



PT Butler

Bible Study Notebooks

Study of Leviticus

Prepared by Paul T. Butler, Th.D.

chapter	page
introduction	2
1:1 – 5:19	6
6:1 - 10:20	10
11:1 – 15:33	14
16:1 – 20:27	19
21:1 – 24:23	26
25:1 – 27:34	33
bio	39

LEVITICUS

The theme of Leviticus is:

“For I am the Lord who brought you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God; you shall therefore be holy, for I am holy.” (Lev. 11:45; 22:33; 25:38; 26:45)

James E. Smith, in his book, *The Pentateuch*, in the College Press “Old Testament Survey Series,” 1992, says this about **Leviticus**: “With twenty-seven chapters, 859 verses and 24,546 words Leviticus is the shortest book in the Mosaic collection. A somewhat cynical analyst observed, “Leviticus is a dust heap containing a single pearl —‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself’ (19:18). To the casual reader, this book represents the epitome of Old Testament irrelevance. Leviticus is full of minute descriptions of ancient rituals which have not been performed now for almost two thousand years. Christian theology argues that all these ceremonies have been rendered obsolete by the once-for-all-time sacrifice of Jesus Christ. As the name suggests, here is a handbook for a priesthood long since replaced in the plan of God by the priesthood of believers in Christ. So why study Leviticus?”

Smith answers that---and we shall condense his answers along with notes from other sources (e.g. *Halley’s Bible Handbook*, etc.) as our “Introduction” to Leviticus.

The word *Leviticus* means, “pertaining to Levites.” The book contains the system of laws, administered by the Levitical Priesthood, under which the Hebrew nation lived. These laws were given mostly at Mt. Sinai, with additions, repetitions and explanations throughout the wilderness wanderings. Levi, one tribe out of the Twelve, was set apart for the religious work of God. God took them, in lieu of all the Israelite first-born sons. The Levites were supported by tithes and had 48 cities (Num. 35:7; Josh. 21:19). One *specific* family of the Levites, **Aaron and his descending sons**, were set apart to be **priests**. The rest of the Levites were to be assistants to the priests. Their duties were the care of the tabernacle, and later, of the temple; and to be teachers, scribes, musicians, officers, and judges (1 Chron. 23). Incidentally, Moses was from the tribe of Levi (a brother to Aaron).

Leviticus, the third book of the Bible, is probably the least read of the entire 66 books of the Bible! However, *Leviticus* should be of very significant interest and edification to every Christian! The Bible of Jesus contained this book. More than **forty** New Testament references to Leviticus have been identified. As ceremonial requirements, these laws are no longer valid. **However**, their underlying principles are as valid today as during the old dispensation.

In Leviticus God sought to govern either by broad principles or specific precepts, *the whole of the life of his people*. While in 8 passages Moses speaks to the priests, **in 17 passages** Moses speaks to the children of Israel. What God wanted as revealed in *Leviticus* might be summed up in the words of Paul, “Whether therefore you eat, or drink, or whatsoever you do, do all to the glory of God” (1 Cor. 10:31). Everything in the book of Leviticus is calculated to *stimulate the spiritual life*. Sanitary and dietary laws are not laid

down for the sake of diet and sanitation, but are God's way of distinctively delineating a *consecrated life* for a *chosen people*. Details of ritual are prescribed to express the sense of the holiness of God in whose service the *chosen people* are called. The purpose of the law was to make Israel a Holy Nation.

The book of *Leviticus* is a "picture" book. In it is set forth a ritual typology (verbal or material *representation*) through which the spiritual redemptive program of God is *pictorially* predicted! There are **27** different types involved in 462 verses.

The **last** event in Exodus (the erection of the tabernacle) is dated to the **first** day of the **first** month of the **second** year of the exodus (Ex. 40:17). The **first** event in Numbers (the census at Sinai) is dated to the **first** day of the **second** month of the same (**second**) year (Num. 1:1). *Leviticus, therefore, covers only one month sometime between those two events.* Leviticus is therefore **central** in the Law chronologically, and it is also theologically **central**. With its doctrine of mediation through sacrifice and priesthood, and reconciliation at the altar, Leviticus is the very **heart** of the Mosaic books —**and of the Gospel as well!**

James E. Smith has charted the **Thought Progression in the Pentateuch** as follows:

<u>Genesis</u>	<u>Exodus</u>	<u>Leviticus</u>
God's Remedy for Man's Ruin	God's Answer for Man's Cry	God's Provision for Man's Need
The Seed of Woman (Gn. 3:15)	The Blood of a Lamb (Ex. 13-14)	Priest/Altar/Sacrifice
The Problem of Sin	The Possibility of Salvation	The Provision for Service

Exodus begins with enslaved sinners; Leviticus with redeemed saints. In Exodus God got his people out of Egypt; in Leviticus he got Egypt out of his people. Exodus is the book of deliverance emphasizing the fact of sacrifice; Leviticus is the book of dedication and sets forth the doctrine of sacrifice. In Exodus God speaks from the mount, and *God* approaches man. In Leviticus God speaks from the tent, and *man* learns to approach God.

The book of Leviticus can be summarized, "Sacrifices and Sanctity." This book demands that **holiness is essential**. The first part of the book told the Israelite how he might approach a holy God; the second part told him how he might maintain his relationship with the Lord. Leviticus stresses the **sanctification of the nation**. In this book God emphasizes that his people must be set apart to his service. **Holiness must govern every aspect of their life**. The abiding lesson in the book is that **holiness is essential**.

Exodus speaks of redemption and instruction. Leviticus speaks of fellowship with God, of holiness and worship. Leviticus may be outlined under seven main points.

The Great Problem: Sin.

The Great Provision: Sacrifice.

The Great Power: Priesthood.

The Great Plan: The Day of Atonement.

The Great Possibility: Access to God

The Great Principle: Holiness.

The Great Privilege: the Presence of God.

Two religions—Judaism and Christianity—claim Leviticus as divinely authoritative. Yet neither religion practices the rituals prescribed in this book. For ancient Judaism the destruction of the temple signaled a period of punishment. Modern Jews believe that study of Torah (the Law) supersedes sacrifice. Orthodox Jews, however, continue to look forward to a restoration of the sacrificial ritual and priesthood in a restored temple. Christianity has approached the book in a different way. The apostles looked upon the book typologically as a **foreshadowing** (Heb. 10:1-25) of the sacrifice made by Christ. The apostles rejected the notion that the authority of Leviticus was bound to a literal observance of its laws. The Mosaic law in its entirety was part of a system which **anticipated** its own replacement with a better system, a new covenant (Jer. 3:15-18; 31:31-34; Heb. 8:1-13; 9:1-28; 10:1-39).

Oswald T. Allis wrote concerning Leviticus, “This is the New Testament gospel for sinners stated in Old Testament terms and enshrined in the ritual of sacrifice; and it finds its fullest expression in the ritual of the day of atonement.” So the *typology* of Leviticus is couched in five different areas: **(a)** the stigmata (i.e., that which made the Israelite “unclean”); **(b)** the sacrifices and offerings; **(c)** the appointed times (feasts & fasts); **(d)** the priesthood; and **(e)** the high priest.

Each of the five basic sacrifices of Leviticus points forward to a feature of Christ’s **one, complete, final** sacrifice: **(a)** the burnt offering, a sweet smelling savor (Eph. 5:2) portrays Christ’s perfect commitment; **(b)** the meal offering typifying Christ’s perfect manhood which alone made his sacrifice acceptable—no corrupting element (e.g., leaven) could be added to meal offerings (Heb. 10:1-18); **(c)** the peace offering symbolized fellowship with God (Eph. 2:14); **(d)** the sin offering depicted sin covered by blood, removed and judged (1 Cor. 5:21; 1 Pet. 2:24); **(e)** the trespass offering required payment of a penalty—Christ gave his life a ransom (Mt. 20:28; 2 Cor. 5:21).

Eleven appointed times are commanded in Leviticus. At least 9 of these have more or less obvious typological significance **(a)** the weekly Sabbath points to the eternal rest of God’s people (Heb. 4:9); **(b)** the lamb of the annual Passover depicts Christ, the Christian’s Passover (1 Cor. 5:7); **(c)** the feast of Unleavened Bread suggests the holy walk of believers (1 Cor. 5:8); **(d)** the required presentation of first-fruits each year reminds the Christian that Jesus was the first-fruits of those who sleep (1 Cor. 15:33); **(e)**

the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost) reminds the Christian of the coming of the Holy Spirits (Acts 2:4); (f) the blowing of trumpets at the beginning of the year points to the ingathering of God's people from all tribes and tongues through the Gospel (Matt. 24:31); (g) the Day of Atonement sets forth the death, resurrection and ascension of Christ in beautiful symbolism—what Isaiah 53 is to Messianic prophecy, Leviticus 16 is to the whole system of Mosaic types, the most consummate flower of the Messianic symbolism; (h) the Feast of Tabernacles (Ingathering) portrays the worship in the Messianic kingdom (Zech 14:16-18) by people from every tribe and tongue on earth; (i) and the year of Jubilee (the 50th year)—the year of release and freedom—symbolizes the freedom and restoration the Christian has in Christ (Isa.61:2; Luke 4:19; John 8:31-38).

Exodus 29 and Leviticus 8 list eight steps in the consecration of the Old Testament priesthood. Each of these steps finds a counterpart in the ordination of the New Testament priesthood of all believers: (a) sons of Aaron were *called* to be priests (Ex. 29:4)—Christians are *called* to priesthood through the Gospel (2 Pet. 2:9); (b) OT candidates were *washed* with water (Lev. 8:6)—candidates for Christian priesthood have been *washed* in baptism (Acts 22:16; Heb. 10:22; Titus 3:5); (c) after washing came *robing* (Lev. 8:7-9)—in baptism the Christian “puts on Christ” (Gal. 3:27; Rev. 3:18; Rom. 13:14); (d) anointing with oil came next (Lev. 8:12)—the Christian has received the gift of the Holy Spirit—that which the oil of the OT symbolized (1 Jn. 2:20-,27; 4:13; Acts. 2:38); (e) blood was applied to the garments of Aaron and his sons (Lev. 8:30)—so also the heart of the Christian has been “sprinkled” (cleansed and consecrated) with the blood of Christ (Heb. 10:22); (f) through this ceremony the sons of Aaron were consecrated or made holy (Ex. 29:21)—Christians are a holy people (Heb. 10:10); (g) the sacrifices were then eaten by the candidates (Lev. 8:31)—Christians partake of their sin offering which is Christ (John 6:63; Heb. 13:10-12; 2 Pet. 1:3-4).

J. Sidlow Baxter, in his book, *Explore The Book*, 1960, lists **4 great values of the book of Leviticus for the Christian today**: (a) Leviticus reveals to the Christian the character of God as much as it revealed that character to Israel of old—God has not changed; (b) Leviticus symbolically sets forth the basic principles which underlie all dealing between God and men—these principles have not changed—the spiritual realities which they pictorially presented abide for all time; (c) Leviticus suggests principles which should govern civil legislation today—the book sheds light on property rights, marriage and divorce, capital and labor, religion and the state and many similar issues; and (d) Leviticus is a treasury of symbolic and typical teaching—here the great facts of the New Covenant are *illustrated* in the great types of the Old.

LEVITICUS 1:1—5:19

The Israelite believer had to **bring and slay** the “burnt offering” himself in order to learn that this offering was to make **atonement** for his sins. He would learn that **only** an animal **acceptable** to God would suffice. It was to be “without blemish.” It was to be in Hebrew a *par ben-boqor* (a “bullock” or “son-of-the-herd”—a young male). The best, most precious, unblemished, costliest, dearest animal a man had was the only sacrifice acceptable to the Lord! And this is a “type” of the Lord Jesus Christ, a “Son-of-the-herd of humanity”—the best, most perfect, costliest, dearest of all humans. The Israelite couldn’t disengage himself from the bringing and the slaying of this “burnt offering.” He had to be totally involved! He could not leave his responsibility up to someone else—no priest (or preacher or elder) could do it for him. God wanted to see the individual believer involved—mentally, physically, emotionally—in the process of his atonement. **We** put the precious “Son of God” to death by our sins. Our sins were the **cause** of Christ’s death. While it was God alone who created the bullock, created the human being, and created the system of atonement, the one atoned for must become an actor, a doer, a participator in his atonement. That is why God, in the New dispensation, has ordained for those atoned for by the blood of Christ some “commandments” to **DO** (e.g., confess one’s faith before others, be immersed in water, worship, observe the Lord’s Supper, evangelize, give of one’s time, talents, and “possessions”). God made us and he made all those “things” but he wants our **involvement** in our own redemption to remind us that **we** were the cause of Christ’s death in atonement for our sins.

Before the worshiper slew the bullock, he “placed his hands upon the head of the bullock” and actually **leaned** upon it (the Hebrew text in Lev. 1:4 says *nesemakh*). This action is called *the semikah* and expresses full identification. By this significant action the offerer and the offering became one. The offerer signified he knew the bullock was a **vicarious** (a substitute, representative) offering in atonement, in place of himself, for his sins. After “leaning upon” the animal, the worshiper then slit the animal’s throat as the priest caught the blood in a pan. Thus the worshiper had vividly impressed upon his mind that the wages of sin is death! What a blessed consolation it must have been to the Israelite to trust (have faith in) God that this animal would (at least temporarily) atone for his sins *until* God should provide the **perfect Lamb**. It did not take long, however, for most of Israel to make such offerings into nothing more than ritualistic sham! (See Isa. 1:10-20). The Israelites very soon after God’s giving of this Law began to trust, not in God, but in their own self-righteousness and even in “other gods.” God forbid that we should “lean” on any other than Jesus Christ for the atonement of our sins! Not even on ourselves!

