:3.

### THE MEANING OF THE BOOK FOR ISRAEL

It is not to be supposed that Israel understood the full significance of Leviticus as we understand it. Its meaning or purpose for them was to furnish a code of laws for their well-being, physical, moral and spiritual, and to prepare them for the coming of the Messiah.

If Israel was to be a blessing to all the other nations, as we have seen, then Israel must for this purpose be separated from all the other nations. This separation was to be effected by a revelation to her of the holiness of God, and this revelation is made in the system of sacrifices which Leviticus reveals, as well as in the precepts of the law, and the enactment of penalties.

The way Israel was to be prepared for the Messiah was by suggesting to her the thought of redemptive mercy to be revealed, which was suggested by the conviction that the blood of bulls and goats never could remove sin (~~<8104>~~ Hebrews 10:4). In the interpretation of this book we are always to distinguish between its historical intention for Israel and its typical meaning for us.

### THE MEANING OF THE BOOK FOR US

Leviticus is of great value to Christians, containing five distinct revelations of the first importance:

- (1) *The character of God.* It reveals the character of God by showing us His holiness, His intolerance of sin, and His mercy to the penitent.

(2) *The fundamental conditions of true religion.* It teaches us the fundamental truths of true religion by showing the need of a mediator with a propitiatory sacrifice (~~see~~ Hebrews 9:22).

(3) *The principles that should guide human legislators.* It reveals the right principles of human legislation concerning civil government and religion, capital and labor, landholding, social evil and cognate matters.

(4) *The work of Christ.* It reveals the work of Christ by exhibiting the way of salvation through atonement, showing the present and future position of the believer in His name. In this book Christ is the offerer of sacrifice, He is the offering, and He the priest who presents the offering. Thus, as Jukes affirms, Leviticus reveals the work of Christ differently from any other Old Testament book. How wonderful as we thus think of Christ in this threefold way! As the offerer He is the one who became man to meet God's requirements. As the offering He is the victim in His character and work, by which atonement was made for man. As the priest He is the officially appointed intercessor who brings man to God.

(5) *The prophecies in types of things to come in the kingdom of Christ.* This book reveals things to come in the kingdom of Christ by showing us in the Day of Atonement (chap. 16) a type of the entering into the heavens of our great High Priest. In the feast of trumpets we have His coming again and the ingathering of the full harvest of redemption. In the sabbatic and jubilee years we have foreshadowed the millennial blessing which follows His second coming.

### THE OUTLINE OF THE BOOK

Leviticus might be called the book of the laws — not law, but laws. The whole of the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Bible) is called "The Book of the Law." But Leviticus is distinctly the book of the laws, in that it gives laws in detail for the government of the priests in the regulation of the morals and worship of the people.

With this thought in mind, the following is a suggested outline of the book:

1. The law of the offerings, chaps. 1-7.
2. The law of the priests, chaps. 8-10.
3. The law of purity, chaps. 11-15.

4. The law of the Day of Atonement, chap. 16.
5. The law of holiness, chaps. 17- 22.
6. The law of the feasts, chap. 23.
7. The law of the sabbatic year and the jubilee, chap. 25.

### QUESTIONS

1. State the spiritual and evangelical relations of Genesis, Exodus, and Leviticus.
2. To what class of persons does the spiritual teaching of Leviticus apply?
3. What distinction has this book regarding the doctrine of inspiration?
4. What was its historical application to Israel?
5. How was God's holiness impressed on the nation?
6. How was she prepared for the coming of the Messiah?
7. What distinctive value has this book for Christians?
8. How does it reveal Christ?
9. How does it reveal things to come?
10. Can you name the seven great laws it contains?

## LEVITICUS 1 — THE BURNT OFFERING

There are five offerings in chapters 1-7, and these five include all the offerings and sacrifices referred to in the history of Israel. It will simplify matters if we remember this. Sometimes offerings are presented for the priest himself, sometimes for the nation, a ruler of the nation, or a common individual; sometimes the offering is a bullock, sometimes a sheep, a goat, a turtle dove, or a pigeon; but in any case, it is always one of these five offerings. Chapter 7, for example, refers to offerings for vows, thanksgiving offerings and voluntary offerings, but these are all simply different aspects of one of the five, namely, the trespass offering.

It should not be supposed that these offering in themselves satisfied God (~~3304~~ Hebrews 10:4), but their importance lay in what they symbolized, namely, the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

These five offerings, again, may be divided into three kinds. The first two (that is, the burnt and the meal offerings) are forms of dedication by which the surrender of the offerer to God's perfect service is expressed. The third (the peace offering) is really an offering of thanksgiving by which the offerer expresses his praise to God and communion with Him. The last two (the sin and the trespass offerings) are those of expiation, and deal with the removal of sin and pardon of its guilt.

The order in which these five are revealed here is not that in which Israel presented them, but in their actual use the sin and trespass offerings came first. Then in the consciousness that sin was put away and pardon secured through those offerings the burnt and meal offerings followed, by which their desire to devote themselves to God wholly for His service was expressed. Lastly, in the peace of a cleansed conscience and a surrendered life the peace offering was presented, expressing fellowship and communion with God. See ~~422~~2 Chronicles 29:21-31 for an illustration of the order in which the offerings were presented.

### THE BURNT OFFERING

Which offering is first referred to (v. 3)? It is probably called the burnt offering from a Hebrew word which means "that which ascends." It is distinguished from the other offerings, in that the whole of it was consumed upon the altar, and none of it was eaten by either the offerer or the priest. The typical significance of this is as follows:

- (1) it acknowledged God's claim for the perfect services and entire devotedness of the offerer;
- (2) it acknowledged that the offerer was destitute of that service and devotedness, and hence presented as substitute in his stead;
- (3) it acknowledged that the absence of this service and devotedness involved guilt and deserved death, hence the slaying of the substitute; and
- (4) it acknowledged that because no such service and devotedness was found in the offerer he needed an offering to be wholly accepted in his place as a sweet savor to God.

How is the acknowledgment of the final point above expressed in the first specification of the burnt offering (v. 3)? What class of victim is referred to

here? Of what sex and quality must it be? We thus see that God claims the best as to strength, energy and perfectness (compare ~~3008~~ Malachi 1:8, 13). Christ is the only and absolutely perfect One.

What other kinds of victims might be used in the burnt offerings (vv. 10, 14)? It is difficult to say why these varieties were permitted. Some think they represent consideration for the poor, who might be unable to present those more costly; others say they represent different aspects of Christ, as (for example) service in the case of the bullock, submission in the case of the lamb, mourning innocence in the case of the dove; while others that they represent different degrees of faith or apprehension of Christ on the part of believers, some being more feeble than others in their apprehension of Christ having only a partial recognition of what He has done or what He is to them.

### **THE RITUAL OF THE BURNT OFFERING**

Seven features constitute the ritual of the burnt offering, as follows:

1. the presentation (v. 3).
2. the laying on of hands (v. 4).
3. the slaying of the victim (v. 5).
4. the sprinkling of the blood (v. 5).
5. the separating of the pieces (v. 6).
6. the washing of the pieces (v. 9).
7. the burning of the whole (v. 9).

Concerning the presentation, who was obliged to make it (v. 2)? That the offerer should do this was doubtless to represent his individual confession of his need, his individual acceptance of God's way of salvation, and his individual recognition of the excellency of his offering. The Revised Version adds a thought to verse 3 namely, that the offerer is to present his offering in order that he may be accepted. In other words, it is not enough for a man to praise God, or even to see to serve Him, until he first is accepted before God, and for this acceptance of himself he requires a propitiatory offering. God is thus satisfied by the perfectness in the offering. In the sin offering the atonement is for sin and not acceptance, but here in the burnt offering the worshipper comes without sin. That, therefore, which he offers is received as a sweet savor by the Lord

(~~448B~~Ephesians 5:2), and on the ground of it the service of the offerer is received. Note, where the offering was to be presented, namely, at the door of the Tabernacle. This not only to guard against idolatry in groves, or to compel men to worship as God appointed, but to provide for publicity (see ~~400B~~Matthew 10:32; ~~509~~Romans 10:9-10).

The laying on of hands (v. 4) is instructive. The act implied the identification of the offerer with the offering not only, but also the transfer of his obligation of guilt to it as his substitute. What expression in this verse proves that the offering was in his stead? (Compare to ~~816A~~Leviticus 16:21; ~~040B~~Numbers 8-11 RV; ~~002A~~1 Peter 1:24.

Who should kill the victim, the offerer or the priest (v. 5)? The fact that the offerer did this signifies each individual's responsibility for his own sin.

But who sprinkled the blood? That the priest should do this shows us Jesus presenting our offering of Himself before God.

The flaying and cutting were done by the offerer (v. 6). Some would say that this was to render the parts more convenient for burning; others say it signifies a minute appreciation on the part of the offerer of the excellence of his offering. The application of this to the believer on Christ is clear.

The burning of the whole is important, since it signifies the ascending of the offering in consecration to God, and His acceptance of it (9:24). As He taught the Israelites that complete consecration to God is essential to right worship, so He teaches us that Christ represented us in perfect consecration and surrender (~~417B~~John 17:19; ~~415B~~Romans 5:19; ~~800B~~Hebrews 10:5-110). He died that we might not die, but it does not follow that since He was consecrated for us we need not be consecrated. This will be referred to later, but just now examine ~~512B~~Romans 12:1.

## QUESTIONS

1. How many offerings are included in "the Law of the Offering"?
2. What do they symbolize?
3. Name them, and describe their meaning.
4. In what order did Israel present them?
5. What spiritual acknowledgments were involved in the burnt offering?
6. Name the seven features of its ritual.

7. State the spiritual significance of the presentation.
8. Do the same for the laying on of hands.
9. Who killed the victim, and what did it signify?
10. What was signified by the burning?

## LEVITICUS 2-3 — THE MEAL AND PEACE OFFERINGS

### THE MEAL OFFERING (CHAP. 2)

We call the second offering the "meal" instead of the meat offering, following the Revised Version. The burnt and meal offerings really belong together. They are both offerings of consecration, and when the one was presented the other followed as a kind of appendage (see <sup><08312></sup>Leviticus 23:12-13, 18; <sup><04807></sup>Numbers 28:7-15; <sup><07139></sup>Judges 13:19; <sup><13077></sup>Ezra 7:17; etc.).

