

CONNECTIONS

LEVITICUS

Leviticus 1

ALL FOR GOD

As I stand looking from my New Testament position and observe those from an earlier time, I am better able to enter into their thoughts and ways of connecting with God through watching them bring their offering to sacrifice to God. Abel brought a burnt offering to God with the understanding of simple faith, that the animal on the altar he made, was in reality a type of One he could not see. Noah also, offered burnt offerings of worship, when after a year in the ark, he presented the sacrifices of holy things to a holy God who could not look upon sin. After the vestiges of sin had been dealt with, the first act of human response to God from a cleansed earth was the sweet-savor of the burnt offering. The new beginning was initiated by worship that typified the Person and work of Christ. Now in my mind I stand looking as a grateful ex-slave, who has been freed from Egypt and has participated in some way in the making of the Tabernacle as a dwelling place for God in the midst of His people, comes to the beautiful gate with an animal to offer God as an expression of appreciation. For one month, God had carefully explained through His servant Moses, the way a holy God allows redeemed people to approach Him and worship Him. There was no casual or cavalier attitude such as is common today. No one was saying, "I will worship God in my way, and you can worship Him in your way." There has been none of that. Redeemed people who were called to be a holy people with a holy priesthood were to come to God with the sacrifices God chose. The one who offered would only be accepted if the offering he brought was accepted. Cain, the first apostate, learned that the hard way. To deliberately turn away from God's revealed will has soul-damning consequences.

"Vayichrah," ("And He called") - the original name of the book in Hebrew, is known as Leviticus. It is not really a book of instructions to the Levities, but a call from God to come and worship in the beauty of holiness. A holy God gave His declaration how redeemed people can have access into His presence. The shedding of blood is the only way for remission of sins, and how it was to be done was not left up to man's ideas. In my mind's eye I could look back and see how over half of human history as far as time, there were times and ways God opened the door to fellowship with men. Those dispensations of God's dealings with humanity recorded in the book of Genesis did not work because of man's willfulness and failure. But at the foot of Mt. Sinai, God opened another dispensation of time to allow men access and fellowship with Him through the giving of the law. Access to God has never been a casual stroll into some grotto, church or self-chosen spot. "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord." The worship of God is always an act of devotion that is motivated by appreciation and gratitude for who God is and His gracious interest in us. Worship is always to be approached with an awareness of awe, deep respect, dignity, reverence and holiness of life that accompanies real true humility.

I see a man looking over his herd, his flock and his dove-cote to see what he has that would be acceptable to God. The loom of Mt. Sinai impresses him with a holy fear of God who had spoken in fire, thunder and earthquake. The law had been given; the Tabernacle was finished and standing in its appointed place, and he is - Oh, so conscious, that God is near. From every animal he possesses, he picks the very best to bring to God. He is not going to bring one of his overworked oxen. He brings the one animal that is better than all the rest and sets it aside to watch it to see if there was any defect in it that was hidden from his eyes at first. Almost everything has more than one purpose, but this one animal has a higher purpose than any other. It was to represent Christ and lead the offeror into the place where faith had become real. This animal is making it possible for this man to come to God by faith. God is going to scrutinizing the offering and if it is acceptable the man will be accepted. If the offering is not accepted, the offeror will not be accepted. The offering is what really counted.

The moral perfection that is needed to be in the presence of God is impossible for man to attain to. It is only possible if there is a sinless one without the capacity to sin that is able to be substituted for the sinner. With fearful reverence, but trusting in the word of God who said that burnt offering would be a sweet savor to Him if it met the holy requirements, I see the one who brought the offering, put his hand on the head of that perfect creature in identification. By doing so he testified to his inability to come to God as he was, he testified he believed God's word so his faith was counted for righteousness. He testified to the perfections of the sinless sacrifice, and then he killed the sinless animal in total identification with it. That was the first part of what he had to do. The priests took the blood, and by sprinkling it on the four sides of the brazen altar they demonstrated the efficacy of the blood and sacrifice. The offeror skinned the animal so that all the inward perfections were exposed. Each piece he separated from the others around it, was to testify to the moral perfections of Him of whom the sacrifice represented. This was a type of Christ in the moral

perfections of the many offices He bears, the character and the personhood of the Savior. His relationships, His holy life, His suffering, His glory, His supremacy, His authority - every part of His was perfect, and it was there for all to see.

When the burnt offering was an ox, the offeror put his hand on the head of the animal, killed it and skinned it and separated the pieces, washed the inwards that spoke of the feelings, and the legs that spoke of the perfect walk of the Lord Jesus Christ. The offeror who brought the perfect sheep or goat took it to the north side of the altar to kill it. There is no mention of laying a hand on its head or skinning it, but it was cut in pieces and washed. The bird that was offered as a burnt offering was left complete but was opened up by the wings and spread out. Each animal had a meaning and each part as well. The ox would teach us of the persistent and faithful service of the Lord when in His life He "did always those things that pleased the Father." He never failed nor faltered in His duty and could say, "I have finished the work Thou gavest Me to do." The sheep teaches us of the character of the Lord. "I delight to do Thy will, Oh my God." His submission never ceased and He never complained about all He had to pass through. The dove/pigeon teaches us of the innocence of our Lord Jesus Christ who was "holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners." The head of the animal that was arranged in place on the altar teaches us of the thoughts of our Lord towards His Father. The thoughts and plans of God were going to be fulfilled and the Lord did them willingly and completely. The legs teach us of the perfect walk of the Lord in the light of fellowship and communion with His Father. The inwards speak of the feelings and affections of Christ towards His Father and the fat speaks of the health and vigor of the Lord as He hastened to do the Father's will in every way.

The sweet-savor offerings were burnt on the brazen altar. The other two were done differently. In my mind I can see the offeror look at everything in its place on the altar on top of the wood and watch, as that perfect offering was accepted by God. "We are accepted in the Beloved." It is the offering that was important as a life was offered to God completely as a type of the Perfect One who would come and please God in every way. The offeror would see the sinless one die, and be completely consumed by the fire - and knew God was well pleased.

I watched in my mind and learned that reverence for God cannot be just put on and taken off at will. When it is real, there will be obedience to God when we submit to His word. The sacrifice is to be perfect and holy; offered by a holy priest with a sense of true commitment to God; demonstrated by sincerely giving God the best I have. When that is true, worship will be in spirit and in truth. There will no additions or subtractions to the voluntary response of body, soul and spirit of the worshipper - expressed visibly, emotionally and spiritually. In that way God is glorified. In my heart I see the one who brought the perfect sweet-savor sacrifice of the burnt offering that was suitable to his ability and apprehension of God's grace, walking to his home with his heart filled with gratitude to God and his spirit lifted up to praise, worship and obey the One True God who delivered him from slavery and brought him into a place of blessing.

Leviticus 1:4. *"And he shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt offering; and it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him."*

HAND UPON THE HEAD.

He makes his choice with care, cautiously looking over each leg, each ear, each eye, all parts of the body with a concern that no blemish is found. With breath indrawn at the choice he finally makes, he lifts the animal, and cautiously lest something happen that would mar its perfection; he walks with careful steps to the place where God meets with His people.

Leading up to this day, there is a sense of increasing devotion toward God. He has experienced deliverance. He has experienced walking through the Red Sea on dry land. He has eaten miracle bread and flesh. He has been satisfied with the water that flowed from the Rock in the wilderness. He wants to show his appreciation to God. Some things are better seen than spoken.

So now, for the first time, he is going to offer a burnt offering to the Lord. Though he has sinned, he has experienced forgiveness. His desire is for the Lord alone. He knows the presence of God is there as he lifts his eyes and sees the cloud above. At night the glow from the heavenly fire keeps the darkness at bay and he rests assured that God is there - dwelling with His people.

But now this: this personal act of faith, this sense of wanting to draw near to God Himself, brings him with this perfect specimen of his herd to step inside the gate of the tabernacle and bring his offering to the officiating priest.

First, He puts his hand upon the head of the animal in an act of identification. *This animal is to be slain for me. It is sinless, I am not; it is perfect, I am not.* He kills the young animal he has raised from its birth. He

then cuts it into appropriate pieces and the priest who acts as a mediator, picks out each proper part and places it on the altar. Some parts he must wash with water and when all is done as God decreed, he stands back and watches the smoke of the sacrifice ascend to God. God, who knows the hearts of all people, has accepted his offering, and he finds joy in his soul.

By faith, we too, place our hand on the Head of the Perfect Sacrifice. By faith we stand by the cross-altar and see the One who is offered, accepted by God on our behalf. It is with the joy of being accepted in the Beloved that we come, place our hand of faith on Him, see the value of the sinless sacrifice, and go away with joy – the joy of devotion.

"O Holy Father: thanks for allowing us to come to Thee through Christ. Thanks for accepting us in Him. Thanks for making known to us the privilege of identification. Thanks for making it possible for us to enjoy the benefits of what Thou dost see in the Sacrifice that Thou hast provided. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."

Leviticus 2

THE GIFT OFFERING

By watching in my mind's eye through the scriptures, I see one bringing evidence of his appreciation of the blessings of God to the Tabernacle. He had prepared the ground and planted the seeds. Now for every seed he planted in the ground, hundreds more came forth and he is conscious of the fact that hidden in the dark ground was life God had released for his benefit. If he had been lazy or careless, the very ground he walked on would have withheld its life from him. But wisely he had labored and now "in due season ye shall reap if ye faint not." With a basket of freshly ground flour, well-sifted so there was no impurities or un-ground kernels, the man who planted in faith and reaped with joy, now comes to acknowledge his gratitude to God in a visible way that was defined by God and made acceptable to God. He did not design his own private ceremony, nor did a group of people on their own, plan their own way as to how they would express their appreciation to God. They were given the choice to make a gift of the meat-offering to God in His way. It is an insult to God to design a "worship service" to appeal to man's emotion and to meet the approval of the public. God has His way we are to worship Him. It is our privilege and responsibility to worship and remember Him in a manner suitable to Him.

The meat-offering, also referred to as the meal-offering was a sweet-savor offering that was put on the altar and burned there. It was given when the burnt-offering and peace offering were made and accompanied them both. Yet it was a distinct sacrifice with a specific reason behind it. There was no thought of sin in these sweet-savor offerings. These were to give to God, and to the offeror, evidence of appreciation by a specific act of worship. The response to God for what He has given is best recognized as when the Father gave His only begotten Son; when "the Son of God who loved me gave Himself for me," and when the Holy Spirit takes all of the blessings of God and makes them real to us. In the meat offering there is appreciation for God and what He had done, and also apprehension of the blessings brought to us. Part of the offering was for God and part was for man.

In order for flour to be fine, there must be a lot of beating to break all the parts into one perfectly smooth and even texture without any foreign or unwanted pieces to corrupt it in any way. The Lord Jesus was miraculously conceived in the womb of a virgin woman, Mary, and was perfect, pure and sinless in every way. During His time on earth He endured the deepest suffering as He fulfilled all righteousness that was demanded by God for man to be acceptable to Him. He suffered in His *soul*, "Now is my soul troubled and what shall I say..." He suffered in His *spirit* as He wept realizing that death came to men because of sin. He suffered in His *body* when "He bare our sins in His own body on the tree." All of this He did, first that God would be satisfied, and then for our blessing. The fine flour had no unevenness in its character, was unchanged throughout and was perfect in the smoothness of its texture. The gentleness of Christ and every attitude of His Person, whether meekness, lowliness or every other characteristic, was consistent. When the flour was taken in the hands of the priest and held up before God, there was a whiteness that was left on the hand of the priest even as it was being burnt.

Mixed with that fine flour was oil expressing in type, the Holy Spirit who came upon Mary. There was no leaven in the flour that would indicate the Lord Jesus had in any way inherited the tendency to sin, the desire to sin or the ability to sin. The flour was pure and the oil that bound the flour together is that which reminds us of the fact the Lord Jesus was filled with the Spirit in infancy, in childhood when He "waxed strong in spirit," and in His public ministry. At His baptism the Spirit appeared as a dove upon Him. In the wilderness the Spirit was there. The power of the Spirit was upon Him when He preached because He was anointed of the Spirit. Each piece he separated from the others around it was to testify to the moral perfections of Him of whom the sacrifice represented. This was a type of Christ in the moral perfections of the many offices He

bears, the character and the personhood of the Savior. His relationships, His holy life, His suffering, His glory, His supremacy, His authority - every part of Him was perfect and it is there for all to see.

*We may not realize at first the worth of what we do.
But we will have better understanding by the time we are through.
Symbols may seem so simple, but to God they have great meaning -
Because faith sees beyond the tangible, to what our God is seeing.*

*A Perfect Man God sees, who pleased Him in every way.
There was perfection in the words He spoke and in His work each day.
Even more, there was legal satisfaction when that Perfect Man was found -
And through that sacrifice He made, God's grace could then abound.*

*When we sing our hymns of praise and worship, that is all for Him.
When our spoken or unsaid prayers are made, the holiest we enter in.
When our hearts pour out in gratitude and we His life retrace -
We are moved to worship in faith for His redeeming grace.*

*The perfections of His life and work as a Man, are all for God.
The things He did and said while here, fulfilled the written word.
Evidence everywhere pointed to "This Man" as the only One -
Who could fulfill all righteousness, the God-Man, His own Son.*

*When we lift Him up to God, our hands are covered with white -
When we present our Savior to God, by faith and not by sight.
To those who don't know God, it is only a form they do go through.
To those who know and love the Lord, it is the best that we can do.*

*The meal offering does unfold the perfections of the Perfect Man.
When we bring our offerings of praise, we worship as only believers can.
"In spirit and in truth" are the criteria we are to obey.
Therefore, we must keep within the bounds the scriptures to us say.*

"Holy Father, may I never get to the place in my life that I substitute my own ideas of worship, for that which Thou hast taught in types, shadows and in the written word. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."

Leviticus 2:3. "And the remnant of the meat offering shall be Aaron's and his sons": it is a thing most holy of the offerings of the Lord made by fire."

MOST HOLY.

*A further act of gratitude accompanied the man;
Beside the animal he brought, he brought a gift of grain.
To show respect and honor God, he brought the food God gave.
He offered some of it to God, the best that he did have.*

*By this one act he publicly confessed he surely knew,
All he had came from God alone; in this offering this he showed.
Over the grain there was oil then poured, and incense upon that.
When it was ready, on top of that it was seasoned with some salt.*

*These may seem strange to those around who wonder at the scene.
But to those of us who know our Lord, it reminds of what has been.
For us today it speaks of Christ, the perfect, but humble man.
In His perfection, He lived here and never once did sin.*

*The spotless purity of Him was like fine flour so white;
And the fragrance added to the flour reminds us of His life.
He lived as Man among the men, and in every step He trod;*

There was always that which testified, He was truly the Son of God.

*No leaven was put in the grain-offering; that is fungus or a mould.
The life of Christ, and His person too, showed He was the Son of God.
The type was seen, way back then as a man brought then to give;
His offering pointed him, and us, to the Lord Jesus, Him who saves.*

"There are many ways we see Thy Son, O Father God; in all the scriptures of truth. But the offerings point us to so many facets of His Person, Life and Work, that we can learn more of how Thou dost see Him. With grateful thanks, I speak to Thee of Him, and worship; in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."

Leviticus 3

SHARED FELLOWSHIP

As an observer of those people of old who know God and learned more of Him as they obeyed and served Him, I can see how, why and what they brought to the Tabernacle in this peace offering. The full meaning and particulars relating to the offerings they brought was explained to them (and us) more fully at a later time. The person who brought the peace offering appreciated God, and what satisfied God. The burnt offering was constantly on the altar because the whole offering was for God. On that burnt offering was put God's part of the meat (meal) offering and the fragrance of the frankincense was ascending to God as the priests ate of the cakes of unleavened bread. In this event, the approach offering is brought signifying there is something God, the priests and the offeror have in common and can each partake of the peace offering. This animal, whether one of the cattle or one of the flocks, was to be a perfect animal, either male or female. Provision for peace is made for all. The burnt offering that was always burning provided for acceptance with God. The meat offering was the gift offering expressing appreciation with God. The peace offering of this perfect animal, was shared by different ones, and expressed fellowship with God by the offeror and the priest.

The sweet savor offerings are significant in a special way because the offering itself is what is important. The perfections of Christ that satisfied the righteous claims of God, and therefore our acceptance in the Beloved, has been established and we come into the good of what satisfies God. What relief it is to be accepted by God through His acceptance of the perfect God-Man, our Lord Jesus Christ! The meat offering also is of great significance to us because in the Person of Christ, we can see what is so unique and satisfying of Him, not only to God, but to us. Our appreciation of Christ enables us in our worship to glorify God when we exalt Him, and at the same time we are refreshed ourselves. In this peace offering in its perfection, we learn that our fellowship is possible and is maintained by our Lord Jesus Christ. "He is our peace." The sacrifices that were brought to be offered were such that each part could be given without hesitation to each participant.

Looking on at that scene that took place so many years ago, I wondered how the offeror would see Christ clear enough to believe on Him before He ever came to earth. Then by meditation on that action taken at the door of the Tabernacle before the altar, I see the offeror putting his hand on the sinless animal's head as an act of personal identification. In essence he is saying, "I am not perfect nor sinless, but this living creature is. This is for me. I have peace with God because of the perfections of this offering." The offeror would watch as the priests sprinkled the blood in the right places. He would see all the fat removed and the kidneys along with the fat, even that lump of fat on the liver, and the priest would place it on the burnt offering that was burning. As the fat flared into flame there would be the scent that was a sweet savor to God that both the offeror and the priests would see as they ate of the flesh of the same animal.

The offering of Christ satisfied God and He found pleasure in the sacrifice He made. The offering of Christ satisfies me because of His perfection that is imputed to me and makes possible meaningful fellowship with God. The offering of Christ was satisfying to Him. "He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied." The peace offering provided for the needs of the priest's children. There is full provision for the Church to be in communion with God because our standing in Christ is secure. However, many of those who are in the Body of Christ do not find their satisfaction and peace in the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ, and so try to get from religion and/or the world, what God has already provided for them in Christ. Instead of finding joy in seeing what delights God, and feeding their souls on what makes and maintains fellowship with God, they turn to things that cannot satisfy. To know Christ as our Savior does not make our fellowship secure. Our standing is secure, but unless we "go on to know the Lord, and practice what we know," there will be no real sharing of fellowship with the Father and with the Son, and the peace that goes with that.

I am challenged as in my mind I watch the flame from the burning fat of the peace offering ascend to God. As I watch the priest and his family eating of the body of the offering, and the offeror himself partaking of that

same spiritual food, I say to myself, "Peace has been made through the blood of the cross." I can declare to others and for my own benefit, "We preach peace by Jesus Christ," and be assured in my own soul that fellowship with God has been established on the basis of the value of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. God and I enjoy fellowship together because we share the Lord Jesus Christ together. Christ is the Mediator, who has reconciled us to God by His death. Because of His nature, His Person, His character, His work and the many "offices He bears," fellowship with God is possible.

When we gather at the Lord's Supper to remember Christ and to proclaim His death until He comes again, we find ourselves in fellowship with God. The sacrifice Christ made was first for God. The passion and the energy typified in the fat, speaks to us of the desire to please God that motivated the Savior to give Himself as a ransom for us. Fat on the flanks tells of His confidence in God and the caul (lump of fat) on the liver tells of His glory - all that brought delight to God. The flesh of which the offeror and priest partook of - and in a spiritual sense we too partake of, speaks of the strength, the life and the holy walk of the Lord Jesus, delights us because we know we had none of that ourselves. Without it we could never please God. But He did that for us. "Hallelujah, what a Savior."

Christ has made peace and the sinner and God are reconciled through the death of the Mediator. Now we share eternal life in fellowship with God and the Savior. It is my privilege to partake of that same Person who God finds His joy in - and we are at peace.

*It seems so elusive to men, that no matter what direction we turn -
There is no peace to be found from men, by what we are given or earn.
Either it is not there or is hidden by the clutter of things of the earth.
Everyone wants to have peace, but few comprehend its true worth.*

*In order for me to have peace, God first must be satisfied.
That only can be possible, if for me the Peace Offering has died.
My hand on the head of the sinless, is what make peace good to me.
God looks at the Offering first, that is what He can see.*

*One time in the past God said, "When I see the blood, will pass over you."
That happened on the night when the death angel, in judgment, Egypt passed through.
In a similar way the Lord Jesus on the cross first satisfied God.
Then He could pass over me because He saw the witness of blood.*

*Now both God and the one He has saved, find in Christ their joy and delight.
God alone knows the deep passion and cost; I know Him by faith not by sight.
So, I am limited in a way, to appreciate what has been by God recorded.
His holiness, His walk and His redemption, to me He graciously afforded.*

*God feeds on what is uniquely His, and finds delight in His Son.
I feed on what I can know of my Lord and what by grace He has done.
But I can also appreciate much when through His word I read.
For fellowship and communion with God, I have all I really need.*

*Fellowship is because peace is made by Christ when He died on the cross.
Fellowship is maintained when I stop to remember all that salvation cost.
Fellowship and communion continue when eternal life we share.
Fellowship and joy are real when to Calvary in spirit I repair.*

"Father, how delightful it is to me to know that we share our joy and fellowship with each other because of the Lord Jesus Christ. He means so much to me - I can't enter into all He means to Thee. But I can worship in fellowship with Thee in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."

Leviticus 3:17. "It shall be a perpetual statute for your generations throughout all your dwellings, that ye eat not fat nor blood."

PERPETUAL.

*For God alone, some things are meant to be.
The priest at the altar must be careful to see;*

*That God got His portion from every
Sacrifice men offered; for perpetually,
Those things belonged to God.*

*Peace has been made between God and men.
The practice they followed was given to them,
By God, who with symbols and types back then;
Gave visible evidence that by men could be seen –
Peace has been made.*

*The fat and the blood, when offered up to God;
Was burned on the altar, and went up in a cloud
Of smoke, to be seen by the man who there stood,
And watched and learned as best as he could –
There was fellowship between him and God.*

*He took to the Lord that which his wealth did allow;
From the best that he had, his appreciation did show.
Peace made at the cross cast here its shadow;
The "offeror" who ate of that sacrifice would know –
I am reconciled to God.*

*Today, as I think of that scene way back in the past;
I am reminded that peace has been made that is just.
The cross-death of Christ was not a choice but a "must."
There was no other way I could be reconciled thus –
Eternally!*

"Father God; with joy I recall the fact of peace that has been made through "the blood of His cross." To live in perpetual peace is a state of comfort and confidence. I know what has been done is forever, and reconciliation is a fact of which I constantly aware of. I am able to pray or praise at any time and in any place and enjoy fellowship with Thee through Christ. I thank Thee for this great privilege, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."

Leviticus 4

SIN AND ITS EFFECTS

The sweet savor offerings were all voluntary sacrifices made with the offering itself being what was important. Burnt offerings were made before the laws were given to the children of Israel. In the burnt offering all was burned on the altar and our acceptance by God is possible because of the Person of Christ. The meat offering was one in which no life was given. This was put on the burnt offering and all of the frankincense was for the Lord. The hidden years of the life of the Lord when He was here, as well as the public years of service, was able to be shared by God and those who worship Him. All the fat was burned for God. Peace has been made by Christ and in type - God, the priests and the offeror all partake of the same sinless substitute, expressing our fellowship with the Father and the Son through the Spirit. The two non-savor offerings were compulsory. One because of our sinful nature, and the other because of sinful acts.

There is the unmistakable fact that we sin because we are sinners, not the other way around. In the teaching of the sin offering, the emphasis is on the offeror rather than the offering. The offerings that were brought were suitable to the ones who offered them. This offering was for unintentional sin. For those who sin willfully after they have heard the truth, "there is no more sacrifice for sin." When one is awakened to their sin to which they had been ignorant of in their unbelief, there is conviction of sin and one wants to know what can be done to deal with this. By our nature we are not able to come to God ourselves or by our own efforts. We need a sinless substitute. This is where we begin with God. In the text of scripture, God begins with describing the offering first. We get God's view of things in the first chapters of Leviticus in the institution of the sweet savor offerings. Man's view is seen in the sin offering and the application of it to meet our need as sinners by nature. This is what first comes to mind when we hear the Gospel.

The first person mentioned is the priest who represents all the people. He assumes responsibility for others. At the door of the Tabernacle, where men meet with God, he brings the best he has of the herd. There he puts his hand on the animal's head in identification and sacrifices the animal. When he kills that animal the

life blood is taken and some is sprinkled in front of the veil as close as possible to the ark of God's presence, some was put on the horns of the golden altar of incense, speaking of the heavenly view of the sacrifice. And then the rest is put at the foundation of the brazen altar, that speaks of the basis of our acceptance with God. The first one that has to be satisfied is God. Then worship at the golden altar and communion because of the redemption price paid, can begin. The fat is then burned all for God as incense of a sweet savor. The rest of the bullock is taken outside of the camp and burned completely in a clean place where the ashes of the offerings is taken.