The bullock offered as a burnt offering had to be without blemish. Thus the animal had to be skinned and quartered to make sure it was “without blemish.” Then it was washed to signify purification, and then totally consumed upon the altar of burnt offering. The fact that the offering was to be **totally** consumed was to signify that God is a “consuming fire” (Heb. 12:29). Nothing short of total obliteration of human sin will please God. When sins and iniquities are set before God, even as the sacrifice was, they must be consumed by his righteous indignation. Nothing of this “substitute” must be left

—it must be **totally** “burnt-up.” Nothing is left of the worshiper’s sin—it is all gone at least for that time—but the OT worshiper could not have his conscience totally cleansed by *unwilling, sub-human*, animal sacrifices (Heb. 10:1-7). It is such a magnificent blessing that we in the New dispensation can read, “For our sake he made him (Christ) to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God” (2 Cor. 5:21). And again, “And by that will (the willingness of God and Christ) we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ *once for all*...But when Christ had offered *for all time* a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, then to wait until his enemies should be made a stool for his feet. *For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are sanctified*” (Heb. 10:10-14). Our sins are totally, completely, finally, and perfectly atoned for by Christ who was, one might symbolically say, “totally burnt-up” in hell for our sins. He suffered the “second death” for us!

The “meal” offering (offerings of grain, flour and cakes) were to be composed without “leaven” (yeast) because leaven is a bacteria—thus, a “contaminating” element. Honey was also “impure.” The Hebrew word *minechah*, is translated “cereal-offering” (RSV) and “meal-offering” (ASV). It was a mixture of flour, olive-oil and incense. The Hebrew word means literally, “a gift-offering” from the word for “gift.” It was never offered by itself but only as a part of one of the other offerings. This handful of flour-oil-incense (“dough”) is given to the priest and he burns a portion of it upon the altar as a **memorial**, and what is left was to be retained by the priests. “It is a most holy part of the offerings by fire to the Lord.” The portion on the altar was to be “consumed” totally by the fire. By this offering the Israelite worshiper is saying to God, “Because of this offering **remember** me.” Perhaps these “cereal-offerings” (only in a small portion) symbolize that the worshiper has only a “small handful of contribution” in the redemptive **vicarious** program of God who works through *his* own infinite, divine, will and pre-determination! If we are *involved* in the redemptive process on our own, it is but a small contribution compared to the One sacrificed on the Cross in our place! The fact that these “cake-offerings” were **always** used with **another** offering signifies that “meal-offerings” alone could not atone for the worshiper’s sin.

Salt was used with **all** sacrifices of whatever kind or for whatever purpose—not just with the “cereal-offering.” Salt is an emblem of incorruption and perpetuity. Salt was also an emblem of “covenant-making.” Anytime a covenant was made in the OT salt was always used as a confirmatory ingredient. Death and corruption are the results of sin, and although Christ was made a sin offering and suffered death for us, still, because Christ was sinless, God did not suffer his Holy One to see corruption (Psa. 16:10). Christians are a kind of “salt” of the earth—cleansed of corruption, given life eternal, and living, walking demonstrations of “covenant-relationship” with God through Christ. Christians are to present their *bodies* as “living sacrifices...” (Rom. 12:1-2) and “offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name...” and not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God” (Heb. 13:15-16).

There were many differences between the “peace” offering and the “burnt” offering; (a) the peace or “thank” offering could come from the herd (bulls) or from the flock (sheep) or from goats; (b) it could be either male or female; (c) part of the peace

offering (the breast and thigh) was to be retained as food for the priests and the worshiper; **(d)** the peace offering was not primarily for acceptance before God, but for **the enjoyment** of God's acceptance. Still, the peace offering had to be without blemish, and none of the fat or blood could be consumed. Furthermore, like the "burnt offering" the worshiper had to "lean upon" (place hands upon) the head of the victim for the peace offering, and the animal is slain at the door of the tabernacle by the worshiper declaring that he is responsible for this animal's death because of his sin. This peace offering was clearly symbolic or typical of Jesus Christ upon whom the "chastisement of our peace was laid (Isa. 53:5; Eph. 2:11-22; Col. 1:20). And, peace having been made by God between himself and the sinner, the sinner can come rejoicing back into **fellowship** with God which is typified by the fact that the worshiper and the priests could both sit down to a meal from the remainder of this peace-offering!

The reason for the prohibition of the eating of blood, whether in the case of the peace-offering specifically, or on other occasions is given plainly in Leviticus 17:11-12. God prohibited the use of blood for food because blood is the vehicle of life and the very essence of the offering (i.e., substituting life for life)! The reason for the prohibition for the eating of "fat" is the same—"fat" is the sustenance of life and the "best" part of the offering. The worshiper consecrated his vicarious sacrifice in its essence and all of its best to God and was to do the same with himself when he made the offering. There was a heavy penalty attached to the violation of this law prohibiting the eating of blood and fat— whoever did so was to be "cut off" from Israel (disfranchised, excommunicated, cast out). By this the Israelite was reminded of the exceeding importance that these two things had in the mind of God. Christians are obligated by the grace of Christ to consecrate their lives in totality to God (Rom. 12:1-2; 1 Cor. 6:19-20; 7:23; Phil. 3:7-11; 1 Pet. 1:18-19, etc.).

The "burnt offering" was for atonement for sin that the worshiper **knew** he had committed. The "sin offering" was for "sins of **ignorance**" (Hebrew *visigagah*, "through ignorance"). It was not for sins of omission, but for sins committed by a person, when at the time, he did not suppose that what he did was sin. Although he did the thing deliberately, he did not perceive the sin of it. So deceitful is sin, we may be committing an abomination in the eyes of God and we do not even recognize it as sin! It may be a lack of knowledge or a calloused conscience that leads us to this "ignorant" sin, but it is sin nevertheless! God provided, even in the OT, for atonement for such sin! Let no one say the God of the OT was not a God of grace! Even the very skin and all its entrails—even the dung—of the "sin offering" were to be burned on the ash heap. The sin-offering was to be even more completely consumed than the "burnt offering"! The worshiper was not to forget the awfulness of sin because he had made atonement by the "burnt offering." "Outside" the camp is about 4 miles away from the tabernacle. In all sacrifices this separation from God's altar (i.e., from God) is represented by the ashes being carried away out of the camp. But, to call attention still more to this special truth that we sin even when we don't realize it and that God cannot tolerate any sin at all, the Israelite took the "sin offering" itself out to the ash-heap and burned it all there! Could this symbolize hell itself? Hell is where unredeemed sinners shall be burned with the smoke of their torment going up forever and ever away from the presence of God (Rev. 14:10)

Someone has called the sins described in Leviticus 5:1-13 as "the sins of

inadvertency—when we sinned and hardly knew we did it— **unintentional** (Gal. 6:3). And the first of such sins is that of not remembering to tell all we know even if unintentional! If we hear the judge administer an oath to us and we fail to tell what we know (for whatever cause) we are, when we withhold information, sinning! That would be the case whether we are under oath if we are asked specifically for the truth by someone else for a good purpose or not,! Even if we commit an act of “uncleanness” and **forget** it but are reminded of it by ourselves or someone else, we have sinned! You see, God demands **absolute** holiness in order to dwell in his presence! What grace, what love, what majestic glory, that God provides a way of **making** us holy, if we accept his way of **vicarious sacrifice** in our place! Our right to live forever in God’s presence can’t be claimed on the basis of our self-righteousness, for God knows we sin when we don’t know we’ve sinned!

Suppose a man forgot and ate the first fruits of his farm or garden and failed to bring it to the Lord? He must restore the amount and add one-fifth (Deut. 15:19). All the honor due God and **more** will be exacted by him! “If any one sins, doing any of the things which the Lord has commanded not to be done, though he does not know it, yet he is guilty and shall bear his iniquity” Lev. 5:17. Surely the knowledge of what was right and what God required is always within reach of mankind, for God has revealed it in nature and in word. **When we sin, even in ignorance, it is willful ignorance!** Nadab and Abihu were consumed not because they sinned only in ignorance, but in defective, high-handed ignorance. A particular type of sin is here considered, but the principle is the same. We defraud God in our worship—we fail “to discern the body”—or to sin with the *mind* and the Spirit—not because we could not but because we will not. When it happens we hardly know it has but we **are responsible and need atonement lest we bear our iniquity**. The only way we can believe that we sin unwittingly, is to believe that the Bible, is inerrant, revealed, and divinely inspired from God Almighty, himself! **GOD CANNOT AND DOES NOT CONSIDER SIN A LIGHT MATTER!**

LEVITICUS 6:1—10:20

It is so easy to cheat or betray the trust of a neighbor! Sometimes we don't even remember that we have done so! What if we "borrow" something from a neighbor and forget to return it—take a small loan of money and forget to pay it back—lose or let be ruined some machinery a neighbor loans us? Even so small a matter as dealing falsely (defrauding) a neighbor is a sin that has to be atoned. We may disregard such a small thing as insignificant, **but God does not** (2 Kings 6:5; Exodus 22:7). What if we "oppress" a (intimidate, slander, belittle, even ignore) a neighbor? What if we find what a neighbor lost and say, "Finder's keepers, losers weepers"? **NO! EVEN THAT IS A SIN!** Thus, even in the Old Testament, the sinner should have a **guilty** conscience about that and not only go to a **priest** and give an offering for atonement, but he should make restitution to the victim of the loss and add a fifth (20%) of its value to the restitution. If this isn't the "Golden Rule" in legislative form, I don't know what would be! God is **exceedingly jealous** for the **rights** of every person, and even **more jealous** for his own holiness. If an Israelite is claiming Jehovah as his God, the Israelite **must be holy in every "insignificant" matter of life.**

Two lambs a year old, were to be offered upon the altar, **continually, day by day** (Ex. 29:38-46; Num. 28:3-10). The **continual** burnt offerings "at the door of the tent of meeting before the Lord" would be where the Lord would **meet the people and speak with them through the priest (Urim & Thumim) officiating.** The **continual** burnt offering was to be sanctified by the Lord's glory. Thus the fire on the altar was to be kept burning, **continually.** The size of the altar, the number of animals being burned, the pile of wood continually replenished, would make a "banked fire" that would last all day and all night! This "unquenchable" fire should remind the sinner that Hell (God's place for the punishment of sin) burns forever (Matt. 18:7-9; Mk. 9:44-50; Lk. 16:19-31; Rev. 14:9-11; 19:20-21; 10:14; 21:7; 22:14-15). **ONLY THE GRACE OF GOD IN PROVIDING "A LAMB" AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR THE UNQUENCHABLE FIRE KEEPS SINNERS FROM BURNING IN THAT FIRE FOREVER!**

The Israelite clearly needed every **reminder** God gave him about sacrifices, offerings, priesthood, etc. We note how soon they forgot them after they became affluent and secure in the days of Solomon! How easily we forget! **How often we need to be reminded!** REPETITION IS **THE** FUNDAMENTAL OF LEARNING! It was a sad day in the modern American educational system when "progressive education" "trashed" the concept of learning to spell and learning multiplication tables, etc, by **rote-memorizing!** Human beings must learn the grammar of their language by "rote-memorization." There's no other way to learn grammar except by memorizing the paradigms of nouns and verbs. The main reason we have so much bad English grammar in today's speakers and writers is that these "communicators" did not learn their grammar by rote-memorization (the same is to be said of the modern lack of ability to "cipher"). Illustration picked off the internet-news: "In the Los Angeles Unified School District (2nd largest in the U.S.), the policy of passing students with failing grades will continue unabated next year because some 350,000 students, almost one half of the 711,000 students, would not make advance if the system flunked flunking students." Even God ordained that his people

should learn his “law” by rote memory (Deut. 6:4-9; 6:20-25; 11:18-25). GOD KNOWS MAN—HE MADE MAN—GOD KNOWS THAT MAN IS PRONE TO FORGET, EITHER BY INDIFFERENCE OR DELIBERATELY! Our first parents “**forgot**” God’s warning about the “tree” in Eden! So human beings have been “**forgetting**” God’s word ever since! GOD HAS TO REPEAT, AND REPEAT, AND REPEAT, HIS COMMANDMENTS—EVEN IN THE NEW TESTAMENT! That is why we are to “stir up one another to love and good works (by) not neglecting to meet together (to) encourage one another...” (Heb. 10:23-25). It is why we must be **reminded so we can recall** the words of the apostles (1 Tim. 4:6; 2 Tim. 1:6; 2:14; 2 Pet. 1:12-15; 3:1; Jude 5). It is the reason the NT church observed the Lord’s Supper every first day of the week (Sunday) (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:23-34).

The breast-plate was a “pocket-like” square piece of cloth fastened on the garment of the high priest at his chest and held there by cords or chains tied to the two stones upon the high-priests’s shoulders. Sewn onto the outside of the breastplate were twelve stones—one stone for each tribe and the names of the tribes inscribed upon each separate stone (Ex. 28). However, the most significant part of the breastplate was the “pocket” into which the *Urim and Thummim* were placed. Right over the heart of the high priest! So the **heart** of the high priest of God is where the word of God and the people of God **come together!** “Urim” means “lights” as in the sun and moon and “Thummim” means “perfect, great” (Psa. 136:7 where “urim” is translated “lights”). We do not know precisely what these two “things” were so it is useless to speculate. Whatever they were, they had to do with the communication of God to Aaron through them. They had something to do with the “perfect law of the Lord” (Psa. 19:7—the word “thummim” is translated “perfect” here). The Urim and Thummim were in the center of the “breast-plate” of the high priest, corresponding to the place of the ark of the covenant; two stones held the breast-plate to the high priest’s garment upon which were also engraved the names of the 12 tribes of Israel. **Thus the revealed word of God is CENTRAL to the people of God!** God’s word is their safety and sustenance! It is only through his revealed word that God communicated to Israel (cf. 1 Sam 14:41-42; 28:6; Neh 7:65). The high priest donned the breast-plate with all it contained, when he drew near the Lord’s presence, and somehow the Lord revealed to him what was necessary.

When Aaron presented the “ram of ordination” and Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the ram, these priests were to understand not only that this ram was a “trespass offering” for the atonement of the priest’s sins, but they were also to acknowledge that they themselves were being “sacrificed” (consecrated) to serve God and God’s people. That would be their whole life! They were “presenting their bodies as living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God” (Rom. 12:1-2). And in the most dramatic manner possible, the putting of the blood of this ram upon tip of their right ear, the thumb of the right hand, and the first toe of the right foot, signified that their entire being belonged to God’s service (“you are not your own; you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body” 1 Cor. 6:19). God’s servant (priest) dedicates his “hearing” to **hear God**; he dedicates his hands and feet to **do what God’s word tells him to do**. The hand and the foot move in response to what is heard! God’s priests did not “do” until they “heard” from God! By the blood of Christ we have been “purchased” (ransomed like Aaron and his sons were by the ram) to **hear God’s will and then do God’s will**. We

have been ransomed not with things perishable, but with the **precious blood of Christ**, a “lamb” without spot or blemish (1 Pet. 1:18-19). Having purified our souls by our obedience to that truth, we must love one another earnestly from the heart.