We have seen that the burnt offering was entirely consumed upon the altar as expressive of the entire consecration of the one who offered it, and God's acceptance of it as a sweet savor to Him. In this it typifies Christ who is the only perfect life of consecration, and who has been accepted by God on behalf of all who put their faith in Him. This aspect of the sacrifice of Christ is indicated in <sup><04082></sup>Ephesians 5:2 and <sup><03638></sup>John 6:38.

The meal offering, composed mainly of fine flour, is generally taken to represent a consecrated life in its use for mankind, since flour is the universal food of man. It is a fact that God habitually uses for His service among men the lives and powers of those who are truly dedicated to Him, and this seems expressed in the fact that the burnt offering always had the meal offering attached to it. Our Lord's life represents this consecration in such places as <sup><04028></sup>Matthew 10:28 and <sup><04038></sup>Acts 10:38, and is a consecration to God for the service of mankind, which He offered and God accepted on behalf of all who put their faith in Him.

### Varieties in the Offering

It will be seen that there are certain varieties of the meal offering. The first is referred to in verses 1-3, whose substance was fine flour, oil and frankincense. What parts and portion of the offering was to be taken out by



the offerer to be presented unto the Lord (v. 2)? To whom did the remainder belong for their use (v. 3)?

The second is referred to in verses 4-10, and contains the same substance except the frankincense, the distinction being that the offering is baked in the oven, or in a pan, and the priest rather than the offerer removes the Lord's portion.

The third is alluded to in verses 14-16, and consists of what substance? How was it to be prepared? What is included in this class which was omitted from the second class?

Verses 11-13 refer to articles that were prohibited from the meal offering, and one was particularly prescribed. Name those prohibited, and that prescribed. Leaven and honey represent decay and corruption, the first-named being the type of evil recognized as such, and the second, evil that is unrecognized because it has earthy sweetness in it. Both kinds of evil were absent in Jesus Christ, and the perfection of the type necessitates their absence in it. As to salt, it is the symbol of incorruption (~~4053~~ Matthew 5:13; ~~4053~~ Mark 9:50).

Taking the offering as a whole, it may be said to symbolize His fulfillment on our behalf of the second table of the law, just as the burnt offering symbolizes His fulfillment on our behalf of the first table. Of course, in fulfilling the first He fulfilled the second, but in the burnt offering the one thought predominates and in the meal offering the other thought. In the burnt offering Christ is, representatively, man satisfying God and giving Him what belongs to Him, while in the meal offering He is, representatively, man satisfying man and giving him what belongs to him as an offering to the Lord. The burnt offering represents His life Godward, and the meal offering His life manward.

### **THE PEACE OFFERING (CHAP. 3)**

The data for the law of the peace offering are found by comparing chapter 3 with the following passages: 7:11-34; 19:5-8; 22:21-25. We put them all together in this lesson that the student may obtain a complete view of the whole. There are certain features of this offering which differ from the others.

For example, the objects offered. The peace offering might be a female (v. 1), the explanation for which may be that the effects of the atonement are contemplated rather than the act itself. Furthermore, no turtle dove or pigeon was permitted, the explanation for which may be that as the offering was connected with a sacrificial meal of which several partook, a small bird would be insufficient.

The Lord's portion consisted chiefly of the fat (vv. 3-5), the richest portion, symbolizing that the best belongs to Him. Eating the fat of all animals was not prohibited, but only those used in sacrifice, and in these only when they were being so used. The prohibition of the eating of blood, however, applied to all animals and always (17:10-12). The peace offering was to be consumed upon the burnt offering (v. 5), thus symbolizing that the peace it typified was grounded upon the fact of atonement and acceptance on the part of the offerer. The peace offering usually followed the meal offering (see the details in the dedication of Aaron, chapter 8, and those of the Day of Atonement, chapter 16).

By turning to 7:28-34 it will be seen that certain parts of the peace offering belonged to the priests. The waving of these parts back and forth, and the heaving of them up and down, were a token of their dedication to God first and their being received back again from Him by the priests.

By comparison of 7:15 and 22:29-30 and parallel places, it will be seen that the offerer himself had for his portion all that remained. It also will be seen that he was at liberty to invite his friends to the feast, which must always be eaten at the sanctuary and which was an occasion of joy (<sup><4524></sup>Deuteronomy 12:4-7, 17-18). The only condition for partaking of the feast was that of ceremonial cleanness (7:20-21).

### *The Significance of the Offering*

The meaning of peace in this case includes not only tranquillity of mind based on a cessation of hostilities (that is, a mere negative peace), but positive joy and prosperity. Three propositions define it: Peace with God (<sup><4505></sup>Romans 5:1); the peace of God (<sup><5107></sup>Philippians 4:7); and peace from God (<sup><4103></sup>1 Corinthians 1:3), conceived of as flowing into our hearts.'

The feast, therefore, is an expression of friendship and fellowship growing out of the fact that the breach between man and God has been healed by His grace. The Israelite, who represents the Christian saint, is seen to be

enjoying a feast with God, where God Himself is the host rather than the offerer. God first accepts the victim in expiation of sin and then gives it back for the worshipper to feast upon with Himself. Moreover, the feast is held in God's house, not in that of the offerer, emphasizing the fact that God is the host. Of course Christ is the offering represented here, whose blood is shed for our guilt and to bring us into reconciled relation with God, and who Himself then becomes the meat by which we who are reconciled are thereafter sustained (~~4015~~John 6:51-58).

Keep in mind that this is a joint repast in which all three partake: God, the priest, and the offerer. It therefore represents our fellowship with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ (~~4008~~1 John 1:3). Remember also that cleanness is the condition (~~4009~~1 John 1:9). An Israelite might remain such and be unclean, but he could hold no feast and enjoy no communion with God while in that condition. The application to Christians is very plain (~~4013~~1 Peter 1:13-16).

## QUESTIONS

1. By what name is the first of these offerings known in the King James?
2. Give the distinction between the burnt and meal offering as to the scope of consecration.
3. What do honey and leaven symbolize?
4. Where was the peace offering consumed, and why?
5. What did the waving and heaving mean?
6. What is the meaning of peace in this case?
7. What is the idea of the peace offering?
8. Can you quote ~~4008~~1 John 1:3?

## LEVITICUS 4-7 — THE SIN AND TRESPASS OFFERINGS

### THE SIN OFFERING

The data for the sin offering is found in 4:1-35, 5:1-13 and 6:24-30. As to the name of this offering, it will be seen that "sin" is mentioned here for the

first time in connection with the law of the offerings. The idea of sin is included in the others, but it was not the predominating idea as it is here. There was atonement for sin in the other offerings, but rather for sin in man's nature than the actual transgression in his life, while here the latter is brought into view. In Hebrew the same word applies for "sin" and "sin offering" as though the two were completely identified, or as though the offering were so charged with sin as to itself become sin. In this connection read ~~808B~~ Romans 8:3; ~~870E~~ 2 Corinthians 5:21 and ~~808E4~~ Galatians 3:14 to see how this was also true in our substitute, Jesus Christ. Another matter of interest is that while the preceding offerings were all known more or less in other nations and before the time of Moses, this offering is entirely new and original with Israel. This shows that Israel enters on a new stage of existence in the sense that as a nation she has a truer conception of sin and the need of expiation than the other nations that received no special revelation from God.

For evidence that the other offerings existed before Moses and were not confined to Israel compare ~~0354~~ Genesis 31:54; ~~0282~~ Exodus 18:12; 32:6; and ~~6006~~ 1 Corinthians 10:6. This should strengthen our faith as showing man's natural sense of spiritual need and desire for fellowship with God, and also as pointing back to an original revelation from God to man on the whole subject. God thus seems to have based the Mosaic ordinances upon His earlier revelations to man, correcting them where they had been corrupted, and adding to them where it was necessary to the progress of revealed truth.

Passing from the name of this offering to its nature, what kind of sin is referred to in 4:2? This shows that while ignorance might palliate it could not remove the guilt of sin; sin is sinful whether recognized by the sinner or not, and requires atonement just the same. (Compare ~~0992~~ Psalm 19:12; ~~4004~~ 1 Corinthians 4:4 R.V.)

Observe the different sections of this law. What class of persons are first referred to (vv. 3-12)? After the priests, who are mentioned (vv. 13-21)? The congregation of Israel means the nation. What is the third class specified (vv. 22-26)? The fourth class (4:27 to 5:13)? In chapter 5 prescriptions were made for the common people

**(1)** as to the nature of the offense (vv. 1-5) and

(2) as to the nature of the offerings (vv. 6-13). In regard to these the higher the rank of the offerer the more costly must be his offering. Expressing that guilt is proportionate to privilege (compare <sup><1110></sup>1 Kings 11:9; <sup><500E></sup>James 3:1). Note the responsibility for sin on the part of whole communities (compare here <sup><900></sup>Psalms 2; <sup><600></sup>Revelation 2 and 3). It is just as important to note also that no one can be overlooked, however obscure. God demands from and provides an offering for the poorest and the neediest (5:11-13).

In this offering, where was the victim to be burned (vv. 12-21)? To make the burning without the camp more distinct from that of the altar, another Hebrew word is used (compare in this case <sup><5300></sup>Hebrews 13:10-13). The burning on the altar symbolizes the full surrender to and the acceptance by God of the offerer, while the burning without the camp symbolizes the sacrifice for the sin of the world on the part of Him who was "despised and rejected of men."

### THE TRESPASS OFFERING

The facts associated with the trespass offering are found in 5:14-6:7 and 7:1-10. It is hard to distinguish between the sin and trespass offerings because they almost necessarily overlap. Trespass means an invasion of the rights of others (compare <sup><600></sup>Joshua 7:1; <sup><4800></sup>2 Chronicles 28:20-22) and there are those who distinguish between the two offerings by saying that the sin offering represents sin as a principle, and the trespass offering sin as an act. Penalty is prominent in the first, and reparation or restitution in the second. Both find their fulfillment in Christ, who not only bore the penalty of but redressed every claim which God had upon the sinner.

