



Leviticus 21-25

Tape #7042
Leviticus 21-25
By Chuck Smith

Shall we turn now in our bibles to Leviticus chapter 21. We trust tonight to complete the book of Leviticus. My wife said, "If you make it through Leviticus, the rest is down hill". There's a lot of ordinances and laws, and all, that really don't relate to us, in our time, but it is interesting to observe how God related to man in other times. So, we'll just sort of summarize for you, chapters twenty one through twenty seven, this evening.

Now, in verse one of chapter twenty one, we find that God is speaking to the priest. The function of the priest was two-fold. He was to go before God in behalf of the people, representing the people, before God. Then he was to come out to the people, representing God to the people. He was a mediator. He was one who stood between God and the people. So, these are the instructions for these men, who were to stand before God for the people, and before the people for God. Those men who stood between.

First of all they were not to defile themselves, for the dead, among their own people, except for their relatives, who are nearest to him. Mother, father, son, daughter, brother, virgin sister, if she has no husband, and for them, he may defile himself. That is make himself ceremonially unclean. See according to the law, you were not to touch a dead body. If you touched a dead body, then you were unclean, and you could not offer the sacrifices unto God until you had gone through the purification rites.

They're not to make any bald place on their heads, [that is shaving their heads] nor are they to shave the edges of their beards, nor make any cuttings in their flesh, [they're to be holy] and not profane the name of their God, for they offer the offerings of the Lord, made by fire and bread, Now, when they took a wife, they were not to take a prostitute or a defiled woman. They were not to take a woman who had been divorced, for he offers the bread unto God. If a daughter of a priest became a prostitute, she was to be put to death, burned with fire. And the high priest who has the anointing oil upon his life, is not to uncover his head or tear his clothes (21:5-10).

Now, you remember reading of people in the bible times, often times it says, "And they rent their clothes." It means that they tore their clothes. It was again, a cultural thing. You get real hurt or sorrowful, if you wanted to really show the greatest kind of sorrow, you'd rip your clothes. We don't have such customs anymore but, they did, they would rend their clothes. You remember that God said, "Hey, rend your hearts, not your garments, before the Lord." It became a thing, you know, you just want to show how grief stricken you were or how moved you were by a situation, you'd tear your clothes. God said, "I'd rather your hearts be torn, rather than your clothes. I'd rather be an inward thing, rather than an outward display". So much of our displays are outward. God is looking at the heart. God is interested in what's in your heart.

Nor shall he go near any dead body, or defile himself, even for his father or mother. Nor shall he go out of the sanctuary, nor profane the sanctuary of God, and he is to take, as his wife, only a virgin. He is not to marry a widow, [which a ordinary priest could do] nor is he to marry a divorced woman, defiled woman, or harlot: but he shall have a virgin, among his own people, [that is not a stranger, or not from another land or nation] nor shall he profane his posterity among his people: for I the Lord set him apart (21:11-15).

Now, verse seventeen is addressed to Aaron, who was the high priest.

No man of your descendants in succeeding generations who has any defect, may approach to offer the bread of his God. [So, the priest, the high priest who was to go before the Lord, was not to have any kind of physical defect.] He wasn't to be blind, or lame, or have a marred face, or a limb too long, he was not to have a broken foot or broken hand, he wasn't to be a hunch back, or dwarf, or a man with defects in his eyes, eczema, or scabs, or a eunuch (21:17-20).

If they have a defect, they can serve in other areas of the priesthood, but they are not to come before God to offer the bread.

He may eat the bread of his God, but he is not to come near the veil, to the very place of offering in the sanctuary (21:22-23).

Chapter 22

Now, chapter twenty two is addressed, in verse two, to Aaron and his sons.

That they separate themselves from the holy things of the children of Israel, and that they do not profane my holy name, in those holy things, which they sanctified to me: for I am the Lord. And whoever, of all your descendants through your generation who goes near the holy things, which the Lord, which the children of Israel sanctified to the Lord, while he has uncleanness upon him, that person shall be cut off from my presence (22:2-3).

So, there were things that defiled a person, and they weren't to come into the sanctuary in that condition. If a person has sanctified something to God, has brought a sacrifice to God, then they are not to touch it, unless they have gone through the cleansing and the purification rites.

And whatever man of the descendants of Aaron, who is a leper, discharge of his body, [and so forth] he is not to touch these things that have been consecrated to God. Unless he washes his body with water. [verse six] Therefore keep my ordinances, lest they bear sin for it and die thereby, if they profane it: For I the Lord have sanctified them, and no outsider shall eat the holy offering. One who sojourns with a priest or a hired servant, shall not eat the holy thing.

Now, the sacrifices that were given, a portion was for the priest. It was considered holy. Only the priest or his immediate family could eat it. The meal offerings, the little loaves of bread that they baked, were again for the priest but, only the priest and his family could eat of it. If he had guests come for dinner, he could not give them the food that was used as a sacrifice, or that food that was sanctified unto the Lord. It was to be exclusively for the priest and his family.

