



The Quarry Gospel Church

BIBLE STUDY - 23.06.21

BIBLE STUDY - LEVITICUS - 20.THE MANUAL OF DEDICATION - Leviticus 27

GOD'S WORD ON CONSECRATION

(Final study in Leviticus)

INTRODUCTION

- God is holy and set apart - and we are called to be holy - *1 Peter 1:13-16*.
- We have 24/7 access to God through Christ's work on the cross - *Hebrews 10:19-22*.
- God has not changed. He is still holy - all the underlying principles of His laws still apply to those who wish to be His disciples.
- Through Christ we have been "set free to be obedient"- to be holy in every aspect of our lives.
- Leviticus 27 returns to the focus of Chapters 1-7 - the idea of "voluntary" offerings, made out of love for God, not given out of duty.

1. THE PROVISION THAT GOD MADE (vv 1-25)

- This chapter is for the nation as a whole (v1... "If anyone").
- The laws are for those who want to dedicate a gift to God. (person, livestock, property or land)
- Sometimes better and more practical to give "monetary value" of gift. (The gift is given and then redeemed at a price).

A) Dedication of Persons (vv2-8)

- Not always practical/possible to "give a person" - the tabernacle/temple could only accommodate a certain number of people.
- God provided for the giving of the monetary value of a person; being an agricultural and manual labour society, the value was determined by age and gender in accordance with the person's ability as a labourer.
- It was a costly offering (e.g. 30year old man=50 shekels - just over 4 years wages!)
- God also made provision for the poor to be able to give; the priest would determine a value proportionate to their means.
- God wanted to reward the attitude of heart - and we can only give to God what He has given to us already. (story of *The Widow's Mite*)

B) Dedication of Animals (vv9-13)

- vv9-10 - God prevents "hasty vows" being made.
- Animals ceremonially unclean could be offered as a gift of dedication as they were not "sacrificial" animals.
- The Priest fixed the redemption values of all animals.

C) Dedication of Property (vv14-15)

- Houses mentioned in Leviticus 27 are "houses within cities", in keeping with other laws already given.
- Priest is again the arbiter of value.

D) Dedication of Land (vv16-25)

- **Ancestral Land**
 - This would be affected by the laws of Jubilee.
 - Value determined by number of crops available before the next Jubilee + 20%.
 - If not redeemed by the year of Jubilee it would become the property of the priests.
- **Purchased Land**
 - Value would be based on remaining years to the next year of Jubilee.
 - If not redeemed by the year of Jubilee it would revert to the "original owner" (from the time when the Promised Land was first distributed amongst the people)

2. THE RESTRICTIONS THAT GOD IMPOSED (vv26-34)

- There was a danger of getting caught up in emotion and making rash promises you later regretted and wanted to retract. (e.g. *the story of Ananias and Saphira*)
- There was a danger of trying to give God something that already belonged to Him.

Hence the following additional restrictions:

A) The First-born of Animals (vv26-27)

- *Exodus & Numbers* - the Firstborn son of a family had to be dedicated to God. (see also *Luke 2:22-24*). - They could be redeemed.
- With animals - Firstborn of "ceremonially clean" animals already belonged to God and could NOT be redeemed, whereas those of "ceremonially unclean" animals could be redeemed.

B) Items "devoted" to God (vv28-29)

"Devoted" - a serious word - meaning 'to place an embargo on something'.

Items devoted to God were either:

- For the exclusive use in the sanctuary (e.g. utensils); or
- Set apart for destruction - as in *Joshua 6:17-21*

Things devoted to the Lord were "off-limits" - spoils of war devoted to the Lord could not be redeemed. (Only voluntary items could be redeemed.)

C) Restrictions concerning the tithe (vv30-33)

- You cannot give voluntarily what is already covered by the tithe.
- To give voluntarily means going over and above the tithe.
- Farmers would not be able to "swap" a bad for a good animal - if they tried to they would lose both!

These laws prevented the people giving God what was already His or passing off fraud as generosity!

3. APPLICATION - THE DEDICATION GOD DESIRES

A) God welcomes but holds us to our acts of devotion

- Israel had much to thank God for; to thank Him they would have to give over and above the requirements of the law and give voluntary offerings out of love for God.
- We too have much to be thankful for. Our devotion should go way beyond what God asks us to do.
- We should not be swept along by emotion and make promises we later regret and want to retract!

Ecclesiastes 5:1-7 - God expects us to fulfil our promises to Him as He fulfils His promises to us.

B) God seeks people who will give generously

- *Chapter 27* is about going beyond the tithe.
- *Malachi 3:8-12* - the close connection between the tithe and God's blessing.

Question: We're under grace not the law so does the tithe still count today?

Answer: Jesus' description of a generous and godly giver was the woman who "gave it all" (*The Widow's Mite*).

Under grace we have been set free to give over and above the tithe. Jewish Christians would have expected to be giving the tithe - they were now free to give more.

QUALITIES OF CHRISTIAN GIVING: (from passages in 1 & 2 Corinthians)

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|---------------------|---|
| <i>1 Cor.16:1-3</i> | a) Regular - on the 1st day of the week;
b) Inclusive - "Every one of you";
c) Deliberate;
d) Proportionate - in keeping with income;
e) Responsible - save it up; |
| <i>2 Cor.8</i> | f) Not cold charity - they gave themselves first to the Lord (v5);
g) A demonstration of grace - modelled on the grace of Jesus (v9);
h) takes account of what one has (v3);
i) aims at meeting peoples' needs to bring equality;
j) requires responsible accountability; |
| <i>2 Cor.9</i> | k) involves generosity (v6);
l) involves a willing spirit (v7);
m) never leaves the Christian worse off (v8); and
n) results in thanksgiving to God (vv11-12). |

The tithe is best considered as a "minimum" we should give to God.

2 Corinthians 9:8 - "And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work."