What would these priests be doing that would take seven days? They were probably confined to the “outer court” for seven days (not inside the tent itself, i.e., in the “Holy Place”). They were not to go outside the confines of the outer court which also had a high wall around it with a gate. While they were on duty, there was nothing for them to do outside the court of the tabernacle. It would take them seven days to **do** everything we can *read* in a few minutes. Think of all the many, many animals they had to slay, skin, dissect, wash, sprinkle their blood, burn, plus all the other rituals like keeping the oil in the menorah, keeping the 12 loaves on the table, keeping the incense burning, keeping the fire burning on the altar, receiving and relating what God revealed through the Urim and Thummim, etc., etc., etc. These OT priests were consecrated to serve God and man. They were not put in the tabernacle for their own pleasure—they were not there to take a vacation. Furthermore, this is the **only** place God would have them serve! **So God was serious about what and where they were to be doing their service to him!** IS THERE A LESSON HERE FOR THE CHRISTIAN? OF COURSE THERE IS! Even in the church, its members have one, sole purpose—to serve God where and how he has directed them to do so in his New Testament! They need only look to God’s word—they don’t need to go outside the word to find God’s directions on how and where to serve him!

Upon walking down the ramp of the altar of burnt offering, Aaron and Moses walked together in the presence of the large assembly and entered the door of the tabernacle. Their first act would be to burn incense upon the golden altar of incense since this completed the act of the sacrifices (Ex. 20:7ff). Probably while in the holy place Moses gave Aaron the specific instructions for the burning of the incense, the trimming of the lamps, the order of the bread on the golden table. The Lord had promised to manifest his **glory** to the people. So when Moses and Aaron came out of the tent God manifested his **glory**. The **glory** that appeared to the people was probably in the *form* of a brighter, more majestic, or awesome appearance of the **cloudy pillar** (Ex. 16:10; 40:34; 1 Kings 8:10-12). Also, “fire came forth from before the Lord and consumed the burnt offering and the fat upon the altar” (Lev. 9:24). It must have been an awesome experience. But the purpose of these manifestations were more important than their awesomeness. By these “miracles” God is saying that he has accepted the priesthood and all their service to him for the people. God did this several times (Gideon, Judges 6:20-21; Elijah, 1 Kings 18:28; Solomon 2 Chron. 7:1-2). It caused the people to “fall on their faces and shout” praise to God (see also 2 Chron. 7:3). Human beings could never stand in the awesome presence of the glory of God except by having their sins atoned. In numerous places in the Bible, human beings are struck down and become ill by the presence of a mere **angel** from God’s heaven!

Nadab and Abihu were wrong on several counts: **(a)** they **presumed** as to the *time* they chose to burn the incense—they **presumed** to enter the Holy Place and burn incense for a *reason* that did not originate with God; **(b)** they **disobeyed** God about the *place* to burn incense—they did not wait until they were within the holy place to burn the incense—the fact that they walked in the outer court with incense burning in their censers

may mean they were drunk (Lev. 10:8-9); (c) the *fire* they used to burn the incense was in **disobedience** of a *clear* commandment of God. When they approached the door of the tent, the same fire that burned the sacrifice on the altar flashed across the mercy seat and across the golden altar to consume these two men who presumed to disregard and ignore God's law! God will either be sanctified by his servants by obedience or by punishment. Increase of privilege involves increase of responsibility and of danger for disobedience. That is how Moses revealed it, Lev. 10:3-7, and Aaron accepted the revelation of Moses! (see Ex. 19:22; 28:41-43). Furthermore, there was to be no mourning for the deaths of these two sons of Aaron. Aaron and his sons did not eat the meat of the sin offering because they had no appetite for it after witnessing what they had just seen—so they burned it! The service within the tabernacle must be completed, so Aaron and his sons didn't even get to bury their dead brothers—burying the dead is never as important as following the will of the Lord. What God did to these two men seems, at first, too severe for a merciful God—but God is **mercifully strict**. “Lest ye die” seems brutal for God, but remember, Satan is not easy with those who follow him. Satan has but **one end** for those who follow him against God—that is **eternal death**! IT IS A SERIOUS MATTER THAT GOD'S PEOPLE CLEARLY DISTINGUISH BETWEEN THE HOLY AND THE COMMON, THE CLEAN AND UNCLEAR (Lev. 10:10-11) AND TEACH ALL WOULD-BE FOLLOWERS OF GOD AND CHRIST THE SERIOUSNESS OF IT! Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice! To disobey God is as wicked as witchcraft and idolatry (1 Sam. 15:22-23).

It's all in the motive! The motives of Nadab and Abihu were those of presumptuous, contemptuous, rebellion! Furthermore they were probably drunk on wine when they did it which was another deliberate, rebellious, violation of the law. Aaron speaks up for Eleazar and Itamar (his sons) and himself (because ultimately he was responsible for what they “didn't” do), saying, “Behold, even today they (we) have obeyed the Lord and have offered the sin offerings and the burnt offerings”—i.e., consider what we **have** done as well as what we haven't done. Aaron freely **admits** their **omission**—they had sinned. But Aaron pleads for patience and mercy because “of such things as these (the death of his two sons Nadab and Abihu) which have befallen me.” Aaron is pleading that he and his sons *forgot* to share in the momentous responsibility of “bearing the iniquity of the congregation” in the act of eating the “sin” offering. So, in a very real sense, Aaron is entering into the *spirit* of the sacrifice, beyond the “letter” of the law. That's what a “sin” offering was for—for sins of **omission**. He is pleading that he and his sons did *not remember* their job of taking upon themselves the “iniquity of the congregation.” Because of their grief, loss, shock—and the emotionally exhausting experience of having to go on with their other duties and refrain from mourning the death of their family members, Aaron and his sons *forgot* to fulfill this task. It slipped their mind! Aaron's explanation satisfied Moses (and apparently it satisfied God, or they would have all been dead!). DEATH WAS THE RESULT OF THE DISOBEDIENCE OF NADAB AND ABIHU—FORGIVENESS THE RESULT OF THAT OF ELEZAR AND ITAHMAR—**THE DIFFERENCE? IT'S ALL IN THE MOTIVE!**

LEVITICUS 11:1—15:33

The primary reason God forbade pork, cat-fish, and other “unclean” foods is **“because he said so.” Authority—Sovereignty—Deity.** God simply declared some food unclean and others clean to teach human beings that his will must prevail in every facet of life! If God says it is wrong—IT IS WRONG! No questions, no hesitation in obedience, no arguing, no rationalizing from human beings are appropriate. If God says it is right, acquiescence from his creatures is the only response to be made! Some Israelites may have been tempted to rationalize, “Why should we not be allowed to eat a pork-roast?” BUT IF GOD SAID “NO PORK,” THEN HE **MEANT “NO PORK.”** There may have been some hygienic reason God forbade these foods when one thinks of the circumstances of ancient times in the preparation and preservation of foods. Some foods that are perfectly all right for consumption **today** would have been vulnerable to contamination and extremely unhealthy for consumption **3000 years ago.** **But the main purpose** in the prohibition of these foods was for **God to demand his Sovereignty over the lives of his people, and to give them demonstrable ways to be “holy” (separated from the heathen around them).** There was nothing *morally* wrong with swine and cat-fish, etc., but if human beings are persuaded by God to make **his** choices in food, they will be persuaded to make **his choices in other things which do have *intrinsic* moral distinctions!** These OT distinctions between “clean” and “unclean” animals have been rescinded by the New Testament (Acts 10:9-16; 1 Cor. 10:23-33; 2 Tim 4:1-5).

Once again, the answer is that **God is teaching Israel to be “holy” and that his sovereignty prevails even in the ordinary tasks of the household.** God doesn’t want our holiness to be put on when just we “go to church” and then put off “when we go home.” **GOD IS PRESENT AT THE DINNER TABLE AND AT THE SINK WHERE DISHES ARE WASHED. GOD WANTS HIS PEOPLE TO “BE DIFFERENT” (HOLY AND RIGHTEOUS) IN THE KITCHEN, BEDROOM, LIVING ROOM, SHOP, OFFICE, FACTORY, AND AT THE MOVIE THEATER!** Again, this commandment has hygienic purposes. To follow these regulations would produce germ-free living quarters—*quite different than the germ-infested habitations of most of the heathen world of that day!* When any dead animal or insect fell upon a wooden bowl, article of furniture, or any garment, used for any purpose, that article must be washed. When any dead or unclean animal or insect fell into a vessel of wood or earth it was to be broken and thrown out—if a dead insect falls on your food, throw out your food—if it falls into your drink, throw out your drink and smash your cup. The Israelites of old and almost without exception, the Jews of today, are spotlessly clean about their homes and their businesses—much more so than many of their “Gentile” neighbors!

Remember, the distinctions between “clean” and “unclean” all the way back to Noah and the flood! So God is not capricious in his demands that human beings submit to his sovereignty for God’s reasons! There **are** apparently some “unclean” things even for Christians (Acts 15:19-21). Three reasons God gave the Israelites prohibitions against eating or touching certain animals and things which God himself declared “unclean”: (a) they were to be different (“holy”) **because they had accepted an**

absolutely holy God! If God made these distinctions, they must accept them! They must accept his divine wisdom because they have accepted his divine Lordship; **(b)** they were to be “different” (holy) in order to be a **witness** to those “Gentiles” around them who did not know what a **holy God demanded** (Deut. 4:5-6; 2 Kings 17:8-20; Neh. 9:1-38; Jer. 11:1-17; Ezek. 5:5; 16:1-63 etc.)—but they actually became worse than the heathen around them (Jer. 2:10-11; 5:30-31; 18:13; 23:14; Hosea 4:1-10); **(c)** they were to be holy (different) because God is holy. **What is more to be desired than to be like God?** Human beings were created for the **very purpose** of being like God and his Son Jesus Christ (see Rom. 8:29); and there is a 4th reason, **(d)**, they were to be different and follow God’s orders because he had delivered them from their bondage and slavery in Egypt—**they should be holy just to show God their appreciation for their freedom!** Peter makes the same argument for Christian holiness in 1 Pet. 1:13-24—READ IT!

Again, the only “reason” God makes the distinction of “uncleanness” for the mother giving childbirth and not declaring the child born “unclean” is to teach God’s sovereignty—even in the most significant, emotional, and intimate experience of life! Of course there was *nothing* morally unclean about a mother giving birth to a child! The only *moral* association would be in the development of the habit of obedience to the laws of God **in everything**. Any *uncleanness* was **ceremonial!** And it is perfectly in keeping with the character of God to demand whatever he wants in the way of behavior, any time, any place, any-how! There is undoubtedly a very important hygienic purpose for making a mother with a new-born infant “unclean”—it was to keep others from touching either mother or child and communicating disease to both when they were most vulnerable! The same principles apply to the demand for circumcision—it was a **sign of covenant to God’s holy demands** from the day he chose Abraham (Gen. 17:10-13). It was *not* necessarily for hygienic reasons—circumcision does not apply in the New Testament (Acts 15:1-29; Rom. 2:25-29; 3:1; 3:30; 4:9-12 15:8; 1 Cor. 7:18-19; Gal. 2:3; 5:2-6; 6:15; Col. 2:8-23; 3:11; Titus 1:10-11). The only purpose God had in doubling the time period for the “uncleanness” of the mother when she gave birth to a daughter would be to remind the Israelites of the *historical* fact that by *woman* came transgression to humankind (1 Tim. 2:14). That, of course, does not mitigate the *historical* fact that the first *male* also sinned. But because Jesus Christ was the **perfect Lamb of God to atone for ALL unrighteousness**, Paul could write, “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, *there is neither male nor female*; for you are all one in Christ Jesus” Gal. 3:28.

The Hebrew word for “leprosy” is *tzara’ath*. It is from a root word meaning “to cast down, to defile.” When the Old Testament was translated into Greek the writers (of the Septuagint) used the Greek word *lepros*, which meant “psoriasis” or “scaly.” Translators of the Latin Vulgate (which was the basis for the King James Version) *transliterated* (i.e., replaced it letter for letter instead of *translating* or giving its *meaning*) and thus we have in the Latin, *leprosus*. So the first English versions (KJV) did the same *transliteration* from the Latin and thus we have *leprosy*. Had the Greek word been *translated* it would have appeared as “scaly.” Even the Latin word *leprosus* means a “scaling or peeling condition” and the Latin word *liber* (parchment or leaves) is of the same derivation as *leprosus*. The priests of the Old Testament were given only a few days to diagnose *tzara’ath*. It is medically impossible to diagnose modern Hansen’s

Disease (which is what *modern leprosy* is) in such a short time. This suggests that the “leprosy” of the Bible was not the Hansen’s Disease we know today. So the Hebrew *tzara’ath* and the Greek *lepros, lepra*, apparently denoted numerous skin and *mold* conditions which were pronounced “unclean” for religious and social reasons but which were curable. These skin conditions served the same purpose as other conditions and things (animals, dead bodies, etc.) which incurred defilement—to show the absoluteness of man’s estrangement from God because of sin. It is significant that there is no mention of leprosy (defilement) after the death and resurrection of Christ. The Law of Moses was nailed to the cross and fulfilled; there was no more ceremonial defilement. So, while the apostles healed the sick, cast out demons, raised the dead, caused the blind to see, the lame to walk, the deaf to hear, the dumb to speak, **they never cleansed a leper!** It is also significant that the *only* leper *healed* in the NT was one of the 10 Samaritan lepers. All other lepers were “cleansed.” Apparently the Samaritan was simply *healed* because he could not be sent to a Jewish priest to be *cleansed*. Clearly the “leprosy” of the OT was not Hansen’s Disease (modern “leprosy” of the leper-colonies) because clothing and house-walls could get the “leprosy” of the OT. Modern medical science has shown that the symptoms related in Leviticus 13-14 have no connection with the disease we call leprosy (*mycobacterium leprae*) which is really Hansen’s disease. Hansen’s disease is an incurable disease mainly affecting the nervous system and, as a *result* of the inner disease, the outer skin and flesh.

