

FEBRUARY 18

Leviticus 6:1-7:27

As you read through this section, look for *the Lord spoke to Moses*. Every place you find this phrase, God is introducing a new subject. Look also for *and this is the law*.

Leviticus 6

Vs. 1-7 These verses build on the previous section. In the last section the sin had to do with some breach that directly had to do with God or the worship of God in the tabernacle. There a person had withheld some tithe or obligation that hurt those who served at the tabernacle. Here, there is some breach of contract or service withheld from a neighbor. Note the recurring words, *realizes/realized his guilt*, etc.

Notice that this is not “unintentional.” It involves theft or oppression. When the person’s conscience gets the better of him, he voluntarily seeks to make restitution. Notice also, it is restitution to the neighbor, plus the cleansing for his own sin.

In David’s sin against Uriah, I don’t see restitution to his neighbor. I wonder if that is why Ahithophel hated David.

Vs. 8-13 These are notes specifically for Aaron and his sons regarding the *burnt offering* described in Leviticus 1:3. Again, the meaning of the burnt offering seems to be in showing God total commitment to wanting to be reconciled to Him. The offering was to pay all personal sin, to satisfy God and to make the person pleasing to Him. This offering was totally consumed on the altar. Leviticus 1:4 says that the burnt offering is for atonement. This was different than the sin and guilt offerings, both of which had to do with specific sins, and both of which could be eaten. Here in the burnt offering the thought seems to be the sacrifice, devotion and resolve of the person to be totally reconciled to God by offering the animal to take his place. There is an aspect of this offering that suggests the need for personal cleansing and atonement for sin. The burnt offering, whether required or given as a free-will offering, was a ransom or substitute for the nation or person.

This burnt offering was required by God twice a day, every day. It represented the ransoming of the nation every day, symbolizing their need for daily cleansing and acceptance by God.

It is interesting that only the priests could touch or remove the ashes, and they had to wear other clothes when they took the ashes out of the tabernacle compound. Here it is mentioned that the fire on the altar had to be going all the time. Apparently, every time they camped, they had to designate a special place away from the camp of Israel where they would carry out the ashes and where they would burn parts of certain sacrifices. I would think that for this place to stay “clean,” they had to guard it and keep people from digging through the ashes for meat or for salvageable parts of the animals.

Vs. 14-18 Again, these are special instructions about the *grain offering* from Leviticus 2, specifically for Aaron and his sons. Notice that when they ate this offering, it had to be in a holy area within the tabernacle compound before the Lord. Interestingly, whoever ate of this offering, or whatever touched it, became holy.

Vs. 19-23 Here is an exception to the priest eating the grain offering. If that offering was for the priest himself, the priest could not eat it.

Vs. 24-30 This is the *sin offering* for unintentional sin for a leader or person as seen in 4:22-35. These could be eaten by the priests. Notice in v. 30 it mentions that if the blood of the sin offering was brought into the *tent of meeting* (the Holy Place), as it was for the sins of a priest or for the nation, they could not eat it.

Leviticus 7

Vs. 1-10 These instructions are for Aaron and his sons regarding the *guilt offering* from Leviticus 5. What is interesting here is that the officiating priest got to keep the animal's hide.

Vs. 11-21 This is the peace or fellowship offering from Leviticus 3. It is interesting that this offering is the third presented by God in the list of offerings in chapters 1-3, but it is the last one presented here. I think it is because this offering was done totally out of gratitude to God and the desire to sit with Him and celebrate before Him. All of the other sacrifices are required. This one came out of gratefulness and the desire to share God's blessings.

Vs. 16-18 These verses give a special condition to the rule that the sacrifice had to be eaten on the same day.

Vs. 20-21 These verses state that anyone who participated in the peace or fellowship offering, while he was unclean before God, would be punished.

If you think about how we live today, in a figurative sense, we violate this too. We know that Jesus accepts sinners. We know we don't have to be perfect to live with Him. But we slowly begin to think that we can have all manner of sin and "uncleanness" in our lives and still have peace and fellowship with Him. We are so wrong when we think that. This morning I was reading where Paul told the Ephesians in Ephesians 4:17, *Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds.*

If you look at what Paul warned Christians to reject and stop doing, especially in 1 Corinthians, you realize that Christians think they can live unclean and unholy lives and still partake of God. Not so.

Vs. 22-27 Here is some clarification regarding the eating of fat, that is, those internal fatty parts that were not connected to the meat.