But we do remember, that when David was fleeing from Saul, he came to the priest in the tabernacle, and he and his men, fleeing from Saul. David had really run out without anything. He didn't even have a sword, and so he asked the priest if he had a sword, and the priest said, "Well, the sword you took from Goliath" and David said, "That's good enough", and he said, "What have you got to eat" and he said, "All I have here is this show bread". It was that holy bread that had been placed on the table, before the Lord, and so David took the show bread for himself and his men, and he took off.

Later on, Jesus, when He was being challenged by the Pharisees concerning his violation of the oral interpretation of the law, which is known as the Mishna. It didn't violate the torah itself. But they had what they called the oral traditions by which they amplified the torah, and explained the torah. And Jesus was constantly violating these articles of the Mishna, the oral traditions. That is why I put very little regard on the oral traditions. Jesus was constantly violating them and of course, getting in trouble for it. Then later on they wrote the Talmud, some sixty volumes, to amplify and explain the Mishna.

We were in Israel last weekend there was this one gal who was seeking to be a Rabbi, though it is kosher yet in Israel, they don't have any women Rabbis. So, anyhow, she's sort of a feminist and hoping to be one, and so she was explaining to us the ceremony at the end of the Sabbath. Now, to begin the Sabbath, you have the candle lighting ceremony, and you have to go through all of this ritual and so forth, also now for the end of the Sabbath, there's a ritual again, a lighting of another candle, and then you take cinnamon and spices, and you smell them, and you go through this ritual, but they have everything, and they just, you have to light the candle this way, you know, and you don't strike the match on something, you know, I mean, weird. You know, everything was all laid out, how you were supposed to do everything, and everything, or if you do it this way, it doesn't count. They were going through and explaining all of the facets, and this one guide that we had, when they were explaining the whole thing to me, he turned and said, "Never become a Jew, Chuck."

But, these are the things that the, it gets so complicated. God gave His word. It's sort of like, we have our constitution. You know, it's pretty straight forward. Basic, but man, look at the volumes that have now been written to interpret our constitution. And we are still all the time, talking about constitutional issues, and now we have all kinds of laws, and regulations and rules, by which we have interpreted the

constitution of the United States. It fills walls of volumes! Well, the Jews were much the same way. God gave them laws, straight forward, it's pretty basic, the Torah. But then, "What did God mean by this?" So, they had their oral traditions, which was the Mishna. But then, what was meant by the oral traditions, so they have the Talmud, to explain the oral tradition. So, you have to go through the whole thing, to find out where you are.

Well, Jesus was accused of violating the oral laws, the Mishna, and so He allowed His disciples, on the Sabbath day, to pick some wheat, and He allowed them to rub it in their hands, thrush it, and were eating the wheat. And they said, "Hey! That's not lawful to do." And He said, "Do you remember what the bible says that David did when he was hungry? How he went to the tabernacle and he took the bread, which was not lawful for him to eat, and he ate and gave it to his men. For man was not made for the Sabbath, but the Sabbath was made for the man." And so, Jesus makes reference to David's particular violation of this law, that no outsider, that is outside of the priesthood, was to eat of this bread.

If the priest has a slave, or those born in his house, they may eat it. If his daughter marries an outsider, she can't eat it anymore. As long as she's unmarried, she can eat it. If she's widowed, or divorced, and moves back home, then she can eat it again. And if a man eats it unintentionally, he has to restore it to the priest, adding twenty percent. Then the Lord spoke to Moses to speak to Aaron and his sons, [verse eighteen], and to all the children of Israel. [So this is spread out now, we've been addressing the priest, and then we're addressing Aaron and his sons, now to Aaron of his sons and all of the children of Israel.] Whatever man of the house of Israel, or the strangers in Israel, who offers his sacrifice for any of his vows, or for any of the freewill offerings, which they offered to the Lord for a burnt offering, you shall offer of your own free will, A male without blemish from the cattle, from the sheep, or from the goats. But whatever has a defect, you shall not offer, for it shall not be acceptable on your behalf (22:10-23).

So, the offering that you made to God, of consecration, had to first of all, be of your own free will. God never forces any man to give to Him. You should never give unto God under any kind of constraint or pressure. Anything that you give to God, you should always give of your free will. That's a requirement of God. Any offering that you make to the Lord, has to be a free will offering, something from your heart to the Lord. If it isn't it, it isn't acceptable, so you might as well keep it. Then also, you weren't to offer anything to God that had a defect, a blemish. For if it did, it was not acceptable.

Then, whoever offers a sacrifice of a peace offering. Now the burnt offering was consecration. Peace offering, was fellowship. The offering by which a man came into fellowship or communion with God. If you want to offer the peace offering to fulfill your vow, or a free will offering from the cattle or the sheep, it must be perfect to be accepted. There shall be no defect in it. So God requires the offerings that are made to Him to be perfect.