It is abundantly clear from the Law of Moses (in all its seemingly unreasonable *minutiae*) that God is at work in **every minutiae** of human existence! God sees *uncleanness, sin, and estrangement*, in **every aspect of human existence**. GOD IS ABSOLUTE AND HOLY—MAN IS SINFUL AND “UNCLEAN!” **EVERYWHERE!** The obvious cannot be avoided! God wants to **control** human beings, body-soul-and-spirit! BECAUSE GOD IS **GOOD, HOLY, LOVELY, PURE, LOVING, MERCIFUL, BENEVOLENT, CARING, ALL-WISE, ALL-POWERFUL, ALL-KNOWING!** **GOD WANTS TO BRING HUMAN BEINGS BACK INTO INTIMATE FELLOWSHIP WITH HIMSELF.** Thus, every human being **needs to obey God—to *habitually* do what God commands!** It is in this process that human beings are **changed from one degree of glory to another into the likeness of Jesus Christ which is BLESSEDNESS, INDEED!** *So, even if a person COULDN’T HELP getting a skin disease, or if his house or his clothes got mildew—he was to recognize it as a sign that every human and every thing he touched was **defiled**.* THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS—NO NOT ONE! OUR SUPPOSED “RIGHTEOUSNESS” IS AS FILTHY RAGS TO GOD! God has “subjected” this creation to “futility” not of its own will but by the will of him who subjected it in hope; because the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God (Rom. 8:18-23). This befouled, doomed, sin-cursed existence is not what God had planned for those who love him, trust him, and obey him. THAT POINT NEEDS TO BE REPEATED, AND REPEATED, AND REPEATED IN OUR REBELLIOUS, SELF-SEEKING, UNBELIEVING WORLD OF THE 21ST CENTURY!

The “leprosy” of the house was clearly some sort of *moldy-mildewed* incrustation that “infected” the walls. Such kind of incrustations affect any *stone or brick-walled* building (both inside and out) in almost any climate except the most arid—especially if there are prolonged periods of damp, cool weather. This would be true in many places in

the land of Palestine, then and today! While such incrustations would be unhealthy for the inhabitants, the main purpose God had in declaring such houses “unclean” was, once again, to show that he has “cursed the ground because” of man’s sin (Gen. 3:17-21), and to teach mankind that “sin couches at their very doors” (Gen. 4:7).

For the Israelite to keep the Law of Moses and have his house “atoned for” by the sprinkling of blood mixed with water indicated that Israelite loved, trusted and was willing to obey God and live with God in covenant-binding relationship. Thus, his house and all that was in it could be “cleansed.” **Many a house (home) in that age and in our 21st century is “incrusted” with spiritual “uncleanness” and needs the atonement provided for by the Perfect Sacrifice of Jesus Christ.** In so many homes today there is the “leprosy” of selfishness, materialism (worshiping “Mammon”), the “leprosy” of all kinds of abusive treatment of one another, the “leprosy” of hatefulness toward others outside that house, the “leprosy” of unbelief and moral relativism. Such “leprosy” of modern homes is dangerous to physical health and is dangerous to spiritual survival! If not cured by the atonement of Jesus Christ and covenant-bonding to him, it *may* lead all within that house to “suffer in their own persons (physically) the due penalty for their error” (Rom. 1:27). It most certainly lead inexorably to the eternal death in hell! It is singularly important that any Christian within a household make every attempt to bring Christ to all in the house!

Genital discharges are where the essence of LIFE issues forth. LIFE must be clean before God. The “*running issue from a man*” in Lev. 15:1-15 was, as with the woman, a secretion from the sexual organ and was other than a “wet-dream.” The Hebrew participle is expressive of a continued duration. It may have been some type of *gonorrhoea* or it could have been another kind of secretion from another kind of disease of the urethra. However, the ***involuntary emission of semen*** (“wet dream”) in Lev. 15:16-18 is also declared to be a defilement! There was no defilement in legitimate sexual intercourse between married Israelites—but there were laws in the Mosaic dispensation enjoining the Israelites to **abstain** from conjugal intercourse during the preparation for acts of divine worship (Ex. 19:15; 1 Sam. 21:5-6; 2 Sam. 11:4). That is what Lev. 15:18 speaks to. The woman for seven days at the period of her *menses* (i.e., menstruation) was declared unclean and anyone who touched the blood upon her bed, chair or clothing was also declared unclean. If her husband “lay” (i.e., had sexual intercourse) with her, he became unclean for seven days (Lev. 20:18; Num. 5:13; Gen. 26;10; 34:2; 35:22; 1 Sam. 2:22). It *doesn’t* mean that her husband could not sleep in the same bed with her at this time! Of course, if the husband touched her or the blood of her “uncleanness” he would be unclean for seven days—it seems he would have to be very careful if he slept with her in the same bed! The whole point in what seems today to some to be “nit-picking” by God is all summed up in Lev. 15:31—“Thus you shall keep the people of Israel separate from their uncleanness, lest they die in their uncleanness by defiling my tabernacle that is in their midst.” UNCLEANNESS IS IRRECONCILABLE WITH THE CALLING OF GOD’S “CHOSEN PEOPLE.” AND GOD’S PEOPLE ARE APT TO SIN EVEN WHEN THEY DON’T REALIZE IT AND DID NOT INTEND TO DO SO! BUT THOSE WHO CLAIM HIM AS THEIR GOD AND FATHER ARE TO BE “A HOLY NATION.” **God had his dwelling place in their midst! He lived with them—they lived with him—they were to be holy as he was holy! Those who choose God’s way must purify themselves according**

to the purpose, plan and procedure he commands! In the Christian age people “purify they souls by their obedience to the truth” of the Gospel (Acts 2:38; 22:16; 1 Pet. 1:22-24; 3:21)

LEVITICUS 16:1—20:27

After the high priest presented his *own* “sin-offering,” accompanied by the two “chief priests,” he came to the *north* side of the altar. Why the *north side*? Because God is often spoken of as dwelling in the “north,” and “coming out of the north” into the land of Palestine (both for blessing and judgment) (see Job 26:7; 37:22; Psa. 48:2; Isa. 14:13; 41:25; Jer. 1:13-15; 4:6; 6:22; 10:22; 13:20; 16:15; 46:6; 46:10; Ezek. 40:46; 42:1,2,4,11,13; Zech. 6:6,8; 14:4, etc.). It was here that the **two goats** were presented with their faces facing west—toward the entrance to the tabernacle (the tabernacle always faced east). This is where the Divine Majesty revealed himself! Then Aaron (the high priest) was to “cast lots upon the goats”—the goat upon which the lot fell **for** Jehovah was offered as a “sin offering” and the goat upon which the **other** lot fell was for “**Azazel**,” and was to be set before Jehovah to make atonement for “**Azazel**” and sent away for “**Azazel**” **into the wilderness!** (Lev. 16:6-10). In other words, the “Azazel” goat became “**the scape-goat**.” The Hebrew word “**Azazel**” means literally, “**removal**.” In the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the Hebrew OT) the word “Azazel” is translated, *apopompaio*, which is a strange word which (though not found in the NT) evidently means, “take the cup away.” And in the Latin Vulgate the word “Azazel” is translated *emissario* (English, “emissary”) which means, “the one going out.” Aaron was to “make atonement upon the horns of the goat, confess the sins of the people, and send it away into the wilderness.” Some translators have thought that the Hebrew word “Azazel” is a name for Satan and thus this “scapegoat” would bear away the sins of the people into the “wilderness” where Satan dwells (see Rev. 12:13-17). There is a *parallel* to the “scapegoat” in the ritual for a recovered leper when a living bird was released in the country to carry the evil away and the leper declared clean (Lev. 14:6). There is also the symbolic-metaphorical-prophecy in Zech. 5:5-11 that one day in the future, the “iniquity in all the land” would be borne **away** to the land of Shinar (the land of heathen, wicked, Babylon). The symbolic, typical reference of the “scapegoat” can point to only one fulfillment—Jesus Christ “who suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through his own blood” (Heb. 13:11-16). What a **blessed typical (prophetic) picture—sins not only atoned for, BUT FOREVER “SENT AWAY”—OUT OF GOD’S SIGHT, REMEMBERED NO MORE, NEVER TO RETURN AGAIN!** God promised in the prophets that he would “pardon iniquity...pass over transgression...tread our iniquities under foot, **cast all our sins into the depths of the sea.**” (Micah 7:18-20). The apostle John wrote, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins **and cleanse us from ALL unrighteousness.**” 1 Jn. 1:7,9; see also Titus 2:14; Heb. 9:28; 10:10,14).

The *Day of Atonement* was a “law forever” for the nation of Israel. Here is a clear passage from the OT that indicates the Hebrew word *olam*, (“forever”) does not mean “for all eternity.” **Either Yom Kipper**, “Day of Atonement” was fulfilled by Christ on the cross and at the empty tomb **or** much of the New Testament (especially Romans, Galatians, and Hebrews) is **fraudulent!** Every tenth of day of the “seventh month” (October) the people were to “afflict” (Hebrew *aynno*) themselves. The LXX (Septuagint) translates it into Greek, *tapeinosate tas psychas humon*, literally, “chastise the soul of

you.” The Latin Vulgate translates it *affligetis animas*, which is much the same as the Greek LXX meaning literally, “scourge the being.” The Hebrew word *tzoom*, which means “fast” (abstain) is used 50 times in the OT **but never once in the Pentateuch** to mean “abstain.” So, the *Day of Atonement* was not *necessarily* for *fasting*. IT WAS MORE THAN THAT! It was **for afflicting the soul!** It was for repentance, for contrition, for grieving over one’s sins! It would *include*, of course, abstinence from all that was indulgent or fleshly-gratifying. *Yom Kippur* was Israel’s only **legislated** day of “fasting” or abstaining from food and drink. The Israelites, on their own, evidently *added* many other “fast” days to their religion (Isa. 58:3-5; Zech. 7:5-7, etc.). At Yom Kippur from sundown on the 9th day to sundown on the 10th day, **no work was to be done and no food or drink was to be taken**. This day was to be regarded as a “high” Sabbath (the holiest of days) no matter which day of the week it involved (and it could be on any day of the week). The presence of native friends or of foreigners was not to distract them from afflicting (bowing in humility) their souls by restraining their earthly appetites. By bowing his soul the Israelite was to humble himself *inwardly* in relation to the sacrifice (atonement) which had just been offered in place of his soul. He was to give humble thanks that through this sacrifice he had been cleansed from sin and restored to fellowship with God. The return of every new year brought to the Israelite a fresh **remembrance** of his sin, “for it was **not** possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins” (Heb. 10:3-4). The sacrifice of a dumb, unwilling animal could not clear the conscience of the worshiper—ever! It would require the **sacrifice of a willing, perfect human being** to fully, perfectly, and finally atone for the sins of humanity! The *Day of Atonement* was **uniquely and perpetually significant for Judaism so long as Judaism was acceptable to God**. BUT GOD CANNOT POSSIBLY HONOR MODERN JEWISH OBSERVATION OF YOM KIPPUR BECAUSE TO GO BACK TO THE OLD TESTAMENT PRACTICES AFTER THE NEW TESTAMENT HAS BEEN RATIFIED BY THE PERFECT SACRIFICE OF CHRIST IS **APOSTASY!** (Gal. 2:16; 5:4; Heb. 6:1-20; 10:19-39). **No matter how often a modern Jew observes the “Day of Atonement” (Yom Kippur), he cannot have his sins completely, and finally, and forever forgiven!** In fact, God does not now forgive sins at all, at any time, through any sacrifice except that of Jesus Christ. Forgiveness for any sin of anyone can now only, and must, be done through entering into **covenant relationship with Christ** by observing what Christ and his apostles have revealed to be God’s **covenant terms** in God’s **New Testament!** (Heb. 9:23-28; 10:1-18). There is a wonderful **Special Study on The Day of Atonement**, in the book, *Leviticus*, by Don DeWelt, 1975, College Press, Joplin, MO, pp. 271-283. EVERY CHRISTIAN SHOULD READ IT!

No! Israelites could eat the flesh of other “clean” animals besides those they ate of their sacrifices. Ancient Semites, like modern ones, especially the nomads of old, ate very little flesh (meat) other than their “sacrifices” which were occasions for “feasting.” The sacrifices which were to be killed exclusively before the tabernacle does not include many “clean” wild animals (such as deer, pigeons, turtle-doves) which formed a fundamental part of the nomad’s diet. Furthermore, these “sacrificial” animals to be slain (and sometimes eaten) before the tabernacle are qualified as those which were of a certain age (before two years of age) and of a certain physical condition (without blemish). All other animals they could slay and eat at their abode (be it tent or later, house). One has only to read the “historical books” (e.g., Samuel, Kings, Chronicles,

Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, and many of the prophets) to see that Israelites slew and ate numerous kinds of “flesh” (meat) with impunity from God. The Israelite must take what he is offering to God to the altar so the priests may make sure they are not “eating the blood” of their sacrifices. The problem was the prohibition of eating the “blood” of the sacrifices—like so many of their **heathen neighbors did by drinking the blood of their idolatrous sacrifices** (17:5-7). **THEY MUST NEVER CONSUME THE BLOOD OF ANY ANIMAL THEY SACRIFICED (OR ANY OTHER ANIMAL THEY ATE, FOR THAT MATTER) FOR THAT WOULD MAKE THEIR CONDUCT INDISTINGUISHABLE FROM HEATHEN IDOLATRY!** (See 1 Cor. chs. 8-9-10).

