

THROUGH THE BIBLE STUDY

LEVITICUS 24-27

Perhaps the greatest *NASCAR goof* of all time occurred in the 1985 Daytona 500. One of the contenders that February was legendary driver, Donnie Allison.

Allison was off to a good start, yet just two laps into the race something went wrong. On lap three Allison's car stalled. He rolled off the track into the infield.

It didn't take long to discover the problem... *No one in Allison's crew had bothered to fill the car with gas.* Donnie Allison was an experienced, seasoned, successful driver. His car was \$250,000 worth of precision and preparation.

But the Allison crew made a major omission. *They tried to race without fuel!*

And this is the mistake made by many churches. When we enter the race God has set before us we need the fuel of the Holy Spirit. This was God's concern for the Old Testament priests. In chapter 24 He addresses the fuel for their ministry.

“Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: "Command the children of Israel that they bring to you pure oil of pressed olives for the light, to make the lamps burn continually.”

Remember there were no electric lights in the Tabernacle...

The only light was the glory of God behind the veil, and the golden Menorah, a seven-branched lamp stand, that stood outside the veil in the Holy Place.

The priests performed their daily duties under the light of the Menorah. But it had to be fueled, and only the purest oil – from pressed olives – was used.

In Zechariah 4 the prophet sees the same menorah being supernaturally supplied with oil. In his vision the menorah represents Israel. God shows Zechariah that He alone will fuel the work He wants to in His people.

Zechariah 4:6 states, “Not by might nor by power, but My Spirit,” says the LORD of hosts. ‘Who are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain!’ Whenever we attempt a work for God – or have an obstacle or mountain to move - we also need to use only the purest oil to fuel the project.

Let’s rely not on human genius or ingenuity, but on the Holy Spirit.

Verse 3, “Outside the veil of the Testimony, in the tabernacle of meeting,” The Menorah sat in the Holy Place - outside the veil that led to the Holy of Holies.

“Aaron shall be in charge of it from evening until morning before the LORD continually; it shall be a statute forever in your generations. He shall be in charge of the lamps on the pure gold lampstand before the LORD continually.”

"And you shall take fine flour and bake twelve cakes with it. Two-tenths of an ephah (or a fifth of a bushel) shall be in each cake." Here’s another source of fuel.

Oil supplied the lamp with light, while bread supplied the priests with strength.

“You shall set them in two rows, six in a row, on the pure gold table before the LORD. And you shall put pure frankincense on each row, that it may be on the bread for a

memorial, an offering made by fire to the LORD.” Also in the Holy Place was the table of *showbread*. The word means “*bread of presence*.”

And the showbread reminded Israel that God was their source and strength.

The bread consisted of two rows of six loaves each – or twelve in all - one loaf for each of the twelve Hebrew tribes. All Israel needed to be dependent on God.

“Every Sabbath he shall set it in order before the LORD continually, being taken from the children of Israel by an everlasting covenant. And it shall be for Aaron and his sons, and they shall eat it in a holy place; for it is most holy to him from the offerings of the LORD made by fire, by a perpetual statute.”

The showbread sat on the table for a week - then was eaten by the priests.

There’s an interesting story in 1 Samuel 21. David and his men came to the High Priest Ahimelech, and asked for bread. When he was told the pantry was bare, David ate the showbread – *which was a clear violation of this law*.

Yet rather than condemn David, years later Jesus used his actions to teach the legalistic Pharisees a lesson... When David’s posse scarfed up the sacred bread it proved that in God’s eyes *human need* trumps *religious ritual*. God is far more into *compassion* than *tradition*. He’d rather *feed the hungry* than *observe formality*.

In verses 10-16 Moses runs into a situation not covered by the letter of the Law. A man blasphemes God's holy name - *what's the appropriate penalty?*

“Now the son of an Israelite woman, whose father was an Egyptian, went out among the children of Israel; and this Israelite woman's son and a man of Israel fought each other in the camp. And the Israelite woman's son blasphemed the name of the Lord and cursed; and so they brought him to Moses. (His mother's name was Shelomith the daughter of Dibri, of the tribe of Dan.) Then they put him in custody, that the mind of the LORD might be shown to them.”