The priest who brought the offering of a bullock is the type of Christ who is both the Offeror and the Offering. "He offered Himself without spot to God" on our behalf. He took the place as the Substitute for sinners and "suffered, the Just, for the unjust to bring us to God." By dying in our place, as our representative, He suffered the wrath of God when He was taken outside the city and crucified. "The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin." The terribleness of sin is not understood until we can see what He endured for us. The consequences of sin are often down-played by those who do not understand the holiness and righteousness of God. In our place of acceptance in Christ, we go "forth unto Him, without the camp, bearing His reproach." Christ our priest has opened the way to God for us through His own blood.

When the congregation sinned, the consequences were severe, because Israel had experienced idolatry down through the years. The offering that was required for the congregation is the same as that of the priest. The Church and Christ are indissolubly linked so that what affects one affects the other. The priest represented the people before God so brought his sacrifice suitable to the consequences of his sin. When the congregation sinned the elders of the people had to do the same as the priest did. The effect of both who sinned was the same, and the rite for atonement was the same. "A little leaven, leaveneth the whole lump."

The ruler who needed atonement for unknown sin had to bring a male goat. The ruler's sin did not interfere with the worship of God by the congregation but is a person of influence he has a certain degree of responsibility to have a clear conscience in order to serve other people acceptably. He had to be able to enjoy communion with God before He could represent them in the daily things of life in a righteous way. The blood of his sacrifice was sprinkled on the brazen altar and poured out there, relating to our acceptance by God here in our earthly walk. The heavenly response to the sin offering is not seen in this man's sacrifice.

We may feel insignificant as common people, but God's plan of salvation is the same for us as for any others. God made provision for those who live in simplicity and an ordinary life, to be fully accepted through the sacrifice of Christ. The female goat had to be without blemish the same as the other animals. The level of our apprehension of Christ determines the value of what God expects of us. Whether a lamb or goat, God in grace made it possible for all to come to God by virtue of the sacrifice. Christ has become the "propitiation for our sins." God was willing to accept the offeror who brought the appropriate offering.

As I watch in my mind's eye, these various people coming with their sin offering, I wonder if they came with fear and trembling. I believe I would have, because if the offering was not acceptable, I would not be forgiven. The priest who offered the sacrifice knew what was to be given to God and how the blood was to be applied. In the case of the priest and the congregation who brought the bullock, we know the whole animal apart from the fat and the blood was taken outside the camp and burned. As far as the ruler or the common people we know what God got and where the life blood was poured out. As far as the rest of the animal, we are not told what happened to it. God knows who we are and He knows how much we understand of His redemptive work. At the beginning of our Christian life, all we really knew was, "I am a guilty sinner, but Jesus died for me." And from that, God got what He desired because He knew what we could give. Now as individuals, and as a body of believers, we learn and grow in grace and knowledge. The more that is understood, the more that is rightly expected from us.

In our gatherings to declare the Gospel, we can tell people plainly, "Christ died for the ungodly." In the Church we know we have been purchased "with the blood of His own." As individuals we respond with gratitude to "the Son of God who loved me, and gave Himself for me." When I think of one who had brought his offering and his sense of guilt lay very hard on his conscience - now on his way home, there would be the relief and gratitude that "the priest made atonement for him, for his sin which he hath sinned, and it hath been forgiven him." How grateful and joyful he must have been! Forgiven!

Leviticus 4:1-2. *"And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If a soul shall sin through ignorance against any of the commandments of the Lord concerning things which ought not to be done, and shall do against any of them:"*

IGNORANCE.

A priest could say, "I didn't know,"

But because of who he is he should stop and think;
"Is this God's will, would this be right?
Should I go ahead, take this food or drink?"
In order for priests to learn what not to do;
There was a price to pay so that not again,
Would they carelessly or without a thought,
Claim ignorance for some personal sin.
A bullock was the price he had to pay,
For the ignorant act he never thought about.
The next time a choice he was confronted with,
He would take the time for some serious thought.

If the nation as one, made a sinful act,
And didn't seem to know what they did was wrong;
Then they all had to come to the altar at once,
And bring a bullock to be offered for them.
The elders of the people, one by one,
Would place their hands on the animal's head.
On behalf of all, this sinless beast,
Would take their place and its blood was shed.
The fat was burned on the altar for God,
Then the bullock was burned outside the camp.
The nation would learn as they watched that day,
Ignorance is no excuse; sin has a consequence.

The ruler was to bring a young "he goat",
Because he, as a leader should know what is best.
The things he does without a thought,
Have damaging effects upon all the rest.
The common man too, was without excuse
When in ignorance, he would act in haste.
He was responsible, though he didn't know;
So, a young "she goat" with no blemish
Was the way he would learn that ignorance;
Has a price tag too, that goes along with it.
None of us can claim when wrong, it's not my fault.
Christ is for me, the only sacrifice that is fit.

"I know Father, that ignorance is no excuse for doing what is wrong. There are times that arise when I sense something is not right although I may not be exactly aware of what it is. Please give me understanding before some act continues too far to avoid the consequences. My mind sometimes overlooks the obvious. I want my mind to be open to what is right. I am asking for this, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."

Leviticus.4:29. "And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the sin offering, and slay the sin offering in the place of the burnt offering."

THE OFFERING.

Sin whether in ignorance or in choice,
Has its demanded price.
The sound of prick'ed conscience's voice;
Calls out for needed grace.

Where, who, what can alleviate the need
Of acceptance and forgiveness true?
Is there not one whom I can plead
My wrong - repentance for the sin I rue?

Yes! God forever shall be praised;

*He found for me the perfect
Substitute; a spotless Lamb He raised
In far and distant field - and fit.*

*Fit to satisfy God's true demand;
Fit to meet my need so great.
Fit because, by His own hand
He reached out on that Roman stake;*

*And thus, identified Himself so pure,
With this low sinner, so defiled;
And now with trembling hand, but sure
I reach to Him - am reconciled.*

"O Righteous God, who has bid us draw near and made us Thy children by faith in Jesus Christ: By faith I take this trembling hand and stretch it toward the place of holy acceptance. There is the One whom Thou hast seen as a fit Lamb, a Holy Substitute and He stretches His holy Head toward me. Me who am undone, unworthy, and an unlikely son - He, bless God, identifies Himself with me at that altar of holiness. My hand though trembling, has no place else to go but to that blessed Head and quivers at the touch, the reality of "being accepted in the Beloved." I confess my sin, I groan at the sound of those words, and yet such blessed relief even at the sound of my own voice saying what needs to be said. The blood; O the blood that flowed - the life once given for ever, for all, for me, for God to accept such an undeserving sinner. A thousand times ten thousand thanks be to Thee from these lips that have been touched with a coal from off that altar - for the cleansing power of the blood. Amen."

Leviticus 5

GUILT OFFERING

In watching the people of God in the past through my mind's eye as I read the scriptures and see those people coming with their offerings, I wonder at the way God sees and knows each person, and the reason they are coming to the Tabernacle. As an observer I cannot discern whether one leading an animal has the same objective as the rest. But I know that man looks on the "outward appearance, but God looketh on the heart." Some would have sweet savor offerings as they are enjoying God, and His grace and mercy toward them. Others becoming conscious of the fact of the sin principle in them, are bringing the sin offering. The degree to which they realize their need of being righteous before God determined whether they brought a bullock, female goat or lamb for the sin offering. To the careful observer there were those with downcast eyes and a sad countenance who were coming to the Tabernacle. He may have heard an oath and said nothing. He may have touched the carcass of an unclean animal or some uncleanness of a man. For some reason he may have lost his temper and said a lot of things he should not have said. He is bringing the trespass offering (guilt offering) because he has gone too far in sinning. He may not have known it was wrong or maybe did know that. Either way he had to bring a trespass offering. Ignorance was no excuse. Specific sin that can be named, whether against God or man, had to be dealt with by the trespass offering.

The concealment of evil is sin. Association with evil that has been committed in any way, is sin. Wrong speech is sin. The effect of sin can hinder the work of God and man. Therefore, it has to be dealt with. A casual overlooking of sin on our part is not acceptable. We are plainly told, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Missing the mark is one thing. That is dealt with in the sin offering. We may have not grasped the damage done by some sin done in ignorance until we have been taught specifically. Whenever sin is committed our conscience makes us conscious of the fact that we are guilty of something that condemns our heart. To sin against holy things to some doesn't seem so very serious that we stop to face it, deal with it and forsake it. Atonement is one part of the trespass offering that was directed God-ward. Restitution is another part of the trespass that is directed man-ward.

Innocence is not a reason for pardon. Wrong is still wrong whether we know it or not. Our heart may plan guilt. Our conscience senses guilt. God knows when there is guilt and does not deal with it just any way. "There is a way back to God..." He does not ignore sin because what we do to others, deliberately or not deliberately, still affects them and our relationship with God. As I watched I could see the trespass wasn't measured against a scale. It wasn't the kind of sin or the degree of sin as to its effect - it was the act. Those bringing the guilt offering were not measuring the amount of guilt. Guilt is the result of sin no matter how great or small we may think it is.

The offeror who came and knew what was wrong, brought a female lamb or goat to the priest to be offered. The poor person who had realized what he did was wrong, could bring two doves or pigeons; one for the sin committed and one for a burnt offering. If he had no access to even two birds, he could bring unmixed flour to offer for his sin. Nobody could be excused for not facing sin and dealing with it. The offeror who had sinned against holy things had to bring a ram without anything at all wrong with it. It had to be absolutely perfect. Atonement had to be made to cover that sin so that trespass would not be charged to them. Christ provided that redemption for us. God is glorified by who Christ is, by what He has done in creation, in His life and now by what He did when He died on the cross redeeming what was lost and bringing it to God. Now those trespasses are not imputed to us. The atonement Christ made has satisfied God. The person who brought the ram would see that judgment is now past. The rights that were once his were restored. But that was not all that was involved.

In the trespass offering, restitution must be made beside the guilt offering to be burned. There are consequences to sin that cannot be avoided. They must be faced. The ram was a type of Christ in His testimony and death for sin. The transgressor brought that offering. The priest took that and by it, atonement was made for the transgressor. God was satisfied and now able justly to grant forgiveness. But there were others affected whose claims had to be satisfied. For the harm that was done by that act of sin, it had to be fully paid for by the transgressor. That amount was determined by the value of money that was used to measure the worth of a thing, a service or an event. Added to restoring that full amount there was another twenty percent put on to what had to be restored. In type the Lord Jesus added way more on our behalf when He redeemed us to God.

We have to face the same thing in our day. Specific sin has to be faced and confessed before God. How thankful we are that "The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin." It is important for us to make amends for all that has happened because of our sin whether we were aware of it or not. There is fall-out of one kind or another to every action we do. A ram had to be given to make atonement in the holy things. A ram also had to be given to atone for those things that were not known. I may think something is okay because I make that decision, but that may not be acceptable at all. It is important that one does not act without carefully determining if this is what God wants, and is the way He wants me to do this. Other people may be adversely affected by what seemed to be of no importance to me.

How thankful we can be for the sacrifice of Christ for us! His atoning work deals with the problem. I avail myself of that benefit when I face the problem and confess my sin and trust in Him to forgive and cleanse me. Any offense that results from what I have done, by responding to those who have been affected, and going beyond merely repaying, I am able to make full restitution and the trespass offering is effective.

Leviticus 5:1. *"And if a soul sin, and hear the voice of swearing, whether he hath seen or known of it; if he do not utter it, then he shall bear his iniquity."*

SHOULD I?

*Some facts must be told, to not do so is sin.
The effects of withholding are bad.
To keep silent may at times be a serious crime,
Even when we have been caught off our guard.*

*Sinfulness, of whatever kind, is unclean in every case.
To try to down-play what God says is wrong,
Leads us farther and farther away,
Till to that sin we will soon be immune.*

*Why is this right, and the other thing wrong?
Who makes these rules for us?
It is God Himself Who knows what's along
The path-way of life we must pass.*

*The things that were holy were all designated,
To be used for the priests' food alone.
Others who made some vows they neglected,
Had to make a sacrifice for sin to atone.*

To tell the truth and live it before others;

*Is an obligation I am expected to fill.
Then the things I know, and before didn't bother;
The truths, I must commit now to tell.*

*It is not enough for me to know what is right,
Others from my lips need to know;
What may to people be small – in God's sight
It's important; because like leaven – sin grows.*

*The result of a transgression is long in effect;
Dark marks on the soul are implanted.
To be right with God, and clear of attack,
Confession lets forgiveness be granted.*

"O Righteous Father: I am beseeching Thee to help me never to speak when I should be quiet, and to speak when my words should be heard. I have this tendency to be "mouthy" at times and it can be very inappropriate. I also hold back from testifying when I should. I want to learn to speak like my Lord. "They marveled at the gracious words that proceeded from His mouth." May my words be with grace seasoned with salt, by Thy gracious guidance. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."

Leviticus 6

STANDING AND STATE

As I watch in my mind those living in Old Testament times and wonder how they would know what they could do to be in a right standing before God, I could see the value and the reason for those visible offerings they were to bring and offer to God. The burnt offering gave the understanding for those who saw by faith, that a perfect animal, suiting the offeror's appreciation, was a type of Christ, the only Perfect Man. One representative, the God-Man, gave Himself completely to God. Because of His righteousness, those who believe in Him and put their faith in Him without holding anything back, are "made the righteousness of God in Him." When the priest who had put on His priestly robes making him acceptable in the presence of God for us, removed the ashes of the burnt offering. That was evidence of a finished work. There is nothing that could have been done then, or that we can do now, that adds to a perfect sacrifice. Then the priest changed his clothes and took those ashes outside the camp to a clean place. The offeror who loved the Lord would see that this separate place is a special place of remembrance. God has accepted that perfect sacrifice - and in faith, perhaps as seeing "through a glass darkly," he would see I am accepted in that sacrifice. It is a testimony of one who loves the Lord.

In a practical sense, for me I see that because of "the mercies of God," I should offer myself "a living sacrifice, holy acceptable unto God which is my reasonable (priestly) service." That will keep me separate from the world and not willing to be poured into its mold. That offering will let me experience what is God's will for me and motivate me to appreciate my position in Christ - and live accordingly. I am to go forth unto Him, "without the camp, bearing His reproach."

Then as I consider one who brings the offering of grain that has been ground into fine flour to give to God as a meat offering, I believe the sincere-hearted offeror would understand by faith, that "every good and perfect gift comes from above." He wants to recognize before God that He is the source of our blessings here on earth. Christ offered Himself in His perfections for us. We now have "all things in Christ to enjoy." The Lord truly "loved His neighbor as Himself," and expects the same from us. The fine flour of the meal offering was first put on the burnt offering for God to enjoy. Then the bread made from the grain offering was eaten in the court of the house of the Lord - not outside. This unleavened bread was the food of the priests who drew near to God and was able to partake of that same offering.

There is no doubt that when we offer to God in our praise, thanksgiving and worship, our thoughts of the Lord Jesus Christ, it is His perfections, His character, His life that are important to God - and to us. Our remembrance meeting is to remember Him and make a public proclamation of His death. The value of His sacrificial work is in the value of His Person. The offering is what is important. "He was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners."

Another person comes with his offering and I notice there is joy and a sense of excitement in that person. He may have received some special blessing from God or it could be that he had been enjoying fellowship with others and realized the basis of that fellowship was God. He knows he is accepted by God because of grace

that was shown to him, and he wants to express his gratitude to God. So, he brings the best offering he can to share in fellowship with God, the priest and partake of it himself. According to his ability and/or apprehension, he brings a bull, goat or lamb and watches as the fat and those parts that are for God are burned as a sweet savor to Him. Then both the priest and the offeror are able to eat of the flesh of that offering that expresses the fellowship they have because of that offering. All three are enjoying together the effect of God's grace in Christ.

In a similar way we bring our offering to God, and we read that "with such sacrifices God is well-pleased." The gift of gratitude the Philippian believers gave to Paul was called, "an odor of a sweet smell. A sacrifice acceptable unto God." From the Lord's view this is a work of faith and labor of love. He said when He was here regarding what we give as an expression of appreciation, "I was hungry and ye gave Me meat; I was thirsty and ye gave Me drink..." As far as we are involved in this act of fellowship ourselves, there is joy in giving that may be greater than the joy the grateful receiver gets. Paul said when he was sacrificed, "I joy and rejoice in you all." He actually was able to rejoice in his suffering for the sake of the Gospel. There is real joy when we experience fellowship with God and His people.

I see one, in my mind's eye, with a sense of trepidation and a downcast countenance coming to the gate of the Tabernacle with his offering - the sin or the trespass offering. In the case of the sin offering he has learned what he thought didn't make any difference to anyone - actually does. God knows, and even though the man may not have realized how serious the sins of ignorance are, it still has to be paid for. Our state before God has to be addressed. This was not deliberate rebellion because there was no sacrifice for that. "Stubbornness is as idolatry, and rebellion and the sin of witchcraft." That was dealt with by the death penalty. When one brought the sin offering, he brought a sinless substitute that would be the victim for sin and die for that sin.

To us that means Christ "has once suffered for sin, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God." Now we are to "arm ourselves" with that same attitude and willingness to suffer in order to do the will of God if that is necessary. When we focus our minds on Christ, we will "make no provision for the flesh." To us the teaching of the sin offering is made plain, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless, I live..." The "world is crucified to me..." The man who brought the sin offering would go home with the assurance he was forgiven.

Another person comes with the burden of known guilt upon him and he brings the ram for his trespass offering. The law has been broken and he knows it. The offering he brings is part of his responsibility. He had been trusted but had failed in fulfilling that trust. He may have robbed another person in some way or another. He may have found something another person had lost and had lied about it, or engaged in some immoral activity. He had to make full restitution so he brought what was needed to the priest to pay what was lost by his trespass, and added to it twenty percent more of its full value. Then his ram was brought, his hand was placed on the animal's head and it was sacrificed for his guilt. The same thing had to be done if he had committed a trespass against another person. Restitution for wrong was necessary in order to bring the trespass offering and have it accepted.

Christ did die for us, but He also restored what had been lost through our sins. What God should have received from us - obedience, service, worship, praise and glory we did not give - Christ did give for us. What we had lost - peace, fellowship with God, and joy in Him - He restored and we are far better off now than what man had even before Adam fell into sin. Christ is not only "the Just," but He is "the Justifier of him who believes in Jesus." How wonderful it is that He is "faithful and just to forgive us our sins!"

*They come, conscious of the holy place they are now approaching.
No mockers nor jokers when this step of faith they are taking.
They are bringing what God Himself demands, not of his own making -
They are bringing their offering to God.*

*For gratitude there is still an order, not just a song and dance.
The offering of Christ was Himself was not by man's design nor chance.
God alone knew the value; He did not give it a passing glance -
The burnt offering was all for God.*

*In order for there to be fellowship with God, there was evidence of grace.
The offeror brought the flour, all the bread was eaten in that place -
Where God dwelt with His people and the path of faith they trace -
Our fellowship is based on the Christ of God.*

*Peace is made and relief brings grateful appreciation.
We rejoice with our God and the Author of our salvation.
That peace is such that we commit ourselves in consecration -
To the One who made our peace with God.*

*The sin offerings for things we know and don't know
Demand a righteous judgment before we farther go.
The Lord Jesus paid that price in full while here below -
Now we are accepted through the Son of God.*

"Holy, Righteous Father, please keep me from ever treating sin lightly as if it had no serious consequences. May my faith in Thee and the experiences of grace I enjoy daily, draw from my heart the sacrifices that are due to Thee. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."

Leviticus 6:30. *"And no sin offering, whereof any of the blood is brought into the tabernacle of the congregation to reconcile withal in the holy place, shall be eaten: it shall be burnt in the fire."*

FOR GOD ONLY.

*When God makes it plain what His will is for you;
Be sure you don't make some strange change.
His plans are immutable, we dare not intrude
Into places God only can claim.*

*Far too often men have imposed
On ground too holy for them.
For whoever we are, we dare not suppose
Ourselves and our lives free from sin.*

*The place where God dwells, is sanctified-wholly;
There's no way to approach without blood.
For me to partake of what belongs to God only;
Is so wrong, I would die if I did.*

*But in grace, God comes out to us to make clear,
His interest in the lives that we live.
When He calls us to Him, in His word we can hear,
What we can then to Him freely give.*

*It has long been revealed that God's great desire,
Is to have fellowship and joy with all men.
He has moved out to us that He might reconcile
When we "failures" will come back to Him.*

*The blood of the sacrifice had to be shed,
That there could be redemption ground.
On the basis of the Sinless One that bled,
We can draw near to where grace does abound.*

*When the fact is made plain, we've been reconciled;
God has accepted us fully in Christ.
Now instead of fear and of prayers being denied;
God has come near and accepted our trust.*

*No, we are not intruders on His holy ground,
Here's the place where He calls us to come.
We live our new life where grace now abounds;*

Where God lives – we live, this is our home

"It is a wonder to me Father God: that Thou hast called me to come to Thee. The ground I walk on by nature; certainly, is not holy ground. But when I consider the cost of the sacrifice and the altar on which it was laid - I can see that there is not one other thing to be added or taken from that. Please keep me from ever taking for granted, the Person of that offering. I am preparing my heart now for the gathering of Thy people tomorrow to remember Him. We will be on special, holy ground. Draw near to us and let us draw near to Thee in a way that is respectful, God-honoring and yet full of holy joy. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."

Leviticus 7

DO IT RIGHT

When it comes to anything a believer does, each of us needs to remember that we are to be holy because God is holy. So not only are we separated unto God, but the activities we do must be consistent with that by being holy. The things we do, the things we give are to be holy. It was no casual stroll down to the Tabernacle when a man brought his trespass offering. There was order, carefully designed by God Himself as to how this serious problem that was now faced, had to be dealt with. God's law for anything He directs us to do is holy. It is not up to us to make additions, subtractions or changes to what God's Word says. The blood, all the blood, belonged to the Lord. The life of the flesh is the blood and that is not to be eaten. When an animal sacrifice for the trespass offering was killed, its blood was poured out in prescribed places and sprinkled where God directed. In a practical sense, the blood transmits whatever is in its stream, good or bad, to every part of the body. The offering indicated the life of an innocent, sinless victim was given to God on behalf of the guilty sinner who has sinned before God. Sin offerings were needed to deal with the wages of sin of whatever sort it was.

A burnt offering was all for God: totally, completely except for the skin that could be seen outwardly. The skin was for the officiating priest. What we see outwardly is not what counts with God. The skin can be shiny and clean but what really counts is those things that are unseen. "The things that are seen are temporal; but the things that are unseen are eternal." Our Lord Jesus Christ looked like a man when He was among men. What He was inside was what made Him such a blessing to those who believed on Him, and made those who would not believe on Him so full of hatred. In His person and character, the light that shone in the world from Him exposed the darkness that was in the hearts of unbelievers.

The meat (gift) offering was offered to God as fine flour mixed with oil and frankincense as a type of the perfections of the character of Christ. The part that was made into bread of one kind or another belonged to the priest that presented the offering, and the part he didn't eat went to the other priests. When we offer to the Father the thoughts, praise and worship we have to give God about His Son, we are blessed ourselves. But more than that, others who listen are able to share in that blessing and say, "Amen," when we give our thanks. It is of interest that each observing priest got an equal part.

There were three kinds of peace offerings that were shared. Each person bringing a peace offering was to bring his own. There was nothing done by proxy here. One would bring a peace offering for thanksgiving. There may have been recovery from illness or deliverance from danger. It was the right thing to do whenever there was deliverance from some kind of calamity, to bring an offering of thanksgiving to God, and in this way acknowledge Him as the One who blessed the giver of the offering. Another would bring a peace offering for a vow he made when a promise made in prayer or a pledge given for some reason is fulfilled. To make a pledge of alliance is a form of a vow that must be kept. The person who brought the freewill peace offering wasn't identifying any specific reason for bringing offering. This was a voluntary offering - a spontaneous expression of appreciation to God for who He is and what He means to the one offering. It is the fruit of appreciation giving praise to God for His glory and honor alone.