This is the **third** time Leviticus has stated the prohibition against “eating blood” (see Lev. 3:17; 7:26). Even strangers and sojourners (visitors) were under the same prohibition when in Israel. It certainly would apply to any “foreigner” who became a proselyte of the Israelite faith. **VIOLATION WAS PUNISHABLE BY BEING “CUT OFF” (EXPULSED, “EXCOMMUNICATED”) FROM THE COVENANT OF ISRAEL!** Why such a severe penalty?—**BECAUSE BLOOD REPRESENTS, AND CONTAINS, THE LIFE OF THE “SOUL”—BOTH ANIMAL AND HUMAN! And through “animal sacrifices” God is making a SUBSTITUTE—the “soul” of the animal for the “soul” of the man.** Leviticus 17:11 says it clearly, “For the **life** of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it for you upon the altar to make atonement for your **souls**; for it is the blood that makes atonement, by reason of the **life**.” “LIFE” AND “SOUL” ARE SYNONYMOUS! Literally, the Hebrew word *nephesh*, is used for both “life” and “soul” in 17:11. The Hebrew word translated “flesh” is *bosar*. Don DeWelt points out in his commentary on *Leviticus*, “BODY: Made of dust, corruptible and subject to decay...mortal...to return to the dust...the outer man; SOUL: Man’s self-consciousness (i.e., humanness)...formed in or by the unity of the spirit and the body...man’s individuality...what makes him different from every other person...parents provide the body...God provides the spirit. When the two (body and spirit) unite, the result is *you*... ‘A living life’ unique and wondrously made...You are one of a kind; SPIRIT: Our parents produced our bodies but ‘God is the Father of the spirits of all flesh.’ As our bodies partake of the physical likeness and image of our parents, so our spirits partake of the likeness or image of God. ‘We are His offspring’ (Acts 17:28). All the capacities of man are capacities of His (God’s) spirit since God is alive in the same sense we are, and he has given us of Himself.” **THE CRUCIAL QUESTION IS: “WHOM WILL YOU SERVE,” YOUR SPIRIT OR YOUR SOUL?** Will you decided to worship God or mammon? You are merely *God-related* through your spirit and this-world related through your soul. **WILL YOU BE “SOUL-ISH” OR “SPIRITUAL”?** **WILL YOU WORSHIP THE “CREATURE” OR THE “CREATOR”?** (see Rom. 1:18-32). “Strangers” and “sojourners” in Israel were prohibited from eating blood because they would have submitted to the law of the land, and because their eating it would not only infringe the law which they voluntarily adopted by “sojourning”, but would lessen the offensiveness and abhorrence with which such indulgence was to be regarded by the Israelites (Acts 15:20,29; 21:25). Since the apostle Paul has spoken with the authority of the Holy Spirit on “meat sacrificed to idols” (and not necessarily prohibiting eating that by Christians—both Jew and Gentile) it would seem that the “scruples” enjoined by Acts 15:20,29; 21:25 upon the first century church **would not apply to Christians today—neither Jewish-Christians nor Gentile-Christians!** (Although it has been clearly established by medical science that eating “rare” animal flesh is not in keeping with a healthy diet!). **BUT DIET**

WAS NOT GOD'S PURPOSE IN PROHIBITING THE CONSUMPTION OF "BLOOD" IN THESE LAWS ABOUT ATONING SACRIFICES!

Incest in the Hebrew language is designed by two different words: *zimmah* and *tebhel* respectively. They are usually translated, "vice, wickedness, refined immorality and unnatural vice." The Levitical law made it a *crime* to have sexual intercourse between a man and (a) his mother; (b) his daughter; (c) stepmother; (d) half-sister; (e) granddaughter; (f) step-sister; (g) his father's sister; (h) wife of an uncle; (i) daughter-in-law; (j) sister-in-law (except for the levirate marriage); (k) step-daughter; (l) step-granddaughter; (m) granddaughter; (n) mother-in-law; (o) two sisters at the same time. In other words, marriage is forbidden between any person and a direct ancestor or a direct descendant or any close relative of either himself/herself or any of his/her ancestors or any of his/her immediate descendants. *We notice it does not specifically forbid marriage of "cousins."* What's the reason for strictly forbidding marriage (i.e., sexual intercourse) within the family—even in-laws and "step" relatives? Three reasons: (a) the home and community could not tolerate that a man was at the same time brother and husband, or a son and a husband; (b) by intermarrying with those *outside* the family the fabric of a society or community is established—an "intermarried" family would provoke all kinds of feuds and divisions (e.g. some Mormon clans today); (c) the strength of the genetic pool is weakened and all genetics defects are multiplied by family intermarriage so that all kinds of illnesses and deformities may occur in the children and grandchildren. This multiplication of genetic defects *could also be exacerbated when first cousins marry*—although one notices it happening with great frequency in *early American genealogy!* **Consider all the trouble many OT people brought to themselves by not heeding this prohibition (some of them even "heroes of the faith")**—Lot; Moses; Reuben; Amnon; Jacob, etc.

Is homosexuality ("gay-lifestyle") right or wrong? Who is to say? Shouldn't the God who made us all be the final authority on our "sexual-orientation" be the absolute, final authority? Leviticus 18:22 says, "**You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination!**" That, of course is not all the prohibitory statements against homosexuality in the Bible! **Homosexuality** is severely condemned in the Bible. It is a crime for which the **death penalty** is assessed (Lev. 18:22; 20:13; Deut. 23:17-18). Homosexuality is **perverse** and **unnatural**. It is declared unlawful and profane (1 Tim. 1:8-11 and the Greek word in 1 Tim. 1:9, translated "sodomite" is *arsenokoitais* which is literally, "male-sexual-coitus"). If God intervened directly in history to obliterate societies practicing this perversion (Gen. 18:16—19:38; 2 Pet. 2:6; Jude 7), *and he did*, surely it should be legislated a crime by all civil governments. It is a crime against nature and society. Homosexuality universalized proves it is perverse, destructive, unreasonable and criminal. It would, if practiced, inevitably, inexorably result in genocide, for no matter how much sexual intercourse one male has with another male, or female with another female, they cannot produce children! *Sodomy* or homosexuality is not only forbidden in the Old Testament, it is strictly forbidden by the New Testament. Anyone who practices it **cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven** (Rom. 1:26-32; 1 Cor. 6:9-11; 1 Tim. 1:8-11). (See also 1 Kings 14:24; 15:12; 22:46; 2 Kings 23:7; Job. 36:14; Hosea 4:14—a "cult prostitute" was most usually homosexual in behavior). Deut. 23:18 is translated in RSV, "You shall not bring the hire of a harlot, or the wages of a dog (i.e., sodomite) into the

house of the Lord your God in payment for any vow; or both of these are an abomination to the Lord your God.” NOT ONLY THE PHYSICAL ACT IS AN ABOMINATION, BUT FOR AN ISRAELITE TO TRY TO OFFER TO GOD ANY MONEY OR GIFT GIVEN AS WAGES FOR ENGAGING IN HOMOSEXUAL ACTIVITY WAS AN ABOMINATION TO THE LORD. Jehoshaphat, in his great spiritual revival of Israel (1 Kings 22:46) *exterminated* the male cult-prostitutes from the land as did Josiah (2 Kings 23:7). It is clear from the Bible (OT & NT) that any and all homosexual behavior is a **crime** against God, civil government and social order. The Christian way to deal with it is to **purge it by converting to Christ** those who practice it. Homosexuality is a moral choice, not a genetic predilection —THE BIBLE SAYS SO! We now have **scientific proof** that homosexuality is **not** genetically predetermined. In March 2007, the director of the Human Genome Project, Dr. Francis Collins, said: “homosexuality is not hardwired. There is no gay gene. We mapped the human genome. We now know there is no genetic cause for homosexuality (from *The Beacon*, Oct. 2008, a monthly publication of R. L. Beasley Ministries, P.O. Box 2862, Joplin, MO, 64803).

No one loves his neighbor if he does not “reason with” (RSV) his neighbor when the neighbor is unreasonable or incorrect. The Hebrew word *yacah*, would be better translated, “reason, convince, plead, dialog, correct” rather than “reproach or contend with.” When a neighbor is doing something rash, unreasonable, harmful to himself or others, a **good neighbor reasons** with him until and tries to convince him of the error of his ways! IS JESUS A GOOD NEIGHBOR TO YOU? OF COURSE, AND HE REASONS WITH YOU AND PLEADS WITH YOU! The verse in Lev. 19:18 says, “You shall not take vengeance or bear any grudge against the sons of your own people, but you shall **love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord**. JESUS DEFINED A “NEIGHBOR” AS ANY ONE IN NEED OF HELP (Lk. 10:25-37 e.g., the “Good Samaritan”). God ended the statement with, “I am the Lord.” In other words, we are to love our neighbors as God loves us—actively, unreservedly, and willingly. There is no place for vengeance and grudges between individual human beings if they are believers in the One True God! Vengeance belongs to the Lord and he has mandated civil government to execute his vengeance upon those who commit crimes (Rom. 12:14—13:7). Perhaps someone in the class should read a few of the scriptures cited in the bulletin insert for this question about “reproving, rebuking, convincing,” etc. (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). IF YOU WERE CAUGHT UP IN SOME EMOTION AND ABOUT TO DO SOMETHING RASH THAT WOULD HARM YOU OR SOMEONE ELSE—WOULDN’T YOU WANT YOUR “NEIGHBOR” TO BRING YOU BACK TO YOUR SENSES?! OF COURSE—THAT WOULD BE THE LOVING THING FOR YOUR “NEIGHBOR” TO DO FOR YOU!

YES! God **does** expect the younger, even in the New Testament church, to “rise up” (with respect) before the “hoary head” (elderly). Don DeWelt comments beautifully in his commentary on *Leviticus*, “When you meet them in public places, or they come to where you are, show them reverence. Both the infirmity and the wisdom of the aged have a claim on us; and besides, **age**, apart from its qualities, has in it solemnity. By the sight of them, Lord would solemnize us in the midst of our pursuits. ‘Lo! The shadow of eternity! for one cometh who is almost already in eternity. His head and beard white as snow, indicate his speed appearance before the Ancient of Days,’ the hair of whose head

is as pure wool!" The books of "Wisdom" (Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes) have much to say about respect for the elderly. The Bible strongly admonishes believers to *respect* not only the elderly, but the helpless, the fatherless, the widows, the ill, the authorities appointed to rule over us (church and civil governments). FOR IN RESPECTING THESE UPON WHOM GOD SHEDS HIS AUTHORITY, CARE AND GRACE, WE RESPECT GOD! The apostle Paul, guided by the Holy Spirit, thought it very important to write, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother (this is the first commandment with a promise), that it may be well with you and that you may live long on the earth." (Eph. 6:1-3; Col. 3:20). Wouldn't it do much good for our society in the 21st century if young people would *really* give respect to those who are their elders? Remember what happened to a couple of children who were mocking one of God's prophets?----the bears ate them up! IS GOD SERIOUS ABOUT THIS, OR WHAT?! Remember what happened to the sons of Eli the priest and the sons of Samuel the priest-prophet because of their disrespect for their fathers? Remember what happened to Absalom—to a hundred such people in the Bible because of disrespect for elders and authorities.

The very method of execution, ordained by God, for someone guilty of slaying a child and offering it to an idol (whether that idol be made of wood or stone, or human thoughts and feelings—as in abortion) should be enough to warn any sensible human being against the crime. Once the accused has been declared guilty by the testimony of two or more witnesses, the criminal was taken from the court of justice to the place of execution outside the camp (city) (Lev. 24:14; Num. 15:36; Deut. 17:2-7), and the witnesses upon whose evidence the criminal has been sentenced to death are to throw the first stone. This is the way the Law of Moses was carried out after the second temple was built (ca. 516 B.C.). On his way from the court to the place of execution a herald preceded the criminal, exclaiming, "_____ is being led out to be stoned for this and this crime, and _____ and _____ are the witnesses; if any one has to say anything that might save him, let him come forward and say it." Within ten yards of the place of execution he was publicly admonished to confess his sins, within four yards he was stripped naked except a slight covering about his loins. After his hands had been bound, he was led upon a scaffolding about twice the height of a man (12 ft). Here wine mingled with myrrh was mercifully given to him to dull the pain of execution, and from here one of the witnesses pushed him down with great violence so that he fell upon his back. If the fall did not kill him, the other witnesses dashed a great stone upon his chest, and if this did not kill him, all the people that stood by covered him with stones. The corpse was then nailed to a cross or "tree" and afterwards burned up. Then the relatives visited the judges and the witnesses to show that they bore no hatred towards them, and that the sentence was just. **KILLING OF CHILDREN IS A HEINOUS CRIME IN THE WORD OF GOD!** They are innocent (especially babies). **Abortion will bring down God's judgment upon a nation and individual if repentance is not quickly forthcoming!** In the days of the prophets some who were guilty of offering their children to be burned alive in the fire of the god Molech were actually brazen enough to appear before God in the sanctuary to pretend to worship him (Jer. 7:9-10; Ezek. 23:37-39). Romans 1:18-32 tells us how a civilization slides into depravity when it refuses to have the knowledge of God and exchanges the truth of God for a lie—it becomes beastly, "**foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless.**" And God will give them up to receive in their own persons the due

penalty of their error” (Rom. 1:27).