Now, gives me a problem if I want to offer my life to God. How can I offer my life to God? It's not perfect! It is far from perfect! So, there comes the problem. I want to commune with God, I want to fellowship with God. What can I offer Him? Now, even in those days they brought an animal to offer, but the animal that they brought had to be perfect. No defect in it. That immediately eliminates my coming to God on my own merits or my own goodness, or my own works. Because I'm not perfect and my works are not perfect. God will not accept me. The offering will not be accepted. God won't accept me, if I just say, "Hey God, here I am!" You know, "I'm Chuck, Lord, I came in to talk to you", and, "who are you?" He won't accept me. They're defects. They're blemishes, they are imperfections. You must be perfect to be accepted. That is why my approach to God is through Jesus Christ. He is my sacrifice. He is the perfect sacrifice. He is the one who brings me into fellowship with God. He is the one who establishes the relationship between God and myself. Jesus Christ. If you want to come to God, you've got to bring a perfect sacrifice. There cannot be any defects. And Jesus is the perfect one. So, it must be perfect to be accepted. Remember that. That excludes any of us coming apart from Jesus.

If the animal is blind, broken, maimed, has an ulcer, eczema, or scabs, you shall not offer it to the Lord, nor make an offering of fire of them, on the altar unto the Lord, Either a bull or lamb that has any limb that's too long, too short, you may offer as a free will offering, but for a vow, it shall not be accepted. Ye shall not offer unto the Lord what is bruised, or crushed, torn, cut (22:22-24).

There is a tendency of people to give their cast offs to the Lord. God doesn't want your cast offs. God doesn't want your leftovers. God always required the first fruits unto the Lord. God first. But we don't often place that kind of a priority. Often times, it's God's last. If I have anything left, then you know, I'll give it to God. I'll take care of myself first, and all of these things first, and anything left over, well we'll think about God then. But God doesn't want your leftovers or your cast -offs. Can't use it anymore. You know, it's no good, well, let's give it to the church. Well we've had a lot of those kinds of gifts. When we were in Tucson, we went to pastor there, and there was this big old, ugly rocking chair, in the living room. And we said, "Oh, that old, ugly thing. Let's get rid of that." But then we found out that it belonged to Aunt Bertha, and her niece had given it to the church, she didn't want it. But oh, it belonged to Aunt Bertha, and don't want to throw it away, you know, so we were supposed to keep it. She didn't want to keep it at her house, too ugly. "Give it to the church, you know, but don't you do anything to it, you take care of it, cause that was Aunt Bertha's." No, please don't give God any of those kind of gifts. He doesn't need them, and He doesn't want them. Not the cast offs.

Again, verse twenty nine, If you offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving unto the Lord, let it be the free will. Do it from your heart. Don't do it because you think, "Oh I ought to", or "Oh man, gotta go to church, gotta do this for God, Oh my". No way! That's no way to serve God. That's no way to give to God. Only give from your heart. God loves a cheerful giver!

Ye shall keep my commandments, I am the Lord. Ye shall not profane my holy name; the holy name of Yahweh, but I will be hallowed among the children of Israel. I am Yahweh who sanctifies you, who brought you out of the land of Egypt to be your God. I am Yahweh (22:31-33).

Chapter 23

And so, the Lord spoke to Moses saying, Speak to the children of Israel (23:1).

So now, leaving the priesthood, we're talking to the nation, and he's talking to them about the feast, these holidays, and really they are holy days. And that word holidays sort of comes from holy days, but they're no longer holy days, they're just holidays now. But, originally they were holy days and there were three separate feasts, that were week long feasts. Celebrations. Time when the people had their minds turned towards God, and the things of God. Time when the people gathered together to worship God as a community, as a nation. These days were dedicated unto the Lord. Oh how glorious that must have been! How glorious it would be if in the United States, we had set aside three weeks out of the month, to just worship the Lord, and to come before the Lord and spend time, and just seeking Him, where the national consciousness would be centered upon God. Oh how strong the nation would be!

So these are the feasts, the holy convocations, when every adult male was required to come and stand before God. Throughout the land, wherever you are, you've gotta go and stand before the Lord and of course, many a times they brought their families with them.

Now, first of all, he starts out with:

The Sabbath day, the seventh day, is a sabbath of solemn rest, a holy convocation: you are not to do any work on it, and it shall be the Sabbath to the Lord, [or the rest unto the Lord] in all your dwellings (23:3-4).

Now, the law has it's fulfillment in Jesus Christ. He said, "I didn't come to destroy the law, but to fulfill the law." As far as the Sabbath day, the day of rest, surely Jesus is a beautiful fulfillment of that Sabbath day, for the believer. For we have entered into His rest. "There is a rest for the people of God, and they that have entered into that rest, have ceased from their own labors." And that tremendous labor to try to be righteous or be accepted by my righteousness before God, is over. I am now resting in Jesus. He's my Sabbath. I rest in Him. And in Him, I am accepted by God.

Next was the feast of the Passover.

On the fourteenth day of the first month, at twilight, is the Lord's Passover. And on the fifteenth day of the same month, is the feast of unleavened bread to the Lord: In seven days you must eat unleavened bread. And on the first day, you will have a holy convocation, and you're not to do any customary work on it, but you shall offer an offering, made by fire unto the Lord, for seven days: The seventh day shall be a holy

convocation, You shall do no customary work on it (23: 5-7).