Accompanying the animal of the peace offering was a variety of cakes. There was one of each kind brought and given to the priest to offer along with the sacrificial animal. If the offering was for thanksgiving, the priest's part was to be eaten the same day the offering was made. If it was for the completion of a vow or a voluntary offering of appreciation (freewill), it could be eaten on the day it was offered and the day after as well, but anything after that had to be burned. Our times of fellowship with God and the communion we have, isn't to be a stale dry review of things that we have experienced before. True communion with God needs to be fresh and our fellowship needs to be constantly nourished through the Word of God and our communication in prayer, thought and meditation on divine things.

In every offering all the fat belonged to God and was burned as an odor of a sweet smell to Him. Fat was not ever to be a part of the diet of the children of Israel, and neither was blood. Those pollute mankind by their

very nature. At the same time, they speak to us of the great blessings of God, the energy and enthusiasm of eternal life enjoyed by God that was seen in Christ. The life of the flesh is in the blood. This has no part in the eternal life God gives to us. When Christ was offered for us, the perfections of His Person made possible the freedom from the consequences of our sin, because He gave it to make atonement for our souls. That was for God's satisfaction, and we are not to return to that life again.

When the officiating priest picked up the breast of the animal being offered and waved it toward the altar symbolizing the offering was a sacrifice to God, and then waved it back, it symbolized the blessings we received from God. The priest could keep that for himself. The same was true with the right thigh that was lifted and presented to God. The priest was able to keep that for himself and his family. The waving of the breast and the thigh as a heave offering, symbolizes appreciation for God's affection toward us and the power He gives us.

The Father loved us and gave His Son for us to turn away the righteous justice (propitiation) of God from us and put it on His Son. "The Son of God loved me, and gave Himself for me," and the love of the Spirit is constantly being manifested to us. God has showered us with His affection. The power of God has been demonstrated to us in the Gospel and, now by that divine strength He has given to us, we can live for Him. Types of Christ can be seen by us as we read about these offerings. From our place in the history of God's dealings with men, we have some very special privileges because we look back in faith to the facts of the life, death, resurrection and ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ, and we appreciate and worship Him for what He has done. Those who lived before His first coming looked ahead by faith to see Him who was promised, and they could see much of the One in whom they trusted by the descriptions of Him in type, in the offerings they brought.

*To look back and see what others saw, is one of the ways I learn.
To look ahead to promises, helps me from temptation to turn.
Offerings were visible lessons telling people of faith, what is yet to come.
Now we look back and see typical teaching about God's Son.*

*By standing as in an allegory and watching those who came
To bring their offerings to the Lord, I know their faith's the same
As what mine is when I look back, and turn to look ahead
And see as old saints saw by faith, the reason blood was shed.*

*Our tendency is to lightly look on that which a holy God does hate.
Sin to us seems almost common place, instead of a great weight
That will sink a soul down into hell unless they are forgiven.
Holiness escapes our definition until we hear from God in heaven.*

*Death for sin was right at the start and that truth has not changed.
It makes no difference what has been done, or one's pedigree or name.
Righteousness and holiness, both truths go hand in hand.
God only has the both of them, but He is willing to give them to men.*

*By faith the offeror brought his sacrifice to the place God did choose.
When offered as required by law the consequences of guilt then he did lose.
He looked ahead as we do now and learned forgiveness is complete
When a holy God and sinful man at the sacrifice of Christ do meet.*

"Father, for every foreshadowing of the Lord Jesus Christ, and every evidence of the importance of faith in Him alone for salvation and acceptance by Thee, I give Thee thanks and praise. Amen."

Leviticus 7:16-17. "But if the sacrifice of his offering be a vow, or a voluntary offering, it shall be eaten on the same day that he offereth his sacrifice: and on the morrow also the remainder of it shall be eaten: but the remainder of the flesh of the sacrifice on the third day shall be burnt with fire."

OUT OF TIME.

*Now – today – at once: it is good, and right and proper.
God has passed His verdict of the rightness of what has been offered.
No changes are to be made – no additives – no switching of parts.*

The way it is – is the way God wants it to be.

*The vow is made – the charges that are stated are heard by God and man.
I chose to make them before God and witnesses – for the duration.
To change the wording later doesn't cut it – it is recorded – unchangeable.
The words are what it is – the sacrifice ratifies it.*

*I want to give it – to give it all, the way it is in its' perfection.
It is good enough for God and only God. I cannot claim it, it now belongs totally to God.
An after-thought comes and I want to hold back part of its' value – Never!
The offering is God's completely – even if it is a Samuel – or an Isaac.*

*The vow – the voluntary offering is given – to God alone – for God alone.
The smoke of the sacrifice is as incense to God.
I am allowed to partake of the same food that is given to God.
Eat it today – now – here when its' meaning is fresh in my mind.*

*Another day comes – the day after the freshness of my spiritual gift is given.
I think of the vow – the offering, am I ever glad I gave it to God.
I eat again of that spiritual meat that was given to God.
The thoughts and words are still there – perhaps not as vivid in my heart.*

*The third day comes and I begin to think of other things – life goes on.
In my heart I want to make it fresh again – maybe if I eat of it again?
But God said, "No." It is to be burned with fire – the time is passed.
The third day is too late – the flesh is spoiled – the meaning begins to fade.*

*I learn from the Word that God has a time – a place – a way.
It is important that I do what I am to do now – in God's time – not later.
When it is fresh in my heart and my soul is warm – act now!
Not later when the ardor has cooled and I think I can pick it up again.*

"O God who knows my heart: I have given to Thee today what I felt I had to give. And now I feel it is far too insufficient. I would like to have been able to rephrase a lot of what I offered to make it more acceptable. If I could do it over, I probably would. But I know what has been offered is long gone – and accepted. May there be that on which I can feed for these next days. May it have brought Thee some satisfaction. I really meant what I offered. It just seems so small and limited. In the name of the Lord Jesus, Amen."

Leviticus 8

CONSECRATION

Observing the public consecration of Aaron and his sons as priests before the Lord and on behalf of the people, I noticed this took place out in the open in front of the Tabernacle. This was not some private act of consecration, but was seen by those who looked on, and would see there is a difference between them and us. They had been chosen by God to bring offerings that He designated, to do the work of service in the Tabernacle in His way. This was not left up to the people to do in their own way, any more than worship and service for God is left up to us to do in our own way. A person consecrated to God is one chosen by God and entrusted with holy things. We cannot add to those things anything of ourselves or of the world's way. It is our responsibility to worship as a church and serve in the body of Christ as He has designated.

Aaron, as the high priest, is a type of Christ in the Levitical priesthood. His sons who were priests are representatives of the Church. There is a priesthood of all believers that is associated with Christ, in a similar fashion as Aaron's sons were taken "with him" to be consecrated. They were sons who were set apart from others by birth who were now to be engaged in priestly work by consecration. They were set apart from others by their birth, even as all believers who have been born again into the family of God. That is one meaning of the word "consecration." Another meaning of the word is "hand that are filled," indicating there is a consecration to service as well as being set apart by birth. An unconsecrated son of Aaron would not be able to engage in priestly service for God. Not every Christian does practice the priesthood of

believers even though they are priests by God's grace. The public practice of the priesthood is not popular today and is not done in very many "church gatherings."

The garments of Aaron, in the position of high priest have teaching for us in relation to the high priestly ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ. His High Priesthood is different from Aaron in that Aaron never took an oath to be a priest forever because he had to die. Our High Priest is a priest forever by oath because He will never die, and "ever liveth to make intercession" for us. The coat of white linen Aaron first put on speaks to us of the pure, sinless humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ that was able to be seen by God. The girdle like a sash around him is a type of the faithfulness and righteousness of Christ in His work as He did God's will in every way. The robe of blue that was put on next would speak of the heavenly perfections of our Great High Priest who has access to the throne of God on our account. In front of that beautiful garment was fastened the breastplate reminding us of the righteous judgment and justice that makes possible our continual acceptance by God. His advocacy and the perfectness of His decisions are more important than we could ever imagine. Without Him I could do nothing.

The Urim and Thummim were two articles of some kind probably kept in a hidden pouch that would be used in decision making to discern God's decision on a particular matter of inquiry. In some way by looking at these two things, there was revealed to them something that only God could know. Our Lord Jesus and the Father are always in perfect agreement and what one knows and does is perfectly clear and satisfying to the other. We may never know the reason for some things that happen, but our Lord does and the Righteous God does, and that is all that matters. The high priest also wore a miter, a visible head-piece that indicated his subjection to God's authority. He was able to act with delegated authority - not on his own authority. The Lord Jesus Christ who is eternal in His being and power, as the High Priest for us, acts with authority from God for us. When we pray we do so under authority of the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We don't make requests or claim promises because of who we are. Our only acceptance is because of Him in whose name we pray. The gold plate on the front of the miter separated the priest from everyone else and all else - to God... "Holiness to the Lord." The bonnets the sons of Aaron wore, typified the subjection of the priests to the high priest in the same way we, as a kingdom of priests, are subject to our Great High Priest. Our access to God is through Him.

The oil that was poured on Aaron, the high priest, tells us of the unreserved outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Lord Jesus Christ when He was here and when He was raised by from the among the dead by the power of the Spirit. There is no limit to the power and dominion of the Lord. "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth." The same Spirit has been given to us who are in the Church. We are one body in the Lord. We are not powerless. The Lord was victorious over the world, over Satan and over sin that no longer has dominion over us.

The priests, the sons of Aaron, speak to us of the priesthood of all believers. The girdles and bonnets typify the fact that we have been placed in an office with the official position of priests to offer our spiritual sacrifices to God. When the sin offering was made there had to be evidence that atonement was made, sin was put away and that was burned outside the camp as evidence of a finished work. The fat was burned on the altar as a testimony to the fact that God knew what Christ went through. Aaron killed that animal reminding us that Christ laid down His life for us. He knew what was needed and He did it. When Aaron killed the burnt offering, there was a testimony in the blood sprinkled and some put on the ear and toe of the high priest and his sons, the priests, they were then set apart and ready for service. Christ was sanctified for our sakes and we in turn are associated with Him because of the same perfect sacrifice. That sacrifice was waved before God, so it was for both God and man in the same way the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus was for God's satisfaction and our blessing. Even Moses had a part in this wave offering teaching us that Christ is both the Apostle (Communicator - Moses) and the High Priest (Mediator - Aaron) of our profession.

Separately Moses sprinkled blood and oil on Aaron and his sons. The blood speaks of us being separated unto God by the sacrifice of Christ, and being united in priestly service by the Holy Spirit who gives us each a work to do for God. When they ate together of that boiled flesh and bread for the whole week, there was truth testified to of communion and fellowship with God and other. And in our case, it continues until Christ comes and ushers in the new week of blessing. By the time that week was over, there was no question on the minds of the on-lookers as to who the high priest was and who were priests who could lead in worship the way God intended. May it ever be so with us as we worship and serve in our public practice of the priesthood of believers.

*Look and see, who are those men standing before that door?
They are those God has called to serve Him evermore.
Only men it is true, but the sons of the Great High Priest -*

Children of God are a kingdom of priest from the greatest to the least.

*Our heavenly Great High Priest is always before God on our behalf.
Our worship and service are His in righteousness, not what we have or lack,
So as those who come to offer God what we have gathered up to give -
That is what we value most, it is in Christ alone we live.*

*The duty of the priest is to offer the sacrifices of praises unto God.
And support in whatever way we can the interests of our Lord.
On behalf of others we pray and serve them in Jesus' name.
If we neglect our intercession, we are the ones to blame.*

*The grace of God displayed is testified to in many a way.
We do so in daily offerings to God, and on one special day.
The "Lordly day" has things unique we carry out in faith.
Offering gifts of worship and sacrifice we do in a chosen place.*

*Our priestly service involves us giving honor, praise and glory.
But that is not all that God accepts, there is more to a priest's story.
He is to offer himself to God, blameless and undefiled.
The priestly office is not held by strangers, each priest is God's own child.*

"Holy Father, my mind is turned to the moment after consecration has taken place, to the first time a priest, I offered a sacrifice to Thee. It was with fear and trembling. Now I continue to do so, with reverence for Thee and a desire to honor and glorify Thee. The focus on myself that made me fear the first time, now is on Thee and the Lord Jesus. I believe there is a greater sense of awe and the holiness involved now than there was at the beginning of my Christian life. I honor and worship Thee in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."

Leviticus 8:33-34. *"And ye shall not go out of the door of the tabernacle of the congregation in seven days, until the days of your consecration be at an end: for seven days shall He consecrate you. As He hath done this day, so the Lord hath commanded to do, to make an atonement for you."*

FULL HANDS.

*It is no small thing to be set apart for God.
The work ahead is explained in God's own Word
The ones God picked must be sanctified by blood
They are not free to leave, even if they could.
The days of consecration are here.*

*The assembly of the saints is gathered by the door.
The water has been gathered until there needs be no more.
The clothes the High Priest wears, none else has ever wore.
The sacrifices have been brought to the altar - for
The days of consecration are here.*

*I sense the moving in my soul of the Holy Spirit's work,
My inward thoughts go far beyond the corners where they lurk,
The value of the souls of men, challenge me not to shirk,
My duty, to those without the Gospel, who go forever into dark,
The days of consecration are here.*

*The fields around are white with people by the millions,
The Savior, when He was here, looked on them with compassion.
To reach out to them with the Gospel is our mission;
But to do this requires my clear spiritual vision.
The days of consecration are here.*

*It would be wrong to start before I'm really ready.
The work would suffer from one who is unsteady.
There is the need too, for people to hear the word clearly.
The message of the Gospel too, must be felt dearly.*

The days of consecration are here.

"O Father God, who has entrusted me with Thy Word: thanks for letting me be put in trust with the Gospel. It has impressed me with the fact that what I am called to do is definitely not some small thing. I understand in a measure what the hymn writer meant when he wrote, "Consecrate me now to Thy service Lord, by the power of grace divine." But I really mean from my own view, "Who is sufficient for these things." Give me the power to preach the word with Thy power. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."

Leviticus 9

THE EIGHTH DAY

All the instructions had been given; all the preparations had been made; the priests clothes were all made; the perfect animals were there to be offered; the fine flour has been made and is ready for use; the people all gather - what has been taught was now going to be acted upon and seen by the congregation. I watched from my distant place in the future and could sense both the anticipation and the fear. The cloud was over the Tabernacle. That had been built and finished exactly as God had instructed. Now the offerings are to be made that makes it possible for God's people to come to Him. In careful faith the offerings were made - first for Aaron and then each in order for the people. To go about that holy work would have meant that all who were involved would be carefully reviewing in their minds all that had been taught them. Probably the observers were wondering what God would do and how would they know He was satisfied to accept them.

The things of God should never be approached with a careless or cavalier attitude. Holy activities in holy things requires holy people to act in a holy way before the Most Holy God. In grace, God has made known to us His will in His Word. He expects us to approach Him and act according to His chosen way when we serve Him. Those people watching at the gate as Aaron and the priests began their duties, would have wondered that first time at the carefulness and caution that was taken when the animal was killed and the hands placed upon its head. Next, they took the blood and sprinkled it, took the skin and all the parts, and separated the fat from it. Then they would have seen for the first time there is a pattern to follow in our approach to God. Our attitude towards the things of God is able to be seen by those who observe our lives. Our attitude and approach to assembly life is seen by our family and even those who look on from a distance. When we leave on a Lord's Day morning, our neighbors know we are going to worship God. Our manner of dress, our conduct, even the Bible we carry in our hands indicates the degree of importance we attach to the things of God.

When we gather together as priests to worship, those who look on from the "learners' seat" will form impressions as to our willingness to follow the scriptural pattern that was taught. On occasions when we have been with new believers in a new assembly work, the attitude and actions of those who come to the Lord's Supper, sets the tone of the meeting that day and all the days that follow. Holiness is "becoming" in the house of God, and that can be seen by those who watch and listen. Much of the impact of any service we do takes its character from the way we worship and present our offerings to God. Every word we say about the Lord Jesus Christ and every song and hymn of praise gives a message to those looking on. The message of the Gospel is seen visibly when God's people gather to remember Him and show His death until He comes again.

The seven days of preparation in which Aaron and his sons did everything that was commanded them by the Lord through Moses, had prepared them for this day - this eighth day of a new beginning for the people of God. The preparation time was over. Now the time had come for the people to see, and meet, the requirements of faith. Every action, every visible evidence of the order God desired was watched carefully. The smoke of the sin offering was rising from outside the camp where it was burning as a testimony of one sinless substitute taking the place of the sinner. On the altar every part was placed in proper order and the fat placed on top.

Aaron turned and lifted his hand high toward the people so they would know they were included and blessed because of all that was happening in front of them. Nothing we do is without some consequences for good or bad. When it comes to our testimony and fellowship with God's people, it is important that the dignity, honor, respect and reverence for God we have, is evident to those who look on. Certain things are communicated without words. Our attitude toward the things of God are often more important than our actions and words.

When Moses and Aaron went into the Tabernacle and blood was sprinkled on the horns of the golden altar where incense burned before God, there may have been a quietness come over the people as they watched and wondered what was happening between those who represented them, and God. When they reappeared at the door of the Tabernacle and blessed the people again, there was evidence of God's glory seen. One thing we do know, there was fire that moved out from inside that Tabernacle and the offerings on the altar

were burned before the eyes of the people. The impact of the presence of God brought to them both joy and reverential fear. That is the way our worship of God and the consciousness of His presence when we gather together unto Him should affect others beside ourselves. "Holiness becometh Thy house, O God."

The eighth day of resurrection and rest is a testimony now of the blessing we will experience in heaven when Israel is enjoying the promises of the kingdom in their "Sabbath rest" on earth. Those who have been redeemed by the blood of Christ and placed into the Body of Christ will experience rest forever because of the grace of God. That grace provided the sacrifice of Christ that is the basis of our rest forever. All that God requires has been done. By virtue of the sacrifice of Christ, atonement for sin has been made and we have "peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." Sin and its curse have been cancelled. Satan has been defeated. God is able to bless His people and they are able to dwell in His house fully accepted as sons and daughters of God. Blessings will come to Israel when they see the Messiah in His glory and they will enjoy that eighth day rest of joy and reverential respect of the King of kings.

*They came that day, the Sabbath day had passed -
There was something new about to take place.
Not all may, at first, the significance grasp -
When faith lays hold of the blessings of God's grace.
But when holy things are carried out in God's way -
It will not be long until His presence is known.
When we gather together our homage to pay -
The "eighth day" blessings with then be shown.*

*An attitude of reverence and of godly fear -
Accompanies those who worship and praise.
There is the sense that they know God is here -
When to Him their voices in worship raise.
There may be only a few who there do gather -
To bring to God their thank offerings in.
One thing in common they share together -
Is heart-felt and deep appreciation for Him.*

*We may never know the impact on those -
Who look on, as in fellowship we meet.
We don't have the right or power to impose -
Faith on them, even though ours is so sweet.
Perhaps in a simple word or phrase -
Expressed in some way that they can hear -
There will be an answer to the questions they raise -
And by faith, Christ will real to them appear.*

"Father, may we the people of God who regularly gather together in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, always be aware of the fact that much of what we do is seen and not just heard. May the rest we have in Christ be evident in us. May we know and live in the power of His resurrection always. Amen."

Leviticus 9:23-24. "And Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle of the congregation, and came out, and blessed the people: and the glory of the Lord appeared unto all the people. And there came a fire out from before the Lord, and consumed upon the altar the burnt offering and the fat: which when all the people saw, they shouted, and fell on their faces."

BEFORE THE GLORY.

*Do what He says, don't mess around – this is the eighth day.
It is time to start – this what God has had in His mind all along.
Take the right ones – the animals God clearly chooses – and wants.
The young calf, the rams, the bullock – do it right.
And you'll see the glory!*

*Drew near – don't stay away from Him. "Come near to Me."
Everyone, come closer. Distance divides God's people.
Distance keeps us away from God Himself and we don't want that.*

*The Lord has commanded us to draw near to Him and His place.
And the glory will appear!*

*Don't stay where you are. Go to the altar where you can make atonement.
Go there for the people – go to the place where the Lord commanded.
Leave your comfort zone – Move forward to where God waits for you.
The place and time for the atonement is here.
God's glory will appear!*

*One by one they are led to the altar. One by one they die there.
Animals only it is true, but they are sinless – clean – able to be a substitute.
Temporary it is true – the Reality is yet to come – years in the future.
The Savior is coming. They slew the animals – pictures only.
The glory will appear!*

*Brought the people's offering – it was the first.
Brought the burnt offering and offered it according to the manner.
Brought the meat offering – visible evidence of the Christ who is to come.
Brought the peace offering for the people – between them and God.
The glory will appear!*

*God's man for the moment – Aaron as the representative of people;
Acting for the first time in such a public way.
Dressed the way God wanted him to dress – doing what God wanted him to do;
In the way God wanted it done – lifted up his hand toward the people.
You will see the glory appear!*

*Aaron blessed the people. He could do it because he was given that right.
God knew who He wanted, doing what He wanted.
He offered the way God wanted it done. The offerings were on the altar right.
Aaron came down from the place. God wanted room to work – FIRE from the Lord!
The glory of the Lord appeared to all the people!*

“Visit us again, O God of our salvation! Let us see Thy glory here – in this place of tension and uncertainty for some. Let us see an unmistakable display of Thy glory in this place at this time. However, we can act or speak that we might be like obedient Aaron and Moses – use us – and then let us step down from the altar that Thy glory may appear in the fire of God's approval. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.”

Leviticus 10

CARELESS INDIFFERENCE

Something terribly serious has happened. In my mind I can see the people who fell facedown in their joy and respect for God when fire came and consumed the burnt offering on the altar, are now a state of fear because the fire of God came again and consumed two priests. Whatever happened? Weren't they dressed properly? Yes, that was all right. But rather than going to the altar where the burnt offering was constantly burning, they got fire for their censers from another source. The cross-work of Christ on Calvary is the only way of approach to God. Even though many resist this fact today and change scriptural practices to their own way to suit the wishes of the people and to be more attractive, any other way people try is wrong. When Nadab and Abihu put the holy oil into the profane fire, that sacrilege brought judgment from God. Mixing right and wrong makes the whole thing wrong. Those two priests had just been taught what was right, and yet did a holy thing their own way. Was what they did, blatant disregard for what God had said was the thing to do? Or was it human effort to make things go smoothly in the service of God? Was it a short-cut to save some steps? Whatever was behind their actions, the consequences were the same. We are always to do God's things in God's way. Any other way was an act of disrespect to God, and in the case of worship, an insult to the sacrifice of Christ made on the cross at Calvary. He provided what was required. To add anything to what He did is careless disregard for what God had done.

The people looking on as the consuming fire took those two men, would have had a lesson that God is holy, and is not going to allow wrong to be done, even if one is a spiritual leader. Sacrifices to God are important

and are never to be done carelessly or with an indifferent attitude. Whether it be the sacrifice of praise, of thanksgiving, of gifts or even a contrite heart - it is never to be a careless exercise without proper consideration as to what we are doing. Two relatives took away the remains of the burned priests in their coats before the stunned audience of thousands. That scene would have been indelibly impressed on their minds, "I can't take anything God says or wants done in a careless or indifferent way. I must do things His way - or else!"

When some identifying event happens, whether it seems to me good or bad, I must not let it detract me from my service for God and my obligations to God's people. Aaron and the two sons who were left were to continue on with their priestly duties unhindered. They were not to take off their bonnets lest their hair was mussed up and disheveled. That dignity and respect for their office and work was never to be demeaned for any reason. Their clothes were not to be torn in their anguish nor were they to show evidence of mourning for their two careless brothers. All of Israel could mourn for the dead priests but these who had been given holy responsibilities by the Lord could not let anything deter them from their work. When I have been given a work for God, it is not up to me as to whether I take it or leave it. And it is not up to me when I quit the work. A priest, or any servant of the Lord is under divine authority. Others are influenced by any decisions or actions I take. It is not my privilege to act independently of what God reveals to be right.

It can become quite easy to grow careless and indifferent about anything - even about obeying God. One way is not just as good as another. God has His own reasons for having things done in the way He commands. I may not know His reasons, but when I know what He says and wants, that is enough to keep me faithful to Him and His Word. If Nadab and Abihu had been drinking wine before they went about their work for God, that in itself could have influenced their bad judgment. There has to be a distinction between that which is holy and that which is common. Because "everybody does it," or "it is socially acceptable," does not change the fact that everything about one who is a priest or any worshipper of God has to be holy always. One does not become a part of the priesthood of believers only when we come together at the Lord's Supper, at a teaching meeting or when the Gospel is preached. The role of a priest is a life work with an appropriate life style expected of us. Drinking wine would disqualify one from teaching about self-discipline and holiness of life before the world. Drinking wine is associated with worldly practices and those who worship God in spirit and truth are to be distinctly different from those who do things their own way. That is why we are to "come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord."