The trespass offering had reference only to the sin of an individual and not the nation, as only an individual perhaps could make reparation. The victim in this case was the same for the poor as for the rich, a ram of the flock, indicating possibly that the obligation to repair the wrong cannot be modified to suit the condition of the offerer. Furthermore, notice that anything unjustly taken must not only be restored but a fifth must be added. In other words, no advantage must be gained by the trespass. Thus if the sin offering called for faith the trespass offering called for repentance. It is blessed to know that in our Lord Jesus Christ both God and man received back more than they lost.

There appear to be two distinct sections of this law of trespass offering. The first refers to trespass in the holy things of the Lord (5:14-19), and the second to trespass on the rights of man (6:1-7). By the "holy things of the Lord" are meant — the eating unwittingly of the flesh of the firstling of one's cattle, or using one's tithe or any part of it for himself (compare ~~URS~~ Malachi 3:8, 10). The trespass on the rights of man included embezzlement, robbery, fraud, falsehood, etc. The order of proceeding in the latter instance was to confess the wrong, to make restitution and add one fifth, and to bring the guilt offering to God.

How comforting to know that Christ is the great antitype of all these offerings so far as we are concerned, that is, we who have believed on Him as our Savior and confessed Him as our Lord!

He is our burnt and meal offering in the sense that He is our righteousness. In Him we are fully surrendered to and accepted by God. He is our peace offering in the sense that in Him our life is in perfect fellowship with God. He is our sin offering, the One who has fully borne our sin, expiating our guilt. Finally, He is our trespass offering, rendering perfect satisfaction unto God and making reparation for all our offenses against Him in the com-pletest and to the fullest extent.

## QUESTIONS

1. What view of sin is emphasized in the sin offering?
2. What peculiarity lies in the Hebrew word in this case?
3. What peculiarity is found in the history of the offering itself?
4. Is sin which is unrecognized sinful?
5. What is symbolized by burning without the camp?
6. Define the word trespass.
7. Distinguish between the sin offering and the trespass offering.
8. For what spiritual exercise did the trespass offering especially call?
9. Describe how Christ is represented by these offerings.
10. Have you received Him as your substitute Savior?

## LEVITICUS 4-7 — THE OTHER SIDE OF THE OFFERINGS

In the lessons on the offerings we have seen what Christ is to us and what He has done for us as symbolized in them, but before we pass from the subject it might be well to touch on the response which the work of Christ should awaken in our hearts.

In Brooke's *Studies in Leviticus* he quotes the following collect from the liturgy of the Church of England:

Almighty God, who hast given Thine only Son to be unto us both a sacrifice for sin and also an example of godly life, give us grace that we may always most thankfully receive that His inestimable benefit, and also daily endeavor ourselves to follow the blessed steps of His most holy life.

This expresses the two ways in which the lessons from the offerings should be applied by Christians.

We need to "always most thankfully receive His inestimable benefit." In other words, we must by faith accept Christ as our five-fold offering, on the basis of which alone we are saved and have our standing before God. Morning by morning as we awaken let it be with the consciousness that in the burnt offering and meat offering of Christ we are accepted and blessed of God, that in His peace offering we have the right to commune with Him, that through His sin and trespass offering every defect is remedied and every fault will find pardon.

But then let us remember that we should also daily endeavor ourselves to follow the blessed steps of His most holy life. After we have accepted Him and represented Him to God as our sacrifice by faith, then we can follow His example. But we are not in a position to do this before. If He is our example, then we may expect to find Him so in relation to each form of offering or sacrifice in which He has been revealed to us.

He is our burnt offering, a perfect dedication to God, but are we not also bidden in Him to present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is our reasonable service (<sup><5120></sup>Romans 12:1)? He is our meal offering presented to God for the service of man, but we too are "every one of us to please his neighbor for his good to edification" (<sup><5110></sup>Romans

15:2). He is our peace offering, making and maintaining peace between God and us, but we are to be peacemakers, not in the sense in which He alone is our peacemaker but in that human sense in which we can bring man and man together and so be called children of God. He is our sin and trespass offering, and in this too we may follow His example. It is impossible that we should make atonement for sin as He did, but there is a sense in which we may "bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ" (~~REF~~ Galatians 6:2).

In other words, our lives are to reflect what we have received and are receiving from Christ, a surrendered will, a loving walk, a life of blessing, a heart of compassion, a spirit of patience. So, "with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, we are changed into the same image from glory to glory as by the Spirit of the Lord" (~~REF~~ 2 Corinthians 3:18).

## LEVITICUS 8-10 — STRANGE FIRE, AND CONSEQUENCES

In an earlier lesson the present chapters were outlined as The Law of the Priests, though we might better have said, The Law of the Consecration of the Priests. And yet in either case the phrase must be used in an accommodated sense, since we are not here dealing with the law itself but with the initial execution of the law in the consecration of Aaron and his sons. The law itself was considered in the Book of Exodus, so we may pass over chapters 8 and 9 of the present lesson since their contents were sufficiently dealt with previously.

### THE AARONIC LINE

Before taking up chapter 10, however, let us consider the history of the priesthood which begins here.

The priesthood was originally appointed to remain in Aaron's family through all generations, and no other could intrude into that office. Aaron was succeeded by Eleazar, his elder surviving son after the death of Nadab and Abihu, and the priesthood continued in this family through seven generations, until the time of Eli, named in the earlier chapters of First Samuel.



Because of the wickedness of Eli's sons the priesthood was removed from that branch of the family and given to the descendants of Ithamar, Aaron's other son; but in the time of Solomon it returned again to the line of Eleazar (~~1027~~ 1 Kings 2:27), in whose line it continued until the Babylonian captivity.

After the return of the Jews from captivity Joshua, the first high priest, was of the same family, but subsequent to this time the appointment became uncertain and irregular, and after Israel became a Roman province no regard was paid to this part of the original institution. As a matter of fact, the office became so desecrated in the corruption of later times, that it was often sold to the highest bidder, whether of the family of Aaron or not. This was the case a long while before the coming of Christ.

What part the Aaronic line will play on the future return of the Jews to their land and their form of worship we cannot say, but there is reason to believe that in the millennial age God may restore it for the execution of His purposes through Israel in that dispensation.

### **THE EVIL CONDUCT OF AARON'S SONS (10:1-7)**

Resuming here the text of the lesson, what was it that Nadab and Abihu did (v. 1)? What was the immediate consequence (v. 2)? How did Moses explain this awful circumstance (v. 3)? And what was its effect on Aaron? What prohibition of mourning was laid on him and his remaining sons (v. 6)? And what further command, and why (v. 7)?

To understand the death of Aaron's sons, notice the last verse of chapter 9, which speaks of the sacrifice on the brazen altar in the outer court and holy fire from the Lord consuming it. It was this fire that consumed the sacrifice, which should have been employed in the censers to burn the incense before the Lord. Nadab and Abihu neglected this, offered strange fire, and were instantly slain.

This looks like a terrible punishment for a slight offense. But the offense was not slight. It was a flagrant disobedience of a plain command; several commands. Not only did they disobey in the matter of the fire (16:12), but also in performing an office which belonged only to the high priest, for, as some think, they went into the Holy of Holies. Two went in where only one was permitted. Furthermore, the offense was committed at a critical moment in the history of the people, at the beginning of their covenant

relationship with God. It suggests a somewhat similar occurrence in the opening era of the Church, <sup><401></sup>Acts 5:1, 3. In both cases a signal manifestation of the divine displeasure was necessary for the sake of impressing the lesson upon the whole nation in the one case and the whole Church in the other.

It need not be supposed that this punishment involved the eternal loss of the souls of these men. It was a case of God's judging in the midst of His people, not a case of His actings among "them that are without." It affords a solemn warning, however, to any within the visible church who would depart in worship from the plain revelation of God, and to any without who would seek to approach Him in some other way than the prescribed one (<sup><341></sup>John 14:6; <sup><401></sup>Acts 4:12).

### **THE PROHIBITION OF STRONG DRINK (10:8-11)**

From what are the priests to be prohibited, and when (vv. 10-11)? It is natural to infer from this that the offense of Aaron's sons was occasioned by strong drink such as made it possible for impulse to get the better of judgment, from which we learn that it is not enough for the Christian to abstain from what is in its own nature sinful, but also from that which may heedlessly become an occasion of sin.

### **THE RENEWED WARNING (10:12-20)**

The substance of these verses has been considered in a previous lesson, but in view of the occurrence of this day Moses is moved to renew the charge to Aaron and his sons upon the matter.

The explanation of the closing verses seems to be like this: On this day of special privilege when they had performed their priestly duties for the first time, God's name had been profaned by the will-worship of Nadab and Abihu, and the wrath of God had broken out against them and their father's house. Could it then be the will of God that a house in which such guilt was found should yet partake of the holy things in the sanctuary? In other words, Aaron and his remaining sons had been so awakened in their consciences as to the holiness of God and their own inborn evil that they associated themselves with Nadab and Abihu as under the displeasure of God. Thus, although they had disobeyed the law in the letter (vv. 16-18) yet their offense grew out of a misunderstanding and showed how deeply

they had been moved by the judgment that had fallen upon them. What was the result of their explanation upon the spirit of Moses (v. 20)?

## QUESTIONS

1. can you rehearse the history of the priesthood to the time of the captivity?
2. What do you know about it subsequent thereto?
3. What do you understand by the "strange fire"?
4. What was the real nature of the offense of Aaron's sons?
5. What may have been the extent of their punishment?
6. What lessons does it teach us?
7. How do Aaron and his remaining family express a sense of their own responsibility for the offense of Nadab and Abihu?

## LEVITICUS 11 — WHAT TO EAT AND WHAT NOT TO EAT

We begin at this chapter the consideration of that section of the book previously designated as The Law of the Clean and Unclean.

Let us gather the facts by a series of questions, and then seek to learn what they mean. Read the verses and answer the questions, for that is the only way to approach a mastery of the lesson.

How is "beasts" translated in the RV? What creatures might Israel eat (v. 3)? What exceptions were made (vv. 4-7)? How far did the prohibition extend (v. 8)?

Of sea creatures what might be eaten (v. 9)? How should others of them be regarded (v. 12)? What were abominations among the fowls (vv. 13-20)? What might they eat of the fowls (vv. 21-22)?

