

## LESSON TEXT: Leviticus 1:1--5:19

Prepared by Paul T. Butler, Th.D.

### INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS:

George Atley, a young Englishman with the heart of a hero, was engaged in the Central African Mission. He was attacked by a party of native rebels. He had with him a Winchester repeating rifle with ten loaded chambers. The party was completely at his mercy. Calmly and quickly he summed up the situation. He concluded that if he killed them it would do the mission more harm than if he allowed them to take his life. So as a lamb to the slaughter he was led; and when his body was found in the stream, his rifle was also found with its ten chambers still loaded.

Back in the early 1970's the Portland *Oregonian* carried the story of the posthumous award of the Congressional Medal of Honor to black American soldier from the South. This soldier, with several buddies, was in a trench during a Viet Cong attack when a grenade was thrown into the trench. Without hesitation, the soldier encircled the grenade with his body and took the full force of the explosion. His commanding officer, in making the citation, said that his sacrificial and heroic act had saved the lives of the other soldiers in the trench.

**Sacrifice**--that's what the first 5 chapters of Leviticus is all about. The English word "sacrifice" comes from a combination of two Latin words, *sacrum* (something that is valuable, sacred, or devoted) and *facio* (to commit, to give up, to offer). Immediately after falling into sin, human beings were making *sacrifices* to God the Creator (Gen. 4:1-7). For thousands of years afterward God mandated through his revealed word that those who claimed to be worshipers of the One True God should make *sacrifices* unto him. Why?

Atonement! The word *atonement* comes from the Latin *ad* (at), and *unum* (one)--thus "unite, make into one." Sinful humanity estranged itself from its God but God immediately set about to unite his creatures back into oneness with himself. He planned to do this through the program of *sacrifice* (the giving up of something that is sacred and valuable, as an exchange for that which has become profane and invaluable). Temporarily, God ordained animal and vegetable sacrifices, but ultimately his plan was to give **himself** (in the Person of his Son) as **the absolute, complete, and final sacrifice**.

The Pentateuch (the Torah) or the first five books of the Bible should never, never be studied without also reading and re-reading the book of Hebrews in the New Testament---DO IT!

### QUESTIONS:

1. Why did the Israelite believer, *himself*, slay the burnt offering 1:3
2. What meaning is there in having the Israelite lay hands on the animal being sacrificed? 1:4
3. Why is the burnt offering to be completely consumed on the altar? 1:9,13
4. Why were offerings of grain, flour, and cakes to be composed without leaven and honey? 2:4,11 What did grain offerings **not** do? 2:11
5. Why did the grain offerings have to be salted down to every grain? 2:13
6. What's the reason for a difference between burnt and peace offerings? 3:1-15
7. Why is there a prohibition against eating blood and fat? 3:16-17
8. If the burnt offering is for atonement, why mandate a "sin" offering? 4:1,13,22,27 Why is the sin offering burned on the ash-heap? 4:11-12
9. Is it really a sin to lie under oath as a witness? 5:1
10. Should a person really be guilty of a sin if he didn't intend to do it? 5:17-19

"You have longed for sweet peace, and for faith to increase,  
And have earnestly, fervently prayed;  
But you cannot have rest or be perfectly blest  
Until all on the altar is laid.

Oh, we never can know what the Lord will bestow  
Of the blessings for which we have prayed,  
Till our body and soul He doth fully control,  
When our all on the altar is laid.

Is your all on the altar of sacrifice laid?  
Your heart, does the Spirit control?  
You can only be blest and have peace and sweet rest,  
As you yield Him your body and soul."

---Elisha A. Hoffman, 1839-1929

**On June 18, 1940, *The Times* of London published the last letter a young airman wrote to his mother. Pilot Officer, V. A. Rosewarne had written: "The universe is so vast and so ageless that the life of one man can only be justified by the measure of his sacrifice."**

--1000 Windows, by Robert C. Shannon

## LESSON TEXT: Leviticus 6:1--10:20

Prepared by Paul T. Butler

### INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS:

The following is borrowed from *The American Legion* magazine, May, 2000:

Each Memorial Day, we Americans take time to recall the sacrifices made by our veterans and honor them as heroes. For those who guard the Tomb of the Unknowns, however, remembering and honoring is a daily consecration. The importance of this duty is expressed in the Sentinel's Creed of the Guard of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier::

*My dedication to this sacred duty is total and wholehearted.*

*In the responsibility bestowed on me, never will I falter*

*And with dignity and perseverance, my standard will remain perfection.*

*Through the years of diligence and praise, and the discomfort of the elements, I will walk my tour in humble reverence to the best of my ability.*