Another lesson had to be learned that day by those involved in priestly ministry. Apparently, the remaining sons, Eleazar and Ithamar were afraid because of what had happened to their brothers. Instead of eating what they were supposed to eat in the designated place, they didn't feel like eating and so put it on the altar to be burned. They did not realize that what belongs to us cannot be compared to what belongs to God. And more than that, the altar is not a place for our leftovers. To think when I am done with a thing so I will give it to God when I am finished with it is carelessness and indifference of the worst kind. If it is new, it is good for me, but when I am done with it, I will give it to God, is an attitude that is quite prevalent - and is an insult. To give God the last of my life, of my assets, the last of my strength must be a great disappointment to the One who gave His all for me.

No wonder Moses was upset! They were making mistakes without thinking. In every act, and in every decision I make, I need to consider if this is consistent with what I know to be the will of God. Aaron made an excuse for his sons because of the effect of the events of the day, but this did not make their actions right. It is true there may be extenuating circumstances that arise from time to time that affects our actions, but that does not change the principles of right and wrong. That is the purpose of laws. "By the law is the knowledge of sin." Guidelines and principles that were taught by the law were to keep holy things from being common, clean things from being unclean and to clearly define right from wrong.

*Some days in the course of our lives stand out above the others.
It may be a time of joy, or a day when truth, sin uncovers.
To let such times come and go without learning, could be a waste.
Lessons taught and forgotten as unimportant need to be relearned in haste.*

*A shake of the head or a nod of assent does not mean a lesson is learned.
To teach God's people the seriousness of worship, two priests were burned.
Surely the fright they got and the fear that followed when they came to God,
Would make the priests and those who followed, review the words of the Lord.*

It is no small thing to approach to God in the power of Jesus' name.

*There was a careless indifference apparently in two priests when they came
To offer incense on the golden altar, so before they even got there -
They died, reminding us of the need of holiness whenever we draw near.*

*We may think it is just another meeting, we will get there if we can.
But that attitude brings holy things down to where they're only works of men.
The worship of God is the highest form of service to Him we can render.
True worship is only possible when our consciences and hearts are tender.*

*The mistakes of others are written so that we may take to heart -
What is God's purpose in us coming there, and how we can best take part.
Some in silence give a full account and can go farther in their minds -
Than those who speak out loud and appropriate words are hard to find.*

*What is not known or seen by men is before God fully displayed.
The offerings of praise and worship in God's way are to be made.
To do things in our own way, usurps the authority that's only His.
When scripturally we approach God, there is value in our worship and praise.*

"I thank Thee Father, for the warnings in Thy Word. My prayer today is that I will never be indifferent to Thy ways in any aspect of my life. In service may I be devoted. In worship may I be scriptural. In praise may I be wholehearted. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."

Leviticus 10:3. "Then Moses said unto Aaron, 'This is it that the Lord spake, saying, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh Me, and before all the people I will be glorified.' And Aaron held his peace."

NOT THAT!!!

*Self-confidence, shallowness, pampered perhaps - Family privileges exceeding that of others.
Informed, careless, dressed for the part, holy garments on - given responsibilities more than others.
Dull of hearing, self-assured, not willing to listen, "What's the big deal" attitude - not caring for others.
Okay: now it is your turn - do it God's way. A short-cut, strange fire, incense smelling - everything's okay so far.
The altar is there glowing in its' golden splendor - the hands reach up to place the incense on the altar
The brightness of another fire flashes in the tabernacle - fire from the Lord, and two bodies lie in death on the sandy
ground.*

*Two more carry them out wrapped in their own clothes. Before the silent watching crowd they take the corpses outside the
camp - where the strangers and lepers are.*

Nadab and Abihu are dead - "I WILL SHOW MYSELF MOST HOLY!" [NTV]

*Leave the wine the strong drink of whatever kind it is. You are priests - don't touch it like the others may.
You are called to offer - to worship - go into God's presence. Practice the presence of God at all times. You are different
than the others.*

*This is a statute - a command - an ordinance - a precept. The anointing oil of the Lord is upon you. You are the Lord's -
not like the others.*

*They can do things you cannot do. They can get away with what you cannot get away with. You are not your own.
At the wedding - at the party - New Year's Eve - No! Do not touch that! It is a statute throughout your generations.
Others think nothing of it - but you will die - separations - barriers arise. It's not the material that's involved - it's you.
Who you are is what is important here and in this issue. You are a priest before the Lord. You are part of the kingdom of
priests.*

Do not drink lest you die - "I WILL SHOW MYSELF MOST HOLY!" [NTV]

*Teach the children - yours - God's - those of others we try to influence to come into the kingdom.
There is a difference between holy and unholy. Holy - you are separated to God for Him; Unholy - they are on their own
with the others.*

*There is a difference between clean and unclean. A washing has taken place and we are made clean by His blood.
Unclean simply means there are those in their natural state. They want to be their own god and stay the way they are.
They want me to be like them. They want me to do what they do and go where they go. They want me to be like all the
others - to go their way.*

They do not want me to be different. Why do they not want to be like me? What's wrong with me? What's wrong with what I do?
The Lord has spoken to me – and I listened. The Lord has spoken to others and they haven't listened – to conscience, logic, truth, God.
Be like God – godly – “I WILL SHOW MYSELF MOST HOLY!” [NIV]

“O Holy Father: make it unmistakably clear to me and through me to others; that it is no small things to be called of God. It is no small thing to be a priest. It is no small thing to go to the altar and offer that which has been provided by Thee. When there has been things in my life that are not according to the plan and pattern of Thy choosing; make me willing to let them go immediately – and forever. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.”

Leviticus 11

SHOULD I, SHOULD I NOT

The book of Leviticus is the priest's guidebook. The sacrifices, rites and ceremonies were not left to men to design or originate on their own. The word of Lord was the basis that settled every issue and man's responsibility was to obey and not to take away or add anything to what God had said. Anything left to man's wisdom that is contrary to what God's Word says is an insult to His divine will. The authority of the Word of God endures through all ages, generations and cultures.

The descriptions are given in detail of the clean and unclean animals to make clear the difference between what is able to be used for food and what is not to be eaten. There are things we are able to do and things the people of God should never be involved in for any reason. Even though something may be attractive to us and we don't see any wrong with it, we are not at liberty to do what we want when it goes against God's will. Clean animals that chew the cud and have cloven hoofs eat food from those things that are not contaminated by the unclean things of the world. The teaching we get from this is that when we read and meditate on the Word of God, we are partaking of spiritual food that is not contaminated by the already digested diseased food of the world. Meditation on the word and will of God will affect our outward walk in a way that pleases God. When we read the Bible, it is important that we digest what we read.

Before we teach others, we need to have studied the scriptures ourselves. When we practice what we study and preach, we must be careful that our daily walk with the Lord is consistent with God's stated word. The cloven hoofed animals indicate a careful walk that is stable, and is expected of us if we are going to represent the Lord.

A knowledge of the word of God produces love for God and others. Righteousness by itself in life can be stern and harsh when one is seeking to establish a good reputation. Love by itself is easy and vacillating, and can tolerate error and laxness. The value of each depends on its connection with the other. Righteousness and love belong together in the lives of God's people. When they are together, that leads to holiness of mind and life that God wants from His people. God was protecting the children of Israel from diseases that are transmitted by unclean animals that feed on unclean food.

Fish that have fins and scales were considered clean and have a special fitness for food. They are not bottom feeders that eat debris and rotten garbage on the floor of the oceans, ponds or streams. They are fitted for the special element of the water in which they live. The fins make it possible for them to avoid the dangers around them and gives them power against the tides and currents. Scales are to prevent penetration of the skin. In order for us to move through this world safely we need the ability to "flee youthful lusts" that seek to capture us, and to "abstain from all appearance of evil." The scales would remind us of our ability to resist those things that come against us and "war against the soul." The Holy Spirit gives us power to go forward in the things of God, and also to resist the world, the flesh and the devil.

The birds that feed on the flesh were all unclean. Even though they may fly high, if they feed on unclean things they are not to be eaten by humans. Any birds that walked about and ate from the dirt were unclean and forbidden as food to the children of Israel. The same is true of reptiles and insects except for those that hop. The limitations in the camp of the Israelites was to be strictly kept. Then the divine grace of God came into its fullness when the law was fulfilled through the new covenant. Now because of the blessings of God's grace, those things that were once common and unclean have been cleansed by God Himself.

Leviticus 11:44. *“For I am the Lord your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I am holy: neither shall ye defile yourselves with any manner of creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, for I am the Lord that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: ye shall therefore be holy for I am holy.”*

BE HOLY.

*You once lived in Egypt, but you are no longer there;
The food that you ate in that land,
Is not right for you - your life with God share;
He is Lord – you obey His command.*

*From food to your clothing, from family to friends;
There are rules to live your life by.
The Lord, He is God – I must bow to Him when
My choice is to live my life holy.*

*There are things I won't do, and places I won't go;
There are ways God intends me to live.
Egypt is past; to its ways I say, "No."
To be holy, my will to God give.*

*My words and my deeds, I can't allow to defile
This life lived, the way God has planned.
To be holy means separate from sin that's allowed,
Whose actions will leave me condemned.*

*The Lord brought us out, so why should I turn
Back to those things God delivered me from.
To be holy for God, I must live for Him here;
Peculiar to all that's around.*

*That is why He saved us, that from God's people now,
There will a testimony clear to be seen.
For the nations around, all need to know how
They can believe and be brought safe to heaven.*

*To compromise truth, even with motives so high,
Is not that which will bring men to God.
God wants us like Him, the truth we will buy,
When we live holy, the way that we should.*

"To be holy seems impossible Father God, until I recognize that Your will for me is not hard. When I am doing what You want, in Your way, and in Your time – holiness is the result. It is not natural, I know, but in a sense, the spiritual becomes reasonable when I am simple enough to be separated unto You. Give to Your weak servant the strength in the feet, hands, mouth, eyes – in every part of me – to be holy. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."

Leviticus 12

CHILD BIRTH

The care God took to explain events around the birth of a child is significant because it reminds us that every child is important to God. There is no casual looking at the unborn as if they are of no value. When God brings about life through fertilized seed, something important has taken place because God is the Source of all life. The birth of a child is a joyous event, but it is also a serious event. A human being has begun an eternal journey at conception and now that person is in a family to prepare for, and be trained for that journey. As a life unfolds before a new person they will come to a place when they will be able to put personal faith and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ as their own personal Savior. For those who do not put faith in Christ, they will be eternally lost in the lake of fire. The event of childbirth reminds us of the fact that every person will be in saved for heaven or lost in hell. With joy we welcome the new child and with seriousness we are reminded of the purpose of every life and the consequences that lie ahead of every person.

The uncleanness associated with childbirth is not referring to something dirty or sinful but to the bodily emissions that accompany childbirth. The temporary condition of a woman's body following childbirth needs time to recover and to heal itself. That may not be considered physical sickness today, but there is a certain degree of weakness that needs time for full recovery to overcome. A new mother in ancient Israel was not to

participate in any activities related to the Tabernacle or the altar until the prescribed time had passed. If the newborn was a boy, she was to wait one week for physical cleansing to take place and the rite of circumcision to be carried out on the boy. Then there was a period of thirty three days that passed until she was considered ceremonially clean. If the child was a girl, two weeks were required for physical cleanness and sixty six days for ceremonial healing. Many of the things we read about concerning Israel are not easily understood as to the reasons, but we can be sure there are reasons why God required certain things and forbade others. We may not know all the reasons behind things in our own lives but that is why our faith in God and willingness to act according to His revealed will is so important. To trust Him is pleasing to Him.

Religions of that ancient time often incorporated sex into the practice of religion as a fertility rite because of a desire to initiate life and symbolically worship that life source they thought was found in their pagan idols. They were worshipping the creature more than the Creator. The germination of seeds planted was accompanied by sexual promiscuity as the pagan gods were appealed to, that life would come from the planted seed. The children of Israel were to be distinctly different from the practices of the Egyptian religions and the Canaanite idolatry. Worship of God and sexual activity were entirely separate to those who followed the Lord. They were to "be fruitful and multiply" on earth as God said at the beginning of human history. But their worship was related to the God of heaven who created all things and by "whom all things consist." Worship of God is directed to Him personally. We can thank Him directly for His gracious provision of food, raiment and a bountiful harvest. How thankful we should be for His design of the marriage of one man and one woman for life. Certainly we are grateful when our children are born safely and we thank Him for the new life He has entrusted to our care.

We need to be conscious in these days of sexual promiscuity and self-seeking pleasure, that we do not look on a new life as something we have the right to give or take. Christians need to remember it is "the Lord who giveth, and the Lord who taketh away." Those things are not up to us and neither are they a right of ours. Abortion, euthanasia and anything associated with them is not our right to interfere with in any way. The keys of life and death are in the hands of the Lord. We are not to take these matters into our own hands.

When a new mother brought a lamb for a burnt offering to the Lord, it was to be one year old. That lamb had to be born before the child was conceived. God is the One who gave life to both the sinner and the substitute. How significant it is that before the child was conceived in sin, the sinless substitute was already provided for the child. The perfections of our Lord Jesus Christ and the value of His person and work had already been provided for us before we were born. There was full provision made for our acceptance with God when we began our existence. Every human being has had provision made for their salvation before they were conceived. Those thousands who die in infancy every day have been provided for by God when the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus was made - "The Lamb of God which beareth away the sin of the world."

Millions of children unborn or born and who have died young will grow into a multitude of people who will praise God for who He is. Their voices may blend in worship with those of us who will worship as sinners saved by grace and will give our praise and thanksgiving "unto Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood." The new mother who brought her lamb or the doves or pigeons, would be reminded that God gave life to her child and her burnt offering would be all for God. She would also be grateful for the blessing she received by having this new significant person in her life who would be a constant reminder of the God who gives life. The waiting time before she came to offer her burnt offering would give her plenty of time to consider the difference between the holy way the God of heaven and those who worship Him look at life, and the immoral way the pagan worshippers of idols look at life.

Leviticus 12:3. *"And in the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised."*

A MARKED MAN

God knows who is His,
 God sees what we are,
 God sees what others cannot see.
 God looks at the marked man.
 God sees into the heart,
 God recognizes whether I am real,
God looks for the cutting of the sinful flesh.
 I AM A MARKED MAN.

I know what I am doing,
 I know my motives,
 I know the reasons for what I do.

I know my own heart – to a degree.
I want to do Him service,
I want to serve Him right – scripturally; thankfully.
I want my service to be genuine; for God; before men – because
I AM A MARKED MAN.

God wants worshipers to worship in spirit and in truth.
God wants peculiar people zealous of good works.
God wants stewards that are faithful.
God wants me to be diligent.
God wants me to follow Him.
God wants me to go into all the world and preach the Gospel.
God wants me to be holy because He is holy.
I AM A MARKED MAN.

I want to pray, and sing, and worship in the Spirit.
I want to represent my Lord acceptably.
I want to preach the Gospel with faithfulness and compassion.
I want to love sinners into the kingdom of God.
I want people to know I care for their souls.
I want Christians to know I love them as my family.
I want people to be able to know I love God supremely.
I AM A MARKED MAN.

"O Loving God and Father: the reality of cutting off the flesh is sometimes obscured in my life by my conformity to what is around me. Can You please let a little light shine from my face into the darkness where others sit? Can You please let my words and voice sound kind of tender so the spiritually deaf can hear Your voice through mine? Can You give me expressions on my face that let the fearful and the angry ones know I really do care for them? I wait on Your grace to show Christ through me. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."

Leviticus 13

A SERIOUS PROBLEM

In a fairly closed society where people live close together, infectious disease had the potential of infecting a great many people. In order to stop the spread of contagious illness, God included in His instructions for the welfare of the children of Israel, a way to control such a situation when it arose. The leprosy written about in the scripture, probably included a variety of diseases that would include Hansen's disease, but by definition was far more inclusive than what is known today as leprosy. In the instructions given, there was obviously skin diseases described as well as mildew and molds on articles of clothing. By illustration, sin has an effect on every part of a person and also on what one does. When one allows sin a place in the mind, even though it may not be known or there be any evidence at first, it has the power to take away the peace of soul, besides our fellowship with God. The song in the heart goes silent. The joy in the soul that lifts our spirits and steps, and encourages us to greet each new day with anticipation, is lost. The effect of sin in one's life has serious, negative effects on our body, soul and spirit.

The mind that was "stayed on Christ" loses its direction when sin is allowed to infect us. Thought-life begins to claim control and the "perfect peace" God intends for us is gone. The will, that part of one's soul that makes the decisions we live by and keeps us in the path of God's will, when sin is allowed in the mind, loses its guidelines that keeps us in fellowship with God. Confusion and uncertainty claim our attention and instead of the assurance that the Word of God gives us, our decision-making depends on spur-of-the-moment choices that may be entirely contrary to the will of God. Sin allowed in the mind, soon affects the will and then takes control of our emotions. Instead of peace, there comes uncertainty. Instead of Joy there comes sorrow. Instead of love there comes suspicion and antagonism. What had been an effective, fruitful and satisfying life, becomes a sad, isolating experience.

Sin does not only affect me and my life, but others also are affected. It is not only destructive to my life, but it leads to division, separation and unhappiness. The priests in Israel served as doctors in diagnosing disease when something obvious rose on a person's flesh. It was his responsibility to preserve the rest of the children of Israel from what was a problem to one person and could affect them all. Decisions regarding the problem were not made in a careless way. The lives of the leper, his family and other people were involved. Snap judgments and quick decisions are not the way to deal with serious problems. When we know something has entered our life that has serious consequences associated with it, we are wise to stop and

consider every aspect of the matter. How will it affect me? What will it do to my family? Will the Lord's people be blessed or hindered by this decision I am making? Most of all how will it affect my fellowship with the Lord? Will it hinder the work God has given me?

The misery of the leper and the loneliness of his existence would be such that everyone would fear the diagnosis of the priest. It would be important to the priest to carefully follow the instructions God gave, lest the whole camp be infected. On one occasion Miriam was outside the camp for a whole week because of leprosy. In her case it was because of unfair criticism of God's servant Moses. Gehazi, the servant of the prophet, made a covetous decision that affected his whole family afterward for generations that followed. A wrong move for selfish gain, a covetous decision based on materialism, an opinion regarding one's idea about a verse of scripture can affect a whole lot of people in a wrong way.

The type of sin leprosy teaches us about, is a good warning to us regarding each daily decision we make. Something may not seem serious to us at first, and then after due consideration, we realize the potential for evil a bad choice can be. When confronted with the right or wrong of a matter, take time to review it carefully. What good will come from this? What sin may be the result of this decision? How will it effect me personally? What might happen to my family if I do this? Will the Lord's people be helped or hindered if I go there? Can I ask God's blessing on this activity? Would I be willing to take the Lord Jesus there and have Him share in this activity? Such questions when asked by a person who is a child of God can keep us from serious problems in our lives. The effect is not only on people, but it has an effect on where I live, what kind of work I do, the clothes I wear and the places I go. The way I approach God and the fellowship I have with Him is affected by my choices.

Leviticus 13:45. *"The leper in whom the plague is, his clothes shall be rent, and his head bare, and he shall put a covering upon his upper lip, and he shall cry, 'Unclean, unclean.'"*

COVERED LIP.

*The skin, the head, the hair, the clothes –
In all these places the evidence shows;
The insidious disease through the body goes –
He is a leper.*

*It's in the blood, it goes to every part;
Passes through the veins, even through the heart;
It can't be stopped once it gets a start –
It is leprosy.*

*Beyond the ability of man to stop;
It shows itself from bottom to top;
When the evidence shows, you know you've got –
Leprosy.*

*What to do now, How can I hide
The disease which now no longer is just inside?
Other have had it and others died –
From leprosy.*

*Go to the priest, there let him make
The decision as to the path you take;
And his word will your confusion break –
About leprosy.*

*A covering is placed upon the lip;
You must call "Unclean", lest some others slip
Too close, and then they too will get –
Leprosy.*

*But God can heal from the contagion when,
By His grace, He draws close to the outcast men;
And heals the disease by His power. Then –*

No leprosy.

*The same holds true when it comes to sin;
It doesn't all show, though it's deep within.
The outward evidence shows what's always been –
Insidious sin.*

*The only cure comes, when by God's grace;
Each one acknowledges and comes to face
The consequences that on me place –
Sin's guilt.*

*The only hope is that God in love,
Has sent His Son to die – and prove;
His cleansing power so great that I have –
Been made clean.*

"O God of holiness and purity: cleanse Thou me from every taint of sin, any residual effects that from time to time have the look of uncleanness. I confess that sin does rise its' head from time to time, and its' effect is felt in the soul. I come to the Priest and acknowledge the tendency at times to darkness even when there is light in my soul. I have sinned, but I am thankful for the blood of Jesus Christ God's Son, that cleanses from all sin. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."

Leviticus 14

BEFORE THE LORD

After watching the leprosy being diagnosed as real and not only contaminating, but also contagious, one would lose hope, and in daily misery would lament his condition as day after day the disease overcame him completely. He could not hide his condition from others and he had to face himself as he really was. How often people try to excuse themselves and say of sin they practice, "It is only a habit." Not until a person faces up to their sin themselves can there ever be hope for cleansing. Others may see our problem before we do and seek to bring us to where we must face our sin before God, in a similar way one would bring the leper to the priest who judged the leper unclean. There is a hopelessness associated with sin that some people do not want to face. They may hope it is not too serious and can be overlooked. Leprosy on the forehead could not be hidden any more than the nature of sin within a person can be hidden. The problem of indwelling sin not only affects me personally, but what I am influences what I do, and what I do has an effect on what goes on around me.

One day when an observer saw the leper outside the camp, there was not just a small spot on the forehead or some part of the leper's body, but it was obvious he was completely covered with evidence of leprosy. It had reached to every part of the person until he was conscious of the fact that there was nothing hidden from anyone, let alone from God. When a person faces the fact that from the "sole of the foot unto the head" there is nothing in us that make us fit for God's presence, that person is not far from the kingdom of God. They are not just saying words like the leper when he said, "Unclean, unclean," but now there is nothing at all to hid behind. When one comes to the place where they say, and mean it, "God be merciful to me a (the) sinner," that person is at the place spiritual cleansing can happen.

The friend or family member would fetch the priest who would go outside the camp where the leprous person who was totally covered in leprosy was, and he would carefully examine him to see if this was a completed illness. When a person has faced up to their great need of salvation, they are willing to listen to anyone who can show them how to come to the Lord Jesus Christ for cleansing from sin. One may feel themselves beyond the place where there is any hope for them, but the caring soul-winner will assure them that "him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out," are the words of the welcoming Savior. The Lord Jesus Christ willingly came into the world "to seek and to save that which was lost." The priest went out of the camp to meet the leper in the same way that "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." The leper who no longer tried to hide anything was in a place where miraculous cleansing could take place. The priest who saw the leper completely covered, could then show the way of cleansing. Healing the soul or body is the work of God. As a result of the healing work of God, there was a cleansing to be made as evidence of what had already happened. Any short cuts the leper would try to make would negate the whole cleansing. When a person is ready and willing to turn to God alone for salvation, there is cleansing power in the blood. "The is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth."

The priest looked carefully at the leper covered completely with leprosy to see if he was healed. The cleansing can now happen after the healing power of God had done its work. It is the work of Christ alone that saves the sinner. When one is pronounced by God to have eternal life and is saved, that is a work of God entirely. In the cleansing of the leper, another person provides for the leper what he needs. The spiritual mind can discern evidence of the reality of salvation in a repentant sinner. The sinner understands who Christ is in His lofty dignity as the Son of God from heaven who was sent by the Father to save us. The leper would see the cedar wood and know the lasting nature, the sweet scent and the lofty tree it was taken from to provide for his cleansing. The scarlet taken originally from a worm would remind us of the lowly dignity of our Lord Jesus who was found here in fashion as a man and was sacrificed for us and gave His life blood as a ransom from us. The hyssop that grew on the ground teaches us of the humility of Christ who took the low place, "even the death of the cross," that we might be cleansed from our sin and accepted in Him. The two living birds make one complete picture of our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself as a man in His humanity for us. The word of God and the Spirit of God and pictured in type by the bird that was killed over running (living) water, and its blood caught in the clay vessel.

