

**according to
his ability that
vowed shall the
priest value him**

chapter twenty-seven Leviticus

~ Dedication and devotion concerning our vows to God seems like a very strange way to depart from the Levitical leg of our Spiritual Safari. If you read about four verses into this chapter, you begin to wonder why it's even here at all. It appears to be some sort of an addendum; and you may remember my statement at the very beginning of Leviticus that we would need and receive a detailed postscript; this will be the report we receive it in. Some people consider this chapter a MAJOR problem with the inspired and infallible standing of the Word of God. If you dig up some other expositions of Leviticus, you will find many don't even bother to address this chapter – at all. Some commentaries end at chapter twenty-five! Others treat this chapter as simply an appendix. So, if I do say so myself – you are getting an otherwise unavailable literary Bible tour with a personal Guide – the Holy Spirit of God – IF you allow Him to give you the Mind of Christ in preparation for the Gospel of Luke - where we go next.

I would agree our final section of this Scripture seems extemporaneous and unrelated to the rest of Leviticus; but we will see a very definite purpose for placing this chapter as the epilogue. It's something you can only discern spiritually in your life if you know where you have been with Christ and what you are looking for concerning furthering His cause in this world. If those are not your primary focus - then you probably stopped reading this report before we even began. You certainly won't go much further, because our Spiritual Safari is looking for our Blessed Hope on every page of Scripture. While the rest of Leviticus was obligatory AFTER we present ourselves willingly, this is COMPLETELY and TOTALLY voluntary. We're going to have a fitting and intense conclusion to this Levitical Book of Worship.

The vows we make to God are ALWAYS completely voluntary. We are never commanded to make any vows or promises to God in the Word of God. Once we DO make a vow, though, we are going to be held unequivocally

accountable for every thought contained in it, psychologically speaking. That is what we need to keep in view at all times in this chapter. It is the response of a grateful heart that promises something to God; and then follows through with that promise. What shall we render unto the Lord for all of His blessings? As believers we are enjoined to respond to the grace of God. I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God that you present your bodies a living sacrifice; holy and acceptable to God which is your reasonable service. That's not a command – that's God beseeching us:

Titus 2:12 Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world ~

Teaching and commanding are two totally different things. Every true believer wants to do something and pledge something to God, it seems. The biggest problem for them is always finding a worthy thing to make the pledge for or against. I pronounce my life "wretched because it's altogether unprofitable" is one quote I would give you. Another is, "...if only my soul were holy as He is holy and pure as Christ is pure and as perfect as our Father in Heaven is perfect." IF, IF, IF! We saw that in our previous report. It's always iffy with us.

What we have are the sweetest commands in the entire Book by God available to mankind presented Personally now to us. The inevitable and appropriate question is: must I break the commands of God to receive grace? We have been driving towards this question for a long time in our safari, and in this report, we will receive one of the reasons why the answer to that question is "no." God has been utterly and totally silent about this throughout five complete books of the Bible. Frankly, my question is: what can a saved man do for God? What can anyone offer to God? This chapter is the complete answer to that question. I suggest you pray for wisdom, judgment and discernment, read it and learn it properly, correctly and completely. This is the most important lesson you are going to learn from Holy Writ as a saved sinner concerning your life. A vow that is not required becomes unexceptionably mandatory once it has been presented by you to God.

Proverbs 20:25 It is a snare to the man who devoureth that which is holy, and after vows to make enquiry ~

You had better make inquiry FIRST, friends! When we vow a vow to God, we must make haste to pay it, because God takes no pleasures in fools! Pay that which thou hast vowed is what King Solomon said. There are promissory vows and vows of renunciation. These are the topics we are dealing with in this remarkable hidden chapter. There are several notable vows in the Bible, such as that of a Nazirite male. Another notable account is that of Jephthah in Judges. I am confident God prohibited and does prohibit child sacrifice throughout the ages. We will deal with that completely in the Book of Judges. If you think you are going to make a vow and not honor it or if you think you are going to deal loosely with God, you need to consider the error of your ways. I can promise you that the Lord will hold you to your vow – WHATEVER it was and NO MATTER how hastily you made it. This really gets real, my dear friends. If you don't intend to keep the vow or if you are not sure if you can keep it – you better take a second look at what you are doing because you might lock yourself into a lifetime of misery with one rash vow. Many Christians have been set aside and many others are being judged on their broken vows to judge. Many are sickly and many sleep for this very reason, Paul said.

Deuteronomy 23:21 When thou shalt vow a vow unto the LORD thy God, thou shalt not slack to pay it: for the LORD thy God will surely require it of thee; and it would be sin in thee 22 But if thou shalt forbear to vow, it shall be no sin in thee. 23 That which is gone out of thy lips thou shalt keep and perform; even a freewill offering, according as thou hast vowed unto the LORD thy God, which thou hast promised with thy mouth ~

God isn't asking you to make a vow to Him but if you do make that vow you will keep it – you can just write that down! So, we come to a combination of vows concerning persons, animals, houses, land - things which are of the Lord and are a part of any personal vow. I'll admit, it's a little confusing upon first read. Pray for wisdom, judgment and spiritual discernment as we attempt understanding and growth in the knowledge and grace of our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ, friends....