And of the creeping creatures what were unclean (vv. 29-31)? How far did the uncleanness extend (vv. 32-35)? What exception in the case (vv. 36-37)? What reason is given for these prohibitions (vv. 44-45)?

## EXPLANATION AND APPLICATION

The laws are to be explained:

*On hygienic grounds, and as making for the physical well-being of the people.* Factually, the Hebrews have always been marked by an immunity from sickness and especially infectious diseases as compared with other races.

This does not mean, however, that all nations are still subject to these laws. They were given to a people few in number, living in a small country, and under certain climatic conditions. But what is unwholesome as food in one part of the world may be the opposite in another, and hence when the Jewish religion is merged in the Christian and become world-wide these laws are abrogated (~~400~~ Acts 10:9-15; ~~890~~ Galatians 4:1-3; ~~502~~ Colossians 2:20-22). The individual Christian is now left at liberty to exercise an enlightened judgment, under the law of love to Christ.

*On spiritual grounds, and as engraving on the mind an idea of holiness.* From this point of view they are to be looked upon as the earlier laws touching the offerings and the priests. Each particular is so ordered as to reflect purity on all the rest, converging ray upon ray to bring out the great conception of what holiness is. Without these laws the world does not know the nature of holiness. It is an abstract quality which has no place in the thought of man except as derived from the outward separations, washings and consecrations of the Mosaic ritual. Holiness is not "wholeness" nor "entireness" merely, but an idea which signifies separation, higher qualities than common, devotion to sacred purposes, and then ultimately, wholeness in the sense of the moral purity.

This holiness has to do with the body, and through it with the soul. There is, therefore, no religion in neglecting the body and ignoring the requirements for its health. To do this is to sin and to come short of the law of holiness (~~415~~ 1 Corinthians 6:20, RV; 10:31).

*On dispensational grounds, and as preparing the nation for its share in the redemptive work of the earth.* To execute its mission Israel must be kept distinct from other nations, fenced in and barricaded against inroads of idolatry, which was accomplished by this system of religious dietetics. The difference between them was thus ever-present to their minds, touching at almost every point of everyday life. Other peoples, like the

Mohammedans have had such distinctions more or less, and it is stated that wherever they have been rigidly enforced as a part of a religious system the people in question have never changed their religion. We all know how it has been a wall of exclusion to the orthodox Jews which has withstood all the changes of these more than three millenniums.

*On symbolic grounds the flesh of certain animals being forbidden because typifying by their character certain sins and vices, while others, permitted as food, typified certain moral virtues.* Hence the law was a perpetual acted allegory reminding Israel to abstain from these sins in the one case, and to practice those virtues in the other.

"The beastliness of sin" is a common expression, and God has suggested it in these laws. The sinner — and we are all sinners by nature — is unclean, filthy, disagreeable, noxious, brutish. Thank God, that although our uncleanness is intense, mercy holds out to us, and indicates typically in this chapter, a means of complete and eternal deliverance!

## QUESTIONS

1. Name four grounds on which the laws in this chapter may be explained.
2. Are these laws binding on us all in the same sense?
3. How have they worked out practically in the history of the Hebrews?
4. What is Scriptural holiness?
5. Quote <sup><4161></sup>1 Corinthians 6:20 in the Revised Version.

## LEVITICUS 12 — SIN AT THE FOUNTAINHEAD

What period of uncleanness followed the birth of a male (v. 2)? What transaction in his life took place on the 8th day (v. 3)? How long was the period of the mother's purification (v. 4)? What difference was there as to these two periods in the case of a female child (v. 5)? What was required of the mother at the close of this period (v. 6)? The reason for it (v. 7)? How does verse 8 compare with <sup><4124></sup>Luke 2:24, point to the lowly condition of the mother of Jesus as well as to her own need of a Savior?

## EXPLANATION AND APPLICATION

The great principles underlying this chapter will come before us more definitely in chapter 15. The theme is the same there as here, and indeed throughout the whole section, viz.: sin and its only remedy. Here, however, we have sin at its source, humanly speaking. Sin is not merely something which man takes on outside of himself, but something which is a part of him. It belongs not to his nature as God made him, but to his nature as fallen and transmitted from Adam. Sin is here seen mingling with the transmission of life and tainting the vital forces as they descend from parent to child, and from generation to generation (<sup><357B></sup>Psalm 57:5). It is this awful truth that forms the subject of this chapter.

The mere physical uncleanness spoken of is not the real thing, but only ceremonial and typical. In other words, the regulations laid down are not for women everywhere and always, but as a figure for the time then present.

They impose a special legal disability on the woman because she was first in the transgression of Eden (<sup><54M></sup>1 Timothy 2:24), and show us that we all have come of sinful mothers and hence are ourselves sinful (<sup><384B></sup>Job 14:4). In the birth of a child, the original curse against the woman is regarded by the law as reaching its fullest expression, for now by means of those powers given her for good and blessing she can bring into the world only the child of sin.

### *The Meaning of Circumcision*

We have learned that circumcision was not original with the Hebrews, being practiced by other nations in warm climates for hygienic reasons; but God adopted and constituted it in Abraham a symbol of an analogous spiritual fact, viz.: the purification of sin at its fountainhead, the cleansing of the evil nature with which we all are born. Read <sup><512D></sup>Colossians 2:10-11, the meaning of which is that there is no need of ritual circumcision for believers on Christ as they have the spiritual substance of it in Christ. Their circumcision is not made with hands, but is a spiritual thing, a real thing. It is the putting off of the body of the flesh, the realization of that which the other symbolized. Not of the putting off of a part, but the nature itself. It took place when we were buried with Him in the baptism, i.e., the baptism of the Holy Ghost, by which we were made one with Him so thoroughly

that in God's sight we lay in the same grave, having died on Calvary in Him.

### *The Eighth Day*

The "eighth day" will be often met as we proceed, and needs to be recognized in its symbolic and prophetic significance.

The old creation was finished in six days with a following Sabbath, rendering six the number of the old creation as under imperfection and sin. But the eighth day, which is the first of a new week, appears everywhere in Scripture as symbolizing the new creation in which all things shall be restored in the redemption through the second Adam.

The thought finds its fullest expression in the resurrection of Christ as the Firstborn from the dead, the Beginning and the Lord of the new creation, who rose from the dead on the first day, on the day after the seventh, the eighth day. This gives the key to the use of the number eight in the Mosaic symbolism. With good reason, therefore, was circumcision ordered for the eighth day, as it symbolized the putting off of the old nature and the putting on of a new and purified nature in Christ (~~4:17~~2 Corinthians 5:17 RV, margin).

### QUESTIONS

1. What is sin?
2. Quote ~~18:4~~ Job 14:4.
3. What Christian fact is symbolized by circumcision?
4. What does the 8th day symbolize in Scripture?
5. Quote ~~4:17~~2 Corinthians 5:17 in the Revised Version.

## LEVITICUS 13-14 — THE TYPICAL DISEASE

Here we have what appears like a treatise on leprosy, but it is not introduced simply for medical purposes. There were other diseases more serious, but this is singled out and made the subject of special regulations because of its typical character. It is a parable of sin, drawn by the divine hand of the workings, developments and effects of inborn depravity.

The disease is diagnosed under four heads:

- (1) leprosy rising spontaneously (1:17);
- (2) rising out of a boil (18:24);
- (3) out of a burn (vv. 24-28); and
- (4) on the head or beard.

To take the first class: What symptoms are named in <sup>(18:27)</sup>Leviticus 13:27? Who is to deal with the case? How is the diagnosis to be confirmed (v. 3)? In cases of doubt what must be done with the suspect (vv. 4-8)? What are the symptoms of an advanced case (vv. 9-11)? What further condition showed that it was not a genuine case of leprosy (vv. 12-13)? What was necessary to prove its genuineness (vv. 14-17)?

What requirements were made of the leper (vv. 45-46)? According to this, he is to assume all the ordinary signs of mourning for the dead; he is to regard himself, and all others are to regard him, as dead. He is to be a continual mourner at his own funeral.

The reason for this might be hygienic, and because of the contagious nature of the disease. There is also a deeper reason. A principle of divine teaching is that death is always connected with legal uncleanness, because it is the extreme manifestation of the presence of sin in the race and of God's wrath against it. But all disease is a forerunner of death, an incipient dying, and thus manifests the presence of sin working in the body through death.

It would be impractical to have a law that all disease should render the sick person ceremonially unclean, but in order to keep the connection between sin and disease continually before Israel, this one ailment was selected from all the others for the purpose. It is the supreme type of sin, as seen by God.

#### Features of Leprosy as a Type for Sin

1. Its extreme loathsomeness.
2. Its insignificant, often even imperceptible, beginning.
3. Its progressiveness in the body.
4. Its all-consuming nature (eventually it affects the whole person).
5. Its numbing work (over time the victim cannot feel his condition).
6. Its hereditary nature.
7. Its incurability by human means.



8. Its divisiveness (it excludes one from the fellowship of God's people, and hence the fellowship of God).

### **THE CLEANSING OF THE LEPER (14:1-32)**

Although leprosy was incurable by human remedies, it did not always continue for life. Sometimes, being sent as a special judgment from God, as in the case of Miriam, it ceased with the repentance and forgiveness of the offender. Indeed, the Jews generally looked upon it as a judgment, and its very name means "a stroke of the Lord." We know also of lepers healed by divine power in the Savior's time and before. Note that the regulations here were not for the cure of the leper but for his ceremonial cleansing after the cure (see ~~408~~ Matthew 8:1-4). For this reason Seiss thinks these rites illustrate the nature of sanctification rather than justification, although both are implied.

### **LEPROSY IN GARMENTS AND HOUSES (13:47-59; 14:33-57)**

It seems strange to read of disease in garments and houses; yet Moses, inspired by God, was ahead of the science of today which speaks so familiarly of germs and bacilli, and other things of which the fathers never dreamed!

We now know that minute parasitic forms of vegetable life may exist and propagate themselves in places besides the tissues of the human body. We are acquainted with mould and mildew, and know it to imply unhealthy conditions. The leprosy in the present case may border thereon.