The blood was sprinkled seven times over that leprous, ravaged body and the leper was pronounced clean, not because of what was seen but because of what was said. There is power in the Word of God because of the Person that word comes from. The priest had the authority to make that pronouncement even though the bystander who brought what was needed by the leper would not have seen the fact visibly. The leper was clean, not because he felt any different, but because the priest gave his word. Evidence of the cleanness followed the fact. It is not the right of a preacher or the person who responds to the work of Christ on his behalf to say they are cleansed. It is what God says in His Word that gives us assurance of salvation. Our responsibility to those we bring to Christ is to give them the Word of God, and let God give them the assurance of His cleansing from sin in His way - through the scriptures of truth. What man cannot see outwardly, God sees when He looks on the heart.

The blood-sprinkled man who had the blood applied on his body seven times, was pronounced a clean man. The blood had atoned for him. As the leper, the one who brought the leper and the priest together, and the priest stepped away from that stream of running water to the open field - the blood covered bird is let go into the air and is free. When the Lord Jesus Christ rose from the dead, there was evidence of the cross-death on His body, but it in no way limited Him. He bears the marks of His suffering and death which has blessed us. Even though the leper may have looked the same to those who knew him, he knew he was cleansed because the priest had given his word, he had experienced the blood applied to him, and he had seen the evidence on the bird that flew upward from the earth.

The first thing the cleansed leper had to do was to wash his filthy garments that were stained with evidence of living alone outside the place of blessing. This washing would give visible evidence of a change. The habits and activities of a newly saved person give us the first evidence of the reality of genuine conversion to God. Then things become personal to him. The hair had to go. Some people are proud of that but anything that had sheltered any uncleanness on his person had to be cut off. Perhaps those who brought him to the priest did that for him. Others may be able to help us understand what is right and wrong when we are saved. He had then to wash himself completely indicating his personal responsibility to rid himself of all uncleanness. His baldness and the reproach connected with that, and the visible change would be evidence that something fundamental had taken place. He could come into the camp but not into his tent. There was evidence seen by all, that the leper had been cleansed. When one becomes a new creation in Christ, that cannot be hidden. The evidence is there and a person is in a place of public testimony where he can be questioned as to what had taken place in his life.

Seven days later, the cleansed leper shaved again taking his hair off completely. His beard, eyebrows, head - everything that spoke of his old life was removed. Not only was there shaving again, but clothes and body were washed clean as well. Proof of the laying aside of the efforts of the past was seen when the clothes are washed, and then are washed again as another proof of reality. By shaving again there was evidence that he was done with the works of the flesh. The shaved head indicates that no longer do we look at things naturally but spiritually. The shaved off beard typifies our rejection of what we thought we knew by experience, but now we are as "new-born babes who desire the sincere milk of the word that we may grow thereby." The eyebrows shaved off indicate that what we have observed in the past, we are finished with now. This new person is intellectually, experientially and by observation - a completely different person than previously.

Now the evidence is able to be seen by all that this leper, this new person is Christ Jesus, is able to approach God and come into the on-going blessings of a new life of hope and joy. The priest took the cleansed leper to stand before the Lord at the door of the Tabernacle even as a new believer is now

"accepted in the Beloved." Now we are able to enjoy our position in Christ, "Seated with Christ in heavenly places." With three lambs, two males and a female, he presents himself before the altar with the trespass offering, the meat offering and the burnt offering. Now "no longer far from Him, but now by precious blood brought nigh." The priest presented the cleansed leper before the Lord. The priest in every way made him accepted. The priest who pronounced him clean, now is the Mediator and Intercessor, even as our Lord Jesus Christ is for us. The rejected one is now presented, as we will be presented faultless before God. Nine times this person is before the Lord because of the priest. Blood on the ear, thumb and toe testify as to the fact the trespass offering has been made and the cleansed leper is changed in his intellectual life, his ability and his walk. The oil sprinkled before the Lord seven times and put on the ear, thumb and toe, then on top of the blood of the trespass offering and the rest on the head of the cleansed leper. This teaches us that the Holy Spirit gives the power to us to live for God, serve God and have fellowship with God which was impossible before. The cleansed leper had put his hand on the trespass offering and killed it that there would be freedom from guilt. In the burnt offering the blessing comes to him because of the value of the offering and fellowship with God can begin. In worship, thanksgiving and praise he is back where both he and God want him to be.

The cleansing of the house teaches us that sin is not to be overlooked in the house of God. Assemblies of God's people have to deal with sin when it arises. How greatly we need the value and virtues of our Lord Jesus Christ in every personal and public aspect of life. Sin is before the Lord and the cleansing from sin is also done before the Lord.

Leviticus 14:11. *"And the priest that maketh him clean shall present the man that is to be made clean, and those things, before the Lord, at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation:"*

BEFORE THE LORD

The man comes: hopeful, stepping with quiet steps – lambs, oil, fine flour all that is needed and required by God. But it must be done right – in God's way. It must be done on the right day. He is sparkling clean. Not a hair on him to be seen and his clothes and body are freshly washed. He is coming today BEFORE THE LORD.

All things are open and naked before the eyes of Him with whom we have to do. I came to Him with nothing but evidence of sin that has been dealt with. Empty of self, all evidence of personal pride gone. Nothing is left to hide. Save me, O God.

The priest steps up: his duty before him is clear. He takes the lamb and the oil and holds them high – back and forth. People watch. The shaven man so clean and hopeful watches with shallow breaths to see what is done. The priest is careful to offer in God's way because he knows how important it is to do things right – BEFORE THE LORD.

A sacrifice for sin is made. A sinless victim has died and blood has been shed. The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son cleanses us from all sin. It is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul. Without the shedding of blood, there is no remission. Thank God for price the Savior paid.

The blood has been sprinkled: evidence is there to be seen on the hairless head of the man – his ear, hand and foot have the red sign of sacrifice on them. Then mixed with the blood is oil on the same places – ear, thumb and big toe. And the Lord watches because it is – BEFORE THE LORD.

When He, the Spirit of truth is come, He will guide you into all truth. Conviction of sin reaches the ear. Righteousness has to do with the work of the hand. Judgment is at the end of the last step we make. Thank the Holy Spirit for divine acceptance.

The oil that's left: all of it – poured out on the head, the bald, shaven head of the one whose leprosy kept him separate from all the people for such a long time. The priest has made atonement for him – BEFORE THE LORD.

Accepted in the Beloved: what a blessing to have such assurance. Atonement makes us at one with the God of our salvation. That position never is changed because I am "In Christ."

Turtle doves can take the place for the poor. The eighth day is a special day. Something new has happened. The priest has looked and evidence shows – cleansed. A miracle of healing has happened. God has worked and one is restored to God's people. He takes his place – BEFORE THE LORD.

In every aspect of cleansing, whether it be that cleansing from leprosy in the body, mildew in the house, uncleanness of the soul or any uncleanness – there is a cleansing that God makes possible. I thank God for the full and complete cleansing He has given.

"There is no way, O God, that we can ever express the relief of the cleansing that You have made possible for those have had the awfulness of sin upon the soul. When the way of cleansing is made known, we come in all confidence to Thee, trusting in the acceptance made possible through the cleansing power of Christ's blood. I come before Thee, In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."

Leviticus 15

SEXUAL PURITY

The intention God has to preserve and promote the human race is that one man and one woman marry for life and do not have any other sexual partners. In that way there are no sexually transmitted diseases that infect a society. The public exposure of sexual practices and the use of sexual suggestions to sell products has created a mind-set among people today that glamorizes sex. The casual attitude toward sex has produced an acceptance of immorality and promiscuity. Among the children of Israel, the results of such activity had a spiritual dimension to it as well as physical. A man who had contracted gonorrhea, syphilis or other sexually transmitted diseases was unclean and had to take steps to stop that disease.

To overlook what God has condemned and accept as normal, such immoral activity because it is socially acceptable and even legal, does not change it from being wrong. Strangely people will often condemn what God has cleansed and call it "common or unclean." On the other hand, people will accept and practice what God condemns. For the well-being of society people have biblical guidelines to follow. Unfortunately, those have been ignored, rejected and mocked. The principle of "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap," still holds true in every area of human life. The diseased man had to deal with the disease and face the consequences by the prescribed way of cleansing.

Sexual activity in marriage is not condemned nor is it to be considered dirty. It is God's plan that there will be enjoyment in marriage and the human race be continued by procreation. The covenant of marriage was established and maintained by the intimacy of sexual activity. It was for their own benefit that they bathe following sexual activity in the bounds of their marriage. The health of God's people is important to Him and certain actions are prescribed that preserves health. There is a certain dignity that is to be maintained in personhood, in marriage and in one's own body. By avoiding unhealthy activities and practicing those things that promote physical health, our spiritual health and dignity are also secured.

Both men and women are to understand there are safe practices to follow to maintain our marriage relationship physically, morally and spiritually. Washing with water is a very practical way to stop the spread of any physical uncleanness. The spiritual act of the children of Israel when there was uncleanness had to be faced. Both the sin offering and burnt offering had to be made. In other words, God was involved in the situation and atonement for sin had to be made. Nothing we do is unknown to God, and what we may consider to be our private business, has an effect on others around us. God's instructions were to preserve men and women from dangers they may not have known about or could not see.

The public exposure of sex today had taken the purity and safety away from the practice of sexual activity and made it into a form of self-gratification. God's mind was that the "gift" of sex be used in good health and dignity that expresses our affection for our spouse, our commitment to moral purity and in that way we also preserve our spiritual dignity. There is no shame or guilt that accompanies sexual activity when engaged in as God intends. The intimacy of such a relationship in our private lives, preserves our personal relationship with God.

Leviticus 15:31. *"Thus shall ye separate the children of Israel from their uncleanness; that they die not in their uncleanness, when they defile my tabernacle that is among them."*

SEPARATE FROM UNCLEANNESS.

There is much that can defile a believer in the world today. There is the uncleanness that comes from uncontrolled and unchanneled thoughts. The Lord Himself indicated that those things from within are what defile a man. I must commit myself to "thought-control" lest I am defiled and am unable to worship or have fellowship with God. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he," convicts me and reminds me that I am to "bring every thought into control to the obedience of Christ."

There are actions that I may take by choice that can defile me. Some actions will only defile me; others will defile others. Peter led some of his fellow-disciples to return to the fishing boat when they had been called to a higher calling. If I allow discouragement to affect my commitment to the work I have been called to, I am defiled and need to separate myself again to the work I have been called to. "Consecrate me now to Thy service Lord."

Actions and words by others can defile me if I allow myself to attend to those things that call to my fleshly instincts. Much that is seen or read creates a sense of dissatisfaction as if something is missing in my life if I don't get every new thing. All advertising is planned to make people discontented and if I succumb to everything my treacherous heart desires I will be defiled. I need to make sure I do not allow anything that defiles, enter my mouth or be allowed to distract me from the separation to the Lord I have been called to.

Even the laws of the land will not allow certain things to mix. To make different philosophies work, there has to be the expression of differing opinions. One needs to be clear as to whether to obey God or man. Those things that belong to God only, must remain untainted by the subtlety of human preferences. May God keep me to commit myself to Him alone even if I have to separate myself from the mixture of the ecumenical pressures around.

"God and Father who has divided the light from the darkness, day from night: I do understand the value of keeping separate what Thou hast separated and keeping together what Thou hast put together. Help me to have a discerning mind and spirit to know what is right and what is wrong. Help me to discern teaching and "try the spirits" that I will know and act on Thy will alone. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."

Leviticus 16

DAY OF ATONEMENT

Yom Kippur still holds a great attraction to Jews today who do not accept the fact that Messiah has come, and the value of the shadows is past. For those living under the Old Testament before Christ came, this was the greatest day of the year for them. The tenth day of the seventh month would be a time of fasting and solemn consideration as to whether God was willing to accept the offering made on behalf of the people or not. Nadab and Abihu had died because they sinned in doing things their way instead of the way God had instructed. Death for sin was the backdrop to this holy day. We should never consider the service of God to be something we can add to or take away from. Whether we are "inside the veil" in holy worship, or "outside the camp" in public identification with Christ serving Him in a way separate from what is common to the world, there should be a reverence and holy respect for that in which we are engaged. The children of Israel would approach this day wondering if they would be accepted for another year. We have been accepted in Christ forever. With how much more reverence should our approach be into the holy presence of God with heartfelt gratitude and thanksgiving with appreciation for what has been done for us. We are able to enter into the Holiest through this new and living way.

Aaron would have spent careful hours in the preparation of himself to go into the presence of God on behalf of the people. He had washed himself so he would be personally clean, before putting on the white linen garments he wore that day. They would indicate the necessity of being pure in character before going into the presence of God as well as personally clean. These are shadows of the perfections of Christ in Himself and in the purity of His life before God as a man among men. The two aspects of the atonement that was typified that day was to maintain God's glory and meet man's need. To maintain God's glory, there was that which reflected on God's nature of absolute purity, righteousness, authority and everything else that is uniquely God's. His character of holiness, grace, compassion, mercy and all other ways He is revealed to us, was shadowed in the atonement. The holy throne of God and all that is involved in His legal justice and righteous demands were typified on that day of atonement. That was not a day of casual carelessness like some holidays but was a day of reverential fear. The needs of man had to be met because of sin and guilt that could not be excused or overlooked for any reason. As a nation, their need had to be faced. They needed to be right with God, and they needed that assurance.

After Aaron had carefully washed and dressed himself in white linen garments, he brought a bullock for himself and his family, and two goats for the people along with the ram for the burnt offering. As a spiritual house, we who are in the Church need the perfections of Christ to make us acceptable to offer spiritual sacrifices. The Church is a kingdom of priest who are only able to worship and serve God because of the sacrifice Christ made for us. A people for His name is not something to be taken lightly nor can it be compared to some worldly nationality. This place we have been put into by God is to be a "holy priesthood, a peculiar people." It is extremely important that we do not carelessly engage in the holy things or ever consider what are and what we do is of little account. God's people are important because God says so, and He expects our representation of Him to "be holy, for I am holy."

The bull that was offered was the sin offering for the priests, and the ram was for the burnt offering for God alone. The way to God is open for us today through the Lord Jesus Christ. Because we have constant access to God now, does not make it any less holy nor should we ever take a casual view of the place we

have been brought into by the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ. The two goats that were brought to the door of the Tabernacle were both presented to the Lord. The one was for the Lord who could forgive the sins of the people by virtue of the shed blood, even as Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures. The scapegoat was for the people to bear away the sins that had been confessed by Aaron on behalf of the people when he put his hands on the head of the goat.

After the bullock had been killed as a sin offering for Aaron and his family, he took the smoking incense in a censer behind the veil to make a cloud of sweet-smelling smoke to hide the mercy seat from his eyes. The glory of God was more than a man could survive without the covering of the smoking incense. Aaron could then come out and take blood from the slain bull and carry it behind the veil and sprinkle it on the mercy seat and seven times in front of the mercy seat on the east side. After coming out from behind the veil, he would then kill the goat on which the lot fell.

The blood of the goat that was chosen for the sin offering for the people was taken by Aaron and sprinkled on the mercy seat and in front of it the same as the blood of the bull. Our Lord offered Himself in His spotless perfection and God was pleased with Him. He also was sacrificed for us and in the same way God was satisfied with Him, now we are accepted by God. The blood of the bull and the goat were put in the same place and in the same way. God was pleased with Christ because of who He is, and is satisfied with us because of what Christ did in our place when He bare our sins in His own body on the tree. "Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust that He might bring us to God." Some of the blood of both the bull and goat were put on the altar and around the altar. Atonement had been made.

When that reconciling work was completed for the children of Israel, for the Tabernacle, and for the altar, then Aaron could make confession for the sins of the people with his hands on the head of the live goat that had been brought forward. The order that was followed on the Day of Atonement was for God first in the Holiest of all. Then it came to the holy place, then to the brazen altar and then confession of the sins of the people on the head of the living goat. From there, the goat was taken by a fit man into the wilderness and released. The one goat was to satisfy the holiness and the character of God. The other was to meet the need of sinners by making atonement for sins. Everything begins with God and then moves out to us for our blessing. "Behold the Lamb of God which beareth away the sins of the world." "Their sins and iniquities I will remember no more forever." "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us."

Finally, Aaron had to put off the white linen garments, wash himself thoroughly and put on the garments of his priestly office and offer the burnt offerings on the altar with the fat of the sin offerings. Communion and fellowship with God were able to continue for another year and the people were assured of their acceptance by God for another year. The sin offerings were taken and burned outside the camp. The man who led away the scapegoat and the one who burned the sin offerings both had to wash before they could come back and resume their lives as before they were designated for that special work. We should never underestimate the value of the past, present and future work of our Lord. He was "made sin for us, He who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." We in turn are "sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." "By His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." Now we are able to serve the living God without fear. We are able to "draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith."

The Day of Atonement came once a year for Israel and then had to be repeated each year. The shadow and type is now past. Now we live in the reality of the finished work of Christ. His sacrifice was accepted once for all and never has to be repeated. We live in the good of the great accomplishment of our Lord Jesus Christ. The fact that it is not to be repeated, in no way diminishes its value. Rather, the value of such a sacrificial work is enhanced. That is one of the reasons we approach God in reverence and in godly fear. A holy God and a holy priesthood share in common our appreciation of the One who brought satisfaction to both. It is our privilege to enter into the "Holiest by the blood of Jesus." We have experienced the sprinkling on our hearts, and the washing of regeneration in our lives.

Leviticus 16:2. *"And the Lord said unto Moses, "Speak unto Aaron thy brother; that he come not at all times into the Holy Place within the vail before the Mercy Seat, which is upon the Ark; that he die not: for I will appear in the cloud upon the Mercy Seat."*

INTO THE HOLY PLACE.

*Fear is still upon the people; well it should be, and there it should stay;
For those who serve before the Lord, must learn what's right and learn to heed.
So now the lessons learned before, have taught us all God has a way;
For us to come into His place of holiness; the right of acceptance there to plead.*

*It is not our right, but because of the life of a Lamb that before was given;
The evidence is in the blood - that we can now move inside the veil.
The priest of old with blood that showed, the sinless substitute was taken;
Is a picture of a fact to fill my soul with joy - the Lamb's blood works still.*

*With steps of fearful trust, a paradox it is true, but a Holy God, untrue sons had taken;
Now the father-priest moves slowly with a blood-filled bowl in hand.
And reaching hand, careful now to do it right, sprinkles blood with fingers shaking;
Makes sure the blood is there where God has said, seven times in places carefully planned.*

*Today it is so different, not with fear and trembling, but with holy boldness
I am able to move into a place Most Holy, and there before the holy throne of God;
Is evidence placed by the hand of Him who paid redemption's price in fullness;
With heart that's bowed, and head bowed too, and hands full because of the Savior's blood.*

*My voice and heart and soul and spirit, all rejoicing in the presence of God Most Holy,
I come accepted in the Person of Him who pleased the Father and the legal claims fulfilled.
With cleansed heart and hands and words inside to join with others here to fully
Proclaim to God, the virtues of His Son - the only One could justice's voice now stilled.*

*It's in this place, but not with symbol-types from far and distant pasture, but in reality;
I'm moved to place with careful hands, a Sacrifice that for me has been offered.
I place with reverence and careful moves of thought and word before awesome Deity,
Expressions of divine initiation that come from Spirit Holy - to the Almighty proffered.*

*When comes the time to turn and leave through veil that has rent asunder from top to bottom;
My soul: warmed by heavenly fire and lit with Shekinah light to glow from deep within;
Is full with praise and adoration, songs of Zion and prayers of thanks go unto Him.
My steps are light with acceptance; each one with confidence follows the other - to serve again.*

"What a fellowship, O God of glory; to worship inside the veil and not shake with fear, but to enjoy complete acceptance. My adoption is so precious - and yet - at times it seems more gold-like than at others. The supper, the emblems, the hymns, the prayers, the praise and the worship make such an impact on this soul of mine. I hear the simple words of truth learned new by new converts - and I worship Thee. I hear the ancients, and all in between put into words and sweet hymns of adoration, thoughts of the Lord Jesus Christ - and I worship Thee. I watch the faces of women and men who love the Lord supremely and I do not wonder - but rejoice - in what the grace of God has done - and I worship Thee. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."

Leviticus 17

THE VALUE OF THE BLOOD

Many people are afraid of the sight of blood. Some actually faint because, in spite of their own bravado, blood seen reminds them of the fact that death is just ahead of us all. They may not even have consciously thought about it, but our death-day is held off by the blood that flows in our veins. Some people get used to the sight of blood from animals or even other people, but when it comes to their own loss of blood there is fear, and they take every step they can to stop the loss. The reason human beings have this concern is man cannot produce blood and they know it. The value of blood is way beyond any monetary value. "The life of the flesh is in the blood." Life belongs to God. We are totally dependent on God for life. Even when a serious loss of blood takes place, God is able to produce more within us to restore what has been lost. Men can save it, store it, freeze it - but can not make it because the life of the flesh is in it and only God can give life.

God had a place to meet with His people where their sacrifices and offerings could be brought to Him. They were not permitted to offer sacrifices to Him in just anyplace after the Tabernacle was set up. Before Israel became a nation of chosen people who were identifiable among the nations around them, the patriarchs built altars and offered burnt offerings in many places. This changed when God chose to dwell in the midst of His people in the Holiest of all, and the cloud and pillar of fire testified to His presence. Now this holy people were privileged as a called-out company - the assembly in the wilderness. When we gather together in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we are called out from the world-system to be gathered unto Him as a

separated people. This is our designated position. "In the world, but not of the world." It doesn't only happen when we come together for the meetings of God's people for teaching, testimony and worship. We are gathered unto Him at all times. When we make our spiritual sacrifices and offerings, we bring them to Him in the place where saints meet. Our sacrifices are linked with the "kingdom of priests." The attitude of worship, praise and thanksgiving produces the action of bringing spiritual sacrifices to the place where we remember Him and show His death until He comes again. The Lord's Supper is for God first and then for us. Like the Jewish people who were forbidden to make his sacrifices in just any place, we too have to keep the ordinances as God gave them. Others can look on and hear so we are preserved from making mistakes or forming some personal habits of worship that are not according to God's will. It is as wrong for us to think we are doing God's things in our way as it was to an Israelite to make a sacrifice in his own way and place. That was the way the Egyptians sacrificed to their goat-idols (demons), and God's people were not to follow that practice in any way.

The value of the atonement by the blood of a sinless sacrifice goes way beyond what we normally think. Involved in sacrifices made to the Lord was the need of the right attitude. A person could bring an offering out of religious duty and there was no value to it. Religious forms do not make a sacrifice acceptable to God. Just a sacrifice and offering did not bring pleasure to God. When a sacrifice was made and the blood of an innocent substitute was shed. The blood represented the sinner's life that because of sin, ended in death. It also represented the sinless substitute's life by which we are forgiven of our sins. A common pagan practice was to drink blood hoping to get the animal's strength. This was forbidden because only God gives life and the strength needed. Also, the life of the animal was in its blood and to drink that would indicate we can get that by our own choice, taking away the symbolism of the new life God gives. Another reason it was forbidden was to preserve the transfer of disease and infection through the blood of a dying animal.

Life belongs to God - both the giving of it and the taking of it. He holds the key of life and death. To offer a life to God in man's own way essentially robs God of that which is His to give or keep and in the case of sacrifices made to idols, it gives to Satan what belongs to God. Atonement in the blood, and at the cross is where God meets the sinner. That is where a perfect life was given for us. A Just God found a Just Savior there and is able to justify us freely by His blood. "Without the shedding of blood (a life given) there is no remission (of sin)." The Lord Jesus Christ" made peace (with God) through the blood of His cross." The result is that we are "made nigh by the blood." Further, "the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin." In the future there will be millions of people whose garments as "made white in the blood of the Lamb," and are able to join with those who "overcame by the blood."

The value of the sacrifice and shedding of innocent blood began when Adam and Eve were clothed with skins from an animal whose life was taken that they could live. From Genesis to Revelation the value of the blood is always taught in the scriptures. Our future song will be "Unto Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood."

Any animal found dead that had not been bled was to be rejected as food. The contamination that defiled one passes on to another through the blood that has not been drained from a slain beast. Strangled animals, blood - all these prohibitions had physical, moral and spiritual restrictions placed on them by God to preserve the well-being of the whole person who was separated unto Him. We need to be reminded from time to time that we "are not our own," we have been "bought with a price (the blood of Christ): Therefore glorify God in your body and spirit which is God's."

Leviticus 17:11. *"For the life of the flesh is in the blood" and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul.* Do not do your sacrificing out there in the field;

DO IT RIGHT.