Adultery, fornication, and bestiality are as heinous as abortion and homosexuality. They are sins against God’s **VERY FIRST INSTITUTION—THE FAMILY! The family came before the nation or the church! It is the CORE of civilized order. Without it there is total chaos and anarchy!** It has been demonstrated over and over and over in history that destroying the family destroys social order and civilization. It is the **family** that distinguishes human beings from beasts! Oh, I know, someone will say, “But animals have ‘families!’” But animals often “eat” their own babies, too. Animals shove their fledglings “out of the nest” or “lair” and then have nothing much more to do with them on a “family” basis—often, in fact, attack them and destroy them! Animal behavior is “survival of the fittest” but NOT SO WITH HUMAN BEINGS. Adultery, homosexuality, abortion, fornication, sexual prostitution all have **psychological consequences**, piercing the soul and heart of those guilty and those victimized by such crimes! The God who made human beings, knows that such crimes against humanity are not “mere sexual indiscretions” and “non-hurtful” crimes. Neither is divorce! **OR OWN NATION IS A GLARING TESTIMONY TO THE HURT AND CHAOS THAT RESULTS FROM THESE CRIMES.** It’s just that the pictures and stories of millions of broken homes, broken hearts, and broken psyches from abortion, homosexuality, divorce, and adultery do not “make the CBS evening news.” **BUT GOD KNOWS!!!!!!!**

LEVITICUS 21:1—24:23

See also Leviticus 19:26-28. The Israelite men, generally speaking, wore full round beards (Heb. *zokon*) and mustaches (Heb. *sapham*) devoting great care to them. The Arabs and “foreigners” around them wore a clipped and pointed beards (Jer. 9:26; 25:23; 49:32). The mustache or *sapham*, however, was trimmed regularly (2 Sam. 19:24). Neglect of the beard as to cleanliness and grooming, *per se*, was sometimes considered a sign of insanity (see 1 Sam. 21:13-14 where David let spittle from his mouth drool down into his beard). When in mourning it was customary for the idolatrous Arabs and foreigners surrounding Israel to shave off all hair (beard, mustache and head) leaving the head bald *except* for a dish-like tuft upon the crown of the head. According to these idolaters this gave the head the form and shape of a hemisphere (half-of-the-world). It was customary among some of these idolaters to present to their gods the “firstlings” of their beards and head-hair. The Arabs and foreigners were ironically called “those who cut the corners of their hair” (Jer. 9:26, etc., RSV). The beard was regarded by the Israelites as the greatest ornament of a man and was as dear to them as life itself. It was a customary greeting to “grab the beard” of a friend (2 Sam. 20:9), thus the mutilation of the beard was considered one of the greatest of disgraces and a most degrading punishment (2 Sam. 10:4; Isa. 7:20; Ezra 5:1-5; 9:3). It was **only** in seasons of sorrow that the Israelites neglected their beards; and sometimes, to show how deeply they were afflicted, they covered them up, or *cut* them off or even *tore* them out (2 Sam. 19:24; Isa. 15:2; Jer. 51:5; Ezek. 5:1-12). When the prophets wanted a metaphor to proclaim God’s punishment upon Israel for its idolatry, they *often* used the figure of God bringing “baldness” upon their faces and heads. The Israelite **high priest** was to be a **type** of the coming **Messianic** high priest (Jesus Christ, Anointed of God). He was forbidden to mourn or care for the burial of his parents at their death. This is the first time the title “high priest” (lit. “great priest”) occurs. It is given to show that the *rank* of the man is the reason for this law being laid down. Thus the Israelite high priest must manifest the courage, faith, obedience and willingness to suffer to carry out God’s will for the people. Ezekiel, who was both priest and prophet, was forbidden by God to mourn at the death of his wife (Ezek. 24:15-18). **God’s people today must learn what the Israelite high priest had to learn and what Jesus himself had to endure “for the glory that was set before him”—faith, obedience, courage and willingness to suffer to do God’s will.** “Later in, **NT times**, it was a disgrace for a man to wear long hair (1 Cor. 11:6-15)” (*International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, Vol. 1, p. 418*). While it may not be a matter of doctrinal *apostasy* for men *today* to wear “long hair” it certainly would be not in the best interests of Christian witness for any Christian to confuse gender roles, to “copy” heathen fads and fashions, or to do anything that would cause a brother to stumble!

The law prohibiting an Israelite with body-blemishes or deformities from serving at the **altar** as a priest would *not* be acceptable today for the same reasons because Judaism today is **not** acceptable to God as a way to redemption—and Judaism has no temple in Jerusalem and no constituted priesthood. Priests **with blemishes**, however, were allowed to serve in other capacities and clearly were to be allowed all the other

privileges of their priesthood. BUT GOD WAS SERIOUS ABOUT SERVING AT THE ALTAR—IF ONE WITH A BLEMISH ATTEMPTED TO DO SO IT WOULD PROBABLY RESULT IN DEATH (i.e., his “soul” shall be “cut off” and “die” from before God! 22:3,9—like Nadab and Abihu). If we think of an “evangelist” (preacher-missionary) or “pastor” (elder) or “teacher” as *leader* or *officer* in the church of Christ in some ways similar to a priest of the OT, **prohibiting** anyone with a physical deformity of blemish **would not** be acceptable, *per se*. But we are not inhibited in this restriction today by the Mosaic Law! Perhaps there would be physical handicaps that would **necessarily** make a person **unable** themselves to serve today as one of the officers of the church, but that would have to be their own rational decision. We do not know what Paul’s “thorn in the flesh” was (some think it was near-blindness, others some other physical handicap), but he certainly was not deterred from preaching the gospel all over the Roman world! The prohibition for the Israelites was to **instill in them the absolute holiness of God**. The altar of God was to be honored in every possible way—to be protected from everything that would bring it into shame and disrepute. Therefore, any priest who had a bodily blemish or deformity was barred from **servicing at the altar**. It was impossible for the spiritually-immature Israelites to dissociate the altar itself from those who ministered there. If any physical disfigurement had been allowed in those who **officiated** there, the **sacredness** of the ordinances of God would have **suffered from this association**. In the Israelite system it was necessary that body organs should in some instances represent the soul, the spirit (i.e., heart, hands, feet, “bowels”). In the Christian system, what was *typical* in Israel, is *spiritual* in “New Israel” (the church). *The best of the Christian (Christians are “priests”) is to be brought to the service of God*. The Christian must not attempt to “minister” before God in a state of **spiritual uncleanness (i.e., impenitence)**.

God was also serious about what was offered in his altar! An “unclean” priest could not *approach* the altar with an “unclean” offering, nor could an “unclean” priest *partake* of even a “clean” offering until he had “cleansed” himself ritually. GOD IS SERIOUS ABOUT PRIESTS MAINTAINING A **HOLY RESPECT** FOR HIS SERVICE! A priest was to act as a priest at all times and **not treat the holy as if it were common**. Every aspect of his life was scrutinized by God (and the people to whom he ministered). FOR A PRIEST TO BE BLASE ABOUT “CLEANNESS” AND “UNCLEANNESS” (i.e. HOLINESS OR UNHOLINESS) WAS PUNISHED BY GOD WITH DEATH (22:3,9). The Israelite priest must not even approach the altar in the outer-court of the tabernacle, enter into the holy place, or the holy of holies, if he is “unclean.” HIS “UNCLEANNESS” MADE ANY SACRIFICE OR SERVICE HE HAD TO OFFER “UNCLEAN” AND AN ABOMINATION TO GOD! Even touching the smallest “creepy-crawler” that God had designated “unclean” would put him in danger of death if he tried to minister before the Lord without being “cleansed.” **AN ABSOLUTELY-HOLY GOD CANNOT TOLERATE UNHOLINESS—IT WOULD USURP HIS DEITY AND JUSTICE AND MAKE HIM UNTRUSTWORTHY—IT WOULD MAKE GOD A LIAR!** That is why it is imperative that anyone wishing to be a “priest” and serve God in the NT church (“New Israel” Gal. 6:15-16), **MUST BE CLEANSED OF SIN AND MADE HOLY BEFORE GOD**. We are not left in the dark as to how a human being today may be cleansed before God. Jesus took care of that “once for all” at the cross—it does not have to be repeated over and over. Human beings appropriate what Jesus did by believing in Christ, repenting of

their sins, and being immersed in water “for the forgiveness of sins,” and having their “sins washed away” (Acts 2:38; 22:16; 1 Cor. 6:11; Col. 2:12-15; Titus 3:5-7; Heb. 10:1-25; 1 Pet. 1:22-25; 3:21; 1 John 1:8—2:6).

The sacrifice must be as pure as the priest. Without the proper sacrifice the priest cannot serve! THESE ORDERS WERE GIVEN NOT ONLY TO THE PRIESTS BUT TO THE ISRAELITE WORSHIPERS AS WELL! Every worshiper—even a “foreigner” (i.e. proselyte, like Cornelius the centurion in Acts 10:1-8)—was physically and morally responsible for the selection of the animal he was to bring to God as a sacrifice. All animals that were blind, disabled, mutilated, castrated, sick, or had a skin rash or scab—all were “blemished.” No animal “mother” and her “babe” could be offered on the same day. Of course, all animals offered had to be those strictly designated by God as *acceptable genre, species and gender*. ISN'T GOD BEING A LITTLE “PICKY” HERE? **NO! THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD IS BEHIND ALL OBEDIENCE! Man is to do what God reveals, AND MAN MUST GET HIS THINKING AND FEELINGS IN TUNE WITH GOD'S WILL ABOUT COMMUNING WITH HIM!** The Israelite's offering was to be “sacrificial” *thanksgiving*—it was not to be brought unwillingly. He was also to bring the *whole animal*—not to “leave any portion until morning” as if he were going to use some of it for himself. Peace-offerings were “thanksgiving” offerings, and they were to be offered to God for God's joy and “feasting” so the worshiper must not seek any selfish gratification out of the offering himself but must *willingly, lovingly, gratefully*, pour out his soul in this act of worship. Making an offering to God grudgingly is an abomination to God. SIGNIFICANTLY, in Lev. 22:31–33, God gives 5 motives for such “picky-ness” about man's attitudes and actions in worshiping him” (a) God's **sovereign authority**, i.e., “I am the Lord”; (b) God's **holiness**, i.e., “I will be hallowed among the children of Israel”; (c) God's sanctification (calling through his mercy) the Israelites to be his “chosen”, i.e., “I am the Lord which hallow you”; (d) God's right to their obedience because of his deliverance of them, i.e., “I am the Lord which brought you up out of Egypt”; and (e) God's character (nature), i.e., “I am Jehovah” (the “covenant-keeping God”). So, give thanks, O Israel (and NT church)! Bring **only** “acceptable” sacrifices before the Lord God Jehovah!

The significance of God demanding the “first” fruit of an Israelite's harvest was that GOD COMES FIRST IN HIS LIFE! A harvest of food represents life—AND GOD IS FIRST EVEN IN THE VERY SUSTENANCE FOR LIFE! **Our meals (festivities) and groceries are sacred and holy to God!** On the morrow after the “Sabbath” in the Feast of Unleavened Bread (during which one day alone was designated “Passover”), a sheaf of “first-fruits” of barley was offered as a “wave-offering” before the Lord. Oil and frankincense were mixed with flour and the whole offered as a “meal-offering.” In *waving* the sacrifice (i.e., holding it out toward the altar and bringing it back again toward the worshiper) God was being symbolically recognized as the *origin* and *giver* of the entire harvest—the harvest was consecrated in its entirety to God. On the “Sabbath” of the Feast of Unleavened Bread the counting began to complete 49 days in establishing the day of Pentecost. Passover was always on the 14th of Nisan but the “**first**” day of the week of Unleavened Bread began the day *after* Passover and “first days” of feasts were usually designated “sabbath” (Lev. 23:24,32,34). Thus the “first day” of Unleavened Bread or “sabbath” was always on the 15th of Nisan. On the 16th day of Nisan (the day

after the “*sabbath*”). Eating the unleavened bread of the Feast must not begin until after the sheaf of the first-fruit has been offered. When we come around God’s table, God is always served first—he is both the host and the guest! The sheaf of first-fruits was offered and the counting for Pentecost began. Since the 14th of Nisan did not always occur on the same day of the calendar year (it was reckoned according to the moon-phases), the day of Pentecost could also occur on any day of the week as we now reckon weeks. The day of Pentecost in Acts 2 may not have been on Sunday!

The verses cited in the question all end, “it is a statute for ever in all your dwellings through out your generations.” Does that mean the Jews should continue today to keep all these “statutes” of the law of Moses about feasts and days? NO! God is through with the law of Moses in its rituals, ceremonies and requirements. Whatever was of faith and grace from God, and whatever was of moral obligation on man from all creation has been **FULFILLED AND COMPLETED ONCE FOR ALL IN THE NEW WILL AND TESTAMENT OF GOD** THROUGH THE FINAL AND COMPLETED WORK OF CHRIST. That “new will and testament of God” through Christ has ***new covenant terms for appropriation***. The law of Moses is no longer valid for the redemption and salvation of anyone—Jew or Gentile! Anyone who can read at all can understand this from the Gospel of Matthew to the Book of Revelation (e.g., Gal. 2:16-21; 3:6-14; 5:1-8, etc., etc.). Jesus didn’t *destroy* the law—HE FULFILLED IT—FILLED IT UP FULL! And in doing so he abrogated all the ceremonies, feasts, and other minutiae of the Israelite code. In fact, the book of Hebrews is entirely a warning to **Jews** who had become Christians in the 1st century that to leave Christ and the church and return to Judaism was ***apostasy*** and ***blasphemy*** (Heb. 2:1-4; 3:1-19; 6:1-20; 9:15-28; 10:1-39; 12:12-29; 13:9-16). Judaism may continue in the world today, and Biblically-illiterate people may think God honors their attempt to come to him through Judaism, but **JUDAISM AS A MEANS OF JUSTIFICATION OR REPENTANCE BEFORE GOD IS AN ABOMINATION TO GOD!** It is crucifying the Son of God all over again and putting him to an open shame!

On the last week of October (doesn’t always come on our last “calendar” day) the Israelite was to celebrate the “Feast of Booths.” It was later called, also, Feast of Tabernacles and Feast of Ingathering. It was the last of the sacred festivals under the Law of Moses in pre-exile times. It began five days after the Day of Atonement (“Yom Kippur”) Lev. 23:34; Deut. 16:13), and lasted 8 days. It marked the *completion* of the harvest, just as the Feast of Unleavened Bread marked the *beginning* of harvest. During this festival the people lived in “booths” (Heb. *succhoth*). *How* and *where* these tent-like “booths” (or “lean-tos”) were to be built the law does not specify. According to Ezra, after the return from the exile, the Jews made themselves booths upon the roofs of houses, in the courts of their dwellings, in the courts of their temple, in the streets of the Water-gate and the gate of Ephraim. These “tabernacles” were made of olive branches, pine branches, myrtle branches, palm branches, and branches of thick trees (Neh. 8:15-18). After Ezra, the scribes and Pharisees defined how and where they were to be built. It was ordained by them that the interior of each “tabernacle” must not be higher than 20 cubits, and not lower than 10 palms; it must have at least three walls, with a thatched roof partially open so as to admit a view of the sky and the stars; it must not be under a tree, covered with a cloth or any material which contracts defilement; only branches of shrubs which grow out of the ground are to be used for the covering. The later Jews began to

erect their “tabernacles” on the day after Yom Kippur. When the pilgrims came up to the temple in Jerusalem on the evening of the “day of preparation” (Friday) the priests proclaimed the approach of the holy convocation by the blasts of trumpets; the altar of burnt-offering was cleansed, the gates of the temple were opened after midnight; the huge menorah (candelabra of 8 receptacles) was lit, a priest, accompanied by a band of musicians and a jubilant procession of worshipers, went with a golden pitcher to the pool of Siloam, filled it with water and returned to the temple, ascended the steps of the altar with another priest who had a pitcher of wine. They simultaneously poured the water and wine upon the base of the altar. This ceremony was repeated every morning during the last seven days of the feast. Another jubilant multitude went outside Jerusalem at the same time to gather willows and returned with great rejoicing and amidst blasts of trumpets they carried the willows into the temple and placed them at the altar in such a manner that their tops overhung and formed a kind of canopy over the altar. See the Gospel of John, chs. 7-8-9 and 10:1-21 for Jesus’ observance of the Feast of Tabernacles! Jesus used “Tabernacles” to provoke the worshipers to believe in **him** as the “water of life” and the “light of the world.” The sacrifices of this feast were more numerous than at any other feast. It was the most joyous and popular feast of the ancient Jews. **It’s primary purpose was to be a yearly reminder to the Israelites of how God had delivered them from Egypt and how their forefathers had wandered in the wilderness and lived in booths, and HOW GRATEFUL THEY SHOULD HAVE BEEN TO BE THE RECIPIENTS OF THE LAND OF CANAAN BY THE GRACE OF GOD AND THE SUFFERINGS OF THEIR FOREFATHERS!** “Tabernacles” was a very “patriotic” time for the Jew! EVERY LORD’S DAY SHOULD BE A “TABERNACLES” FOR THE CHRISTIAN! Our Lord has delivered us from the bondage of sin and prepared for us a “better country, a heavenly one” (Heb. 11:16). CAN YOU VISUALIZE WHAT THE CITY OF JERUSALEM MUST HAVE LOOKED LIKE WITH ABOUT 1.5 MILLION PEOPLE THERE FOR THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES—WITH ENOUGH “BOOTHES” TO GO AROUND? Any one of these great feasts would have been a great boost to the economy of the merchants and service providers of the city and surrounding environs. We know the corrupt priesthood in Jesus’ time made millions of dollars from the “temple-trade.” The possibility of corruption and exploitation at 4 or 5 such gatherings each year was why the Law of Moses legislated such high moral demands on so many details of these festivals and every-day life.