So, this feast of the Passover, beginning on the fourteenth day of the month, the first month, which on their calendar, was April, at twilight, is the Lord's Passover. The Passover was the reminder of God's deliverance of their first born sons in Egypt. When the Lord passed through Egypt, and all of the first born in the land were slain, with the exception of those houses where the children of Israel had killed the lamb, and placed the blood on the lintels and on the doorposts of their homes. Those houses were passed over by God, and the firstborn of the family was not slain. And so, this feast was to remind them, of really, God's deliverance out of Egypt, by the death of the firstborn, their being saved by the lamb for the family, being sacrificed, and thus the firstborn saved from death.

It was pointing ahead to Jesus Christ who, as the lamb of God, would be slain for us. That death might pass over us, that we might have eternal life through Him. Thus it was not by accident, but extremely significant that Jesus was crucified on Passover. You remember He had celebrated, the evening before the Passover feast with His disciples. Their day goes from evening to evening. So, the fact that He celebrated the Passover feast with His disciples in the evening, it was still the Passover day, the next day when He was crucified. Thus, His death as a sacrifice for our sins, was the fulfillment of this Passover feast. It is what it was, actually it looked back, but it also looked forward; and, so Jesus, when He celebrated the Passover feast with His disciples, took the bread, and He broke it, and He said, "Take. Eat. This is my body now which is broken for you. This do in remembrance of me." They used to do it in remembrance of the lamb that was slain in Egypt. Now, you're to remember the lamb of God, slain for the sins of the world. He took the cup and He said, "This cup is a new covenant, the old covenant was with the blood of the lamb on the door posts, that saved the sons from death. This is a new covenant. It's in my blood and it's shed for the remission of sins." So, the Passover feast, fulfilled, in Jesus Christ.

The next is the feast of the first fruits, when you come into the land which I give unto you. You reap the harvest. You shall bring a sheaf of the first fruits of your harvest to the priest, and he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted on your behalf, on the day after the Sabbath, the priest shall wave it. And you shall offer on that day, when you wave the sheaf, a male lamb of the first year without blemish, as a burnt offering. It's grain offering shall be two tenths of an ephah (23:10-14).

And so forth. So, this feast of the first fruits, where you offer the first fruits unto God. And then the feast of weeks, verse fifteen:

You shall count, for yourselves, from the day after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering, seven sabbaths shall be completed. Count fifty days; to the day after the seventh Sabbath (23:15).

So, after the Passover the first fruits, they were to count then, seven Sabbaths, so that you come to the feast of Pentecost, and "Pente" being fifty days. It's fifty days after the Passover feast, you had this feast of Pentecost. Seven Sabbaths, and then the following day. And again, it was an eight day feast. They are to bring these loaves to the Lord. They are the first fruits, and they are to be baked with leaven. In contrast to the unleavened bread. You are to offer the bread, seven lambs without blemish, a young bull, and the various offerings.

So, this feast of Pentecost was the first fruits being offered to God. There is a harvest out here that is yet to be gathered. But God, we want to dedicate the first fruits of this whole harvest unto You. It was on this feast day that the church was born. It was on this feast day that Peter preached the first sermon, and 2,000 souls were saved. It was the birth of the church when the day of Pentecost had fully come. The Holy Spirit descended upon the waiting disciples, and the church was born. The first fruits of the harvest, that the Lord was going to reap. The church of Jesus Christ. Those that were to be redeemed by the blood of Jesus. So were part of the harvest. The day of Pentecost was the first fruits of the glorious harvest, from among men, the body of Christ, the church of our Lord Jesus Christ. And so, that particular feast was fulfilled with the birth of the church.

Now verse twenty two, just as long as he's dealing with the harvest.

When you reap your harvest, you're not to wholly reap the corners of your field. Leave the corners, don't reap those. Nor shall you gather any gleaning from the harvest. [That is you're not to go back through

the second time.] *You shall leave them for the poor and for the stranger. I am the Lord (23:22-23).*

Now, the third major feast was in the seventh month, [equivalent to our month of October], on the first day of the month, you will have a Sabbath, a memorial of the blowing of trumpets, an a holy convocation. You're not to do any work; and ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord. And on the tenth day of the seventh month, will be [Yom Kippur], the day of atonement, [when the high priest goes in to the holy of holies, as we studied last week, to make atonement before the Lord (23:24-27).

And then it's in verse thirty two, the latter portion that they have their day, from evening to evening, you will celebrate the Sabbath. Not from morning to morning. Not from midnight to midnight. From evening to evening. So their Sabbath began with sundown and ended with sundown.

The feast of the tabernacles, on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, shall be the feast of tabernacles, for seven days to the Lord, there's to be the holy convocation. No customary work. Seven days, you're to offer the offering made by fire. On the eighth day, you shall have a holy convocation, you shall offer an offering made by fire to the Lord. It's a sacred assembly, you're not to do work on it. There were many, many offerings that were to be made because you had the special offerings, you had the Sabbath day offerings, you were having the special offerings of your vows, the free will offerings, that you give to the Lord.

Now, this feast of tabernacles that we get in verse forty two:

They are to dwell in booths for seven days, all who are native Israelites will dwell in booths (23:42).