*God has a place He has chosen for you to come
And place in order on His altar, lest you yield
To pressures and temptations that follow pagan-form.*

*The way those who are not God's children follow;
Is the path of least resistance that pleases me alone.
To set the rules of religious sacrifices; you allow
The idolatrous forms of darkness that won't atone.*

*Never let the goat-idol demon once be mentioned,
Nor prostitute yourselves to such dark Egyptian gods.*

*To look back on such vile things is abomination,
And will be the same as those who on Christ's blood have trod.*

*The blood itself, the source of flesh-life, is forbidden.
To eat and feast on blood is a pagan way.
The symbolism of blood poured out is of a sinless life given,
The price for sin is death – the blood must pay.*

*In other ways, God now protects His people;
From things transmitted that a life might take
If blood ingested carries with it evidence of sinful
Diseases – God alone knows the difference it can make.*

*So when God makes to me His mind and will so clear,
Far be it from me from such instructions ever turn.
He knows the end of the matter, so never ever veer
From the course He set, nor ever His holy will to spurn.*

*Whatever plans God makes for me is always right,
Even though I may not understand it all.
My acts responsible and true, will stand the light
Of holiness divine – and His blest will fulfill.*

"O Father, preserve me from taking anything into my own hands as if I know all the answers to the problems and choices of my life. "I need Thee every hour, most Gracious Lord." Whether it seems right to my mind and eyes is not the point. I want to again commit myself to the "Thus saith the Lord" of the scriptures of truth. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."

Leviticus 18

A HIGHER STANDARD

In Egypt where the children of Israel served the gods of the Egyptians, idol worship included immoral activity and worship of beasts and the base instincts of man's fallen nature. In the land of Canaan the superstitions of men went even farther and they offered new-born babies to Molech, the god of the Ammonites, by putting them into the fire that burned inside the brass idol. One tradition says that drums and loud music accompanied this human sacrifice so that people wouldn't hear the cries of the babies. Unspeakable evil accompanies the actions of people today as well when they remove the moral standards of the Word of God and replace them with the cheap, baseless legislation of man's opinion. What a person practices in his or her lifestyle follows what they believe about God. One said, "A person's morality is the fruit of his theology."

The people of God then, and now, are called to a different standard of morality; one that is higher than the lustful opinions of men who seek pleasure in whatever way they can, and wherever they can find it. How are we to know what is moral and what is immoral? The standards that govern God's people come from God Himself to us through His Word. God is the standard. He is the epitome of holiness, righteousness, purity and character that gives joy, lasting happiness and meaning to our lives. It is not left up to us to decide what is moral or immoral. God made those decisions based on who He is. The original laws of this country came from what is known as "English common law." English common law was based on biblical standards and stood the test of centuries. But now we have courts appointed by men who want to make and change our laws to suit what appeals to the base instincts of our fallen nature.

The laws of sexual purity that were held for centuries have been changed as far as the world's systems, but not for the people of God. Mankind make changes to suit his circumstances, opinions and the opinions of others. God does not change. In man's opinion, "the majority rules," but for the people of God, He has the final say. There are consequently charges made that Christians are dogmatic and not willing to adapt to the changing time. That indicates that we are often going to be alone in our decision making because in the opinion of the majority, being dogmatic is wrong. It is not wrong to be dogmatic when our opinions and practices are based on a source morally higher than our own. It is not always comfortable to do what One with more authority than we have says is right. I obey laws because of God-given authority to the "powers that be." But when they abuse the authority given to them and impose their opinions by turning them into

laws, then I am obligated to "obey God rather than men." That is not being dogmatic in a wrong way. It is really the opposite way around. To impose man-made opinions as laws, is being wrongfully dogmatic.

Human interaction without boundaries can become first shameful and then harmful. Such interaction in order to be a blessing to all involved should show tenderness and consideration of all parties. The Holy Spirit does not place restrictions where there is no danger. One said it well, "The Holy Spirit does not put a dam where there is no danger of a flood." Sexual intercourse with close relatives was forbidden for a number of reasons. One is the effect it can have emotionally on others who share the same family ties. Another is the physical problems that can be multiplied when the gene pool is close. Historically this has been seen when medical research has revealed the rate of weakness (or strength) can be greatly increased among those who are close relations. Because of the principle of deterioration, usually it is the weakness that shows up. Mental and physical weakness often come as a result of close relatives in a sexual union.

There are these realities, not just ideas of which we need to be made aware, and God has done this in His Word. Adultery was forbidden not just for social reasons so that the seed be not adulterated, but so that social disease (sexually transmitted diseases) does not pass from one to another. Even today people are trying to stop this spread of disease by medication and other means. Some say that people have to be educated as to how to practice "safe sex." God made that very plain to us a long time ago. Homosexuality and bestiality were forbidden a long time ago also, and God hasn't changed His laws. The spread of disease by forbidden sexual activity has been well-documented. God anticipated the complications that follow a certain lifestyle and forbade it then. He still does.

Unfortunately, because of man's fallen nature, humans are capable of unspeakable evil, that is not even seen in the animal kingdom, when there are no moral standards of conduct. Those who know and love God are called to a higher standard of conduct than those who refuse to believe on Him. God Himself established the standard because He is the standard. We say we can never attain to that righteousness. It is too high for us. By receiving Christ as our own Savior from our sins, we have been given His righteousness. Our motivation to "be holy" is now based on our love and appreciation for Him, not our self motivation to keep perfect laws. Appreciation of God's grace and love to us constrains us to rise above the changing standards of men. Our Christian liberty which we have from God sets us free from sin's bondage to walk in God's ways. That is the reason we live in peace and experience the joy of the Lord in our lives.

Leviticus 18:5. *"Ye shall therefore keep my statutes, and my judgments: which if a man do, he shall live in them: I am the Lord."*

LIVE IN THEM.

*Patterns of life forming a mosaic of relationships –
Some near at hand, so close that it is hard to see all it means;
Others at a distance – so far away that it is only part of the scenery.
So how can we know the dynamics of living that God intends?
He has made His statutes and judgments clear –
LIVE IN THEM.*

*The careless living of others around us does not make a thing right.
We cannot form our way and patterns of living on that.
It is essential that we know and follow the moral ways of Him –
Him who is our Father, it is true, but also, Lord.
His knowledge of rightness can never be wrong –
LIVE IN THEM.*

*There are ways and words we cannot go or speak;
Life in its' ordinary ways is and should be – holy, wholly for God.
Every aspect of daily living can be a sanctified thing.
For those who live around me, they should know –
There are lines and laws we live by day by day –
LIVE IN THEM.*

*Holiness in families is passed on as is only right from each generation.
To live in light is part of a heritage from God and given to keep.
It is only right to expect them each to follow the basics –*

*There may be changes in ways each looks at things –
But in the fundamentals come from God –
LIVE IN THEM.*

*I'm older now, I hope I'm wiser than in days gone by.
My children and grandchildren are the pride and joy of my life.
If I had something to give to them that I thought would bless them –
It probably would not be in gifts, or money or even in the tales told.
It would hopefully be that they knew my wife and I believed –
LIVE IN THEM.*

"I have a family, O Father of families, who gives children to those who Thou art able to entrust. The heritage of children has been a great blessing to me and Linda. We find great joy in praying for them, looking at them, watching them grow. Please, O God of all grace, help us to teach them Thy statutes and judgments. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."

Leviticus 19

DAILY LIVING

Sometimes it is possible for us to ignore common sense and common decency in daily living. If we are not careful, the pursuit of our own goals will take such a claim on time, energy and skills that we forget the danger of assimilating into what is accepted by society around us and ignoring the needs some people have. Society has made things that are sins in God's eyes, acceptable, and people wonder at the refusal of a true Christian to accommodate to the opinions of the majority. No matter what others think and do, we who belong to God must commit ourselves to holiness. In that way we will have divine guidelines to keep us from breaking fellowship with God even when we must separate ourselves from what other people do.

On the other hand, we are responsible for the well-being of people around us in spite of who they are. All we have and claim for ourselves, really belongs to God and He allows us to use it for appropriate purposes. The biblical welfare system was such that provision was there for the poor, but they had to avail themselves of it by going after it themselves. It was not handed to them on a "silver platter." They had to go out to the fields and gather food for themselves that had been left for them by the property owners. God had arranged for the poor by generously making available to them what was His to give. This was a law of mercy all right, but the mercy had to be accepted on God's terms.

The "edges of the fields" today remind us that we have a responsibility to others to make available to them what they need if they are willing to make the effort to claim it. The poor and the pilgrims and strangers are able to take advantage of the provision if they avail themselves of it. To place something beneficial in the hands of one without expecting some effort on their part if they are able, is a hindrance to them as well as to those they will come into contact with in the future. The Bible isn't a book of "dos and don'ts" but it does teach the importance of righteous, responsible daily living. When we do what God says in God's way, the laws He has given make sense. That is why they can be easily summarized by "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart ... and thy neighbor as thyself." All other laws will fit in those categories.

In caring for the aged, the fundamental law is to give them the respect they deserve. When that is done, the responsibility we owe them will be met. If it is visiting and taking time for them, then we will be glad to give it. If it is meeting some practical or material need that also will be met. To respect and honor those who are older, has the benefit of one being able to learn from their wisdom and experience. That will preserve us from falling into unnecessary traps that will hurt or mar our testimony for God.

Foreigners and illegal aliens come under a lot of scathing criticism in our day. People who talk different languages or are different races and from different countries, are often discriminated against - sometimes without cause. We are told by God to treat them the same as our countrymen who have been here longer. Our background is that of being foreigners ourselves. This world is only our temporary dwelling place anyway. Honesty, integrity, respect for others and reverence for God are principles we are to apply in daily living.

Leviticus 19:9. *"And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest."*

LEAVE THE CORNERS.

There is no mistaking what holy means,

*It can be clearly seen in every part
Of a life that is lived knowing it's God that sees
Every act whether it is from form or the heart.*

*Respect for my parents, alive or dead;
The things I do on the Lord's day –
The things I make, the way things are said,
The when, and the where and the way –*

*All give an impression, whether I like it or not,
As to what I think of my Lord.
How I use what I think I have got –
Right down to the corners of my field –*

*Have a message to give as to the truth that I hold;
All that I have, is given from God to me.
I'm like a shepherd keeping sheep in His fold –
All the corners are for the strangers to glean.*

*When God says, "Do not. . ." it is not really harsh;
The rules are for the best for us all.
Let us follow His plan from the land to the marks;
Lest worse problems upon us will fall.*

*In all of the actions of this life that I live,
It is necessary here to take care.
From the food that I eat to the example I give;
Right down to the clothes that I wear –*

*Are to represent Him who my salvation procured,
It is right before my family that I show.
Honesty in business, and respect for the old;
My love for the Lord will then grow.*

"O God and Father in heaven: for some of us, the rules of life seem to be unfair and at times unrealistic. But I know in my heart You never make demands without good reason. Help me to instruct others properly and act properly in life myself. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."

Leviticus.19:32. "Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honor the face of the old man, and fear thy God: I am the Lord."

REVERENCE.

Reverence and respect for those who are older are not all that popular in this day of "up with self" and "No fear." It was taught in scripture and practiced by the holy people of God as evidence of our reverence for Him.

There was to be...

Reverence for parents among the families of God's people because – "I am the Lord your God."

Reverence for the Sabbaths among the gathering of God's people because – "I am the Lord your God."

Reverence for the Lord's name in all our conversation because – "I am the Lord."

Reverence for the Word of God in public because – "I am the Lord."

Reverence for one's body kept without markings because – "I am the Lord."

Reverence for the sanctuary where we meet with God because – "I am the Lord."

Reverence for the aged upon whose person is evidence of life lived because – "I am the Lord."

*Does this hoary head of mine;
With snow, wrinkles and defect;
In any way - without demand,
Deserve the least respect?*

*Does this face which much has seen,
Which God, in grace, protects;
In any way – from Son's bright gleam;
His holiness reflects?*

*O, may this mortal, graying head,
My inward parts thus show;
The moral glories of my Lord;
Reflect His holy glow.*

*In life, in word, in attitude;
In nature made anew;
That Christ through me, with gratitude;
His purposes I will show.*

"Father, we have talked a lot over the years, and yet I fear I don't reflect what You really want from me. I don't want to just reflect the passing of the years. I don't want to just give evidence that I have lived, by Your help, a life that shared Good News. What I most long for, is that in some way, my face might shine. I know, I know – Moses was really there, right in front of You and he saw the ground beneath Your feet shine like sapphire, the rocks becoming like gravel in Your presence; the mountain shaking like a leaf before You. But maybe there could be a little "candlelight" reflected from my face that someone might wonder where that light comes from. Could You please make this "hoary head" look a little like manna from Heaven, the Bread of God which came down from heaven? I am not doing a very good job of letting my light shine, but help me to let Christ live in me so that He would be seen in this old head. Amen."

Leviticus 20

SANCTIFY YOURSELVES

To consecrate one's self to God will set us apart from much that is now considered acceptable behavior among the people of our age. Many are drawn to forbidden activity out of the rebellious desire to oppose God and reject the teaching of the Bible. For some reason, to many people "forbidden waters are sweet" - for a very short time. There are serious and lasting consequences when we follow the passions of the world, the flesh and the devil. Israel was warned ahead of time what to avoid, what not to do, what not to allow - but in time they yielded to the attractions that were specifically forbidden and suffered terrible results.

The deceptions of the devil have been directed towards men right from the beginning of human existence. Death for sin is still criticized by those who measure morality by satanic standards. The children of Israel were warned to keep their children safe, but as time passed, they succumbed to the false gods the devil put before the pagan nations. There were gods around them they thought, that had to be appeased by the best they had - and that was their children. The One True God is the God of love, and is not vindictive. His desire is to bless His own people. However, when they sacrificed their children under the influence of the devil, they themselves were to be put to death to preserve the nation. We now have laws that men have made so we can legally put to death our unborn children and suffer no legal consequences. Those who do that, will find they have consequences they have to suffer - and live with until death. God is the God of life who wants health and happiness for human beings and has defined by His laws how this can be maintained. God is the God who cares for the unwanted children and for the widows and the lost. There is no question that His ways are the best ways to preserve life, love and happiness - and yet people reject Him and charge Him with holding back on us. Instead of doing that God, the God who gives, gave His "only begotten Son" that we might live through Him.

The devil also attracted God's ancient people with the occult and occultist practices. Even today many are attracted by games designed by the power of darkness and that have dark, murderous themes. We need to face the fact that Satan has not changed his goals, nor are his tactics lessening in intensity in any way. Rather, with the advances of technology he is using that means to promote his agenda in the areas of games, social networking, television and in whatever way possible. Lies, deception and dangerous practices attract people and they are drawn to them constantly.

The flesh has never changed either. Sexual sins were a problem to mankind all down through human history. That which was to be a blessing to people in their marriages and home-life, becomes a curse when the commitment of one man to one woman for life is ignored. Not only does unrestrained flesh bring

unhappiness in a marriage that may break the marital commitment, but it can actually destroy the family unit and affect the child-parent relationship that is so needed by the next generation. Moreover, unrestrained sexual activity spreads disease and twists the minds of people who engage in those practices until wrong doesn't seem wrong any more. God prohibited such immoral practices and pronounced serious consequences on those who engage in such things, to protect His people as a whole. Because of His love for us, He gave strict guidelines and laws to preserve the well-being and health of His people. Those who deliberately turn away from His revealed will in this regard were dealt with according to His laws because they rejected His grace. Prohibitions by God for evil doing are acts of love, not the actions of divine anger.

The people of God in those days had laws to guide them in a world system that had developed which was contrary to God's design. The rules He gave were for a reason. Any rules we make in families as well as in governments need to have an appropriate reason. Spiritual laws given by God really work. They have worked for centuries when people obey them and live by them. God's laws when obeyed preserve us from self-destruction and promote honorable, happy living. The guidelines defined by God when followed and enforced keep the peace and help the people to live useful lives with satisfying results. The consequences of breaking those God-given laws are suffering and separation. Our nation and generation are suffering and divided today because of the rejection of God's laws and standards, and the insertion of laws that have been changed to suit the immoral and unrestrained practices that please people who live only for the moment.

God's people are to remember to sanctify themselves to be a holy people no matter what is in vogue at the moment. What people do now does not change the standards of righteousness God has already given.

Leviticus 20:26. *“And ye shall be holy unto Me: for I the Lord am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be Mine.”*

I ... HAVE SEVERED YOU.

*It seems to some men that God is going too far, when He calls for our life to be different.
Why not mix and match to fit in with the crowd, instead of trying to be separate?
But the God who I serve is so unique, that there's not, any way to compare Him with others.
His character traits and the life He imparts, make us who believe all as brothers.*

*Unlike the strange gods of the world around, He is a God who is known by His love.
And more than the idols that are carved out by men, He gives life that idols can't give.
He is the God of the helpless, the children, the needy – not like worldly gods that just take.
He is a God who is unselfish, who gives – not demands; His own Son gave His life for the sheep.*

*It is not an unreasonable when He makes commands; our body and life must be clean.
To live like those in the land all around, would badly pollute generations to come.
Whether I like it or not, there's an influence I cast – either good or bad – at my age.
I am severed from those around by His claims; but I still can show them His grace.*

*To live by men's laws and customs and ways, is not consistent with the God that I serve.
I am a child of the King, and His influence I bring to every situation in this life that I live.
There are distinctions each day that I make on the way, as I move through this land like a pilgrim.
My home is not here, and I really don't dare to act on situations as I see them.*

*My Father in heaven, has left me down here, to let people around see what He wants.
He promises grace when in weakness of self, my feet on His promises I plant.
When it comes to my choices – should I do it or not – I remember that I have been severed.
I am not free to act like the nations around; I have been bought and from sin am delivered.*

*It is a serious offense to my Father who loves, and wants me daily to prove;
That what offends Him, should also offend me; that is one of the ways I show love.
When I am making my plans for this day that's before, I remember that I'm not my own.
My Father, in grace, has severed me thus; this truth clearly to me has shown.*

“I understand, O heavenly Father, that when Thou dost cut off from those around me, all ties and patterns of life that do not stand divine approval; it is a good thing. I do not want to be polluted in any way, by my wrong choices. It is bad enough to be influenced without knowing it. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.”

Leviticus 21

CONDUCT IS IMPORTANT

There are some things in life over which we have no control. We do not choose to be born into a specific family. The cause of our relationship with a particular family is not up to us but to the One who gives life - and makes no mistakes. It is by the grace of God alone that we hear the Gospel. It is by the work of the Spirit of God we are convicted of sin and brought to repentance. It is by the sacrifice of Christ we are able to respond in faith to the work of His grace and we are regenerated by the Holy Spirit and placed as children into God's family. Every child of God is a priest by birth, whether a newborn babe in Christ or one who has matured, and offers publicly, spiritual sacrifices to the Lord. Both are priests. Neither became one by self-effort.

In the life of a Christian, the same as that of the Old Testament priest, relationship has been established by God. He is the cause of the formation of the relationship. That relationship was secured to the family of Aaron, and it is to those who are in Christ. "Once in Christ, in Christ forever; thus, the eternal covenant stands." Relationship is one thing; capacity is quite another matter. The fact of the relationship is secure; the privileges and enjoyment of that relationship is another matter. Conduct in the relationship of the priestly family in regards to worship and service depended on a number of things. Some of those things, the members of the priestly family had no control over, and other things they did. One could not help any physical blemishes they were born with. There was some work they could do, but not in the public part of priestly ministry. A handicapped person of the priestly family was supported as a priest but could not represent God to the people, nor the people to God.

It is important for us to remember that we as a kingdom of priests, have been set apart from the world to be holy unto the Lord. We are also to be holy unto those we represent. There is a difference made when one is born into the family of God. The Lord Himself sanctified the priests of the children of Israel. They were His servants in a special way. They were intended to be those who offered spiritual sacrifices for the people, and represented God to the people. The restrictions for those who were in public view were made so that the holiness of God would be understood by those who came to God. Circumstances and associations even today can hinder the service of a child of God.

When a person is saved by grace, that person is accepted in Christ on the basis of who He is. He is the cause. Communion with God is quite a different thing. Communion is affected by our conduct in the relationship with our heavenly Father. We are sons and daughter of God by virtue of the new birth the Spirit and the Word brings about. Obedience as sons and daughters is up to us. There are limitations in our Christian life and service over which we have no power nor control. That is not our fault. Such limitations have been allowed by God or are the result of our life when we were "dead in trespasses and sins."

There are those areas in our life as a believer over which we have the responsibility to take control. Carelessness as a believer can effectively stop our communion with God and leave us with lasting effects that will hinder our priestly service for a lifetime. Willfulness will keep us from worshipping God in "spirit and in truth" because we think we can do God's work in our own way. Worship and service are not arbitrary for one who is a child of God. He is the One who has sanctified us, and is the One who has every right to expect our obedience and communion with Him. God knows our limitations and makes allowance for them. He also knows our hearts and is expecting us to present our bodies "a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God" which is our "priestly service." Our conduct as priests in this relationship we have with God, is up to us. We are not left to speculate about holy things and holy living. The guidelines for priestly service are in the Word of God and He has the right to expect us to conduct ourselves accordingly. We can't help the blemishes that come by our nature. We can deal with the carelessness and willfulness that negatively affects our communion, worship and work for the Lord. We are to be holy unto the Lord, holy for the Lord and sanctified by the Lord.

Leviticus 21:22. *"He shall eat the bread of his God, both of the most holy, and of the holy."*

BREAD OF HIS GOD.

*God is not unfair when He will not allow just anyone at all,
To approach His altar with a perfect lamb, when on his God he calls.
The priest who offers must closely match, the sacrifice he makes;
What is given to God, goes through the priest by the position that he takes.*

*To the man who offers, he represents God; and to God he represents man.
On the one side law; and on the other side grace - the design is by God's plan.*

*God is perfect in holiness, and the sacrifice as well, the lamb is perfect to view.
So, the priest who offers – as close as he can – must look like he's perfect too.*

*The discrimination seems to some, that God is not acting in a way that seems right.
Can a handicapped person help what is wrong, when all is not perfect or bright?
The answer is clear: there is a work to do, no matter what might seem to be wrong;
And I am called to do only what God allows, in the role in which I belong.*

*The Levite who served in the place and the way where, to serve by God he was called;
Could eat of the food that came to that place; the food of His holy God.
He was not abandoned or unimportant because he could not to the altar go.
God was careful to place only the ones that He knew, could in type His perfection show.*

*We all have a work for our Lord to fulfill, and daily would go at each task,
Though I have some physical defects, I am able to do what God in His wisdom asks.
Limitations may come but there will always be some service to do for my Lord.
And when hunger arises deep down in my soul, I can feed on His spiritual food.*

*The provision is there for each servant to eat, I'll take what God gives with my thanks.
The work of another doesn't hinder what God wants – as for me, I'm glad for His grace.
In the plans of His kingdom, I have a work and a place where I fit, if only I take;
What God has allowed, and for me has endowed: my contribution here I will make.*

"I thank Thee, O gracious Father, for allowing me a place to serve Thee in spite of who I am. There are failures and handicaps in my life and work, but I am grateful that I can still work for Thee and eat of the holy bread of God to sustain my soul. I give Thee thanks and glory, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."

Leviticus 22

DEFILEMENT AND DEFECTS

Those who are children of God and who are able to serve and worship Him, need to learn the importance of everything they do. They need to always be conscious of the fact that they are consecrated to God and are separate from the world system for a reason. We are to be separated unto the Lord because He is holy and separated from the sinful ways of fallen mankind. We need to be reminded often that we are to "be holy, for I am (God) holy."

In our service for God, such holy occupation deserves, and demonstrates, purity that accompanies anything or person that represents God. A priest could not serve if there was some sickness in him. He had to be clean inwardly. It is possible to not only be defiled ourselves, but through our own carelessness, defile others. Sometimes defilement happened to the priest because of outward contact with people or things that were unclean, and the consequences were that he became unclean. There can even be moral defilement that comes from a defiled mind in which thoughts have not been brought under control "to the obedience of Christ."

We are wise when we heed the warnings to avoid unholy contact with those things or people that demean the Lord and His Word. It is very easy for a person to be wrongly influenced by a teacher or professor who uses smooth words to challenge the faith in God a young believer has. Words can quickly defile the mind and may never leave one without doubts and unanswered questions that hinder or even stop our service for God. Similarly, unholy alliances in marriage, business, religious and political activity has the power to stop effective service for God. We are plainly told to "come out from among them and be ye separate saith the Lord." There are good reasons for that separation. Usually unholy contact that leads to unholy alliances, will go farther and result in unholy compromises.

The more highly we estimate the Person and work of our Lord Jesus Christ, the more we will be committed to holiness ourselves. When our understanding of our calling and commission is clear, then we will serve God in the way He deserves to be served. We will then be able to demonstrate the purity of God by holiness in our life and service.

