



The Quarry Gospel Church

BIBLE STUDY - 02.06.21

BIBLE STUDY - LEVITICUS - 17.THE MANUAL OF HOLINESS - Leviticus 17-26

Part 7 - SAFEGUARDING THE SACRED - Ch.24

INTRODUCTION - Background

- Leviticus is a 24/7 call to holy living but can appear to be just an historical document.
- BUT - although specific laws in some cases have been laid aside in light of the New Covenant, the UNDELYING PRINCIPLES are still in place and in operation.
- God does not change - *Malachi 3:6* - nor do His instructions - *1 Peter 1:13-16*
- Jesus expanded on these laws placing the emphasis on the "spirit" of the law: see *Matthew 5:17-18,20* and *Matthew 5:21-22,27-28,33-37*
- **God wants to have fellowship with us** - a relationship with His people
BUT - God is holy and to come before Him as unholy would result in death.
THEREFORE - God has always given His people a way in which to have fellowship with Him: Old Covenant - rules and laws (as in Exodus and Leviticus)
New Covenant - through faith in Jesus Christ - faith in the blood of the "once for all" atonement which makes us righteous in God's eyes.

1. KEEPING SACRED OBJECTS SACRED (vv 1-9)

- Evangelical Christians generally avoid calling anything "sacred"; (although treating objects in use in God's service with respect and care).
- We are sinful and prone to taking things God has given us to use in His service and make them objects of worship.
2 Kings 18:4 - Hezekiah removes the Bronze serpent Moses made 430 years previously which had become an object of worship.
- There were sacred objects in the Old Testament - the Tabernacle and the items within it, priestly vestments, sacred times (festivals) and actions (sacrifices). These included the Lamp and the Bread on the table, both of which had to be "maintained and protected"

A) Key word - "continually" - vv.2,3,4 and 8(N.B. v8 - NIV translates "regularly")

- Previous chapter looked at annual festivals.
- Lamps to be attended to daily.
- Bread to be replaced to weekly.

B) Just because they are "routine" activities, they are no less important

- Danger today of concentrating on the spectacular;
- It is important to serve God faithfully in the "unremarkable" smaller ways - in the weekly routine of small things.

C) New Testament - Jesus teaches his disciples the importance of small things:

- *Matthew 10:42* - Giving a cup of water;
- *Matthew 25:34-40* - ..*"whatever you did for the least of these.. you did for me."*
- *Matthew 25:23* and *Luke 16:10* - the importance of being faithful in small things.

We should serve God in the routine events of everyday life just as carefully and faithfully as in the bigger events and acts of service.

D) The meaning of keeping these two items attended to was known to the priests:

- The LIGHT - testified to God's presence, day and night - a symbol of God's ever present light among His people.
- The BREAD - a symbol of the needs of God's people - this needed to be "replenished" every Sabbath.

APPLICATION

- As Christians we must maintain the light in our hearts:
 - we are a temple of the Holy Spirit;
 - we should enable Christ's light to burn in us by the regular study of His word and by regular prayer.
- As Christians we must continually lay our needs before Him and feed on Him.
- Jesus used these 2 symbols of Himself:
 - *"I am the light of the world"* - through Him we too are to be the light of the world and display that light.
 - *"I am the bread of life"* - We are also to give men and women something to feed on. Only by regular fellowship with God can we obey Jesus' commands.

2. KEEPING SACRED GOD'S NAME (vv 10-23)

In the Old Testament a name represented the person - it wasn't just "words"; to curse God's name was to curse God.

Then and now - it matters what we say - especially about God and His name.

vv10-23 - The story of a tragic event:

- We are not told what the man said - to write it down would have been equally blasphemous.
- v.12 - the man is put into custody until God's will is made clear: because he was a foreigner, Moses wanted to make sure the blasphemy law applied to him as well.
- In confirming that the law applied to the foreigner too, Israel were given a clear message, that if this foreigner deserved execution, then how much more would blasphemy not be tolerated among the Israelites!
- **God's name was to be safeguarded in this community by everyone**
(This led to Jewish customs such as not saying or writing God's name - they went to great lengths to make sure they could not blaspheme God's name.)

APPLICATION

- The person of God (His name and all it represents) is still sacred today - God has not changed.
- New Testament - words of Paul to the Church at Corinth who were abusing the celebration of the Lord's Supper - *1 Corinthians 11:23-31*:
 - Paul gives a serious instruction and a serious warning;
 - N.B. Paul is **not** saying that because we should not eat or drink in an unworthy manner, we have a way of being worthy of Christ's sacrifice - we have ALL sinned.
 - Paul is talking to a church that is mocking God by taking the bread and wine in a carnal manner, with a carnal attitude.
 - **To take a sacred thing and use it in a carnal way is sinful.**

Chapter 24 - TO SUM UP - THE SACRED MUST BE KEPT SACRED:

As Christians today:

- We are not bound by all of the Old Testament laws - *Hebrews 10:19-25*;
- **BUT** we must keep everything to do with God sacred:
 - **We must "tend" the light in our hearts;**
 - **We must "feed" on Christ through His Word;**
 - **We must place our needs before Him daily;**
 - **We must treat Him - God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit - as "sacred".**

GOD IS HOLY, HIS NAME IS HOLY AND HE WILL BE TREATED AS HOLY BY HIS PEOPLE.