Two men are scrapping. They're throwing fisticuffs. We're not told why they're brawling, perhaps one was a Bulldog – and the other, a Gator. They may've been hockey players... Maybe Rocky and Apollo... But while flailing at each other one of the men loses his cool, and shouts out a blasphemy. Hebrew cops arrest him - book him on blasphemy – and now it's up to Moses to decide what's next.

Understand prior to this event the penalty for blasphemy had not been revealed to Moses. Obviously, it was wrong, but how was it to be punished? Moses may've checked the tablets and scrolls, but there was no mention of the man's sentence.

If the penalty for blasphemy had been carved by the finger of God into the stone tablets, like the Ten Commandments, Moses' decision would've been a snap – a piece of cake. Just consult the tablets, and there's your answer.

The same would've been true if Moses had possessed our Bible. As far as I'm concerned the words written in this book

are *written in stone* – they're sure and certain. That's why when a question is answered in the Bible the will of God is clear. Don't expect the Lord to speak any further – He's already spoken.

Guys don't tell me the Spirit of God is leading you to marry an unbeliever...

Or He says its okay for you to live with your girlfriend...

Or God has called you to be homosexual...

Or it's okay with Jesus if you don't pay your taxes...

Or God has made a special exception for you to divorce your spouse...

Hey, it's crystal clear that Scripture says just the opposite. The Holy Spirit penned this book, and the Spirit is never going to contradict Himself.

But here Moses is faced with an issue that's not covered in the Word. So what do you do? How do you make decisions on issues not spelled out in Scripture?

Of the 123,718,000 girls in America how did I know Kathy was the right one?

Of the 23,000 occupations – how did I know God called me to be a pastor?

Of the 5000 universities how did I know where God wanted me to attend?

Of the 50 states, and 159 counties in Georgia, how did I know where to live?

In a decision not directly decided on in Scripture how do I discern God's will? Here's what we learn from Moses... When

an issue is not covered in the *Word of God* we seek the *mind of God*... *And notice how Moses does it*...

First, he *desires* to know. He doesn't just act on what *he thinks* is God's will.

Second, he *delays* to know. He doesn't rush into anything. He gives it time.

Third, he *depends* to know. His confidence is in God's ability to speak rather than his ability to hear. And in God's time He communicates to Moses His will.

It was said that George Washington Carver got his knowledge of the peanut from the Bible. But here's how he explained it, **"The Bible teaches nothing about the peanut. But it told me about God, and God told me about the peanut."** Hey, as believers we have the mind of Christ. It's just a matter of tuning to His wisdom.

Verse 13, **"And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Take outside the camp him who has cursed; then let all who heard him lay their hands on his head, and let all the congregation stone him."** Obviously, God wanted his punishment to serve as an example – a deterrent to anyone else who might blaspheme God's name.

"Then you shall speak to the children of Israel, saying: "Whoever curses his God shall bear his sin. And whoever blasphemes the name of the LORD shall surely be put to death. All the congregation shall certainly stone him, the stranger as well as him who is born in the land. When he blasphemes the name of the Lord, he shall be put to death." Blasphemy deserves the death penalty.

Hey, anything that *undermines our reverence for God* should be dealt with radically. Eventually *the loss of reverence leads to a corruption of morals*.

Today, God still wants us to eliminate the blasphemer... *not by stoning him, but by saving him!* Remember, we have a greater power than Moses. Armed with the Gospel of Jesus - and with the ministry of the Holy Spirit – we have a power to change people’s lives - and turn them from *blasphemers* into *worshippers*.

Verse 17, “Whoever kills any man shall surely be put to death. Whoever kills an animal shall make it good, animal for animal.” Notice, kill a human, and you’re put to death. Humans are sacred - they reflect God’s image. But an animal is a piece of property. If you kill someone’s animal you just replace it with another animal.

Verse 19, “If a man causes disfigurement of his neighbor, as he has done, so shall it be done to him - fracture for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth; as he has caused disfigurement of a man, so shall it be done to him.” This is called the Law of Tit for Tat. A person’s punishment should always be equal to the crime.

This is not the human tendency. Our natural response is one-upmanship. Punch me in the eye, and I’m not just going to respond in kind. I’m going to exceed what was done to me. I’ll give you a black-eye *AND* a bloody lip.

“And whoever kills an animal shall restore it; but whoever kills a man shall be put to death. You shall have the same law

for the stranger and for one from your own country; for I am the LORD your God.” Then Moses spoke to the children of Israel; and they took outside the camp him who had cursed, and stoned him with stones. So the children of Israel did as the LORD commanded Moses.”