*It is he who commands the respect I protect, his bravery that made us so proud.*

*Surrounded by well-meaning crowds by day, alone in the thoughtful peace of night, this soldier will in Honored Glory rest under my eternal vigilance.*

Now that's **consecration!** *Consecration* of a family of Israelites to the priesthood and what they were to do is our lesson in Leviticus chs. 6-10. Why did God go to such great lengths with such elaborate peculiarities to set apart a group of men for priests? Because the *Cohen* (Heb. priest) was to be God's *intermediary* between himself and sinful mankind. God wanted to communicate with humanity on humanity=s level so as to bring human beings upward to God's level. That would take a special, consecrated, holy, devoted, heavenly-minded person. Human priests, however, were sinners, too. So they had to make atonement for themselves.

God had planned all along to *consecrate himself* (in the Person of his Son) as the **ultimate, perfect, sinless, and final high-priest** for all who would accept him. So God came down to man, and drew man up to himself in the **absolute** priesthood in **Jesus Christ** (see Hebrews, chs. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10). Man needs no more human priests--THE PERFECT PRIEST LIVES FOREVER!

### QUESTIONS:

1. If a man deals falsely with a neighbor why should settlement involve a priest? 6:1-7
2. Why did the fire have to be kept burning on the altar? 6:13
3. Why are the matters about all the different kinds of offerings repeated? 6:14---7:38
4. What was the "breast plate" and what does it symbolize for Christians? 8:8 (See Exodus 28:15-30)
5. Why put the blood of a sacrifice on the right ear, thumb & toe? 8:23-24
6. Why would God threaten Aaron and his sons with death if they didn't remain in the tabernacle for 7 days? 8:33-35
7. What is the glory of the Lord that appeared to the people? 9:22-24
8. Isn't God over-reacting when he slays two beginner-priests for putting the wrong fire on the altar? 10:1-7
9. Why did Eleazar and Itahmar get away with their sin against the offering when Nadab and Abihu didn't? 10:16-20

The Swiss holy man, Nicholas of Flue, prayed, "O Lord, take from me what keeps me from Thee; give me what brings me to Thee; and take myself and give me Thyself!"

On the night of his graduation from medical college, Dr. Howard A. Kelly, world-famed surgeon, wrote in his diary: "I dedicate myself, my time, my capabilities, my ambition, everything to Him. Blessed Lord, sanctify me to Thy uses. Give me no worldly success which may not lead me nearer to my Savior!"

"For it was fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, blameless, unstained, separated from sinners, exalted above the heavens. He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people; he did this once for all when he offered up himself. Indeed, the law appoints men in their weakness as high priests, but the word the oath, which came later than the law, appoints a Son who has been made perfect for ever." --Hebrews 7:26-28

## LESSON TEXT: Leviticus 11:1--15:33

Prepared by Paul T. Butler, Th.D.

### INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS:

Our lesson today is about **the defilement of sin**. The Hebrew word for defilement is *tammea*. The English word *defile* originates in the Latin *de* "down" and *fullo* "trample under foot." Earlier it was "defoul." Synonyms are "make unclean, despised, polluted, befouled, besmeared, despoiled, corrupted."

A few years ago, a passenger on board a plane bound from Zurich to Beirut cried out that he was suffocating. The plane landed at Athens and Joseph Pasatour was taken to a hospital where he died. Undressing him, hospital attendants discovered that he was a smuggler and had on a corset with 1500 valuable Swiss watches. Closer examination revealed that the contraband merchandise had restricted his breathing and caused his death.

The history of human dereliction and the judgment of human conscience testify to the **defilement** of sin (rebellion) against God's word! Even nature itself testifies that man's sin (Rom. 1:18-32; 8:18-25) has **defiled** the good (perfect) creation God made at the beginning of time. The wages of sin is death.

Korean pagans have a curious New Year's custom. Desiring to forget unpleasant things and make a fresh start, each person determines what bad habits he would like to eliminate and what past deeds he wants forgiven. Then he writes the name of these evils on a *kite* and flies it high into the air. When it is almost out of sight, he cuts the string. As the paper "bird" takes a nosedive and disappears from the sight, he thinks that all his faults and previous transgressions are forever removed.