Lekhem-haponeem is the Hebrew word translated “shew-bread, or show-bread” and literally means “bread of Presence.” Every week 12 fresh cakes of unleavened bread, each containing about 4/5 of a peck of fine flour, placed in two piles upon a pure table with frankincense beside each pile and changed every Sabbath day (24:5-9). The table held a series of golden vessels comprising dishes, spoons, flagons and bowls and on the table also was a presentation of offerings of “grain and wine and oil”—the 3 chief products of the land (Deut. 7:13). The cakes were eaten by the priests every Sabbath day and were considered to be among “the most holy” sacrifices. Of the many things connected with the tabernacle (or later the temple) service which became required of the priests, there were only 8 that had to be *consumed* within the precincts of the sanctuary, and the Bread of the Presence was one of them—the others were (a) the remnant of the meal offering (2:3); (b) the flesh of the sin offering (6:26); (c) the flesh of the trespass offering (7:6); (d) the leper’s log of oil (14:10); (e) the remainder of the *omer* (23:10-11);

(f) the peace offering of the congregation; (g) the two loaves (23:19-20). The **sanctity** of the loaves and table of the “shew-bread” (Bread of Presence) was a *continual reminder* to the Israelite worshiper—(a) of the truth that **“man does not live by bread alone”** (b) of man’s continued and unbroken dependence upon God (even during the travels of the table with the tabernacle the “continual bread” was required to be in its place on its table (Num. 4:7); (c) priests ate the Bread of the Presence from the table while the frankincense burned, and the whole ceremony became a symbol of the prayer of thanksgiving to God by the whole nation. **THE BREAD OF THE PRESENCE WAS A “MEMORIAL” OF MAN’S ULTIMATE SPIRITUAL ESSENCE, OF MAN’S DEPENDENCE ON GOD, AND OF THANKSGIVING FOR REDEMPTION FROM EGYPTIAN BONDAGE! It was observed weekly! That “rings a bell” about Christians partaking WEEKLY of the Lord’s Supper! WE SHOULD NOTE BEFORE PASSING—ONLY CLEANSED PRIESTS WERE ALLOWED TO EAT OF THE “SHEW-BREAD” (Matt. 12:4; Mk. 2:26; Lk. 6:4).** There was one exception, 1 Samuel 21:1-6, when David’s men were starving and the high priest gave them “shew-bread” to eat. Jesus used this incident to prove the sacredness of human life and the need to relieve human suffering takes precedence over rituals and “things.” **IT IS RIGHT TO DO GOOD ANYTIME, ANYWHERE, ANYHOW!** But then, God is the one who defines what is “good.”

Nokav means literally, “to pronounce” but when followed by *ath-hasshem*, literally, “The Name” (the word “Lord” is not in the original Hebrew text) it means to **blaspheme** or “pronounce the name of God contemptuously.” Ex. 20:7 uses the Hebrew word *shove* to translated “vain” so the two sins are probably synonymous since *shove* means literally, “false, a lie.” There is a similar (not the same) incident recorded in Num. 15:32-36. The man who “blasphemed” in Lev. 24:10-23 was probably one of the “mixed multitude” that came out of Egypt with Israel (Ex. 12:38). The man’s sin was a **flagrant** violation of Ex. 20:7, the third commandment. **GOD IS ABSOLUTELY CONCERNED ABOUT UPHOLDING HIS HOLY NAME AMONG MEN!** When society loses respect for the *person of God* it loses its power to hold that society together in peace, security, kindness and goodness. **THERE IS NOTHING MORE IMPORTANT THAN “HALLOWING” THE NAME OF GOD! Reverence, awe, respect and obedience are the beginning of worship and service.** Using the name of God or Jesus contemptuously, or falsely (“vainly, emptily, uselessly”) *is different* than using “dirty” words (as abhorrent as they are). Any use of foul language is a sign of the loss of **self-control** (a primary Christian virtue)—use of God’s name and the name of his Son irreverently, disrespectfully, contemptuously, rebelliously and derisively undermines all law and order and morality! Moses ordered the man “put into custody” until the will of the Lord could be ascertained (either by reading the Decalogue, Ex. 20:7 or by Urim and Thummim). “Custody” was practiced for safety’s sake but only until the judgment could be given and punishment meted out—no **prison** sentences as punishment or “rehabilitation” are to be found in the entire Law of Moses! **AND THE PUNISHMENT FOR BLASPHEMY WAS DEATH.** Laying hands on the head of the offender was saying to all who witnessed that the persons affected by his sin were now transferring it to him. The total consequences of his act were upon him.

10. *Lex talionis*, (i.e., Latin for, “The Law of Retaliation”) was: (a) intended to be a law of *exact* justice, not of revenge or malice—it was intended to institute “fairness” into

the Israelite civil and social structure; (b) it *never* allowed for private vengeance—it was always supposed to be carried out under supervision of the priests and judges and according to the written law of Moses “without pity” (i.e., without bias or partiality); (c) and by excluding **murder** from the crimes for which a ransom could be paid (Num. 35:31f.) it is probable that compensation for “an eye or a tooth” injury could take the form of a “fine.” Anyone who wants a **thorough** discussion of crime and punishment as the Bible reveals he should read, *What The Bible Says About Civil Government*, by Paul T. Butler, 1990, College Press, pp. 141-213. Briefly, the Bible is clear, in both OT and NT that capital punishment for capital crime is not only sanctioned by God, but **ordained and commanded** by God. The Hebrew words used in Exodus 20:13, *lo tiretsaka*, are properly translated, “Thou shalt do no murder.” The Hebrew word used to legislate the **execution** of a murderer in Exodus 21:12 is *yuumath* which often translated “slay” or “to cause to die.” **All murder is killing, but not all killing is murder!** *Some killing is justified as “execution.”* There is a diametrically different morality between murder and capital punishment. The Bible decrees execution (death) without mercy and without the possibility of any kind of ransom (Exod. 21:12,14,23; Num. 35:16-21; 35:29-31; Deut. 5:17; 19:11-13). Romans 13:1-7, 1 Pet. 2:13-17 are the two major indicators that the New Testament sanctions capital punishment for capital crime. The great apostle Paul said, “If then I am a wrongdoer, and have committed anything for which I **deserve to die**, I do not seek to escape death; but if there is nothing in their charges against me, no one can give up to them. I appeal to Caesar” (Acts 25:11). **PAUL BELIEVED CAPITAL PUNISHMENT WAS A VIABLE SANCTION IN SOCIETY!** A just war engaged in to defend against aggression is simply capital punishment on an international scale! A policeman or other law enforcement officer who must “kill” a criminal in order to avert a clear threat of murder during a crime is a form of capital punishment. Self-defense against unlawful, murderous attack, is a form of capital punishment (Jesus sanctioned the apostles to “buy two swords” to defend themselves against the murderous mob coming to arrest him in Gethsemane!).

LEVITICUS 25:1—27:34

American farmers might go one full year, every 7th year, without planting or harvesting a crop—but what about the American *urban dweller*? Certainly prices on farm products (which are simply the most fundamental and necessary products to sustain life) would rise “sky-high” the next year! If farm produce prices escalate, prices on everything else escalates—so the farmer would soon be in same the “bind” as the city dweller—in America! BUT IT COULD BE DONE! Everyone would just have to live a less *consuming* life! For the Israelite, the 7th year was a “Sabbath Year”—all year long! The 7th year was a very important year in the Israelite economy: (a) to teach **equality** the bond-slaves were set free; (b) to teach **kindness** and thoughtfulness to slaves, servants the land was set “free” for indiscriminate use by all the inhabitants; (c) to teach **dependence on God** who must provide in the 6th year what they would not have in the 7th or the 8th year, the land must lie fallow; (d) to teach that **mammon was not God, not to be worshiped**, no farming was to be done—they would have time for intensified worship and doing good deeds; (e) to teach Israel **they did not own** the land but were only using it as *stewards* of God. In Lev. 25:20-22 God **emphatically** promises that he will provide **three times** as much in the 6th year than in any other year! So they would have enough for the 6th, 7th, and 8th years, *IF* they obeyed the Lord’s command and refrained from sowing and reaping in the 7th year (and, of course, they would not reap in the 8th year if they did not sow in the 7th). WHAT A LESSON IN THE PROVIDENTIAL CARE OF GOD FOR HIS CREATURES AND HIS CREATION! God wants man to **enjoy** the creation he has provided. God will actually enable the land to produce enough for 3 years for the express use of man in a year of rest so he may learn to worship and relax. Taking every 7th year “off” *averages* out at about 2 months per year “vacation” for the Israelite farmer—in addition the Israelite took every 7th day (“Sabbath day:”) off—that’s another 52 days “off” per year—not bad for an ancient, agrarian society! Some of us are old enough to remember the “Dirty-Thirties” in America—the depression and the drought. Many city-folks were without jobs; the droughts devastated the American “bread-basket” (the Midwest). BUT FEW AMERICANS STARVED TO DEATH IN THOSE DAYS—PROBABLY FEWER THAN TODAY! There were more charitable works being done then, more neighbor-helping-neighbor and family helping family. Today, in America, there is the frenzied mania to obtain “the good life” and people become “work-a-holics” working, consuming 7 days out of 7! And what do we have to show for it? More poverty, more crime, more immorality, more psychological illness, more pollution of the environment, more homelessness. **America needs a good dose of applying Matthew 6:19-34 and John 6:26-29.** Certainly, Christians need to apply Jesus’ **command** (“Be not anxious” is in the imperative mood in Greek—it is not just a suggestion, it is a gospel command)!

For the Israelite, the 7th **day** reminded him of his deliverance from Egyptian bondage—the 7th **month** reminded the Israelite *again* of God’s provisions in the several feasts of the month—the 7th **year** reminded the Israelite of God’s ownership of the land. NOW THE CLIMACTIC, ONCE-IN-A-LIFETIME EXPERIENCE—**SEVEN TIMES SEVEN YEARS, i.e., THE 50TH YEAR, THE “YEAR OF JUBILEE” REMINDED THE ISRAELITE AGAIN OF GOD’S DELIVERANCE AND PROVIDENTIAL CARE!** It was announced in

the 49th year on the great Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement) with ram's-horn-trumpets plated with silver with golden mouthpieces. At the close of that great day the loud blasts from the trumpets were heard and the Israelite was reminded that he had security, providential care from God, peace of mind, that God had pardoned their sins and they had become reunited to him through his forgiving mercy. Every Israelite was ordered "to proclaim liberty throughout the land," by nine blasts of the trumpet, that he, too, had given rest to the soil—he had freed every mortgaged family estate—and he had given liberty to every slave who was now free to rejoin his kindred. **Since God had forgiven the Israelite's "debts" (sins), the Israelite also was to forgive his debtors! The Israelite was prompted thus to behave like God!** SO, YOU SEE, THE O.T. IS NOT AS "UNSPIRITUAL" AS WE ARE OFTEN LED TO BELIEVE!

Whether farmer or city-dweller, we human beings are only *temporary tenants* upon this earth. Our deeds of ownership do not declare the **real Owner**. God made sure by his law that the nation of Israel was well aware of this fact! Land could not be sold in perpetuity (permanently). An Israelite was to live in the same land "area" throughout his generations for the purpose of identifying the legal owner of the land that had been assigned his ancestors by Joshua. This would preserve the "generations" of the tribes **unmixed** until the Messiah came. Furthermore, covetous ambition would be stifled since no one could "add field to field"—but the later Israelites in the days of the prophets coveted and took anyway (Isa. 5:8; Jer. 22:13-17; Micah 2:2) and for that God exiled them in a foreign land. God **did** make provision that if a man became poverty-stricken and hungry he could "sell" his land but the "buyer" did not hold a permanent deed. If the original owner could find a way to buy it back he could do so with certain remunerations going to the "temporary" mortgage holder-owner. If the **land** is not redeemed by the poor man who "sold" it it remains in the possession of the purchaser until the Year of Jubilee, when it is returned to the "family" free of indebtedness. **BUT WHEN A CITY-DWELLER LOST HIS HOUSE THROUGH POVERTY HE HAS ONLY ONE YEAR IN WHICH TO REDEEM IT.** Houses were not like fields—they were made by man and subject to disrepair and decay and thus were not worth nearly as much as the **land** (and this is still essentially true today—God knows what he's doing)! **It is the land and God's allotment of the land that is to continue—not man's work in the land.** Yet, man's work is respected and can be restored to him if he does it within the prescribed time limits. There are **3** cases of real estate considered in this law (**a**) the house in the fortified city; (**b**) the house in the country or village, since they would be attached to the **land** could be redeemed and freed in Jubilee; (**c**) the houses of the Levites. The tribe of Levi *never* had a land allotment. They were given 48 cities scattered throughout the tribes (Num. 35:1-8; Josh. 21:1-3). The houses in these cities of the Levites were to have the same value as the land. If sold, the houses could be redeemed at any time, and were subject to the law of Jubilee. **Such a regulation for the Levites was to protect the only possession they had—their houses.** The pasture lands outside the cities of the Levites were never to be sold (Num. 35:4-5).