Whether or not his name was Rocky before the incident it was afterwards.

Last week we talked about the seven annual feasts on God’s calendar...

They were *Passover, Unleavened Bread, First Fruits, Weeks, Trumpets, The Day of Atonement, Tabernacles*. Two more feasts are discussed in chapter 25.

“And the LORD spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai, saying, “Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: ‘When you come into the land which I give you, then the land shall keep a sabbath to the LORD. Six years you shall sow your field, and six years you shall prune your vineyard, and gather its fruit; but in the seventh year there shall be a sabbath of solemn rest for the land, a sabbath to the LORD.’”

Just as there is a Sabbath day, there was also a *Sabbath year*. One year out of seven the people were to allow the land to rest. The ground wasn’t to be farmed.

It’s interesting, that modern agriculture has now verified the wisdom of this law.

When the ground lies dormant it restores and revives its mineral content. Fail to let the land rest, and you rob it and rape it of its nutrients. Today, agriculturists advocate crop rotation to give the land an opportunity to rejuvenate itself.

The CCSM church staff has been bucking for this for years. First I started giving them a day off in seven. Now they want a year off every seven years.

Verse 4, “You shall neither sow your field nor prune your vineyard. What grows of its own accord of your harvest you shall not reap, nor gather the grapes of your untended vine, for it is a year of rest for the land. And the sabbath produce of the land shall be food for you: for you, your male and female servants, your hired man, and the stranger who dwells with you, for your livestock and the beasts that are in your land - all its produce shall be for food.” If you can’t eat from the fields in the Sabbath year, what is the “*Sabbath produce*”? We’ll get to it in verse 18.

But first God sets out another special Sabbath known as *the year of Jubilee*.

This was a Sabbath of seven year periods. After seven 7-year segments came the year of Jubilee. Verse 8, “You shall count seven sabbaths of years for yourself, seven times seven years; and the time of the seven sabbaths of years shall be to you forty-nine years. Then you shall cause the trumpet of the Jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month; on the Day of Atonement you shall make the trumpet to sound throughout all your land.” “*Jubilee*” means “*blast of a horn.*”

Verse 10, “And you shall consecrate the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a Jubilee for you; and each of you shall return to his possession, and each of you shall return to his family.”

Understand the concept of a year of Jubilee is unparalleled in history. It was uniquely Hebrew - but it was ingenious. Verse 10 describes its chief feature, “each of you shall return to his possession, and each of you shall return to his family.”

In other words, all debts will be paid, and all properties will be returned.

Verse 11, “That fiftieth year shall be a Jubilee to you; in it you shall neither sow nor reap what grows of its own accord, nor gather the grapes of your untended vine. For it is the Jubilee; it shall be holy to you; you shall eat its produce from the field. In this Year of Jubilee, each of you shall return to his possession. And if you sell anything to your neighbor or buy from your neighbor's hand, you shall not oppress one another. According to the number of years after the Jubilee you shall buy from your neighbor, and according to the number of years of crops he shall sell to you. According to the multitude of years you shall increase its price, and according to the fewer number of years you shall diminish its price; for he sells to you according to the number of the years of the crops. Therefore you shall not oppress one another, but you shall fear your God; for I am the LORD your God.

When Israel entered the Promised Land God parceled out territories to each tribe. The land belonged to God, but He loaned a lot to each family in Israel.

Of course, from time to time land was sold or bought. When it was put up for collateral on a loan, and a man couldn't pay his debts, the land would be lost.

But the loss was never permanent – for in the year of Jubilee all the land was returned to its original occupant.

That's why whenever a land transaction came down its value was determined by the number of years to the Jubilee.

Another practice in ancient Israel was slavery. People think of slavery as cruel, but not among the Hebrews. When a person couldn't pay his debts, instead of filing bankruptcy, he worked off the debt by becoming a slave to his creditor.

But in the year of Jubilee his debts were canceled, and he became free.

Think of the practical impact of this law. Most people lived through a Jubilee. Their debts were canceled. It gave them a second chance on life. If family land was lost through a relative's slothfulness they could get it back, and start over.