Human sin is a **defilement** against an absolutely holy God. It cannot be dealt with by *flying kites* of any kind, literal or philosophical! Absolute holiness cannot tolerate lawlessness, rebellion and sin--otherwise holiness would lose its absoluteness! If there is one lesson that needs to be repeated and repeated again and again it is that human beings are sinners--they are imperfect--they have defiled themselves and are unworthy to be in the presence of an absolutely holy God--*unless they have some ABSOLUTE way of being cleansed!*

### QUESTIONS:

1. God prohibits perfectly good and healthy food (pork, cat-fish) and allows the Israelites to eat crickets and grasshoppers! Why? 11:1-23
2. Isn't it going to extremes to order the Israelites to break any vessel into which an unclean animal might fall? 11:33
3. Name three reasons God gave the Israelites for not eating or touching what he declared unclean.
4. If the mother giving birth was unclean why wasn't the child to whom she gave birth? 12:1-8
5. Was the leprosy of Leviticus chapter 13 the same as what is called leprosy today? How do you know?
6. Why would one have to have atonement made through offerings for a disease he couldn't help getting? 14:1-32
7. How can a house get leprosy? 14:34-47
8. Why make atonement for a house by sprinkling blood mixed with water on the house when the leprosy is gone? 14:48-57
9. Why declare people unclean for genital discharges? 15:1-33

As a young man, still in his teens, Rembrandt van Rijn, the famous Dutch artist, painted a portrait of himself. But as a young, virile man he determined to deny himself no pleasure. He sought out every delight and followed his appetites. And one by one the torches of his life were snuffed out.. Twenty years later he painted another self-portrait. In middle age we see the artist shrunken, an old rag around his throat, weakness in his chin, the eyes heavy and dull, without vision or beauty. There are two pictures. The second shows the result of sin. His body was ruined by his own wickedness. In his youth he lived for high ideals and for God. Twenty years later, after living for self and sin, the lights had gone out of his life. His body was a noble mansion given over to darkness and decay.

--Encyclopedia of 7700 Illustrations

Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts! Isaiah 6:5

LESSON TEXT: Leviticus 16:1--20:27

Prepared by Paul T. Butler, Th.D.

INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS:

Right after God's message in his Law on **defilement**, he reveals a message on **atonement**. That is the focus of our lesson in these chapters.

Henry Ward Beecher, great preacher of the Gospel, said that a man who was starving to death would not go into the laboratory to try and figure out how wheat germinates in the soil nor demand a chemical analysis of bread. So those who are really conscious of their need for forgiveness are not concerned with the mechanics of the atonement, but only concerned that they themselves are the recipients of its effects.

James Denney once wrote about God's atonement for sin, "the divine necessity is not just to forgive, but to forgive in a way which shows that God is irreconcilable to evil, and can never treat it as other or less than it is." Because of the spiritual immaturity of the human race in OT times, God *symbolized* what he would do ultimately in order to effect atonement--taking life for life through animal sacrifices. The killing of a dumb, amoral, beast could not demonstrate the absolute righteousness and justice of God and at the same time his immeasurable love for man (Heb. 10:1-7).

B. B. Warfield wrote, "God *is* Love: but Love is not God and the formula Love must therefore ever be inadequate to express God...Assuredly it is impossible to put anything like their real content in these great words, God is love, save as they are thrown out against the background of those other conceptions of equal loftiness, God is Light...Righteousness...Holiness...a consuming fire. The love of God cannot be apprehended in its length and breadth and height and depth--all of which pass knowledge--save as it is apprehended as the love of a God who turns from the sight of sins with inexpressible abhorrence, and burns against it with unquenchable indignation...It is the distinguishing characteristic of Christianity, after all, not that it preaches a God of love, but that it preaches a God of conscience."

That was the purpose of animal sacrifices--to build a conscience against sin and a cleansed conscience in the atoned-for sinner! But animal sacrifices were inadequate to fulfill this program in the ultimate sense. Only a **Perfect Human Sacrifice** could bring God's plan for atonement to fulfillment (see Romans 8:3-11 and Hebrews chs. 9 & 10).