This is called the feast of tabernacles, or the feast of Succoth, the booths, because they were required to move out of their houses. They were to build little thatched houses out of palm branches, or out of other branches, but just mainly they use palm branches today. It is relevant that in the month of October, during the time of the feast of tabernacles, you will see, beside these high rise apartment buildings, these little lean to thatched huts, and the families living in these little thatched huts. The feast of tabernacles was in a memorial, remembering how that God had preserved their fathers in the wilderness experience. For forty years their fathers wandered in the wilderness, they slept under the stars and yet God miraculously sustained them and preserved them. So this feast was in memorial for God's preservation of the people and for His bringing them into the land He had promised. So the eighth day of this feast, the great day, the Sabbath day, the celebration changed from a memorial, of the preservation to a rejoicing over the fulfillment of the promise, "He has brought us into the promised land and now we are dwelling in the land of promise".

Now, this feast God's fulfillment of His promise, after forty years of wandering in the wilderness, was possibly fulfilled in the birth of Jesus. For Jesus was born probably in the month of October, and if we knew the date, it probably coincided with the feast of tabernacles. December twenty fifth was an arbitrary date that was chosen because it was a pagan holiday, and so they wanted a holiday to celebrate the birth of Jesus, and so they just picked up the pagan holiday of Saturnalia, and they used that date, but most likely He was born in October, but I feel the real fulfillment of this feast is yet future. I believe that when Jesus comes again and establishes His eternal kingdom, that this whole picture of the children of Israel, forty years wandering in the barren wilderness, yet being nourished and sustained by God, and now coming in to the land, this glorious land of promise. I believe it will be fulfilled when Jesus comes and establishes God's kingdom upon the earth and we will finish this wilderness wandering, and we'll enter in to that glorious age, that God has promised, the age of God's kingdom upon the earth. So the real fulfillment of this is yet future, and so I am convinced that when Jesus comes again, not the rapture of the church, I don't know when that will be. It could be tonight, hopefully. Won't have to go up tomorrow and get my wife out of the snow. We'll just meet each other in the air. I hate snow. But, I love my wife. But I believe that when Jesus comes again, and His foot sets in that day, on the Mount of Olives, and that thing splits in the middle, I believe that you'll find that will take place during the month of October, the seventh month, and probably the day of the blowing of the trumpets. Because it's a day of jubilee. So, that particular feast has yet it's fulfillment in the future.

Chapter 24

Now in chapter 24:

The children of Israel were commanded to bring pure olive oil to be used in this lamp stand that was in the tabernacle. And Aaron's responsibility was to make sure that these lights in this lampstand were burning every night. There were seven cups filled with oil with the little wicks, they were to trim the wicks, and fill the cups so that all night long, the light would be burning there in the tabernacle. This was the duty of Aaron, he was to be in charge of it from evening until morning and they were to burn before the Lord continually (24:1-4).

Now, with this particular menorah burning, and so forth, there did develop another feast. That is Hanukkah. It was probably developed because the Jews needed something also, to counteract the Christmas. You know, all the little Christian kids getting all kinds of toys and gifts, so we gotta do something about this because our little kids are wanting to become Christians, cause look at all the gifts, you know, so we'll have Hanukkah. We'll celebrate a part of their history in the lighting of the candles, the Hanukkah candles.

Now, according to the story, when Judas Maccabees and those brave zealots who were with him, against insurmountable odds, drove off the armies of Antioch Epiphanes, who had profaned the temple of God, blasphemed, offered a pig upon the altar, and this so incensed the Jews that Judas Maccabees got together with a bunch of fellows and they drove off the forces of Antioch Epiphanes, they recaptured the temple and they reconsecrated the temple to God. According to the story. It takes seven days to compound the oil so it is just right for the candles, and they relit the menorah, but according to the story, they had only enough oil to fill the cups, and it took them seven days to compound the new oil, and so according to the story, the candles stayed lit, with a one day supply of oil, they stayed lit for the whole seven days until they had the opportunity to compound the oil and fill it again. So the lighting of the candles, the Hanukkah and so forth, in celebration of this event of their history. It is not one of the biblical holidays, but yet one that Jesus did observe. So it was really, I said Christmas and the light thing, it was a ceremony they already had. It really preceded our Christmas. Actually the Christians probably need something to counteract the Jews kids presents, and that's why we went for Christmas.

So, here is the lighting of the candles, Aaron's responsibility. Then the twelve loaves of bread were to be placed upon this little table of show bread, two rows of six. Frankincense also on the table, and then on the Sabbath day, these loaves of bread were to be changed. A loaf of bread, one for each nation, changed on the Sabbath day, and then bread taken from the table was to be eaten by Aaron and his sons in the holy place.

Now we come to a event that happened, and at this point it happened that there was a Israelitish woman, whose father is an Egyptian, the son of an Israelitish woman, his father was an Egyptian. He went out among the children of Israel, and he had a fight with an Israelite. And in the fight this woman's son, blasphemed the name of Yahweh. Now this is something that is strictly forbidden, in fact the Jews hold the name Yahweh in such reverence, that they won't even pronounce it. They won't even write the vowels in their manuscripts. They just write the consonants, "Y H V H", so you can't pronounce it. They don't even try to pronounce it. They just call it the name and here in our text, "Of the Lord" you notice, is inserted. He just blasphemed the name. And it has become customary for the Jew when he gets to the name of Yahweh in his text, he just bows his head and he says the name. They just call it the name. They don't even try to pronounce it in their minds. It is too holy and pure a name they feel, to be pronounced. Well here's a kid blaspheming the name and he was cursing. So they brought him to Moses. So they put him in custody that they might discover the mind of the Lord, "Lord what shall we do with this kid?"