The year of Jubilee was a mulligan for life. It didn't hinder the industrious man from bettering his position through hard work - but it did provide a way to even out some inequities, address a few cruelties, and restore to everyone real opportunity.

As clever a welfare system as the Jubilee was its real significance is prophetic.

Think about it, the original and ultimate owner of this world is God. But He gave dominion over the earth to man – and in turn, we lost it to Satan. Three times in John's Gospel, Satan is referred to as **“the ruler of this world”**. But one day God will celebrate the Jubilee, and all the land will revert back to its original owner.

Today, Satan may control this earth, but it doesn't belong to Him. When Jesus returns, Satan will be evicted, and the world will return to its rightful owner.

When Jesus returns all debts will be canceled, the slaves will be freed, and all property will return to its original ownership. *Come quickly, Lord Jesus!*

Let me bring up another point regarding God's calendar... it's full of sevens. The seventh day - seventh year - the year after the seventh seven – there are even periods of seven times 70 years. Daniel's Seventy weeks is an example, as is the Babylonian captivity. It lasted 70 years because the Hebrews had neglected to observe the Sabbath year, seventy straight times.

What I'm about to delve into is conjecture, but what if we took it one more step. Seven times 1000 years – *or seven millenniums?* Based on the assumption Adam and Eve were created 6000 years ago we're now coming to the end of the sixth millennium. From Adam to Abraham is 2000 years. From Abraham to Jesus is 2000. And from Jesus to today is 2000 years... a total of about 6000 years.

Now the Bible mentions one final 1000 period. Revelation 20 teaches us Jesus will return to earth to reign and rule 1000 years. If God chose to fulfill His plans in seven millenniums, then Jesus' Millennial Kingdom would be the seventh.

According to the Jewish calendar this is year 5765. According to our calendar it's 2005. Nobody knows the exact date of creation, but all the calendars indicate we're at the close of the sixth millennium. Jesus may be coming back soon!

And understand this idea is not just wild, Millennial fever - it was believed by many early Christians. Irenaeus, who lived in

150 AD, wrote, “For the day of the Lord is as a thousand years; and in six days created things were complete; it is evident, therefore, that they will come to an end at the sixth thousand years.”

Verse 18-22 answers the earlier question the Jews must’ve asked, *If we’re going to let the land rest in the seventh year, then how are we going to eat?*

He tells them in verse 18, “So you shall observe My statutes and keep My judgments, and perform them; and you will dwell in the land in safety. Then the land will yield its fruit, and you will eat your fill, and dwell there in safety. And if you say, “What shall we eat in the seventh year, since we shall not sow nor gather in our produce?” Then I will command My blessing on you in the sixth year, and it will bring forth produce enough for three years. And you shall sow in the eighth year, and eat old produce until the ninth year; until its produce comes in, you shall eat of the old harvest.” In the sixth year the harvest will be enough for the next two years.

Here’s the hurdle to get over if you’re going to observe a Sabbath day - or for the Jews, a Sabbath year – do you trust God to do more in *His six*, than you can do in *your seven*? This is also the hurdle when it comes to tithing of our money - *do we trust God to do more with 90%, than we can do with 100%?*

How strong is our faith? How much do we really trust the Lord?

“The land shall not be sold permanently, for the land is Mine; for you are strangers and sojourners with Me. And in all the

land of your possession you shall grant redemption of the land. If one of your brethren becomes poor, and has sold some of his possession, and if his redeeming relative comes to redeem it, then he may redeem what his brother sold. Or if the man has no one to redeem it, but he himself becomes able to redeem it, then let him count the years since its sale, and restore the remainder to the man to whom he sold it, that he may return to his possession.” There was a right of redemption throughout all Israel. If you foreclosed on a property the owner always had the right to earn it back.

“But if he is not able to have it restored to himself, then what was sold shall remain in the hand of him who bought it until the Year of Jubilee; and in the Jubilee it shall be released, and he shall return to his possession.”

There was one exception to these laws of redemption... “If a man sells a house in a walled city, then he may redeem it within a whole year after it is sold; within a full year he may redeem it. But if it is not redeemed within the space of a full year, then the house in the walled city shall belong permanently to him who bought it, throughout his generations. It shall not be released in the Jubilee.”

In a sense we all live in a walled city, and deal with our limitations – and the greatest limitation is we don’t have forever to be redeemed from sin. Jesus wants to buy us back from the sins that keep us in bondage, but the offer isn’t forever.