QUESTIONS:

- 1) What purpose was served by the scape-goat? 16:1-22
- 2) How significant was *Yom Kippur* (Day of Atonement) for the Israelite? 16:29-34 Do you think God honors modern Jewish observance of Yom Kippur?
- 3) Does 17:3,4,8,9 mean that the Israelite had to bring every animal he ate to be killed at the tabernacle?
- 4) Why did God make a prohibition against eating blood? 17:10-11 Is this still a prohibition for a believer? (Acts 15:19-21)
- 5) Why not have sexual relations or marriage with near of kin? 18:1-18 (1 Cor. 5:1-13).
- 6) Does God prohibit homosexual relations only for Israelites? 18:19-30 (Rom. 1:26-27; 1 Cor. 6:9-11; 1 Tim. 1:8-11)
- 7) How can one love his neighbor and rebuke him? 19:17-18 (Matt. 18:15-20; Gal. 6:1-2; Eph. 5:11; 2 Thess. 3:6-15; 1 Tim. 5:20; 2 Tim. 2:4; Titus 1:10-15; 3:10, etc.)
- 8) Does God expect us (younger) in the NT dispensation to rise up (respect) before the hoary head (those older)? 19:32
- 9) Why should God have to warn any human being, and especially his chosen people not to slay and sacrifice children to idols (Molech)? 20:1-5
- 10) Why would God sentence people to death for adultery or bestiality? Aren't sexual indiscretions non-hurtful sins? 20:10-16

The famous pirate Gibbs, whose name was for many years a terror to commerce with the West Indies and South America, was at last taken captive, condemned and executed in the city of New York. He acknowledged before his death that when he committed the first murder and plundered the first ship, compunctions were severe; conscience was on the rack and made a hell within his bosom. But after he had sailed for years under the black flag, his conscience became so hardened and blunted that he could rob a vessel and murder all its crew, and then lie down and sleep as sweetly at night as an infant in its cradle His remorse diminished as his crimes increased. And that is why God demanded such repetition in animal sacrifices in the OT and why Jesus wants us to partake of the Lord's Supper every week, 1 Cor. 11:8ff; 2 Cor. 13:5ff.

A few years ago, in Montana, on opening day, wild game protectors put this sign on a main road: "Check-Station 1000 Yards Ahead." At 500 yards there was a convenient side road. Lawful hunters went straight ahead. The Over-limit check-station--It was 500 yards down the side road! and doubtful hunters ducked down the side road.

LESSON TEXT: Leviticus 21:1--24:23

Prepared by Paul T. Butler, Th.D.

INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS:

Today's lesson is mostly about **worship**. I have concluded after many years of worshiping and studying and teaching the Bible that **worship** is the *expression* of thoughts and feelings aroused by being reminded of the truths of the Bible (see 2 Peter 1:12-15). That *expression* or *worship* may be all three or either of Biblical ritual, personal holiness, and benevolent deeds. But it is ***the truth of God's word*** that **arouses worship** not entertainment, not ambience, and not the "inner-self." Without God's truth to provoke the mind and conscience, human beings would *never* worship God but would become not only indifferent, they would inevitably live on the level of dumb beasts (Rom. 1:18-32)!

Henry H. Halley explains in his *Bible Handbook*, "**Going to Church as an Act of Worship**: By this we mean the Motive that prompts it; the thing in our mind before we go that makes us start; doing it as a matter of common Christian principle, as an act of Conscience toward God, an obligation to Christ; not caring especially whom we may see, or what we may hear; going, if need be, in spite of what we expect to hear; finding our chief satisfaction in the thought that we are doing our duty to our God."

More than a hundred years ago, Alexander Paterson Smith gave this definition of worship: "To worship God is to make Him the supreme object our esteem and delight, both in public, private, and secret." And nobody worshiped better than Sir William Temple. He wrote, "To worship is to quicken the conscience by the holiness of God, to feed the mind with the truth of God, to purge the imagination by the beauty of God, to open the heart to the love of God, to devote the will to the purpose of God."

So be in BIBLE SCHOOL and learn from God's instructions to the Israelites of old what true worship is all about. You may be *surprised* to learn that God is very *strict* and *arbitrary* about his "chosen people" following his instructions on how **he** wants to be **worshiped**.

"Worship has occurred when life responds with an openness to how God could change our lives."

--C. Neil Strait

QUESTIONS:

- 1) Isn't prohibiting an Israelite priest from trimming his beard, and forbidding the high priest from showing emotion even at the death of his parents a little extreme? 21:1-15
- 2) How would the law about physical blemishes prohibiting a man from the priesthood play in our "handicap-sensitive" society? 21:16-24
- 3) Why was God so adamant against anyone profaning an offering? 22:1-16
- 4) What is the definition of an "unblemished offering" and why? 22:17-33
- 5) What is the significance of God demanding the "first" fruit of an Israelite's harvest? 23:9-22
- 6) Does God honor present day observance of these feast days? 23:14,21,31,41
- 7) What are the booths Israelites were to dwell in at the "Feast of Booths"? 23:42 Why? 23:43
- 8) Why do you think the priests were to eat a portion of the 12 loaves once each week? 24:5-9
- 9) What is cursing the name of God? 24:10-16 Is that different than just cursing? How?
- 10) Is the death penalty for murder a Christian precept? 24:17-23