The provision in these verses therefore was in the first place sanitary, and teaches how God cares not only for the souls but for the bodies of men and all their material surroundings. But in the second place it was spiritual as in the other instances, teaching that the curse of sin and death was not only upon man but his environment; that sacrificial cleansing was as needful for the one as the other; that the atonement of Christ covered in some mysterious way animate and inanimate creation as well. Read ~~408~~ Romans 8:18-23 and ~~409~~ 1 Peter 3:10-13.

### **QUESTIONS**

1. of what is leprosy a type?
2. Name its typical features.

3. What is absolutely incurable?
4. What scientific fact in this lesson goes to prove the inspiration of the book?
5. Have you read the New Testament Scriptures referred to above?

## LEVITICUS 16 — THE GREAT DAY OF ATONEMENT

When was the law of this chapter revealed to Moses (v. 1)? This has led some to think that the chapter is misplaced and that it should follow chapter 10, an idea strengthened by the fact of its cutting into the middle of these laws concerning the clean and the unclean.

What prohibition is laid upon Aaron, and with what penalty (v. 2)? Is there a suggestion here that the disobedience of Nadab and Abihu was aggravated by their entering into the Holy of Holies when they should not have done so?

With what sacrifices was Aaron to appear (v. 3), and in what apparel (v. 4)? What further ceremonial precaution must he take?

What is the offering for the people on this occasion (vv. 5-7)? What peculiarity is mentioned in the case (vv. 8-10)? What is the ceremony connected with the scapegoat (vv. 20-26)?

In what month and on what day of the month were these ceremonies to occur (v. 29)? What kind of a day was this to be (v. 31)?

### THE SIGNIFICANCE OF IT ALL

This Day of Atonement was the most important in the whole Mosaic system of sacrifices, for then the idea of the removal of sin received its highest expression.

To illustrate: It must be that countless sins were committed by the people collectively and individually of which they were unaware, and which were not covered by any of the daily offerings. If, then, there were not some great act of atonement covering everything to the fullest extent, the sacrificial system had fallen short. To meet this the law of the Day of Atonement was instituted.

On this day atonement was made for Aaron and his house (v. 6); the holy place and the tabernacle (vv. 15-17); the altar and the outer court (vv. 18-19); and the whole congregation of Israel (vv. 20-22, 33); and this "for all their iniquities, and all their transgressions, even all their sins" (v. 21), i.e., unknown to every one except God (compare <sup><3897></sup>Hebrews 9:7-9).

Notice further among other things,

- (1) that only the high priest could officiate on this day (v. 17);
- (2) that he could do so only after certain preparations, among them the bathing of himself, the laying aside of the "garments for glory and beauty" and the donning of a vesture of unadorned white; and
- (3) that he entered the Holy of Holies sprinkling the blood even on the mercy seat in that secret place where no other Israelite might tread.

All these things impress us that the sin offering on this day, more than any other, symbolizes in the most perfect way the one offering of Christ who now appears in the presence of God for us.

### *The Scapegoat*

The significance of the scapegoat is difficult to determine. The Revised Version translates the word by the name Azazel, whose meaning is not clear. Either it is a name of an evil spirit conceived of as dwelling in the wilderness, or else an abstract noun meaning removal or dismissal (RV margin).

If we take it in the latter sense, then the scapegoat may be regarded as bearing away all the iniquities of Israel, which are symbolically laid upon him, into a solitary place where they are forever away from the presence of God and the camp of his people. Thus to quote Kellogg, as the killing and sprinkling of the first goat set forth the means of reconciliation with God, so the sending away of the second sets forth the effect of that sacrifice in the complete removal of those sins as already indicated (compare <sup><4312></sup>Psalm 103:12; Mic. 7:19).

If, however, the word is taken as the name of a person, then the understanding would seem like this: Satan has a certain power over man because of man's sin (<sup><3814></sup>Hebrews 2:14-15; <sup><6159></sup>1 John 5:19 RV; <sup><6120></sup>Revelation 12:10). To this evil one, the adversary of God's people in all ages, the live goat was symbolically sent bearing on him the sins of Israel.

These sins are considered as having been forgiven by God, by which it is symbolically announced to Satan that the foundation of his power over Israel is gone. His accusations are now no longer in place, for the whole question of Israel's sin has been met and settled in the atoning blood.

## QUESTIONS

1. What makes the Day of Atonement the most important in the Mosaic system?
2. Can you quote verse 21?
3. How does the Revised Version translate "scapegoat"?
4. If the word be an abstract noun, how would you understand its meaning?
5. If the name of a person, how?

## LEVITICUS 17-19 — ABOMINATIONS UNTO THE LORD

The underlying thought of this section is in the words of <sup><B180></sup>Leviticus 18:1-5. Israel is redeemed and separated unto God, therefore, she is to live consistently with that fact in all her ways. She is not to do after the heathen peoples round about her.

### THE QUESTION OF EATING (CHAP. 17)

It looks as though the opening injunction of this chapter touched once more upon the ceremonial and recurred to a matter considered under the offerings. But in that case the design was to prevent idolatry in connection with worship, and here to prevent it in connection with the preparation of food. It is to be remembered also, that these regulations were for the tent life in the wilderness, and were afterward repealed in <sup><B1215></sup>Deuteronomy 12:15-24, ere entering upon the settled habitation of Canaan.

The reasons for the prohibition of blood are clearly stated. It was the life of the flesh and the symbol of that life which was substituted for the guilty in making atonement.

As to the first, modern science is illustrating its wisdom in teaching that the germs of infectious disease circulate in the blood. As to the second, the

relation of the blood to the forgiveness of sins was thus always kept prominently before the mind of the people. There is a great lesson in this thought for us as well as them.

### THE QUESTIONS OF CHASTITY (CHAP. 18)

All sexual relationship is prohibited as between a man and his mother, stepmother, sister, granddaughter, stepsister, aunt, daughter-in-law, sister-in-law, a woman and her daughter or her granddaughter, a wife's sister (while the wife is living), a woman at the time specified in verse 19, a neighbor's wife, another man, a beast. The Canaanites did these things, which explains their expulsion from their land; and these things were also common with the Egyptians among whom the Israelites had lived.

A few comments follow. For example, the law forbidding such relationship with a brother's wife (v. 16), is qualified in <sup><1621></sup>Deuteronomy 25:5-10, so far as to permit marriage with the widow of a deceased brother when the latter died without children, in order to perpetuate his family.

The reference to Molech in verse 21 grows out of the connection between some of the licentious practices just mentioned and the worship of the heathen god (compare <sup><1731></sup>2 Kings 17:31; <sup><14731></sup>Jeremiah 7:31; 19:5). In that worship children were slain like beasts and offered in sacrifice to their god.

### CONTENTS OF CHAPTER 19

It is difficult to generalize in chapter 19, which seems to contain repetitions of laws already dealt with in other connections.

Among these reference is again made to the Sabbath; the making of molten images; the eating of peace offerings; gleaning of the harvest for the poor; theft, perjury, oppression; the treatment of the blind and deaf; fairness in judgment; talebearing; revenge, hybridity; carnal connection with bondwomen; uncircumcised fruit; enchantment; physical marks of idolatry; honoring the aged, etc.

The first three have to do with reverence for God. The next series, having regard to the poor, was not only a protest against natural selfishness, but an intimation that the land did not belong to the human occupant but to God, and that its husbandman was merely His steward.

In several verses following, God still speaks on behalf of the weak and defenseless, but ere long balances the subject by showing that the rich are no more to be wronged than the poor.

Reaching the middle of the chapter, the commands concerning hybridity among cattle and in the vegetable kingdom are sufficiently clear, but that about the mingling of stuffs in our garments is not. Perhaps this whole section of laws is to cultivate reverence for the order established in nature by God, nature itself being a manifestation of God. In this case the precept about garments would be a symbolic reminder of the duty to a large class who did not so frequently come in contact with the other reminders referred to.

In verses 20-22 we come upon what seems a divine approval of concubinage and slavery, but we are to remember the explanation of it in ~~Q98~~ Matthew 19:8.

The uncircumcised fruit (vv. 23-25) is as interesting a feature as any in the chapter. The explanation is in the law that the first-fruit always belongs to God. But it must be a perfect offering as well as the first-fruit, and this is not usually true of the fruit of a young tree. During the first three years of its life it is regarded as analogous to the life of a child uncircumcised or unconsecrated to the Lord. It is not until the fourth that its fruit becomes sufficiently perfected to offer unto God, and not until after that is it to be partaken of by the Israelite himself.

The reference to the trimming of the hair and beard is explained by the fact that among heathen peoples to do so visibly marks one as of a certain religion or the worshipper of a certain god. Today certain orders in the Roman Catholic Church are indicated in this manner. But the Israelite was not only to worship God alone, but to avoid even the appearance of worshipping another.

## QUESTIONS

1. To what do the contents of these chapters relate?
2. Why was blood prohibited in eating?
3. In what way does God claim ownership of the land of Israel?
4. How does He defend the rich as well as the poor?
5. Can you quote ~~Q98~~ Matthew 19:8?

6. What is the meaning of uncircumcised fruit?
7. To what does the trimming of the hair and beard refer?

### NEW TESTAMENT APPLICATION

Before pursuing these lessons further we would pause to point out their application to the Christian, and how he should make use of them for his spiritual advancement and God's glory in this sinful world.

Brooke will once more be our guide:

In chapters 1-10 there is revealed what God is, and does, and gives to His people, but in chapters 11-22 we have what His people should be and do for Him. The first half of these latter chapters, 11-16, show that the life of God's people is to be clean, while the second half, chapter 17 to practically the close of the book, shows how it is to be holy. There is a difference between the two ideas represented by "clean" and "holy" (~~2~~2 Corinthians 7:1).

The word "clean," together with "unclean," "purify" and their derivatives, comes from two Hebrew roots, occurring in the sixth chapter over 164 times, thus showing the emphasis God puts upon the thought they express, and impressing us with the fact that a line of separation must be drawn between those who are God's people through redemption by the blood, and those who are not.

But we are taught that only God Himself can indicate what this line of separation is. Only He can say what is fit and what unfit for His people to think, and be, and do. This is New Testament as well as Old Testament teaching (~~1~~Philippians 1:9-11), and means much more than the broad distinction between right and wrong. The people of the world know what these distinctions are, and for worldly reasons endeavor more or less to maintain them; but the people of God know the mind of God, and are expected to follow it in details of which the world is ignorant.