“However the houses of villages which have no wall around them shall be counted as the fields of the country. They may

be redeemed, and they shall be released in the Jubilee. Nevertheless the cities of the Levites, and the houses in the cities of their possession, the Levites may redeem at any time.

And if a man purchases a house from the Levites, then the house that was sold in the city of his possession shall be released in the Jubilee; for the houses in the cities of the Levites are their possession among the children of Israel.”

The Levites will be the one tribe that inherits no land. Thus, even if their house is in a walled city it can be redeemed at any time. “But the field of the common-land of their cities may not be sold, for it is their perpetual possession.”

Chapter 25:35-38 forbids charging a needy brother interest on a loan. And the same generosity shown in Israel should be practiced among brothers in Christ.

Verse 35, “If one of your brethren becomes poor, and falls into poverty among you, then you shall help him, like a stranger or a sojourner, that he may live with you.” Years ago, I worked at a warehouse in Doraville, and I’ll never forget one Friday night. We were locking up to leave when we found a drunk on the dock.

Company rules required us to throw him off the property, but my boss grabbed some soft packing material, and made a bed. He put the man under the overhang to protect him from the elements. And I’ll never forget what Ralph told me, “Sandy, never kick a man when he’s down. You never know when it might be you.”

Verse 36, “Take no usury or interest from him; but fear your

God, that your brother may live with you. You shall not lend him your money for usury, nor lend him your food at a profit.” Don't make *money* off a brother who needs *mercy*.

“I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, to give you the land of Canaan and to be your God. And if one of your brethren who dwells by you becomes poor, and sells himself to you, you shall not compel him to serve as a slave. As a hired servant and a sojourner he shall be with you, and shall serve you until the Year of Jubilee.” Technically a fellow Hebrew who sells himself to relieve his debts was a slave but never forget he's also your brother.

“And then he shall depart from you - he and his children with him - and shall return to his own family. He shall return to the possession of his fathers.

For they are My servants, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt; they shall not be sold as slaves.” God wanted the slavery of His people to end in Egypt.

“You shall not rule over him with rigor, but you shall fear your God.”

“And as for your male and female slaves whom you may have - from the nations that are around you, from them you may buy male and female slaves.

Moreover you may buy the children of the strangers who dwell among you, and their families who are with you, which they beget in your land; and they shall become your property. And you may take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit them as a possession; they shall be your permanent slaves.”

You might ask why a Hebrew slave could be redeemed, but a Gentile's slavery was permanent? It was actually an act of mercy on the Gentiles. Living in a Hebrew house the Gentile slave could learn of the one true God, and possibly get saved.

“But regarding your brethren, the children of Israel, you shall not rule over one another with rigor.” Remember slavery in Israel was a form of bankruptcy. A man could have a slave, but he was supposed to treat him more like a brother.

“Now if a sojourner or stranger close to you becomes rich, and one of your brethren who dwells by him becomes poor, and sells himself to the stranger or sojourner close to you, or to a member of the stranger's family, after he is sold he may be redeemed again. One of his brothers may redeem him; or his uncle or his uncle's son may redeem him; or anyone who is near of kin to him in his family may redeem him; or if he is able he may redeem himself.” He could buy his freedom.

“Thus he shall reckon with him who bought him: The price of his release shall be according to the number of years, from the year that he was sold to him until the Year of Jubilee; it shall be according to the time of a hired servant for him.

If there are still many years remaining, according to them he shall repay the price of his redemption from the money with which he was bought. And if there remain but a few years until the Year of Jubilee, then he shall reckon with him, and according to his years he shall repay him the price of his redemption.

He shall be with him as a yearly hired servant, and he shall not rule with rigor over him in your sight. And if he is not

redeemed in these years, then he shall be released in the Year of Jubilee - he and his children with him.

“For the children of Israel are servants to Me; they are My servants whom I brought out of the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.”

In Leviticus 26 God tells His people what'll happen if they obey the Law, or if they disobey the Law. These blessings and curses are prophetic - and now with the hindsight of history we can clearly see the reliability of God's promises. Chart the history of the Jew, and you'll see it portrayed perfectly in Leviticus 26...

Verse 1, “You shall not make idols for yourselves; neither a carved image nor a sacred pillar shall you rear up for yourselves; nor shall you set up an engraved stone in your land, to bow down to it; for I am the LORD your God.