"It is only when men begin to worship that they begin to grow."  
--Calvin Coolidge, 30<sup>th</sup> President of the U.S.A. (1929-1932)

"One of the acid tests of a Christian is his attitude toward his possessions. Someone has figured out that one out of every four verses in the Gospels is related to this attitude. I think the emphasis can be condensed into a single phrase: *What we worship determines what we become*. If we worship material possessions, we tend to grow more materialistic. If we worship self, we become more selfish still. That is why Christ continually endeavored to direct men=s worship."

--Harvey F. Ammerman

LESSON TEXT: Leviticus 25:1--27:34

Prepared by Paul T. Butler, Th.D.

INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS:

Trusting God! That's what we all believe we are doing as Christians. A man once wrote, "When I would beget contentment and increase confidence in the power and wisdom and providence of Almighty God, I will walk the meadows by some gliding stream, and there contemplate the lilies that take no care, and those very many other little creatures that are not only created by, but fed (man knows not how), by the goodness of the God of Nature, and therefore trust in Him."

Back in the 1930's during the Depression one often saw this sign in most retail stores—"In God we trust--All others pay cash!" If America experienced another financial disaster like the 30's "depression" how many would trust God? Also, during the 1930's America's middle-west suffered one of it's worst droughts often called the "dust-bowl." John Steinback wrote a novel (later made into a motion picture) about it called, *The Grapes of Wrath*. Should another year or two without rain occur in the bread-basket of the U.S. would Americans trust God or big government? When another tragedy or disaster occurs such as the massacre at Columbine, in Oklahoma City, or the World Trade Center in NY, will we trust God or human psychology?

John Henry Newman (1801-1890) wrote, "Life passes, riches fly away, popularity is fickle, the senses decay, the world changes, friends die. One alone is constant; One alone is true to us; One alone can be true; One alone can be all things to us; One alone can supply our needs; One alone can train us up to our full perfection; One alone can give a meaning to our complex and intricate nature; One alone can give us tune and harmony; One alone can form and possess us."

Our lesson today in Leviticus chapters 25,26,27, is about **trusting God**. Even when we cannot understand, and when we think we know better than God, he wants us to *genuinely trust* him. Read Hebrews chapter 11 for a hall of fame of those who **really trusted God!**

***"All I have seen teaches me to trust the Creator for all I have not seen."***

--Ralph Waldo Emerson

QUESTIONS:

- 1) Could American farmers go one full year without planting or harvesting a crop? How would we all eat? 25:1-7
- 2) Why would God require people every 50<sup>th</sup> year to set free indentured servants, cancel all debts and give back any land they had bought? 25:8-22
- 3) Why give a city dweller only one year to redeem his house? 25:23-34
- 4) Would it be practical in our modern society to take the poor into our homes today? 25:35-43
- 5) How could God sanction slavery? 25:44-46 Were Abraham Lincoln and the abolitionists wrong after all?
- 6) What were the conditions upon which God promised Israel they would defeat all their enemies? 26:1-13 Did they?
- 7) Did the Israelites ever suffer the judgments God warned they might? 26:14-39
- 8) When was Leviticus 26:40-46 fulfilled? Is it yet to be fulfilled?
- 9) Was Jesus wrong to accuse the Pharisees of doing what Leviticus 27:28-29 commands to be done?
- 10) Is the *tithe* a Christian guide for giving to God? 27:30-34 (2 Cor. 8 & 9).

The text found in Psalms 118:9, "It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man" *is the middle verse of the Bible*.

Joseph R. Sizoo, former preacher of the New York Ave. Presbyterian Church in Washington D. C. which Abraham Lincoln often attended, said he would never forget the day he held in his hands for the first time the Bible of Abraham Lincoln. It was the Bible from which Lincoln's mother had read to him as a child. She had taught him to commit to memory many of its passages. It was the only possession Lincoln carried from Pigeon Creek, KY, to the Sangamon River in IL. With this book in his hand, preacher Sizoo wondered where it would fall open. It opened to a page which was thumb-marked and which Lincoln must have read many times. It was the 37<sup>th</sup> Psalm—"Fret not thyself because of evil doers....Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him." (Psa. 37:1,7).--*Encyclopedia of 7700 Illustrations*