Vs. 24-25 They couldn't eat the fat of any of these animals, because these animals were used for sacrifice. If they found one of these animals dead from natural causes or wild animals, they couldn't eat them; but they could use the fat and other parts.

This did mean that they could eat the "fat" of wild game, like a deer.

Under no circumstances could they eat the raw, un-drained flesh or drink blood.

All of these practices highlighted the differences between those who followed God and those who did not. These sacrifices and ceremonies also made Israel different from its neighbors. Even in the details and prohibitions God gave the people, they knew that to enjoy the closeness of God, they had to come to Him His way, in repentance, in thankfulness and in gratitude. To those who had a heart of faith, these sacrifices would be offered willingly. For those without faith, they would follow out of duty and practicality. And when it got tough, they probably stopped giving and obeying.

Mark 3:7-30

Up to this point, Mark has blazed through 12-16 months of Jesus' ministry.

There are three major things in this section.

Vs. 7-12 At this point Jesus' popularity has skyrocketed. Vast multitudes are following Him. Also, the religious leaders were already plotting His death.

Vs. 13-19 It was at this point that Jesus chose the Twelve. Luke mentions that Jesus was in prayer all night. I love the description of discipleship in v. 14. The part that really hits me is where it says, *that they might be with Him.* I think this is why a lot of discipleship doesn't work. You can't become a disciple via a large class. Jesus brought them to Him. He spent time with them. He involved them in all His ministry and they learned on the job. This slower, more

personal investment doesn't fit our model of ministry by overburdened, multi-tasking leaders. But you also have to have the mission, to send them out and to have authority. Link this together with the Great Commission and you have disciples going out with authority to make disciples, who make disciples.

It is also interesting that Jesus gave some of them nicknames.

Since Mark reported more of what Jesus did than what He taught, the entire Sermon on the Mount is missing. This is where it would have been included.

Vs. 20-21 Yet all was not well. Jesus' own family thought He was losing His mind as they listened to the way their friends and neighbors talked about Him.

Vs. 22-30 This section is important, because it shows how the scribes and Pharisees began to explain away Jesus' power. They couldn't deny what He did, but they could fabricate a lie to explain His power.

V. 23 I am always impressed by this. Jesus heard what they were saying and called them to Him, saying, "Guys, come on. That makes no sense." The fact that Jesus could cast out demons with such ease showed that He Himself was the strong man and that the kingdom of God was near them.

Vs. 28-30 In order to have committed this sin, you had to have seen Jesus, seen His miracles and really believed that He was possessed by Satan and that His power was of the devil. What Jesus says here is a warning. I don't believe this sin can happen today, because we do not see Jesus doing miracles. But still, unbelief, powered by sin, is strong enough to get people to ignore Jesus and deny His ability to help them. To die in our sins, without trusting Christ as Savior, is the only unforgivable sin.

Psalm 37:1-11

This psalm looks like the companion to Psalm 36. Notice the relationship between the evildoers and fretting. It is interesting to think that because this is inspired Scripture, these commands here are meant for us to obey. The imperatives are not suggestions, but it is only a disciple who is walking closely to the Lord who will be able to wait on the Lord and to follow these directives.

Vs. 1-2 This is the general message of the psalm. It is a summary of David's long experience of suffering and waiting on the Lord.

Vs. 3-9 Notice all the commands in this section. We would tend to say they are advice and that they seem worded in a gentle way; yet all the same, they are the Lord's commands. Notice too that waiting on the Lord stands in opposition to taking action against the one who wrongs us.

V. 8 This seems to give the sense of taking things into our own hands and not waiting on the Lord. David was tempted like this.

There are some great, great memory verses in this psalm that speak to humbly waiting on the Lord and trusting Him. What verses would you encourage others to memorize?

If I said that Jesus apparently knew this psalm well and quoted it, what verse would it be?

Vs. 10-11 Notice how these two verses fit together. The meek are not weak; they are strong because they wait on the Lord and keep their hearts and attitudes pure before Him. The meek inherit the earth because they trust in the Lord and are still there after God's judgment.

The solution in all our waiting and fretting is to delight ourselves in the Lord and wait on Him. Amen.

I think that for a disciple, working in the harvest, meditating on some of these verses is like having a quiet cup of coffee with the Lord, just soaking in His love.

Proverbs 10:3-4

Ok, let's try understanding this again by putting the verses together.

The Lord gives the righteous a diligent hand, and so, does not let him go hungry,
but He thwarts the craving of the wicked by giving him a slack hand that causes poverty.

This is just a suggestion for looking for a connection between the thoughts.