And the Lord spoke to Moses saying, Take him outside of the camp, him who has cursed, and let all of those who heard him, lay their hands on his head and let all the congregation stone him. And then you shall speak to the children of Israel saying, Whoever curses his God shall bear his sin, and whoever blasphemes the name of Yahweh, shall surely be put to death (24:13-16).

So severe penalties for the blaspheming of the name of the Lord. There is something to be said for severe penalties. There's something to be said against them too, no doubt. But where penalties are severe, you find that crime is extremely curbed. They have no drug problem in Singapore. Why? If you are found in possession of drugs, you're shot immediately. Well, if you're carrying drugs, you make sure that your plane doesn't stop in Singapore. It's severe but, they have no drug problem. Now look at the drug problem we

have! Why? Because of the leniency. Our drug problem is out of hand. We cannot control it. It's totally out of hand. Those who are in drug enforcement, are just frustrated, totally frustrated, because of the leniency of the laws. Where there are severe penalties, you find that there is a strict observance of the law. Now, the Iatolla has cut down crime tremendously in Iran, but it's again by severe penalties. If you're caught taking something, they just put your hands up there, and they just whack off your hands. And so you don't find many pick pockets in Iran. I mean, it's a way of solving crime. The leniency of the law has a way of exuberating crime or encouraging almost, because you think that you can get away with it, even if you're caught.

So, God had very severe penalties, but they were effective. Whoever blasphemes the name of the Lord, will be put to death. Well, you can be sure that that was a lesson that they had embedded in their minds, and no one blasphemed the Lord after that.

Capital punishment, in verse seventeen, for anyone who kills a man.

If you killed an animal, you've got to make the animal good, if you cause a disfigurement of a neighbor, as it is done, so shall it be done to him. [If you broke his leg, your leg is to be broken, if you blacked his eye, your eye is to be blacked, eye for an eye. If you knocked out a tooth, then they knock out one of your teeth.] *As you have done, so shall it be done (24:18-20).*

Whoever kills an animal, has to restore it. If you kill a man, you are to be put to death. And the same law goes for everybody. No partiality as far as the law is concerned, stranger, or one of your own countryman, it's all the same.

Chapter 25

Now in chapter 25, he speaks of the Sabbath of the seventh year. That is, every Sabbath year, you're to give the land a Sabbath, the land is to rest. You're not to plow it, you're not to plant it, you're not to cultivate it, nor are you to gather it's fruit. You just let it grow wild in the seventh year. Of course this is a tremendous soil conservation program that God had inaugurated, letting the land replenish itself, so that it has its nutrients again restored to the land. Goodness where we are growing three or four crops a year on the land, all were doing is feeding the land with the chemicals and the fertilizer and all, to get the thing to produce, but the land has been leeches out of any value. We've learned how to grow a beautiful, large, luscious looking, tasteless tomatoes. Everything's for the eye, you know, eye appeal, but as far as real nutrient value and all, it's just not there anymore. But God ordered them to just let the land rest.

Now, the poor of the land, could just come in with the intention, that it was just there, leave it for the poor people to come in and they could pick it, and they could have it. But, you weren't to take it. Actually God said, "If you do this, in the sixth year he'll give you a bumper crop that will carry you over into the ninth year." So the seventh year you let the land rest, and then the eighth year you plant again and it'll go for you. It'll give you enough, at the end of the eighth year, which would be the ninth year, your sixth year supply will have last clear over to the harvest of the eighth year. This was the law of the land.

Then you're to count seven Sabbaths for the land, and on the fiftieth year of the year of jubilee, you were to have two years in a row, where you just kick back and do nothing. Let the land grow of itself wild, don't cultivate it, don't work. Just take off a year. Just enjoy a year vacation, every seventh year. That's not a bad idea! It's a pretty good life that God ordered for man.

Now, the children of Israel did not obey this command. When they came into the land and they began to plant their crops, they just planted every year, they cultivated every year and they did not keep this law of God. They did not give the land its rest. They did not observe the Sabbaths for the land. As a result, after they had been in the land for 490 years without giving it a year off. God said, "Alright! You did not give the land it's Sabbaths, as I commanded you to do, therefore I will give the land it's Sabbaths, and you will be carried away captives to Babylon and you will be in Babylon seventy years until the land has had the seventy sabbaths that it has coming to it, given to it, and then you will be able to come back to the land." So, God took them out of the land for seventy years. For the 490 years that they were in the land without giving it a Sabbath.

God will exact His toll, some way or the other. Try and hold back from God, you think, "Ah, I can

get away with it man!”, you know, planting every year for 490 years, getting by with it. But God’s gonna get His toll, sooner or later His balance sheet is gonna come out. You can’t really withhold from God and get away with it. You can, you know, there’s an old Greek saying, “The dice of the gods are loaded.” That is, you just don’t gamble with God. You just don’t go against God’s word. You’re going find that your going to be the loser. God’s gonna win every time.