To go even further in the acts of priestly ministry, one who offered sacrifices had to be able to discern what was acceptable and what was not acceptable. Not every defect was easily seen. The down-turned ear of an animal or a discharge from its nose indicates there is something internally wrong. An animal that turns only

one way indicates a blind eye. Other external defects can be seen by the practiced eye of one who has a clear understanding of what is acceptable and what is unacceptable when it comes to quality.

The worship of God deserves and demonstrates the quality of true appreciation, devotion and love for God. Such worship deserves the best of our time. Often worship is hindered by what we consider more pressing responsibilities of business, family or pleasure. Worship begins in our minds as we begin to consider who God is and all He has done. There is a sense of awe that often begins at the dawn of a new day and can be nurtured then in a special way. The true worship of the Lord deserves and demonstrates the quality of our talents and abilities. To leave our "left-overs" for God is insulting to Him. Yet, many give their best talents for a business and a paycheck and leave the little of our strength we have left for the Lord.

It is not an uncommon practice to leave even the best of our treasure for those people or purposes that have nothing to do with the kingdom of God. When the priests of old offered sacrifices to God, they had to discern what was the best and be willing to reject those defective animals that were brought. They were not to compromise the holiness of the Lord's people by allowing unholy practices to be directed towards the holy God. Such things would have profaned His name, and those looking on would say, "They are no better than the Egyptian priests. There is nothing to the worship of God that is any better than what we left."

The more highly we estimate the blessings we have received from God, the more carefully we will attend to our worship of God. A proper understanding of who the Lord is and what He has done for us will affect our service for Him. It will challenge us to not allow anything to defile us as we serve the Lord with a sincere desire to glorify Him. In a similar way our understanding of the blessing He has given us will keep us from even considering giving Him less than the best of our time, talents and treasure.

The purity of our souls will be demonstrated in our service for God. We need to be committed to be clean inwardly, outwardly and morally. It is our responsibility to avoid unholy contacts, alliances and compromises no matter how close they may come to us. That way we will avoid defilement ourselves and not be willing to offer to the Lord anything that is defective. Our service deserves our purity, and our worship deserves and demonstrates the quality of our faith.

Leviticus 22:29-30. *"And when ye will offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving unto the Lord, offer it at your own will. On the same day it shall be eaten up: ye shall leave none of it until the morrow: I am the Lord."*

SACRIFICE OF THANKSGIVING.

*Offer thanksgiving: there are so many reasons to draw from deep within
A sacrifice of praise, thanksgiving and honor to give to Him;
Him, who at infinite cost to Himself paid, the price of sin.
Now heaven's door is open to us, we are invited to go in.*

*Offer thanksgiving: grace unmerited, unlimited, full and free;
That grace has been offered and given unreservedly to me.
Such grace as that led Christ our sacrifice, to the tree;
That not only saved and kept, but sons forever we will be.*

*Offer thanksgiving: it becomes a sacrifice when from me there is a cost paid;
When it may not seem natural because there is an obligation laid;
When the cup of blessing is full and I come to offer with hands out-spread;
When after offering to Him, I taste the further fullness of my risen Head.*

*Offer thanksgiving: today is the day to give and receive and enjoy communion sweet.
Today, not tomorrow, is the time when from all I give to Him, I also eat.
Today in fellowship with my Lord and Savior, and my King I greet
Him at the altar of His choosing; and there in joy and gladness, we meet.*

*Offer thanksgiving: give it of full measure from the heart, hold nothing back,
Give in humility, but looking back with joy at each and every act
He has performed in bringing me to this place, not of wishing but of fact.
I am the Lord's; I give Him all the thanks and glory as a sacrifice.*

Offer thanksgiving: I have tasted and seen that in every way the Lord is good.

*I have not followed Him daily, nor done all that I know I could.
I have learned to love Him, learn from Him, feeding at His Word.
Now to offer sacrifices of thanksgiving is only responding as I should.*

*Offer thanksgiving: each day is a new day of blessings received and enjoyed.
Each day is unique as all His benefits and acts of grace are outpoured.
Each day a sacrifice of thanksgiving is worthy to give – unimplored.
So now from my heart and soul comes thanks and honor to my Lord.*

"O Father, my Father, please accept my thanks – my grateful thanks- from my heart, for the abundance of all Thy grace has provided. But more than that, I offer the sacrifice of thanksgiving for being my Father and for not being impatient with all my shortcomings. I want to be like my Father in every way possible – and yet I am limited by my humanity and the gravity of this world. This offering is for today – I offer and partake of it now and will offer again tomorrow. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."

Leviticus 23:1-8

HOLIDAYS

Originally holidays were days set aside for the children of Israel to have celebrations with God. Holy days were designated by the Lord for the benefit of His people and a time of remembrance and teaching about important events. The Sabbath was a weekly day of rest to conclude the efforts of six days of labor. It was designated as a sign of fellowship between God and His people because of His grace. God rested and He found satisfaction in the work of creation as He prepared the world for habitation by man. It was to be a time when God would find sweet fellowship and communion with those who would choose to love Him and share life with Him. But mankind willfully failed and sin brought separation. In the nation of Israel God had in mind a kingdom of priests but the nation failed. Now because of the all-sufficient work of Christ on our behalf there is "a rest for the people of God," and we find our rest in Christ. In spite of all that goes on around us we can rest in Him now, and labor for Him in view of the everlasting rest we shall have when life as we know it now is past.

So even though we are not called upon today to be Sabbath keepers as were the Jews, we find our rest in Christ, and on the "Lordly Day" remember Him and review His death until He returns. Also, on the first day of the week, the "Lord's Day," we remember the resurrection of Christ and are assured of our own part in "the first resurrection" of "the just." The first day is also a day of revelation as John the apostle wrote of prophetic truths that open our understanding to some of the things that will come to pass in the future. He also was used by the Holy Spirit to write to seven churches so that the saints would realize how important the conduct and practice of the Lord's people today is to Him. There is also the responsibility on the first day of the week to set aside that which is proportionate to what we have received from our labors, and give it to God as an offering reflecting our gratitude and appreciation for what He has given to us from His bounty.

There were two festival seasons for the nation of Israel. Early in the year there were four special feasts and then later in the year three more. These were to be reminders of significant events that affected the whole nation from the time of the beginning until the future kingdom's peaceful reign of Christ, their Messiah. The Passover, the Feast of Freedom, was on the 14th day of the first month as a reminder of the deliverance of Israel from bondage in Egypt. During that feast the oldest boy would ask, "Why is this night different from all other nights?" and that would provide the opening for a historical account of Israel's past from a mature adult. Redemption by the blood of the Passover lamb was to be annually brought to the attention of every succeeding generation of Jews lest they forget the greatness of God who brought them out of bondage unto Himself, and at that time made of them a nation that is in existence today.

On the 15th day of the first month the Jews held the Feast of Unleavened Bread that lasted for seven days. This feast was to remind them all that God intends His people to walk in righteousness and purity of life. Holiness is expected of a called-out people who have been called to follow a Holy God. There was no leaven allowed in the homes of God's people during that week. They were not to go about their normal work, and were to make an "offering made by fire" unto the Lord. No manual labor was done throughout the whole nation for that week. The works of man have no part in the acceptance of an offering made by fire that is acceptable to God.

The beginning of those yearly feasts was the one that was a type of the redemption we have through Christ. Now instead of an annual event, "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us. Therefore, let us keep the feast" -

and we do so weekly as we remember Him and proclaim His death until He comes again. The righteousness of life and moral purity that was typified in the feast of unleavened bread that lasted for seven days, is to be characteristic of us all the time. Whatever we do "in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ." The order of our remembrance is the review of the Person and work of our Savior-Redeemer first. In view of such a gracious redemptive work, righteousness of life outwardly and holiness inwardly, should characterize all we do, and sanctify it. The unleavened bread was pierced and striped as it was baked. That reminds us of the One whose hands and feet and side was pierced and by whose stripes we are healed.

Those who had a week set aside to remember their redemption, and who ate the unleavened bread with the piercing and stripes that made it bake thoroughly through, would be able to see by faith what had happened for them. There were also those who would look ahead and the God who delivered them and brought them this far, would not abandon nor forsake those who followed Him. Even those special holidays and the feasts held at that time, would reveal to those who had faith in God, the fact that the real Person would come and fulfill the type. That is where we come into the blessings of God today. We know by faith looking back, what they could know by looking ahead by faith.

*"What is so special about this night?" the childish voice would say.
Then a mature one would review the events of the night of the fourteenth day
Of the first month of the year when with a mighty arm of power -
God delivered His people at the stroke of the midnight hour.*

*For us - our children might ask, "Why is bread and wine on the table spread?"
And we can reply to them, "Christ, our Passover has died, and for us His blood was shed."
Now our Passover Lamb has risen, God is forever totally satisfied.
His every demand has been met, when for our sins the Redeemer died.*

*Our feast keeping is a time of paradox, both sorrow and joy we have.
Sorrow for what our sins cost Him, joy for the eternal life He gave.
Our feast involves eating the bread, we are now found in Him complete.
With solemn yet joyful songs and thoughts, of the Bread of God we eat.*

*The cup is not bitter to us as it was to Him, it speaks of new life given.
The eternal life God gave us is the same now as it will be in heaven.
We are able even now to enter into the good of fellowship with God.
There is no condemnation now to those in Christ Jesus, we honor Him as Lord.*

*The old feasts were types and fore-shadowing of good things yet to come.
They looked back to where they came from, and forward to their new home.
We have the present reality, but still look darkly as through a glass.
All will become crystal clear when we get to our home at last.*

"Father, may I learn the value of my redemption over again when we keep the feast in remembrance of our Lord Jesus Christ. May the resulting effect be a more faithful commitment to a righteous walk and purity within. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."

Leviticus 23:9-22

GIVE TO GOD FIRST

Physical labor is a privilege given by God so that as a result of a man's effort the ground will release its bounty for our use. A seed is planted in prepared ground, and hundreds of seeds are gathered as God uses the multiplying principle from the life of one seed. The children of Israel would not forget how their lives were maintained, there was a special holiday designated by God. This would be the day after the Sabbath on the first day of the week during the week of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The barley was ripe in the fields and traditionally a group of leaders would go with a large company of observers to cut down some of the grain and take the sheaves of barley to wave before the Lord and present a grain (gift) offering. That was to be a reminder to them of God's provision, and to us of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ on the first day of the week. He is the "first fruits of resurrection." He was raised from among the dead as distinct from being raised at the "resurrection of the dead." This was something new to the disciples who believed in the doctrine of the resurrection as did most of the Jews. Now we understand that those "in Christ" will be raised first from among the dead at the rapture of the church even as our Lord was.

At the feast of first fruits the sheaf of barley was first given to the Lord who provided the harvest for them out of His abundance. A burnt offering of worship and praise, and a grain offering was presented to the Lord first. Then all across the nation the barley harvest could begin and the sound of joy from the reapers would mix with the sound of hope the planters made as they had moved previously across the fields. When the Lord Jesus was raised from among the dead, there was joy and wonder as those who saw Him, heard Him speak and were with Him realized that "death cannot keep it prey." When a "corn of wheat" goes into the ground and dies, there is abundant life comes from that death. The power of God releases the life He has contained in such a little space, and from that, much blessing comes to us.

It is no wonder the Feast of First Fruits was a designated day to remind the children of Israel of the blessing of life out of death. The first day of the week we too remember that we have received life out of the death of Christ. "Because He lives, we shall live also." What a blessing! There was no leaven in that grain offering because "in Him is no sin." The day the Lord Jesus Christ rose from the dead was the day the Feast of First Fruits was kept. The Passover speaking of redemption; the Feast of Unleavened Bread for seven days speaks to us of righteousness and purity; and now the feast of First Fruits speaks to us of resurrection - all began the spring holiday season pointing them, and us, to the blessings that come to us from the gracious provision of the Lord. Well might we heed the charge to "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."

Fifty days later on the first day of the week, the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost) was held. This marked the time of the finish of the barley harvest and the beginning of the wheat harvest. The people of Israel would be very glad for the barley harvest. Now they would be able to publicly express their appreciation to God for the harvest of wheat that was about to begin. This is a type of the blessings that we have as the people of God, gathered by the Holy Spirit and linked with Christ as those who are "in Him." The death, burial and resurrection has been accomplished. We have been "crucified with Christ," nevertheless we live a new life in Him. The Church is the Body of Christ and although we are still in the flesh, and are prone to sin at times (there was leaven in the two loaves that were offered), yet this does not keep us from being assured we are "accepted in the Beloved." We are able to stand before God in the value of the blood of Christ that was shed for us; in the virtue of His accomplished work and because of His sinless perfection. This Feast of Weeks, or Feast of Pentecost, marked the end of one season of holy days. It also marked the end of one harvest and the beginning of another that is type still going on today.

Even though we are a "new creation in Christ Jesus," with gifts given by the Holy Spirit and our standing in Christ is secure, still there is the problem of evil within us. The leaven in the bread reminds us of that fact. Seven lambs "without blemish" were brought there along with the bull and two rams. One goat was for a sin-offering because of the leaven. Two lambs were for peace offerings so communion with God could be enjoyed. Then all the burnt offerings went up as a sweet savor of Christ to God. The coming of the Holy Spirit and His indwelling in the believer, does not remove sin. He does give us power to know when we sin, what we need to do about sin, and the power to deal with sin. Spiritual power does not remove the fact of a sinful nature that is prone to sin, but the blood of Christ has atoned for sin. In God's eyes of legal justice, the problem of sin has been dealt with.

The grain left on the edges and corners of the fields does not mean that only a few Gentiles will be brought in during this harvest time of the age of grace. It was a practical way of providing welfare for the poor and those who had no place of their own to get food from. There may be a glimmer of a type in that those around us are sanctified by those who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

*"Why can't we start harvesting today, father, the grain looks good and ready."
The voice of the young makes inquiry because the seeds are full and plenty.
But the one who has labored hard to plant the seed knows only God gives the increase.
And the first of all belongs to God who only can make bountiful fields like these.*

*We are privileged to labor; it is God who puts life in the ground.
We can dig deep to prepare for the seed, it is in God where life is found.
We can carry the water to nurture, God sends the sunshine and the heat.
We can only do a little, it is God who gives the harvest to reap.*

*To bring to God the first and the best is only reasonable to assume.
Any less would be insulting, and on God's grace for us to presume.
He is the One who gives life, it is our privilege to give Him what is His.*

He has the keys of all life and can use them as He will please.

*New life has come to us from Him, He who died is really alive.
From His fullness we receive, by His grace alone our spirits thrive.*

*The joy of a full harvest that brings such blessings to man -
Come from the bountiful hands of God who gives what His wisdom plans.*

*In this great Body of saints, there is evil, of that there is no doubt.
That sin will remain in the Church, until in the air we hear His shout.
But there is through the saints given blessings that are felt all over the earth.
And when the harvest is finished, we will realize what our labor was worth.*

"Father, sometimes it seems to me like I am laboring in vain until I stop to consider it is not how much I do that counts, but who it is for. Help me to labor today for Thee, not for what I think are important results. Be glorified, I pray, in the efforts though feeble, that are done for Thee alone. Amen."

Leviticus 23:23-44

AFTER A LONG INTERVAL

After the busy labor of harvest had past, and the blessings of the provision of God for His people had been stored away in barns and storehouses, the civil new year began. On the first day of the seventh month the trumpets sounded across the land calling the nation to the Feast of Trumpets, the first of the annual fall festivals. They began with Rosh Hashanah (head of the year) as a call to ten days of self-examination and repentance. On this one day, Feast of Trumpets, there was to be no work done and the sons of Israel were to gather symbolically testifying to the re-gathering of Israel. It was a memorial day; calling them to remember the past glory of the nation and to remind them of the future promises to be fulfilled. The blowing of the trumpets was to stir the people to seek the Lord. No doubt there would be joy and thanksgiving for the Lord for the harvest, and this day introduced a time of cleansing in view of the solemn Day of Atonement ten days later.

The day of grace in which we now live is an interval between the beginning of the Church age which followed the resurrection and ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ, and His coming again. When the Lord descends from heaven with a "shout, the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God," a time of God's dealing with Israel as a nation will again take place. Present day Israel is a political system, not a spiritual revival leading to repentance. But we can learn from the foreshadowing of coming events that the Lord's return is imminent. When the trumpet sounds, the Church will be caught up into the presence of our Lord.

Yom Kippur is considered by many Jews to be the most important day of the year. The Day of Atonement was held after an eight-day interval on the tenth day of the seventh month. This was not a joyous occasion but a solemn day of fasting, affliction of soul, rest from all labor all leading to a real, genuine penitence. The high priest had to have prepared himself and the proper animals gathered to be sacrificed for the priest and his family, and for the people. The two goats were there and the people would anxiously wait to see if the atonement for sin would be accepted by God. The "scape-goat" would be then taken into the wilderness and the other sacrifices could be offered because the blood of atonement had secured peace with God for another year. Fellowship was restored and sin covered on that day.

Israel has yet to go through a solemn time of serious consequences before real fellowship is established with their Messiah. The years of tribulation during "the time of Jacob's trouble" will bring them to the place where they long for assurance that they will survive the wrath of God. In that day Israel will mourn and long for God. God will bring the nation to the place of supplication and a deep desire for God's grace to be shown to them. That is when Israel will finally "look on Him whom they have pierced." So many will have been cut off before repentance for their sin and acceptance of Christ takes place. Finally, they will look beyond Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, to the One who is the Atoning Sacrifice. Finally, they will find victory through full surrender to the Lord Jesus Christ. They will mourn but God will give "the oil of joy for mourning." The nation will finally rejoice in the Lord Himself and not just have sins atoned for, but will have "a fountain opened for sin and uncleanness." Israel shall be saved.

Perhaps a type of the Judgment Seat of Christ can be made here as it will not be a day of salvation or celebration, but a day of revelation of the motives believers today have in relation to their service for God. It is wise for us to realize that the trumpet sound of the rapture will take us to the time and place where we will

give account of the "things done in the body." That coming day is one of the motivating factors linked with the ministry of reconciliation we have during this harvest time.

The Feast of Tabernacles was the last of the seven feasts of Jehovah in the year. It was a week of rejoicing, remembering the forty years of living in tents in the wilderness. It was a time of renewal as they camped out in booths made to live in for a week and enjoy the friendship and fellowship of friends and neighbors. This was a happy time of celebration. The Feast of Ingathering at the end of the harvest would indicate they now had a time of rest. The Feast of Trumpets had called them to ten days of soul-searching leading up to the Day of Atonement with its solemnity as the nation waited anxiously for evidence of atonement for their sins. Now five days later was the Feast of Tabernacles with joy and gladness.

History says there was worship and teaching given when there was the reading of the last of the Torah, and the restart of the reading of the Torah at the beginning of the book. There were daily sacrifices made of each kind of offering. They would share their history and renew acquaintances. There was lighting of menorahs and the symbolic drawing up and pouring out of water as types of God's blessings. For seven days this went on until the last great day. That was the day when Jesus cried loudly, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink." We can understand the need of longing souls when we realize this form was repeated year after year, and then the people would return to their homes to repeat the same things over again for another year. The Lord Jesus offered living water which those who believe on Him now can have. He is the True Succoth (booth; shelter) who God has given for us. He is the Great Physician who cleanses us from sin and uncleanness - the Balm of Gilead. For the Jews the day will come when they will share the blessings of the Millennium with their Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will sit on the throne of David, and His kingdom of peace will be world wide.

*It is not wasted time to look back and be reminded of what God has done.
There we are impressed with the work God in His grace has won -
For us that we might be accepted in Christ, and by God we are forgiven.
No longer just people of earth, but now we have our citizenship in heaven.*

*So, in our feasts we are reminded of promises the future holds.
Each day we become more aware, as foreshadowing events unfold.
The sound of the trumpet of God, and a shout will call us to Him.
What we have been laboring at will be ended, and promises given will begin.*

*Israel will have a hard time; payday always follows rejection.
That nation will finally call on God, in "trouble" they are called to reflection.
Then will their Messiah appear and they will look on Him they had pierced.
He will speak peace to their souls, when the call of trumpets reaches their ears.*

*The solemnity of the Day of Atonement will pass as in their land they will find peace.
Brought together from all over the world, God's earthly people will marvel at grace.
On David's throne the King of kings will sit, and peace will come to earth.
National leaders come to Him, and Israel will experience national rebirth.*

*Those who compose the Church, who have experienced resurrection and life -
Will be with the Lord in His glory, and will share in the kingdom as His wife.
There will be much to do in His service to fulfill all the purposes of God.
Every knee will be bowed that was stiff, and every tongue confess Jesus as Lord.*

*Like Israel looked back to some feasts, we look back to what Christ did.
From the Passover Feast and onward, we realize that now in Christ we are hid.
Looking ahead with joy we anticipate a day when as King, Jesus will reign.
And every voice that can speak words, will bring glory and honor to His name.*

"Father in heaven, looking ahead I rejoice in the promise of Christ's return and the blessings that follow. Looking back I rejoice in the redemption He has provided for me, and the blessings of being accepted and secure in Him. I praise Thee and worship in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."

Leviticus 23:37-38. *“These are the feasts of the Lord, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, to offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord, a burnt offering, and a meat offering, a sacrifice, and drink offerings, everything upon his day: beside the sabbaths of the Lord, and beside your gifts, and beside all your vows, and beside your freewill offerings, which ye shall give unto the Lord.”*

19 SPECIAL DAYS.

The nation stops: the claims of culture have its place, especially when God appoints – Days and times and ways to celebrate – not of moral depravity and wild independence. People need to meet together – social settings, rest, refreshment, remembering: All are part of the psyche of a nation that is called to thanksgiving.

The nation remembers: history is one of the greatest teachers of our identity; uniqueness. The Passover: the blood of the paschal lamb, the bitter herbs, unleavened bread. We look back to deliverance by God’s Almighty Hand – His arm made bare. And from my vantage point I look back and remember: my Savior – my Lord.

The nation eats: just like in the past the bread is flat – unleavened, like in Egypt. This nation is different; this nation is to be pure; this nation must be ready to obey. Day after day – seven days in all – for all to remember righteousness has a cost. We are to be holy, righteous and godly in our daily living, remember this – and eat.

The nation prepares: the harvest is nearly here; what better time and way to remember. Remember the labor needed to prepare and plant; give God the first, who sends the rain. Remember the corn of wheat falls into the ground and dies, and in dying brings fruit. I remember that Jesus Christ is raised from the dead and I wave Him before my God.

The nation reviews: the barley is in and the wheat harvest is about to start; take one day; One day for God, fifty days later, to show joy and thanksgiving for a bountiful harvest. Recall on this day the life-giving power that God alone can give – and make life grow. The Holy Spirit has come – and is within; His power is at work that is beyond our ability.

The nation hears: the business year begins today, the first day of the seventh month. Rams horn trumpets are sounding all over the land; special trumpets of beaten silver – The sound is heard – lay down the shovel, the hoe, the pitchfork – bring an offering. Let joy be heard today and everyday as we think of all the way God has led us until now.

The nation fasts: the whole country goes silent. The souls of all are humbled in them. A solemn gathering takes place as the priest goes in – into the presence of God. With bated breath each person waits and watches and listens – he hears the bells – relief! For fellowship maintained between us and our God we give thanks – for the shed blood!

The nation camps out: tree limbs are cut down; happy children anticipate the family time. Under the boughs by day, and under the stars by night – the nation expresses trust in God. Seven days living outside as the ancestors did, and the children learn to really trust God. I too, remember – and want to pass on to my children and grandchildren: I trust my God!

“Holy Father, who has called us to remember Thee in various ways and times: I stop to consider that there are on every hand, and every day, many things that remind me that I feed on the Living Bread; the roast Lamb; the Manna from above. It is my joy to have so many means to bring these free-will offerings to Thee and I give them with a full heart, In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.”

Leviticus 24

PURE - IMPURE

The Tabernacle was a place where God dwelt with His people and the evidence of that when Israel was in the wilderness was the pillar of cloud by day and the Shekinah light of God's presence in the pillar of fire by night. Inside the Tabernacle behind the veil there was the continual, shadow-less light of the presence of God known by that same source of light - God Himself was the light. In the Holy Place where the altar of incense was continually sending up a sweet scent, and the bread of testimony, and the lampstand with seven flames of perfection was burning constantly, the light had to be tended. The oil that produced the light had to be "pure." There was nothing to be in that oil that would cause smoke. The Holy Spirit of whom the pure oil speaks is absolutely pure in every way. His love is that perfect attitude and evaluation of love, because "God is love." The fruit of the Spirit has nothing in it that defiles or clouds anything. The pure grace

of the Holy Spirit was put into the lamps on each of the seven candlesticks that are made out of one piece of pure beaten gold. These formed a "pure" candlestick. The light of the Spirit and the grace that reveals God to us is based on the sacrifice and death of our Lord Jesus Christ.