We learn how communion with God may be hindered or promoted by things otherwise exceedingly small, like eating and drinking (~~1~~1 Corinthians 10:31), the way we dress, or keep our dwellings, the physical condition of our bodies, and the like. There are many questions of casuistry, which the full-grown Christian recognizes as essential in order to walk with God, of which other people know nothing. (Compare

<512> Deuteronomy 14:21; <424> 1 Corinthians 2:14; 10:23; <457> Ephesians 5:17;  
<804> 2 Timothy 2:4.)

The Christian cannot say, "I may do this for others do it." The "others" may not be redeemed and separated unto God, and hence he must leave the doubtful things to them "who claim not royal birth" and "come out from among them and be separate" (<467> 2 Corinthians 6:17-18).

Our author distinguishes between the first half of this section of the book, chapters 11-16, and the latter half, 17-22, by speaking of the latter as presenting on the positive what the former presents on the negative side. In illustrating the thought from the New Testament point of view he uses <400> 2 Corinthians 7:1: "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."

The two phrases "cleanse" and "perfecting holiness" are in different tenses in the Greek. The former is in the aorist, and marks a definite action, something done once for all; but the latter is in the present tense, and implies a continuous line of conduct. When we are bidden to "cleanse ourselves," it means that everything marked by God as unclean is to be at once and forever put away; but when we are bidden to be perfect in holiness a lifelong course of action and conduct is in mind.

Reverend Brooke helps us to understand this by his definition of "holiness," which in its primary sense does not mean supereminent piety but "the relationship existing between God and a consecrated thing." It is in this sense we read of a holy day, a holy place, or a holy animal.

But as soon as this title is given to anyone or anything, the power of it is supposed to begin to work, that is, it immediately demands altered usage or conduct harmonizing with the new relationship to God into which it is brought. As applied to human beings, it is an instant summons to a new line of conduct, and thus passes into the meaning of practical piety. He uses this illustration: If one were rebuking a peer for unworthy conduct he might say, "You are a nobleman; you ought to be a noble man." In this sense Paul uses it in <447> 1 Corinthians 5:7: "Purge out the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, even as ye are unleavened."

These chapters therefore (17-22), bring into startling prominence the breadth and depth of the idea of holiness as God conceives of it. It



concerns the table of God's people, the home, and all their social and business relationships.

It is only as we realize this idea of holiness, and how far we are separated from it by our old nature, that we can appreciate the significance of the Day of Atonement and the place its revelation occupies in this book (chap. 16). The other chapters preceding and following that revelation raised the question, Who can be clean before God? We perceive that, notwithstanding what provisions we make or precautions we take, we can never be sure that no spot of uncleanness remains, or that the conditions for communion with God are fulfilled. Only God can be sure of this, or make us sure, but that assurance is what chapter 16 in its typical aspect is intended to provide.

Once a year, and on that day, "all the iniquities of Israel, and all their transgressions, in all their sins" were completely removed, and atonement made for every uncleanness. The prototype of this we find in the person and work of our blessed Lord, whose grace is sufficient for us, and whose blood cleanseth us from all sin.

## QUESTIONS

1. Why is the standard of righteousness for God's people different from the world's?
2. Name some of the little things which may affect the saint's communion with God.
3. Quote ~~4:10~~ 2 Corinthians 7:1.
4. How would you define holiness?
5. Quote ~~4:10~~ 1 Corinthians 5:7.

## LEVITICUS 20-22 — PENALTIES FOR PEOPLE AND PRIESTS

The twentieth chapter is of deep interest as showing what infinite wisdom and love has considered a just punishment for certain crimes. These crimes are still committed in civilized communities but a different view of their treatment seems to exist. Are human governments in modern times wiser and better than this theocracy where Jehovah ruled?

Why does not this code obtain in Christian nations, since God has revealed it and such nations are supposed to serve God?

The answer is, that no nation on earth is a God-governed nation, as Israel was, and shall again be in the millennial age. The laws of so-called Christian nations are man-made, not God-made. They may bear a likeness or relationship to these laws of God, but only as they grow out of a necessity of human experience. No nation has ever set itself the task of finding out God's mind with reference to this or that penalty, and squaring its legislation accordingly. Hence the lawlessness we see on every hand, and the injustice; hence the teaching of the prophets that the present order of things shall end in a grand catastrophe, and God shall set up His own kingdom on the earth over which His Son shall reign.

### **OUTLINE OF THE CHAPTER**

The first section (vv. 1-6) relates to the giving of seed to Molech, and consulting with familiar spirits (what we call Spiritualism). With Spiritualism might be included other occultisms, such as fortunetelling, clairvoyance, palmistry and the like.

A second section (vv. 7-8) consists of a command to sanctification of life and obedience to God.

A third (vv. 9-16) enumerates other cases for which death was ordered, some of them very unnatural crimes.

A fourth (vv. 17-21) names offenses for which a lesser penalty is prescribed. A fifth (vv. 22-26) consists of a concluding exhortation against disobedience enforced by the impending punishment of the Canaanites, and the goodness of God to them (Israel).

For what crimes is death ordained as a penalty (vv. 2-5, 10, 12-16, 27)? What manner of death is ordained (v. 2)? In the case of certain crimes is any difference made between the sexes (vv. 10-12, 14-16)? In what instance were the bodies of the criminals to be burnt after death (v. 14)?

In the case of the lesser penalties, which offense demanded the most public excommunication (v. 17) ?

### *The Principles Involved*

Certain "reformers" claim that the primary, if not the sole, object of the punishment of crime is the reformation of the individual. How does such a theory square with this divine precedent? Had reformation been the chief thought in God's mind, would He have ordained the death penalty with such unqualified severity?

How does verse 3 show that the intention of the punishment is to satisfy the outraged holiness of God? How does verse 12 show that it is to preserve the natural order of the human family? How does verse 14 show that it is for the moral benefit of the race?

The multiplication of murders and crimes against the family in these days may be explained by the laxity of the laws, or the indisposition of the people to enforce them. Where God pronounces the death penalty, man apologizes for the crime, then lightens the penalty, then abolishes it, and at last legalizes the offense. This modern drift bodes no good, and in the end can only bring disaster to the family and the state.

### **HOLINESS OF THE PRIESTS (CHAPS. 21-22)**

We pass over chapters 21 and 22 with a remark or two, as they treat the same subject as the preceding chapter except as it applies to the priests. While all Israel was called to be a priestly nation, holy to Jehovah in life and service, this sanctity was represented in degrees successively higher in each of its three divisions, the people, the priest, and the high priests, like the threefold division of the tabernacle, the outer court, the holy place, and the Holy of Holies.

The principle still holds good in that special privileges place him who enjoys them under special obligations to holiness of life. Christians, in other words, should not merely be equally correct in life with the best men of the world, but more — they should be holy. And within the Church, those who occupy official positions or who are otherwise elevated above their fellows, are under the more stringent obligations of life and work.

### **QUESTIONS**

1. What kind of government did Israel have?

2. How would you account for much of the disorder and lawlessness in so-called Christian nations?
3. What will bring this to an end?
4. Have you tried to answer the questions asked under "Principles Involved"?
5. What peculiar obligation of conduct lies upon Christians, and why?

## LEVITICUS 23 — FEASTS OF THE LORD

There is nothing more affecting in all this legislation than the provision God makes for the physical happiness and the temporal welfare of His people. He wants them to rejoice if only they rejoice in Him (<sup><3004></sup>Philippians 4:4). This chapter sets this forth.

Compare the Revised Version and observe that the word in verse 2 is "set feasts" or "appointed seasons."

Why are they called set feasts of the Lord? Is it not because He appointed them, and because He would be glorified in them? What other title do they receive (v. 2)? When holy convocations are mentioned we think of public gatherings at the tabernacle, or later on, at the temple; but these were commanded only for the three occasions, the Passover in the spring, and the feast of weeks (Pentecost), and atonement in the autumn (<sup><12402></sup>Exodus 34:22). Probably, therefore, the other convocations were local gatherings crystallized afterwards in the weekly synagogue.

### THE WEEKLY SABBATH (V. 3)

What is the first feast mentioned (v. 3)? Although the weekly Sabbath is included among these appointed seasons, yet it is distinguished from them by the fresh heading of verse 4, and by verses 37-38. It is indeed an appointed season, but dating from the creation of man, and not here first prescribed. It is in this sense a kind of germ of all the other appointed seasons.

How is the sanctity of the weekly Sabbath expressed in the Revised Version? What was prohibited on this day? Did this prohibition extend only to outside work, or what we would call in our day business affairs?

Do you remember what was taught previously about the two reasons for the weekly Sabbath? A memorial of God's rest in creation it was, and yet also a memorial of redemption (<sup><12913></sup>Exodus 31:13; <sup><1865></sup>Deuteronomy 5:15). While the redemption specifically in mind is the Jews' deliverance from Egypt, yet it is a type of our spiritual deliverance from sin through Christ.

The original Sabbath rest of God, in which man participated, was marked by sin, so that the whole creation became "subjected to vanity" (<sup><8180></sup>Romans 8:20). God could not rest in this state of things, and began a work of new creation. The object of this is the restoration of that Sabbath rest which thus was interrupted; hence, the weekly Sabbath looked forward as well as backward.

### **THE PASSOVER AND UNLEAVENED BREAD (VV. 4-8)**

The feasts of the Passover and unleavened bread we met in Exodus, but here we learn how the latter shall begin and end with a holy convocation, and be characterized by the omission of servile work. This last seems to refer to labor in the field and otherwise, outside of the home.

The spiritual meaning of these two feasts we have considered. Through the slaying of the lamb and sprinkling of its blood Israel secured deliverance from Egypt, and by eating its flesh strength for the journey before them. The unleavened bread, however, had more than an historic reference. Leaven is the type of evil or moral corruption, and its removal signifies that the redeemed nation must be a holy and separate people.

### **THE SHEAF OF THE FIRSTFRUITS (VV. 9-14)**

In connection with the two feasts just named, what further ceremony is established (vv. 10-11)? With this what offering should be presented (vv. 12-13)? What prohibitions are entailed (v. 14)?