You shall keep My Sabbaths and reverence My sanctuary: I am the LORD.

If you walk in My statutes and keep My commandments, and perform them, then I will give you rain in its season, the land shall yield its produce, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit. Your threshing shall last till the time of vintage, and the vintage shall last till the time of sowing; In other words, prosperity all year long.

“You shall eat your bread to the full, and dwell in your land safely. I will give peace in the land, and you shall lie down, and none will make you afraid; I will rid the land of evil beasts, and 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, and a hundred of you shall put 10,000 to flight; your enemies shall fall by the sword before you.” *“Five will chase 100”* – you’ll trounce your enemies. This sounds like what the Dawgs did to Boise State yesterday.

“For I will look on you favorably and make you fruitful, multiply you and confirm My covenant with you. You shall eat the old harvest, and clear out the old because of the new. I will set My tabernacle among you, and My soul shall not abhor you.

I will walk among you and be your God, and you shall be My people. I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, that you should not be their slaves; I have broken the bands of your yoke and made you walk upright.”

But next God tells Israel what’ll happen if they disobey the Lord. Verse 14...

“But if you do not obey Me, and do not observe all these commandments, and if you despise My statutes, or if your soul abhors My judgments, so that you do not perform all My commandments, but break My covenant, I also will do this to you: I will even appoint terror over you, wasting disease and fever which shall consume the eyes and cause sorrow of heart. And you shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it.” Invaders will inhabit the land of Israel and eat its crops.

“I will set My face against you, and you shall be defeated by your enemies.” In 722 BC the northern kingdom of Israel fell to the Assyrians. In 586 BC Judah fell to the Babylonians. And then again, in 70 AD the Jews were crushed by Rome.

“Those who hate you shall 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 and your earth like bronze.” No rain and fallow ground.

“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 also send wild beasts among you, which shall rob you of your children, destroy your livestock, and make you few in number; and your highways shall be desolate.” These plagues were God’s attempt to steer Israel back to Him. These were plagues were red lights, but Israel refused to stop...

“And if by these things you are not reformed by Me, but walk contrary to Me, then I also will walk contrary to you, and I will punish you yet seven times for your sins. And I will bring a sword against you that will execute the vengeance of the covenant; when you are gathered together within your cities I will send pestilence among you; and you shall be delivered into the hand of the enemy. When I have cut off your supply of bread, ten women shall bake your bread in one oven, and they shall bring back your bread by weight, and you shall eat and not be satisfied.”

It reminds me of the famine in the days of Elisha. The Syrians had surrounded the city of Samaria. The people

inside the city were on the verge of starvation.

“And after all this, if you do not obey Me, but walk contrary to Me, then I also will walk contrary to you in fury; and I, even I, will chastise you seven times for your sins. You shall eat the flesh of your sons, and you shall eat the flesh of your daughters.” In ancient times the invader would surround a city, cut off its supply lines, and starve the city. Several times Jerusalem was reduced to cannibalism.

“I will destroy your high places, cut down your incense altars, and cast your carcasses on the lifeless forms of your idols; and My soul shall abhor you.” Their dead bodies would fall on their idols to accentuate how powerless the idols were.

“I will lay your cities waste and bring your sanctuaries to desolation, and I will not smell the fragrance of your sweet aromas.” In both 586 BC by Babylon - and in 70 AD, by the Romans, the Temple, or sanctuary, was destroyed. “I will bring the land to desolation, and your enemies who dwell in it shall be astonished at it.”

“I will scatter you among the nations and draw out a sword after you; your land shall be desolate and your cities waste.” In 722 BC and in 70 AD the Hebrews were scattered to the four corners of the earth, where many still reside.

“Then the land shall enjoy its sabbaths as long as it lies desolate and you are in your enemies' land; then the land shall rest and enjoy its sabbaths. As long as it lies desolate it shall rest--for the time it did not rest on your sabbaths when you dwelt in it.” Jeremiah tells us why the captivity in Babylon lasted 70 years. One year of bondage for each of the 490

Sabbath years the Jews failed to observe.

“And as for those of you who are left, I will send faintness into their hearts in the lands of their enemies; the sound of a shaken leaf shall cause them to flee; they shall flee as though fleeing from a sword, and they shall fall when no one pursues. They shall stumble over one another, as it were before a sword, when no one pursues; and you shall have no power to stand before your enemies.”