So, the Sabbaths of the land, and then the year of jubilee. On the year of jubilee, everything returns back, and reverts back to original ownership. Now when they came into the land, the land was first of all apportioned out to the twelve tribes, each tribe was given a section of land, and then each family in that tribe, was given their family possession and that was to remain. That was your family’s land. Now you couldn’t really sell it. You could lease it, but every fifty years, it reverted back to the family. Came back to the family again so that no family would really lose their land, but if you sold it or whatever, it was only sold for that period of time. If it was the first year after the year after the jubilee, then you would lease it for fifty years, but then it comes back to you again. And so, it remained in perpetuity for the family. That is the fields, in the city, your houses were a different matter. So this year of jubilee when everything reverts back. Each returns to his possession. Verse thirteen.

In verses eighteen to twenty two he makes the promises of the bumper crops in the sixth year, if they but observe the land Sabbaths. In verse twenty three, he deals with the redemption of the property. If you sold the land, then you had the right to redeem the land, or one of your kinsman redeemers could redeem it for you, what the brother had sold. Interesting law, we will get into that law more fully when we get to the book of Ruth. And of course all measure to the time of the year of jubilee.

In verse thirty five, we have the laws for lending to the poor. You are to lend to the poor, but not with interest, or usury, that he might be able to live with you.

Then, the laws concerning slavery. The person who is poor and sells himself to you, you’re not to make him serve as a slave, but you’re to keep him as your hired servant, and he shall serve you until the year of jubilee and then he is to be set free, and you’re not to rule over him with rigor. You’re to remember the fact that you were slaves in Egypt, and that God redeemed you out of your slavery, and so God becomes then the picture of the ideal master who has redeemed his slaves and has allowed them to serve Him in joyfulness and blessing. So your servants are to be serving you, not under a rigor, not under a hard thumb kind of a rule, but easy on them. You’re not to rule over one another with rigor, that is those of the children of Israel. If you have foreigners, strangers and so forth, as a slave, then that was a different story.

The children of Israel are my servants God said. [In verse fifty five] I have brought them out of the land of Egypt and they are my servants, and therefore they are not to be slaves. They are my servants (25:55).

Chapter 26

Now, chapter twenty six is a vital chapter. Tremendously important as God gives them the laws and the blessings if they will obey, but the curses if they disobey.

So, you will not make any idols, carved images, pillars. You’re not to set up any grave stones to bow down to them, for I am the Lord your God. You are to keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I am the Lord. Now if, [conditional] you walk in my statutes, keep my commandments, then I will give you rain in its season, the land will yield its produce, the trees of the field shall yield their fruit. Your threshing shall last till the time of the vintage, the vintage shall last till the time of the sowing, you will eat your bread to the full, you’ll be prosperous, you’ll be blessed. And you will dwell in the land safely. I will give you peace in the land, you will lie down, without fear. I will rid the land of evil beasts, the sword will not go through your land, you will chase your enemies, and they shall fall by the sword before you. Five of you shall chase a hundred, a hundred shall put ten thousand to flight. Your enemies shall fall by the sword before you: For I will look on you favorably, I will make you fruitful, multiply you, confirm my covenant with you. You shall eat the old harvest and clear out the old because of the new. I have set my tabernacle among you: my soul shall not abhor you, I will walk among you and be your God, and you shall be my people (26:1-12).

Tremendous blessings promised to them if they would just be God’s people. “Walk in my statutes,

walk according to my commandments. You're going to live a full, peaceful, rich, wonderful life." God's promises to those who will obey Him and walk with Him. Glorious promises of God.

But, if you do not obey me, [verse 14] you do not observe these commandments, if you despise my statutes, your soul abhors my judgements, and you do not perform all my commandments, but you break my covenant: Then this is what I will do to you; I will appoint terror over you, a wasting disease, fever which will consume the eyes and cause sorrow of heart. You will sow your seed in vain, because your enemies shall eat it. I will set my face against you, and you shall be defeated by your enemies; those who hate you will reign over you; and you shall flee when no one pursues you, and after all this if you do not obey me: then I will punish you seven times more for your sins. I will break the pride of your power, I will make your heavens like iron, your earth like bronze, and your strength shall be spent in vain, for your land shall not yield its produce, nor shall the trees of the land yield their fruit, then if you walk contrary to me and are not willing to obey me, I will bring on you seven times more plagues, according to your sins. I will send wild beasts among you which shall rob you of your children, destroy your live stock, and make you few in numbers. And your highways will become desolate. And if by these things you are not reformed by me and you walk contrary to me, then I also will walk contrary to you and I will punish you seven times for your sins, and I will bring a sword upon you, execute vengeance, of my covenant. When they are gathered together within your cities, I will set pestilence upon you, and you shall be delivered at the hand of your enemy, and I will cut off the supply of bread. Ten women shall bake your bread in one oven, and they shall bring back to you your bread by weight and you will eat and not be satisfied. And after all of this, if you do not obey me, and you walk contrary to me, then I will also walk contrary to you in fury, and even I will chastise you seven times for your sins. You'll eat the flesh of your sons, you'll eat the flesh of your daughters, I will destroy your high places, cut down the incense altars, and cast the carcasses of the lifeless forms of your idols, and my soul will abhor you. I will lay your cities waste, and bring your sanctuaries to desolation, and I will not smell the fragrance of your sweet aromas, I will bring the land to desolations and your enemies who dwell in it shall be astonished at it, and I will scatter you among the nations and draw out a sword after you. And your land shall be desolate and your cities waste, and then the land shall enjoy its sabbath as long as it lies desolate and you are in the enemies land (26:14-35).