We have here a preliminary feast of the harvest. The waiving of the sheaf of the firstfruits indicates that the whole harvest to follow belonged and was consecrated to God. Until this action was taken they were not at liberty to use the harvest. In this we have another symbol. Israel is God's firstborn among the nations (<sup><1142></sup>Exodus 4:22), of the redeemed earth. She is the earnest of the redemption of all these nations — the beginning of the world's harvest, which shall be realized in the millennial age.

And the idea is not exhausted yet, as we judge by ~~4107~~ 1 Corinthians 5:7-8. Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us, and the sheaf of the firstfruits in His resurrection was presented unto God as a type of the resurrection of all His people (1 Cot. 15:20).

### **PENTECOST, OR THE FEAST OF WEEKS (VV. 15-22)**

How long after the presentation of the sheaf of the firstfruits came the next feast (vv. 15-16)? What should be offered on this day (vv. 17-20)? With what should these loaves be baked (vv. 17)? What was the design of this offering (v. 17)? Because this feast came on the fiftieth day after the presentation of the sheaf of the firstfruits, it is called the Feast of Pentecost, from the Greek numeral meaning fifty; and the Feast of Weeks, because it followed seven weeks after that of the sheaf.

The former festival marked the beginning of the harvest with the first sheaf of barley, and this, the completion of the grain harvest, with the reaping of the wheat. In the former the sheaf was presented as it came from the field, but in this the offering was of the grain as prepared for food. Why it might be baked with leaven we do not know.

Speaking of the typical aspect of this feast, and comparing it with the Passover, there God was seen to be the Redeemer of Israel, here He is seen to be her preserver.

Comparing it with the sheaf of the firstfruits, there we see a type of Christ's resurrection as "the firstfruits of them that sleep," but here a type of the descent of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost when "the church of the firstborn" was formed as the beginning of the great ingathering of the whole number of the elect (~~4101~~ Acts 2:1-4; ~~5018~~ Colossians 1:18; ~~5018~~ James 1:18).

As compared with the weekly Sabbath, this feast, in celebrating the rest after the labors of the harvest, became a type of the great rest to follow the harvest at the end of this age (~~4103~~ Matthew 13:39).

### **THE FEAST OF TRUMPETS (VV. 23-25)**

We have seen that the Feast of the Sabbath on the seventh day of each week was a germ of the whole series of septenary feasts. The Feast of Pentecost on the seventh week, and now the Feast of Trumpets at the

beginning of the seventh month carry forward the idea. Spring, summer and autumn each has its feast. This seventh month, corresponding to that period of our year from the middle of September to the middle of October was the great month of the Jewish year in that three great events occurred in it — the Feast of Trumpets, the great Day of Atonement, and the Feast of Tabernacles.

The blowing of trumpets was an announcement from God to His people that the great glad month had come, the month of atonement and of the greatest festivity of the year resulting from that atonement, and the earthly blessing accompanying it.

On other occasions trumpets were blown only by the priests and at the central sanctuary, but in this case they were blown by everyone who would throughout the whole land.

How reconciled we could be to the noises preceding New Year's Day, or the 4th of July, Thanksgiving Day, if only the blowing of the horns were an act of worship in recognition of the goodness and faithfulness of God!

### **THE DAY OF ATONEMENT (VV. 26-32)**

The Day of Atonement has been considered in chapter 16. Coming at this season of the year it demonstrated the complete rest brought in, both for God and His people, through the expiation of their guilt.

How were the people on this day to express penitence for their guilt (v. 27)? (Compare <sup>280B</sup> Isaiah 58:3-7; <sup>300B</sup> Zechariah 7:5.) What penalty followed the absence of such penitence (v. 29)? How do these great truths of sin, repentance, expiation, and rest apply to the people of all ages?

### **THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES (VV. 35-43)**

This is the greatest of the feasts. When did it begin, what is it called, and how long did it last? On what two days were holy convocations called?

What reference to the complete harvest is found in this enactment (v. 39)? With what unusual feature was this feast to be celebrated (v. 40)? What did the dwelling in booths commemorate (vv. 42-43)? As the Passover typified our redemption through Christ, the unleavened bread our feeding upon Him for strength, the first sheaf His restoration from the dead, Pentecost the descent of the Holy Ghost, or the spiritual ingathering of the firstfruits

of the world's harvest in the formation of the church, so the Feast of Tabernacles is thought to typify the completion of that harvest in the final ingathering of the elect at the end of the age. Then all that are Christ's shall either rise from the dead or be translated to meet Him in the air at the second coming (~~304B~~ 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).

The eighth day after the feast is a type of that new week ushered in by the millennial age, when the earth and all that is therein shall experience the rest promised to the people of God (~~344B~~ Zechariah 14; 16; 21).

## QUESTIONS

1. Quote ~~300B~~ Philippians 4:4.
2. What feast may be said to be the germ of all the others?
3. To what does the weekly rest day look forward?
4. Of what is "leaven" always the type in Scripture?
5. Of what is the sheaf of the firstfruits the type?
6. What is the Feast of Weeks the type of, compared with that of the firstfruits?
7. What was the great month of the Jewish year and why?
8. Give the name, history and typical significance of the greatest of the feasts.

## LEVITICUS 25 — THE SABBATIC AND JUBILEE YEARS

Considering the limited scope of this work, we pass over chapter 24 to give more attention to the subject of the present chapter which is closely connected with that of the feasts, or appointed seasons.

### THE SABBATIC YEAR

It deals first with the Sabbatic year (vv. 1-7). From what were the Israelites prohibited in the seventh year (v. 4)? How much further did the prohibition extend (v. 5)? But while there should be no sowing, pruning or reaping for the year, nevertheless were all the spontaneous produce of the land to be a waste (vv. 6-7)? What may have been God's object in this law?



Agricultural science recognizes that a periodic rest of land is of advantage, particularly where it is difficult to obtain fertilizers in adequate amount. But there must have been a deeper reason here, and we wonder whether the enactment was not intended as a discipline in faith towards God, teaching the Israelite that man does not live by bread alone (compare verses 20-22 with ~~(NRS)~~ Deuteronomy 8:3). Then may not another thought have been to impress him that his right to the soil and its produce came from God? We can see also how such an enactment would curb selfishness and covetousness, and place the rich and the poor periodically on the same level. It has some symbolical and typical aspects as well, which will be considered later.

### **THE JUBILEE YEAR**

The chapter deals in the next place with the Jubilee year (vv. 8-12). In what month, and on what day did it begin (v. 9)? What name was given to this day? By what ceremony was it introduced? What was the proclamation on this day (v. 10)? Was it also a Sabbath for the land (v. 11)? Then did two Sabbath years come in immediate succession?

A question may arise as to how a new year could begin in the seventh month. But the answer is that Israel had two kinds of years. What might be called its religious year, began with the Feast of the Passover in the spring (~~(NRS)~~ Exodus 12), while its civil year began with the day of atonement in the fall.

### **LIBERTY PROCLAIMED**

One feature of the "liberty" of the Jubilee year concerned the redemption of the land (vv. 12-27). In that year what must be returned to every man who had suffered a loss of it (v. 13)? What was the basis of value in the purchase and sale of land (vv. 15-16)? Since the possession must revert to the original holder in the year of Jubilee, it had only just so much value as there were years and crops intervening between the time it left his hand and the next Jubilee. What was the purpose or effect of this law (v. 17)? What was its basis, or in other words, why could not the land be sold in perpetuity, but must be returned to its first holder (v. 23)?

Observe from this that in Israel, under the theocracy, there was no such thing as either private or communal ownership of the land. The owner was

Jehovah, and all any man could buy or sell was the right to its produce, and that only for a limited time.

### **THE KINSMAN REDEEMER**

The law of the kinsman redeemer is an interesting feature of this subject (vv. 25-28).

If one for reasons of poverty was obliged to sell his land, whose duty was it to redeem it for him did his circumstances permit (v. 25)? Might the original possessor himself redeem it (v. 26)? Observe that the basis of price (v. 27) was that referred to above. Observe also, that if it could not be redeemed in either case, then it must return to him at the Jubilee (v. 28).

### **EXCEPTIONAL CASES**

The exception as to walled cities is peculiar (vv. 29-34). If a man sold a dwelling there, might he ever get it back again (v. 29)? If the opportunity was not availed of, what then (v. 30)? Did this apply to other than walled cities (v. 31)? Was there any exception as to the owners of dwellings in walled cities (v. 32)?

The reason for exempting houses in walled cities seems to be that there was no land here which might be used agriculturally for man's support. In the case of unwalled towns or villages it was otherwise, hence the exception there. The inhabitants of such towns or villages were the cultivators of the soil, and their houses belonged to the farms. The case of the Levites is explained by the fact that according to the divine command, earlier recorded, they had no other possession than their houses.

### **THE QUESTION OF SLAVERY**

The question of slavery comes again before us (vv. 39-55). What kind of slave is referred to in verse 39, voluntary or involuntary? A Hebrew or an alien? What difference must be made in his case? How did the Jubilee year effect him (vv. 40-41)? What other kind of slave is allowed for (vv. 44-45)? If a Hebrew sold himself to an alien, what then (vv. 47-49)?

We wonder at Jehovah permitting slavery. But if we carefully considered the laws governing it in Israel, we must have seen how different it was from modern slavery, how just and equitable, and even how desirable for

those whose circumstances made it necessary. We shall see also that these laws had such an educational power as to altogether banish slavery from the Hebrew people.

### THE TYPICAL AND SYMBOLICAL ASPECT

The Sabbatic year and Jubilee year are the last two members of the Sabbatic system of septenary periods all of which have a typical significance. Each brings out some aspect of redemption through Christ, and all combined form a progressive revelation in type of the results of Christ's work for the world.

These last two periods began on the great Day of Atonement in which all Israel was to afflict their souls in penitence for sin. On that day they both began when the high priest came out from within the veil, where, from the time of offering the sin offering, he had been hidden from the sight of Israel. Both also were ushered in with a trumpet blast. We have in both a type of the final repentance of Israel in the latter days, and their re-establishment in their own land, of which all the prophets speak. The earlier restoration from their Babylonian captivity was doubtless prefigured here as well; and yet the ultimate reference must be to that event still in the future (<sup><3111></sup>Isaiah 11:11).