Verse 38, “You shall perish among the nations, and the land of your enemies shall eat you up.” In the years following Jerusalem’s fall in 70 AD Jews scattered throughout the empire. Only in modern times have they been re-gathered.

It’s hard to read these words “You shall perish among the nations” and not remember the Spanish Inquisition, and the Crusades, and the Holocaust.

“And those of you who are left shall waste away in their iniquity in your enemies' lands; also in their fathers' iniquities, which are with them, 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 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 and My covenant with Abraham I will remember; I will remember the land.”

Moses was given blessings and curses, but the covenant He made with Abraham was unconditional. And because of that covenant no matter how dire things became God never

abandoned Israel.

“The land also shall be left empty by them, and will enjoy its sabbaths while it lies desolate without them; they will accept their guilt, because they despised My judgments and because their soul abhorred My statutes. Yet for all that, when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, nor shall I abhor them, to utterly destroy them and break My covenant with them; for I am the LORD their God. But for their sake I will remember the covenant of their ancestors, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the nations, that I might be their God: I am the LORD.” These are the statutes and judgments and laws which the LORD made between Himself and the children of Israel on Mount Sinai by the hand of Moses.” Israel could pick its own destiny. Obey the Law, and I’ll be year round prosperity. Disobey the Law, and it’ll be famine, siege, and sadness.

Leviticus 27 deals with the practice of redemption. This was a way the Hebrews presented an offering to God. A parent might dedicate a child to the Lord – a man might bring an animal to the Lord - or even give his house or field to the Lord...

And the Lord seldom took possession of these offerings. God was not into stockpiling animals, and houses, and fields. So here’s what happened...

You would give your house to the Lord, and then buy it back. The money went toward the service of God... You could do this with a child, a family member, an animal, a field - pretty much anything. *If anyone wants to give their house to*

the church tonight we'd be happy to take the title, and then sell it back to you! Cool!

In 1 Samuel 1, a woman named “Hannah” gave her son, Samuel, to the Lord - but she didn't redeem him - instead Samuel served the Lord alongside the High Priest, Eli. Usually though, a parent would buy back, or redeem their child.

I'll never forget one night Pastor James went home after church and forgot his daughter – left Jamie – when he got home he discovered his mistake, and came back for her. *If I'd been thinking we could've charged him the redemption price!*

Verse 1, “Now the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, “Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'When a man consecrates by a vow certain persons to the LORD, according to your valuation, if your valuation is of a male from 20 years old up to 60 years old, then your valuation shall be 50 shekels of silver, according to the shekel of the sanctuary. If it is a female, then your valuation shall be 30 shekels; and if from 5 years old up to 20 years old, then your valuation for a male shall be 20 shekels, and for a female 10 shekels;” Notice the conclusive and definitive proof that adults are more valuable and important than teenagers.

“And if from a month old up to 5 years old, then your valuation for a male shall be 5 shekels of silver, and for a female your valuation shall be 3 shekels of silver; and if from 60 years old and above, if it is a male, then your valuation shall be 15 shekels, and for a female 10 shekels. But if he is too poor to pay your valuation, then he shall present himself

before the priest, and the priest shall set a value for him; according to the ability of him who vowed, the priest shall value him.” The valuation was based on the strength to serve – thus a man was more than a woman, a woman more than a teenager, a teenager more than a child, etc.

Verses 9-13 describes the redemption of animals.

Verses 14-25 deals with the redemption of houses and lands.

Verses 26-33 mention several items you can't dedicate to God, and then redeem. *You can't buy back from the Lord what already belongs to Him.*

Verse 29 says a criminal under a death sentence can't be dedicated to God in order to escape his execution. God is eliminating some loopholes from the Law.

Verse 34 sums up the book of Leviticus, “**These are the commandments which the LORD commanded Moses for the children of Israel on Mount Sinai.**”

God took Israel out of Egypt to plant the nation in the land of Canaan.

But before they marched north He brought them to Mount Siani where He gave them the Law, and taught them how to be His people – how to live and worship.

Now the nation is ready, and in the book of Numbers we chart their journey from Mount Siani to a Canaanite border town known as *Kadesh Barnea*.

We'll study what happens there next week...