As we said, this was fulfilled, Jeremiah prophesied of it, and it was fulfilled in their Babylonian captivity seventy years, for the 490 years that they did not give the land its rest.

As long as it lies desolate it shall rest; and for the time it did not rest in your sabbaths when you dwelt in it. And as for those of you that are left, I will send faintness into their hearts in the lands of their enemies; and a shaking leaf shall cause them to flee, they shall flee as though fleeing from the sword; they shall fall when no one pursues. They will stumble over one another and you will have no power to stand before your enemies. You will perish among the nations, the land of your enemies shall eat you up. And those of you who are left shall waste away in the iniquity of your enemies lands; also and their fathers iniquities, which are with them and they shall waste away. But, if they confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their fathers, with their unfaithfulness in which they were unfaithful to me, and that they also have walked contrary to me; And that I also which I have walked contrary to them and have brought them into the land of their enemies,; if their uncircumcised hearts are humbled, and they accept their guilt: Then I will remember my covenant with Jacob, and my covenant with Isaac, my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land. The land also shall be left empty by them, and will enjoy its sabbaths while it lies desolate without them: and I will accept the guilt [and so forth], Yet for all of that, when they are in the land of their enemies, I shall not cast them away, nor shall I abhor them to utterly destroy, and to break my covenant with them: for I am the Lord their God (26:36-44).

So, they'll be in these lands, but even there when they call on me and confess their sins, I'll listen, I'll restore. Now, this is an important chapter for what we've got ahead of us. When we get to the book of Judges, we're gonna find this chapter cycling over and over again. "And the children of Israel sought the Lord, and God blessed them, and they were prosperous, they subdued their enemies. And in their prosperity, they turned from the Lord, and they began to worship their idols, [and so forth], and the enemies came in and the enemies put them to flight, and the enemies destroyed them, [and all, and then you know] they called the

Lord.” And then God raised up Gideon and God raised up the various deliverers the judges. And then as you get into the rest of the books. Kings, the Chronicles, the same kind of a history, repeated over and over again. When they were seeking the Lord, and when they were keeping the commandments of God, they were prospered and blessed of the Lord, and when they turned from God, then they had all kinds of calamities that befell them.

Now, the interesting thing is that when Daniel was in captivity in Babylon, if you will read the prayer of Daniel, you’ll find that at the end of the captivity period, towards the end there, as Daniel sought the Lord, and prayed, confessing his sins and the sins of the nation. Daniel used this passage of scripture to model his prayer. And so it’s important that you put this together with Daniel as God here says, “If they confess their iniquity, begin verse forty, and tie that in with Daniel’s prayer, in Babylon, in captivity, and you’ll find how that Daniel was a student of the scriptures and he modeled his prayer right after what God had said. You read that and you get excited. Because you realize that Hey, Daniel was on the ball, he was on his toes, he knew what God had promised, and how he should pray. You wonder, why would Daniel confess sins and all, when he was such a model person. But yet, he was following the commandment of the Lord here.

But this chapter, we’ll be referring back to it, over and over again, because God is really, in a sense, predicting the future, because He knows what they’re going to do. And knowing what they’re going to do and the calamity that’s going to befall them, He’s warning them in advance!

Now, this particular passage was written in a poetic way, so that it was to be sung; and one of the best ways to memorize things, is to sing them. The little children can so often learn their A B C’s by the song, “A B C D E F G, H I J K L M N O P”, you know and they can learn it much quicker than just by strict rote, if they can have a little melody to it. This was to be a song. They were to learn the song, but it was also, when they’re singing it, suddenly truth strikes you, “Oh wow! That’s why! We have sinned against the Lord. We broke the covenant. That’s why this calamity has, just as God said,”. Boy you go through their history and here is a picture, a graphic picture, of exactly what happened in the history of the nation of Israel.

You know, this is so important, that we’re going to come back to twenty six and twenty seven. I hated to rush through it, but I was trying to finish, but I can’t. And, you just got to know your limitations.

So, next week Leviticus twenty six and twenty seven. There’s too much in here to just pass it over lightly. I mean, this is where it’s at. This is where it’s at. So, we’ll come back to this next week. I just hate myself for trying to run through it so fast, when there’s so much there, I just can’t do it. I just can’t do it. I just can’t do it.

God help us to learn. To learn all the lessons that were taught to us in history. The lessons of this people and their relationship with Him. The blessing of walking with God and keeping His commandments, and the disastrous consequences of forsaking God and His commandments. That we might live a life of fellowship with God, blessed, as we walk with Him. And thus may you live this week, in fellowship with God, walking according to His commands, and enjoying the fruit of the blessing, of just being His child, in fellowship with the Father. In Jesus’ name.