This text (25:35-43) **does not specifically order that an Israelite TAKE INTO HIS HOME a poverty-stricken neighbor or family member.** It does say the non-poor Israelite is to "maintain" the poverty-stricken Israelite. Servitude was allowed as one method of "maintaining" a poor fellow countryman. **Bond-service**, indentured servitude,

is not the same as “slavery” as we think of it in America (and many other parts of the world) before America’s “Great Civil War” where human beings were bought and sold like cattle and actually became “property” of their “owners” and were abused and exploited and *de facto* imprisoned on “plantations.” The Israelite was allowed to let his poor neighbor or family member indenture (“mortgage”) himself and his services to pay his debts and sustain (i.e., “maintain”) himself and even his family, if necessary, so he would not starve. Israelites could only have “slaves” which they took or bought as prisoners of war from the Gentiles or from the “strangers” among them. Israelites could not go out on “slave-gathering” expeditions and practice “man-stealing” (see Ex. 21:16) and was commanded to treat any “slave” he took or bought from war spoils with care and mercy (Ex. 21:20,21,26,27). Many of us are old enough to remember an America where **families** “took-in” their poor relatives and boarded them, fed them, and let them help with the work in the house and in the field. That was when America was more agriculturally based than today. But it still happens many times in 21st century America—more often than many realize. Those “taken-in” should do all in their power to find work and pay as much of the “load” as possible out of gratitude and moral obligation to God’s revealed will (1 Thess. 4:11-12; 2 Thess. 3:6-15). **IT IS RIGHT AND IT IS CHRISTIAN TO FEED AND SHELTER THE POOR (Matt. 25:31-46)—you won’t get into heaven unless you do!**

No! Abraham Lincoln and the “abolitionists” were not wrong in emancipating American slaves in 1861-1865. The TWO-THIRDS OF A MILLION (666,668) MILITARY DEATHS and devastation of the southern lands that were a consequence of that “Great Civil War” were not in vain. Numerous ancestors of mine fought for the liberation of the slaves and the preservation of the Union in that war. But that kind of “slavery” was forbidden to the Israelite—even when they were allowed to “buy and sell” Gentile “slaves.” **Indentured bond-service was NOT slavery!** As legislated by the law of Moses it was even in many respects more humane than the “slavery” of modern indentured “employees.” A modern “worker” does, in effect, become a bond-servant to his employer, often for “life,” and often with much harsher treatment than Moses allowed! As for the Israelite who “mortgaged” himself and/or his family as a bond-servant to a neighbor to pay his debts: **(a)** God says such a bond-servant is God’s servant—he is *not* the neighbor’s “property”—the neighbor has a right only to his servant’s service; **(b)** in no case shall such bond-service hold valid for longer than 6 years—in the 7th year the bond-servant was to have the privilege of going out free for nothing; **(c)** the bond-servant must have the privilege of being redeemed at any time (for a certain “fair” price) by any of his near kindred (e.g. Ruth and Boaz); **(d)** the man being served shall not rule over the bond-servant with harshness; **(e)** families were not to be separated when it came time for the release of the bond-servant—when he went out “free” he was to take his children with him. If a bond-servant had been given a wife by his “master” she and her children had to remain with the “master” until she reached her 7th year of service. If the bond-servant already had his wife when he became a servant, then she and her children went out with him in the 7th year (Ex. 21:3-4). Paul gave instructions for Christian behavior to those who were **really** “slaves” in the Roman empire (Eph. 6:5-8; Col. 3:22-25). MODERN-DAY CHRISTIAN “EMPLOYEES” WOULD DO WELL TO APPLY PAUL’S INSTRUCTIONS. But, of course, Paul also gave instructions to Christian “masters” (Eph. 6:9; Col. 4:1) and MODERN-DAY EMPLOYERS, DITTO! Talk about the “cost of discipleship”—how would you have received Paul’s instructions as a Christian “slave” to

obey in everything those who are your earthly masters, not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart (as servants of Christ), fearing the Lord? And whatever your task, you are to work heartily (rendering service with a good will), as serving the Lord and not men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward...NOT EASY, HUH?! But then, Jesus never promised you a “rose garden.”

God’s **conditions** for Israel’s security, independence and power against their enemies were: **(a)** have no other gods before Jehovah; **(b)** keep Jehovah’s “sabbaths”; **(c)** reverence God’s sanctuary; **(d)** walk in God’s statutes (do God’s will as a life-style) (26:3); **(e)** keep God’s commandments (know, trust, cherish, and **do** God’s word) (26:3); **(f)** and allow God to set his presence and live among them (tabernacle), “walk among” them and “be their God” (26:11-12). Almighty God who controls “nature” is the God Israel was to worship—not the impotent idols of their neighbors. What the idolatrous gods of sun and rain could not do, Jehovah God **could do** and **did do** (Deut. 11:14). But Israel had to keep the conditions if they wanted peace and prosperity. For about 400-500 years (about 14 generations), at least, God provided abundantly for Israel—from the time of Joshua to the time of Solomon. **BUT THEN, ISRAEL REBELLED AGAINST ALL GOD’S CONDITIONS.** When Rehoboam and Jereboam divided up the kingdom, everything went down hill—idolatry, sexual immorality, corruption of justice, violence, crime, drunkenness, thievery, hypocrisy and poverty descended slowly but inexorably upon the two Israelite nations for almost 300 years until God “vomited” Israel out into exile among the heathen idolatry they so dearly coveted. Christ threatened one of the 1st century Christian churches of Asia Minor with, among many other dire punishments, being “vomited” out of his mouth (Rev. 3:16). The same dire consequences as were threatened the church at Laodicea are in store for any church or congregation today which “does not hear what the Spirit saith to the churches.” **GOD HAVE MERCY ON ANY CHRISTIAN OR CONGREGATION OF CHRISTIANS WHICH DOES “WALK IN GOD’S STATUTES AND DO GOD’S WORD!**

Indeed! The two nations of Israel (“Israel” the northern kingdom from 722 B.C. and Judah from 606 BC.) suffered everyone of the judgments God specified in 26:14-39: **(a)** terror; **(b)** sickness; **(c)** depression; **(d)** devastation of their crops; **(e)** ruled over by those who hated them; **(f)** cowardice and confusion; **(g)** laboring in vain; **(h)** attacked by wild beasts; **(i)** slaughtered by the swords of heathen invaders; **(j)** pestilence; **(k)** hunger; **(l)** **cannibalism, “eating the flesh of their own children” (Deut. 28:53-57; 2 Kings 6:28-29; Lam. 4:10; Jer. 19:9; Ezek. 5:10; Zech. 11:9, and Josephus relates cases during the siege of Jerusalem in A.D. 70);** **(m)** destruction of their cities, villages, homes, grain-fields, orchards, flocks, etc.; **(n)** destruction of their temple; **(o)** **THEIR LAND SO TOTALLY DEVASTATED EVEN THE HEATHEN, USED TO DEVASTATION OF WAR, WOULD BE “ASTONISHED” AT IT (Jer. 9:11; Ezek. 5:15; 33:28-29; 35:10; 36:5);** **(p)** powerlessness before their enemies; **(q)** scattered in the land of their enemies until they lose their national identity (Jer. 9:16; 42:16-18; Ezek. 12:14)—Israel (the northern kingdom) would intermarry with the heathen until many of them were “devoured,” i.e., lost their pure Jewish genetic descent (Deut. 22:3; 1 Sam. 11:3,20; Jer. 50:6; Ezek. 34:4,16; see also Num. 13:32; Ezek. 36:13). Few of the original 12 tribes of the northern kingdom, Israel, returned to Palestine with Ezra, Nehemiah and Zerubbabel.

And even many those of Judah who did return (about 50,000) were not all able to prove their pure descent from tribal ancestry. **THE CRUCIAL ISSUE IS GOD KEEPS HIS WORD—BOTH IN JUDGMENT AND IN MERCY...ITS IS THEREFORE REASONABLE THAT MAN KEEP HIS COVENANT-PROMISES TO GOD (Rom. 12:1-2)!**

God, in his *omniscience*, anticipated Israel's idolatrous apostasy! He says, "But if they confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their fathers in their treachery which they committed (past tense) against me, and also in walking contrary to me, so that I walked (past tense) contrary to them and brought them (past tense) into the land of their enemies; if then their uncircumcised heart is humbled (past tense) and they make amends for their iniquity; then I will remember my covenant with Jacob...Isaac...and Abraham, and I will remember the land." 26:40-42. Leviticus was written by Moses 700 years before the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities! God knew they would rebel, that he would exile them, that they would be returned, and that ***eventually, he would remember his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.*** THE COVENANT WITH THE PATRIARCHS WAS ONE OF "JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH" (Gen. 15:6). The law came 430 years after the patriarchs and did not annul that covenant which had its goal, its perfection, its fulfillment in **Christ** (you can read about that in **Galatians 3:15-18**; you should also read **Romans 4:1-25; 9:1-33**—"it is not the children of the flesh who are the children of God, but the children of the promise are reckoned as descendants...") THE PROMISE IN Lev. 26:40-46 **WAS NOT COMPLETED AND FULFILLED UNTIL CHRIST NAILED THE LAW TO THE CROSS!** As just one example from the O. T. prophets that this is so, please read Amos 9:11-12 and then read Acts 15:16-17; and if you're still wondering, you might check Isaiah 61:1-4 and then read Luke 4:18-19! God has nothing left for the Jewish covenant that is outside covenant relationship to Christ!

Leviticus 27:28-29 legislated that the things given to God by the worshiper for God's use and property **could not be redeemed**. Once a worshiper gave something to the Lord for use in the tabernacle (later the temple), IT ACTUALLY BELONGED TO THE LORD! The worshiper couldn't "take it back" nor could it be sold to anyone else by the priests. Verse 28 is the law concerning those things man "devotes" to God alone; verse 29 is the law concerning those things God "devotes" to himself! All of these "devoted" things, whether by man or God, were to be **consumed or destroyed** and WERE UNAVAILABLE EXCEPT FOR THE "CONSUMPTION" OF GOD UPON THE ALTARS OR BY THE PRIESTS OF GOD IN THEIR SERVICE TO GOD. Any beast that touched Mt. Sinai would be "*devoted*" and doomed to death and destruction; the fields of Gilboa, wet with the blood of Saul and Jonathan, were *devoted*, or doomed by David (2 Sam. 1:21). Ahab was told by the Lord that Benhadad was "*devoted*" or doomed to the Lord. The Canaanites were "*devoted*" to the Lord; Jericho was "*devoted*" to the Lord (Josh. 6:17) because of Achan's sin. A tenth (tithe) of whatever the soil produces is "*devoted*" to God and man cannot vow to God what does not belong to him—neither can man "give" to God that which is already God's! One exception—if an Israelite wanted to "redeem" the seed of his soil to use to plant, he could pay the worth of a tithe of the seed—PLUS 20% (Nu. 18:21-24; Deut. 14:22-29). What the Pharisees were doing in the 1st century in Jesus' time was a perversity of this law of Moses. Rather than "honor (i.e., financially support) their (aged) mother and father" they were declaring **all** their personal finances "*devoted*" ("Corban") to God (Matt. 15:3-9), thus Jesus accused them, "But you say, If any one tells

his father or his mother, What you would have gained from me is given to God, he need not honor his father.” What the Pharisees were declaring “*devoted*” to God was being “devoted” to **themselves alone**. The Pharisees violated the *very essence* of the law—the *Decalogue* (see Ex. 20:12; Deut. 5:16), as well as the spirit of this law in Lev. 27:28-29! God never demanded everything the Israelite had to be “*devoted*” *exclusively* to God’s use in the tabernacle. The Pharisees made a “loop-hole” in the law by their traditions and “**made void the word of God.**”

So you see, a “TITHE” even in the O.T. was not “giving” to the Lord! THE TENTH ALREADY BELONGED TO THE LORD AND MUST BE PAID! It could not be “taken back.” The “tithe” of the Old Testament covenant has been (a) **abrogated** with the fulfillment of the law by Jesus in the New Testament; (b) is not sufficient to meet the highest standard of *stewardship* of 100% of one’s blessings from the Lord according to NT doctrine; (c) and does not fit apostolic doctrines of “giving...beyond one’s means” and giving “according to what a man has and not what he does not have” so that there may be “equality” in giving in the church (2 Cor. 8:1-15); (d) nor does the tithe meet the apostolic standard of “each one must do *as he has made up his mind*, not *reluctantly* or under *compulsion*, for God loves a cheerful giver...for God is able to provide you with every blessing *in abundance* so that you may always have enough of everything and may provide in abundance for every good work” (2 Cor. 9:6-10). God promises that every faithful Christian “will be *enriched* in every way **for great generosity**” (2 Cor. 9:11). Our riches from God are not for ourselves—not 90%, not 80%, not 1%—they are **for every good work and for great generosity!** Paul didn’t use those adjectives capriciously—he meant *every* and *great*—and held the Macedonians up as his proof who gave “liberally, out of their deep poverty, beyond their means”!

Introduction to Paul T. Butler Th.D

Paul was born in Springfield Missouri and graduated from Conway High School prior to enlistment in the US Navy. He began serious bible study with correspondence courses from San Jose Bible College. He later enrolled in Ozark Bible College and acquired his Bachelor of Theology degree June of 1961. He received a Master of Biblical Literature degree from Ozark in May of 1973. He received a Doctorate of Theology from The Theological University of America in October of 1990.

Paul taught at Ozark Christian College from 1960 to 1997. He also served many years as registrar for the college.

Introduction to the Sound Bible Study project.

The Sound Bible Study project is a cooperative effort of Christian educators and Jordan Media Enterprises LLC to provide the serious examination of the Scriptures for the conscientious student. All the teachers are experienced educators who have spent countless hours in the classroom on both sides of the lectern. The audio recordings and written notes are made available for those who wish to learn God's Word at a collegiate level but have been unable to matriculate. There is no intention to compete with the many faithful Bible schools, but rather to serve along side and strengthen both the student and the teacher for a stronger and more effective Kingdom of God that knows how to properly divide the Word of God.