### THE WORLD FULFILLMENT

The type, however, reaches beyond Israel and includes the whole earth. See Peter's reference in <sup><4189></sup>Acts 3:19-21, when Jesus Christ the heavenly High Priest shall come forth and when the last trumpet shall sound and He shall appear "the second time without sin unto salvation" (<sup><3028></sup>Hebrews 9:28; <sup><4189></sup>Romans 8:19-22).

### QUESTIONS

1. Name four practical reasons for the Sabbatic year.
2. When did the civil year of Israel begin?
3. Who owned the land of Israel?
4. Can you explain the exemption of walled cities?
5. What effect has God's law about slavery had upon that institution among the Hebrews?

6. On what day of the year did the Sabbatic and Jubilee years begin?
7. Of what are both these years a type?
8. How far beyond Israel's history does the type of the Jubilee year extend?

## LEVITICUS 26 — THE GREAT PROPHECY

This chapter opens with injunctions (vv. 1-2), which practically cover the first table of the law, and then follow promises of blessing in the case of obedience (vv. 3-13); warnings of judgment in case of disobedience (vv. 14-39); and a prophecy of ultimate repentance and restoration to divine favor in the latter days.

### THE PROMISED BLESSINGS (VV. 3-13)

These blessings include fruitful seasons (vv. 3-5); internal security (vv. 6-8); multiplication of numbers and the increased harvest needed to support them (vv. 9-10); and the abiding presence of God with them (vv. 11-12). All these promises are based on and grow out of their original redemption from Egypt and God's covenant with them at that time (v. 13).

### WARNINGS OF JUDGMENT (VV. 14-39)

The judgments are first spoken of in general terms, and include physical disease, bereavement, famine, conquest and dispersion (vv. 14-17).

Then there follow four series of warnings, each conditioned on the supposition that they did not repent as the result of the preceding experiences. Each series is prefaced by the formula "I will punish you seven times more for your sins" (vv. 18, 21, 24, 28). The thought is that each new display of impenitence on Israel's part shall be marked by increasing severity. Notice that the rains will be withheld (vv. 19-20); wild beasts will destroy their children and cattle (v. 22); war, pestilence and famine shall follow (vv. 25-26); and all these calamities will come upon them with increasing terror so that they shall eat the flesh of their sons and daughters, and their city shall become waste and their land desolate to that extent that their enemies shall be astonished at it. Moreover, they will be scattered among the Gentile peoples (vv. 29-33).

The importance of this prophecy is that all the later prophecies concerning the judgments upon Israel are a kind of application of it to the later conditions. It is also an epitome of Israel's history from the death of Joshua, say, until the present time.

This chapter is of great importance as proof of the Bible's divine origin. We have here an evidence of foreknowledge, and therefore, of the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, which cannot be gainsaid.

### REPENTANCE AND RESTORATION (VV. 40-46)

The word "If" at the beginning of verse 40 is in the RV "And." It thus becomes a positive statement of God that Israel shall confess her iniquity and be humbled before Him; and that in consequence, the Lord will remember His covenant with Jacob (v. 42).

These words had a partial fulfillment in the return from the Babylonian captivity, but this did not exhaust the prophecy. Israel again forgot Jehovah and committed her greatest sin in crucifying her Messiah. As the result her people are now scattered among the nations, and her land is desolate. Nevertheless, God's covenant with her fathers is not forgotten. The promises to her were renewed after the return from Babylon with reference to events that shall take place in her history at the end of this age (~~312B~~ Zechariah 12:8-14; 13:1). See also Paul's epistle to the Romans (11:2, 25-29).

Observe that the promises for the future pertain to the land as well as the people of Israel (v. 42). Compare ~~421B~~ Luke 21:24. The inference is clear that Israel shall not only be restored to God in repentance through faith in her Messiah, but she shall also be restored to Palestine, whose fruitfulness will be greater than ever.

### QUESTION

1. Give a general outline of this chapter.
2. What blessings are promised on Israel's obedience?
3. How does this chapter prove the divinity of the Bible?
4. How does verse 40 become a positive statement?
5. Have you read ~~510B~~ Romans 11 ?

## LEVITICUS 27 — VOWS AND TITHES

We have in this closing chapter a supplement to the whole book. Hitherto we dealt with obligations and duties resting on all Israelites alike, but now we come to vows of an additional and voluntary character (~~AKZ22~~ Deuteronomy 23:22).

### PERSONS MIGHT BE VOWED (VV. 1-8)

The thought is, that persons might be vowed for service in the sanctuary; but since service could not be found for so large a number, and especially for young children, who might be vowed, there might be a money equivalent for them. This equivalent, which was to be paid into the treasury of the sanctuary, was determined by the labor value of the person vowed as based on sex and age. It was always low enough not to burden the poor.

### DOMESTIC ANIMALS MIGHT BE VOWED (VV. 9-13)

If the animal were suitable for sacrifice, it might be accepted for the service; but if otherwise, the priest must set a price on it for which it might be sold by the owner and the money placed in the treasury. In this case one-fifth more was to be added to the price, as a check perhaps, to prevent the making of rash vows.

### EXCLUSIONS FROM VOW (VV. 26-33)

Houses and fields might be vowed (vv. 14-25), upon the same principles as the foregoing. But three kinds of property could not be vowed: the firstlings of the beasts (v. 26); a "devoted thing," in the sense of an accursed thing like the property in Jericho, (vv. 28-29 compared with ~~AKV17~~ Joshua 7:17); and "the tithe of the land" (v. 30). The reason for these prohibitions was that these already belonged to God, so their human possessors had no right to them.

There is a serious matter here in the devotement or accursing of human beings, but we postpone its consideration till we meet with a conspicuous application of the principle at a later period.

## LAW OF THE TITHE

The tithe was one of the things belonging to God in any event, and which could not be voluntarily vowed.

This is specially interesting as raising the question whether the tithe is binding upon Christians at the present time. In our judgment it is not; but that does not mean that Christians may give according to impulse or caprice, since the New Testament lays down the principle of giving a fixed portion of our income to the Lord as He has prospered us (~~1~~1 Corinthians 16:1-2; ~~2~~2 Corinthians 8:7-9). It is customary under the Gospel to leave much to the individual conscience regarding the details of worship and conduct, which, under the Mosaic law was regulated by rule. Paul gives the explanation in ~~4~~Galatians 4:1-5.

## CHRISTIAN VOWS

Has a vow of any kind a place in the practical life of Christians? It seems not forbidden in the New Testament, but neither is it approved.

The true conception of Christian life and duty leaves no room for a promise to God of what is not due, inasmuch as through the transcendent obligation of grateful love to Him for our redemption, everything is due (~~2~~2 Corinthians 5:14-15).

The question is not speculative, since it constitutes one of the distinctions between Romanism and Protestantism. The Romish theory of works of supererogation comes in here, and closely associated with it, the doctrine of purgatory. Here is the germ of the celibate life of the clergy, of sisterhoods and monasticism, the tendency of which is towards legalism on the one hand and moral declension on the other (~~9~~Galatians 4:9; ~~16~~Colossians 2:16-23).

## QUESTIONS

1. What particular kind of vows is dealt with here?
2. For what service were persons vowed?
3. What properties could not be vowed, and why?
4. Quote ~~1~~1 Corinthians 16:1-2.
5. Is a vow normal in the Christian life?

## LAW OF THE TITHE

The tithe, or the dedication of the tenth of one's possessions to God, is a practice of antiquity, and a question arises as to whether the obligation is still resting upon those who would serve God in this dispensation? An answer was given in the last lesson, but it is desirable to enlarge upon it.

While we hear nothing of the tithe in the first Christian centuries, it came into practice in the fourth century, and later was established as a law of the church for some centuries.

The modern spirit has become more and more averse to it, until under the present voluntarism it has seemed likely to disappear altogether.

In consequence of this there has been a revival of interest in it of late as necessary for the maintenance and extension of the church, those who would revive it holding that the principle is still binding on the Christian.

In settling the question, it is to be remembered that the moral obligation is one thing and the legal another. Morally it is our duty to set apart for God a fixed proportion of our income, but the precise proportion is a subject on which the New Testament is silent. For the moral obligation see ~~1~~1 Corinthians 16:1-2, where no reference is made to the legal obligation. If the tithe had been still binding as to the letter, this would have been the place for the apostle to have mentioned it.

As a matter of fact, it is commonly found in the New Testament that the individual is left at liberty regarding the details of worship and conduct as compared with conditions under the Mosaic law (~~800~~Galatians 4:1-5).

One author however, calls attention to a matter of importance not commonly considered in the discussion of this subject. For example, the people of Israel were under a theocratic government, where God Himself ruled, where the whole system of law was divinely executed. When thus carried out this system would have prevented excessive accumulation of wealth in the hands of individuals, as we have seen in the consideration of earlier chapters of this book. There would thus have been secured an equal distribution of property, such as the world has never seen, and doubtless never will until the millennium. Under such circumstances it would have been possible to exact a certain proportion of income for sacred purposes with a certainty that it would have worked with perfect fairness to all.



But with us it is different. Wealth is unequally distributed in our economy, and no law of the tithe could be made to work as in Israel. To the poor it would be a heavy burden, and to the rich a tax so small as to amount to exemption. The poor man would sometimes be required to take bread out of the mouths of wife and children, while the millionaire would still have thousands to spend in luxuries. The latter might often more easily give nine-tenths of his income than the former one-twentieth.

While, therefore, the law of the tithe would not seem to be binding upon us to the letter, from the moral point of view it is still in force. It forbids the Christian to give simply according to impulse or whim. He is to lay by in store as the Lord hath prospered him. Let there be systematic giving to the Lord's work under the law of a fixed proportion of gifts to income, inspired by recalling God's grace to us (~~1~~2 Corinthians 7:9), and the Lord's treasury will never be empty, nor will the Lord Himself be robbed of His due.

## QUESTIONS

1. Is the tithe a Biblical conception only?
2. What is the difference between the moral and legal obligation to tithe?
3. Why could the tithe operate successfully in Israel?
4. Why not in our system of political economy?
5. What obligation of giving rests on Christians?