No matter how dark things were around outside, the light burned inside that Holy Place continually. Day and night were alike inside that room. The high-priestly ministry of our Lord continues without deviation in spite of the circumstances that surround us in life. That light is maintained by the priest whose work it was to keep that pure oil in that pure candlestick continually burning without anything that defiles in it. He is constantly ministering on our behalf before the holy throne of God.

By maintaining that light, it was easy to see the altar of gold so the incense could continually send out its sweet scent before God. The "pure" table on which sat the twelve loaves of bread that had "pure" frankincense put on them, could also easily be seen. It was a continual reminder of God's intention to have a unified fellowship among His people. Even when there was times of disunity and dissension among the people, the testimony remained before God. The memorial of that was there constantly in spite of their state. The standing was sure. The shadows that are seen in the Tabernacle in the wilderness typify the reality that we have today. The patterns teach us there is a real substance.

By faith we see the light and grace of the Holy Spirit shining and working in this dark world today. We know the worship of God's people sends "a sweet savor of Christ" to the Father when we meet together. The testimony to the fellowship and oneness of God's people remains even though there seems to be division and dissension that will not quit. So in spite of all there is to discourage and dishearten God's people when we look around at the world, and even the state of the Church, when we look within the Holy Place and see things from God's eyes, we take heart and press ahead with our "high calling in Christ Jesus."

By contrast, we can learn the seriousness of that which is impure. We do not realize how bad sin is until we stop to think. That which is impure morally, is tarnished, dirty, foul, polluted, filthy, indecent, coarse, unclean and to use a word popular today - "gross." The cursing of the unbeliever, even though he was associated with God's people, could not be overlooked. God takes our relationship with Him seriously and expects us to do the same. Men have lowered the standards of life that were once expected of us all, to suit the demeaning habits that have become popular today. Now people think cursing God is not a serious offense at all. In fact, some even laugh at that disgusting habit.

God has established guidelines of punishment that suit the crime but do not go beyond what is suitable. If a person deliberately puts out the eye of another, he loses his own eye. The same is truth with a tooth. We have become used to laws that go way too far, or not far enough. In many places today the punishment is way out of proportion to the deed done that was wrong. This is the same as was done in ancient pagan societies. The law given to Israel was that retaliatory punishment must be suitable to the crime. That is true justice. Who can decide when a person is rehabilitated? People can appear to change, but when we even change established laws, true justice avoids us. A person who bears in their body evidence of their correction, is far less inclined to do the same thing again. A person with one eye won't forget what he did to another person. One who has been beaten won't forget the pain his crime caused him.

The contrast between what is pure and what is impure cannot be mistaken. Life lived as God intended is exemplified by the purity inside the Holy Place. The oil, the candlestick, the table and the frankincense were all clear, unmixed, unadulterated, real, genuine, unspotted, unpolluted and untarnished in contrast to that which was going on outside that was impure. The lesson is plain - when we belong to God, we are to be different from all that goes on around us. We are to be "unspotted by the world." God has an established standard to live by. Everything else falls short of His intention and the potential for our life.

Leviticus 24:2. *"Command the children of Israel, that they bring unto thee pure oil olive beaten for the light, to cause the lamps to burn continually."*

PERPETUAL LIGHT.

*There is a work to do for God that I can do with skill.
When I am preparing pure olive oil; I do this work with will.
This may not seem like the greatest thing as this cup of oil I fill;
But filling this is a part of God's plan; I feel deep within my soul.*

*It is not with a sense pride I work, but with awareness of an honor;
God has allowed me to bless His name with the labor of each and every hour.
I may not enter the holy place and fill the lamp with oil;*

But I can make that smokeless oil that lights that place so holy.

*I will bring to the sanctuary outside the veil the work of these two hands.
Here I will give unto another, the oil that God demands.
The testimony of my love for God comes from this simple man;
I know my work will light the dark that covers over this land.*

*Darkness is on every side as people look for pleasure.
But light has come, the Spirit's here, given without measure.
The oil of olive that He makes come, is to me a priceless treasure.
The darkness flees when the light shines through, across this Christ-less desert.*

*The Lord Himself is the Golden Lamp, on which this oil is placed.
He is what to the eye is seen when we look upon His face.
But to be able to see, there must be light which to the Spirit we can trace.
And before that happened, there was an earthen cup in which the oil was made.*

*The Spirit moves the heart of this man, to want to please my God.
I take the fruit of the olive tree; the truths from God's own Word;
And beat it carefully and strain, until clear, like a musical cord
There comes from the Spirit, the purest light which displays my glorious Lord.*

"O Holy God, I know I am placed in the plan of things, just where Thou dost want me to be. I am thankful to be able to be a worshiper as a priest. But yet, there is a deep satisfaction too, when I am able to get from the fruit that Thou hast made grow, a clear presentation of divine things that relate to the Holy Spirit and His great work. When I read and meditate, please help me to beat the truths that are needed from Thy Word, and then to strain out any impurities that might come from my preconceived ideas – that light may shine by Thy Spirit, on the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."

Leviticus 25

A FINISH - A NEW START

When the Lord spoke from Mt. Sinai as in chapters 25, 26 and 27, the subject matter has to do with government. When He spoke from the Tabernacle as in the previous chapters, these subject matters had to do with worship. The subjects in Leviticus 25 indicates God's design for Israel in relations to the whole world. God claimed the land of Israel for Himself in a special way distinct from "the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof." This was His land to be used by His chosen earthly people, for His chosen purposes. It was here the sinless blood of "His only begotten Son," would go into the ground. It was here "God manifest in the flesh" would dwell with His people. It is here the glory of the Lord will be seen when the King of kings will reign. These verses have world-wide significance. Even though there is an on-going struggle over the possession of this land, the final outcome had already been decided.

In Israel every seventh day was to be a Sabbath. That was a sign of the covenant made with the nation. Every seventh year was to be a Sabbath for the land that it might be rejuvenated when it was left fallow to gather needed nutrients for the next six years of bearing fruit. A farmer working his land plows and plants by faith, expecting a harvest at the end of the season. God expected them to plow and plant the six years by faith. On the sixth year He would provide enough bounty to last them for three years. The problem then, as now, is that a "bumper" crop became a source of materialistic greed, and instead of living off the benefit of a harvest three times as great as usual, the profit was kept as personal gain. The land was plowed and planted again after the seventh year. When Israel was taken away captive years later, the land finally had its Sabbath.

Even though there is no record of the year of Jubilee being kept. It was God's intention that following seven seven-year cycles, there should be sounded throughout the land the trumpet announcing the Jubilee. "Proclaim liberty throughout the land unto all the inhabitants thereof," is an inscription on the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania that was given by God to the children of Israel. All debts would decrease in value as the year of Jubilee approached. Property would then go back to the original owner. Indentured servants would be freed. A new start all over the nation would begin. People would be reminded that they were stewards of what they were using, because it all belonged to God. It is well for us to be reminded that the same is true for us. Everything we claim for ourselves is deteriorating in value the closer the "Coming of the

Lord" is. We will leave everything behind when that day comes. It all belongs to God now. We are stewards of what He allows us to have and use. The Lord's return will be a "year of Jubilee."

The good management of the land would allow for the needs of not only the "land-owner," but also the poor would be cared for by the responsible actions of those who assisted the helpless, widows, orphans and the handicapped. The people of Israel were not to charge interest on loans made to fellow Israelites. Those who were financially secure were responsible for those who had needs they could not meet. We are not able to meet all the needs we see in the world. There are those within our sphere of life and influence, we can meet. God's original intention was that society meet the needs of society, not government meeting the needs.

In the future Israel will finally have the opportunity to live in the promised land in the way God intends. That will come after "the trumpet of the Lord shall sound" and we will be caught up to be with the Lord. When the Lord appears in His glory to take David's throne, there will be wonderful changes take place among God's chosen earthly people. At this present time, it is wise for us to live every day with the conscious knowledge of the fact the trumpet could sound this day. That will keep us from being greedy and materialistic. Our awareness of this stewardship we have, can be passed on to someone else today and help us avoid the dangers of covetousness. Neither God's land or God's people are independent of God.

An attitude of waiting for the Lord to come will keep us from being wrongly attached to the world and the evil in it. In light of the "year of Jubilee" we should hold everything we think we possess with a very light hand and loose grasp. We cannot be serving God and mammon at the same time. The world and all that is in it will be judged and broken up at the return of the Lord. There will be grasping claims by many on all we leave behind but none of it will be of any real value because of the demands of a Righteous God to bring justice and righteousness to earth. The truth behind the year of Jubilee is one that should sanctify us and challenge us to righteous and godly living rather than a materialistic and grasping attitude towards all God has allowed us to use.

*It is not ours to have nor claim all things as we would choose.
God is the Creator and Owner of all He allows us to use.
These things that bear my name are a stewardship He has given.
All seems so trivial and unimportant when viewed from the heights of heaven.*

*The plans God gave were that we use what He has given for His glory.
But the way we cling and grasp them tight, tells quite a different story.
The wise steward does the best He can with what he has been entrusted -
From simple things for daily use, or crowns with jewels encrusted.*

*Everything goes back to the Owner on the year of Jubilee.
Nothing remains for us to claim, the important things we can't see.
Even now when one dies, the spirit and soul leave the body behind.
The motionless body has little value, things that count we cannot find.*

*When Jubilee comes, all will be changed, we will see what things really are.
The possessions we thought were of such value, at the Jubilee are seen from afar.
Then we will wonder why we worried about all we had that we could see.
Nothing we claimed on earth had much worth when seen from the eyes of eternity.*

*Even heaven and earth shall pass away, while people of faith remain.
What we let go on earth for heaven's sake we will find has lasting gain.
The lesson to learn is that I might hold lightly what God has given in time.
Everything from the past and the future, "These," says God, "Are Mine."*

"Father, I am afraid that I hold some of this stewardship with a grasp that is too tight. Please help me loose these grasping hands when I am clenching things too possessively. I am Thine, body, soul and spirit - and so is everything Thou hast allowed me to use. I desire to be a faithful steward. Amen."

Leviticus 25:10. "And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubilee unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession. And ye shall return every man unto his family."

THE JUBILEE.

*Fifty years of light have come and gone; the year of Jubilee has now fully come –
And God waits.*

*His people need to remember again; what I think is mine belongs to Him –
It is not mine.*

*The land needs rest and the people too; go back to the beginning and start anew –
Like at the first.*

*This is no time to congratulate ourselves; it's God who prospers the work itself –
The work is His.*

*However, this is a time of joy; the trumpets sound all along the shore –
Jubilee has come!*

*"Shenath Hayobhel" is truly here; it has come now, the fiftieth year –
Since the Gospel came.*

*"Keren Hayobhel" sounds throughout the land; silver trumpets and the horns of rams –
Stop and praise!*

*Herald the fact that grace has won; the slaves are freed and the land returns –
To God Himself.*

*At the tent of gathering where worship begins; the sounds of honor and praise to Him –
Rises full.*

*Then to those in far and distant places, different climes and different faces –
Rejoice together.*

*Great things He has done, there is no doubt; all join together and with one voice shout –
God reigns!*

*We are humbled and glad, both at the same time; from faces redeemed the joy outshines –
I am the Lord's!*

*God be thanked, we are free today; we have come together to Him homage to pay –
To God be the glory!*

*A generation has passed and part of another; a new one arises still sisters and brothers –
To claim our land.*

*It started small when God opened the door; and it gradually grew till more and more –
The Lord added.*

*Now we gather to Him in liberty; we are no longer slaves, by our God we are freed –
All debts canceled.*

*This is the end of the beginning, not the end; from this place, now we pray God will send –
Faithful people.*

*We are free today; the shackles are broken; from this privileged place God's Word is spoken –
Truthfully.*

*We will not go back; we must go ahead; all the people must know Christ's blood was shed –
Peace is made.*

*We are free from sin, made servants of God; not by force, but because we would –
Love Him wholly.*

*"Preach the Gospel to the poor" is to trumpet it; all the people of the Lord do their little bit –
So others hear.*

*We seem so small among the nations of men; but our God loves us even though and when –
We have failed.*

*For we walk with Him as children of light; small lights in the darkness always seem bright –
In fellowship.*

*We look ahead – the morning comes; we walk and we worship and we war as one –
The Rapture nears!*

*As we come together to rest awhile; we talk with brothers and sisters, and we smile –
As we think of the way.*

*The Lord worked here and He'll work again; prepare our hearts for that time, and then –
Souls are saved.
A worshiping people are a power for God; we are committed to Him and His Holy Word –
No compromise.
At this jubilee year we stop and look back; then we turn around and see the heavenly track –
Leads us home to God.*

"O God of the ages: fifty years have passed since the Gospel boat, "M.G.M." traveled to the Labrador coast. Three of the four men who were aboard have gone home to heaven. The memory of Herb Harris, George Campbell and Doug Howard is blessed to those of us who had the privilege of preaching the Gospel with them. Bert Joyce is the only one of those original traveling preachers who went there in 1956. Give him special grace and wisdom to give to the Lord's people, a good and clear report of the events that happened that summer and fall. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."

Leviticus 26

GOD'S GOVERNMENT

In order to maintain a society that runs peacefully and functions orderly to produce the best possible effect upon the citizens in that place, we need the controlling power of authority. God designates this in the scriptures by appointing the husband to be responsible for his wife and children at home; elders to be responsible for the proper functioning of an assembly and the "powers that be" as "ministers of righteousness" for a nation. His intention was to be all of those in relation to the children of Israel. If the people obeyed Him, they would experience the blessings of full and plenty in material things. They would not have to fear their enemies because the Lord would deal with them in His own way. They could live and walk upright as free men with their heads held high and their hearts contented. God's presence would be gladly enjoyed among them.

God, in grace, has liberated us from the bondage of sin by His grace alone, even though we don't deserve any of His mercies. We have been given the Holy Spirit that we might live above the challenges of the world, the flesh and the devil by His power in us. There is no need to live defeated lives when confronted with the temptations that come and the enemies that surround us. The patterns of life when we were in our sins, has been defeated by divine power. But that will only be experienced when we are obedient to God's revealed will, and we are committed to walk in ways He has directed us to in His word. When that is the case, we are walled about by the protection God has provided for us. His "strength is made perfect in weakness." Our spiritual prosperity is based on our obedience to our gracious Father.

Israel was not an obedient nation as a whole for very long. Some of the early generations experienced those times of peace God promised. But divine government should never be taken for granted. The principles related to righteous living and justice are not up for discussion as to whether they should be changed or not. There are always consequences for sin. God's purpose in bringing or allowing tragedies may be for a number of reasons. In Israel, and it is possible today as well, one reason was because of their disobedience and unwillingness to do what they knew was right. Sometimes tragedy happens to us because of someone else's sin. Innocent people often suffer because of the neglect and/or choices of another. Unfit parenting has injured many children. People have been injured or killed because of careless or drunken drivers. Peacekeepers have been attacked by those who are totally self-centered. Natural disasters have also caused serious consequences to property, life and health. We may not, and usually cannot, discern at the time things happen why they happened. But we are wise to seriously consider ourselves and whether we are disobedient or obedient to the will of God. Calamity is not always the result of wrong-doing but it is a good time for serious and spiritual reflection.

In the case of the nation of Israel, God's action was taken to bring about repentance and restoration to them. The value of punishment is that it changes behavior when accepted properly. Chastening "yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." God had clearly defined the manner of life He expected from His people. There was never a question as to His mercy and long-suffering toward those He loved and who were His own people. His desire for them was very clearly stated. The consequences were easy to understand. His love was demonstrated in that He gave them many opportunities to repent. Even when they fell under His chastening hand of judgment, it was an act of revealed love. On many occasions it brought about repentance, but not permanent changes. That is why the years of captivity were like "years the locusts have eaten." They spent years in captivity and even yet are not what God had in mind for their purpose and well-being when He chose them. That will come because God does have a future for Israel.

Misplaced guilt has no place in the lives of God's people today. To look for some reason for punishment behind every difficulty that arises in our life, is not a proper way to understand God's will. To try to find a reason for blame when disasters happen or trouble comes on others, is not our right. However, to consider everything that happens to us as an accident of nature, or just something we have to put up with, is not right either. Take time to meditate on God's Word and then seek to understand events in our lives as God's way of training us to be effective in His service. If we make the mistake of thinking our Lord is not aware of our attitudes and actions, He can change that very quickly. "For this cause, many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep." He wants us to be representatives of Him among the people and place in which we find ourselves. May we never forget the laws, judgments and principles we live by as believers, influences others so they know the One we belong to says of Himself, "I am the Lord."

*These are not just opinions; they are promises from God.
None are careless decisions of men; they are in the written Word.
To listen and heed what God says, then act according to His will -
Affected the life of the nation then, and does the same for many still.*

*God's judgments are not complicated, nor are they in any way unfair.
The principles of living a meaningful life are the same about everywhere.
He knows what is best for us, these principles were in the beginning.
Blessing comes from genuine obedience, consequences come from sinning.*

*To deliberately go our own way, even after being taught what is right -
Not only has bad results for us, but are abhorrent actions in God's sight.
Consequences for right or wrong, happen as sure as night follows day.
The wise person will submit to God's government in all they do or say.*

*It is impossible not to lose, if one chooses to ignore God's laws,
For every disobedient action we take, take time to consider the cause -
If difficulties arise, or tragedy that comes on us unexpected.
Perhaps it is God's way of speaking when one has His will rejected.*

*Not all that happens to us is caused by something undone or unknown guilt.
There are those lessons we have not learned until some pain is felt.
It may be an act of divine grace when God allows difficulty to come some way.
That may be the very thing that keeps us from falling under sin's dread sway.*

"Father, I know there are things that have happened in our nation that appear to be acts from Thy controlling hand of discipline. In our assembly, age is taking its toll on our number, and none have been saved and baptized to fill the seats of those who have passed on. In my life I am experiencing the limitations of age and deteriorating health. Please teach us all - and particularly me - the lessons I need yet to learn. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."

Leviticus 26:12. "And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people."

I WILL... IF.

*A prophetic history of the Promised Land from the past till a future day;
God promises in words direct - "I will... I will" - 24 times.
He gave them the land to occupy and blessings will abound -
"If!" there is a response needed, expected, blessing has a basis.
Obedience is reasonable, it is a basic fundamental
For God's "I will."*

*A barometer for blessing is connected to whether I obey the Magna Charta of the land.
Rainfall, bountiful crops, sunshine in the right amounts;
An umbrella of indifference, of sin, of stepping out of God's will
Leaves me without the necessities of obedience -
And all that could have been good is lost.
And God says, "I will."*

*The difference between the good and bad is a simple word and act from me –
“If.” The “ifs” of my life make a real impact on the outcome.
The nation lives or dies; I live or die because of my choice of “ifs.”
I dare not point my finger at others choices or failures.
I am called to think, consider and respond –
When God says, “I will.”*

*If Israel had obeyed there would be peace in the land; if not –
If people do not hearken and will not do what God has a right to expect –
If the covenants that are made are broken, refused, despised, ignored –
If I walk contrary to the way the Lord has shown me –
I will walk alone, no light to guide – I do not want that.
I want God’s, “I will” of blessing.*

“O God: I hope I understand the reality of the words, “not my will but Thine be done.” I really want the will of God in every aspect of my life – in my personal life, family, marriage life, assembly life and serving life. For God’s “I will” of blessing, I pray – and choose what my Lord wants. In His name, Amen.”

Leviticus 27

REAL WORTH

The commands the Lord gave to Moses when he was on Mt. Sinai were not just casual suggestions. The importance of God's things has slipped away from many as they consider their worth in light of this age of technology. The actual value of life and a person's capacity and ability is not determined by changing social standards. A human life is still worth more than what we can produce during the years one lives. That measure has to do with our capacity in terms of our existence in time. Real worth had to do with the essence of our existence. Our lifestyle can give our life real worth or it can make our experience of living of little value. As the book of Leviticus closes on the teaching regarding the worship of God, we are reminded again that God takes account of every matter in which we are involved. We are thankful to not be under the yoke of the law, but that does not mean we are not responsible to honor God with all we are and have. Our time, our intellect, our goods and the services we are capable of rendering should be offered to the with a higher motive than "dos and don'ts."

The children of Israel were under obligations with serious consequences if they made vows or committed themselves to giving tithes and did not fulfill them. Things that were sanctified could be brought back and a 20% interest would be paid on the worth the priest designated. When something given was devoted to God, it was not able to be brought back or recovered in any way. It is irrevocably God's. We have the privilege of giving to God with a true heart and full assurance of faith and it can become worship in spirit and in truth. The offering given by a young believer is accepted by God on the same basis as that given by a mature believer. Both are "in Christ" and both are "accepted in the Beloved." There is a difference in the capacity because of ability that has been developed by the passing of years and experiences with God. Both have great value and both give with the spirit of love and appreciation for God's grace.

To labor to be accepted is a worthy effort. To be willing to rely on the grace of God to produce for us what we can give to God is of greater worth. The firstborn, the first-fruits, tithes all belong to God when the children of Israel were under the dictates of the law. Out of a sense of appreciation and love, they could go beyond their obligations to please God. They were not to make rash vows they could not keep. When a vow was made, they needed to carefully think it through first. The same holds true if we have unexpected expenses come upon us, we are still obligated to keep the vows we make. Time volunteered to assist others or to use for the work of the Lord; possessions we have promised to donate to make a project possible - these are like vows we should keep and do what we said we would do. Some things were not acceptable then and are not acceptable now.

Behind all these things there was an attitude on the part of the giver that was important. Whatever they gave and whatever we give is to be willingly. "God loves a cheerful giver." To give what we can to the Lord is one of the ways we express our real gratitude to Him for His blessings to us. To give to the Lord our cast-offs, the last of the strength we have, or things for which we have no further use is not right. In the book of Leviticus, we learn much about what God is like. He is truly just. His expectations are consistent with our abilities. His commands make good sense for a nation to apply to its citizens to live honorable lives. The principles of life and conduct are such as to provide the best possible way of life for His people. God is the same today as He was back guiding Israel through the wilderness to the promised land. His grace is sufficient for us. When we

are weak, we can rest on His strength. Though we are not bound by the shadows of the law, we can give our love, obedience, intellect and our joy to Him and know He accepts our worship for He is our Father. The blessings we have in Christ come as evidence of His care, interest and grace.

Leviticus 27:34. *“These are the commandments, which the Lord commanded Moses for the children of Israel in mount Sinai.”*

UNCHANGABLE.

*Laws were given amidst thundering sounds, lightning and earthquake.
Demands and ordinances, do them right – or accept the consequences.
What has preceded was obligatory – ceremonies, demands, ordinances.
Here, at the end of the book – suddenly – this is voluntary.*

*A climax fitting to all that has gone before; God wants the heart of His people.
A grateful hearted people are worshiping and happy people.
The conclusion of the whole matter is God loves His own unto the end.
Do I love God? This is a fitting end to the book of worship.*

*Responses to our Father in heaven vary: His love, His grace, His mercy
“If you love Me; keep My commandments.”
“What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits...”
“I beseech you by the mercies of God, that you present your body...”*

*Every believer wants to do something for the God I love.
“The grace of God teaches us... live holy, righteously and godly...”
“Do justly, love mercy, walk humbly...”
Our desire is to please Him because of love for Him and each act is one of worship.*

*Once a vow is made, it must be kept, it is mandatory: but some things cannot be vowed.
The first-born of man and beast belongs to God and cannot be pledged – it is God’s.
Anything already vowed, cannot be vowed again – it is God’s.
The tithe I make is not mine to give – it belongs to God.*

*So, I understand from here, the thinking of God for man under law.
How much greater are the blessings of the grace of God “that bringeth salvation...”
Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.”*

*A people who love Him supremely, and want to honor and glorify Him;
The law reveals our inability, our lack of strength, our incapacity –
We cannot do by labor, or will-power, or ordinance what God demands.
But by His grace, He reveals His Son in us – and we become a worshipping people.*

“O Righteous God, the Father of those who know Thee: I give from within the honor that I hold Thee with. Surely every desire that I have leads to Thee and in some way, I want to honor Thee in word, deed and thought. I am so limited in expressing all that I want to say, but Thou who knowest the hearts of all men – knows what I have to offer Thee. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.”