1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When a man shall make a singular vow, the persons shall be for the LORD by thy estimation.

~ A singular vow means to single something out that is of particular value. This is something that is precious to the individual. Remember, David said he would offer nothing in sacrifice to the Lord that hadn't cost him something personally! Now, let me say this because I am not your pastor; and, honestly, I have no ax to grind with anyone: but I am accused of having a bad attitude in life. So, at the risk of all that, I say this: if you are in a church and you attempt to offer something in the service of the Lord that hasn't cost you something – well, may God have mercy on you; that's what I have to say to you as His representative! I am NOT saying you should give "x" amount because we are not under any tithe or command to tithe. I have never even mentioned a tithe for Christians, and I don't take one – I sure don't give one – I gave it all, friends. God didn't ask me for it, but I gave it all anyways - because I love Him. If I ever have anything given to me, I'll give that back to Him, too. That's my vow to God and you may be sure I am going to follow with it until my blood does not circulate any more. It's a free will offering I have given and vowed. I can tell you this, too: if you are cheap with God, He is going to be cheap with you! Some of us have a very hard time, financially speaking. It's our dealing with God that determines our prosperity. This says "by thy estimation." We're talking about that which is of current value amongst the people. I heard of a man who gave all his stock to a church when the market was down. God have mercy on that type of giving, too, friends. The church held it and the stock gained great value a few years later; but that man should have waited until the value went back up before he gave it! That gift to the church was of absolutely no regard to God, either way, trust me....

3 And thy estimation shall be of the male from twenty years old even unto sixty years old, even thy estimation shall be fifty shekels of silver, after the shekel of the sanctuary.

4 And if it be a female, then thy estimation shall be thirty shekels.

5 And if it be from five years old even unto twenty years old, then thy estimation shall be of the male twenty shekels, and for the female ten shekels.

~ When a person is dedicated to Christ by a vow before God it does not mean that individual must serve in the tabernacle. The children of Israel could have brought the animal and received a receipt for it, for example. Each had a calling from the Lord. God gives credit according to the value of the thing you have vowed, and if you don't think the Lord keeps His books with values accurately, you've seriously miscalculated. I'm sure He has an advanced computer program application and algorithm that we know nothing about, friends. It does the mathematical calculations that Einstein forgot to think of! It has a way of recording details as well as figures; some of us won't want to see our historical ledger because we are going to be utterly ashamed of the information contained therein. This is an area where we exercise our free will and we can, actually, assume the place of God Himself! We can promise Him or not promise, but if we do promise Him something, He will hold us accountable....

6 And if it be from a month old even unto five years old, then thy estimation shall be of the male five shekels of silver, and for the female thy estimation shall be three shekels of silver.

7 And if it be from sixty years old and above; if it be a male, then thy estimation shall be fifteen shekels, and for the female ten shekels.

8 But if he be poorer than thy estimation, then he shall present himself before the priest, and the priest shall value him; according to his ability that vowed shall the priest value him.

9 And if it be a beast, whereof men bring an offering unto the LORD, all that any man giveth of such unto the LORD shall be holy.

10 He shall not alter it, nor change it, a good for a bad, or a bad for a good: and if he shall at all change beast for beast, then it and the exchange thereof shall be holy.

11 And if it be any unclean beast, of which they do not offer a sacrifice unto the LORD, then he shall present the beast before the priest:

12 And the priest shall value it, whether it be good or bad: as thou valuest it, who art the priest, so shall it be.

13 But if he will at all redeem it, then he shall add a fifth part thereof unto thy estimation.

14 And when a man shall sanctify his house to be holy unto the LORD, then the priest shall estimate it, whether it be good or bad: as the priest shall estimate it, so shall it stand.

15 And if he that sanctified it will redeem his house, then he shall add the fifth part of the money of thy estimation unto it, and it shall be his.

16 And if a man shall sanctify unto the LORD some part of a field of his possession, then thy estimation shall be according to the seed thereof: an homer of barley seed shall be valued at fifty shekels of silver.

17 If he sanctify his field from the year of jubile, according to thy estimation it shall stand.

18 But if he sanctify his field after the jubile, then the priest shall reckon unto him the money according to the years that remain, even unto the year of the jubile, and it shall be abated from thy estimation.

19 And if he that sanctified the field will in any wise redeem it, then he shall add the fifth part of the money of thy estimation unto it, and it shall be assured to him.

20 And if he will not redeem the field, or if he have sold the field to another man, it shall not be redeemed any more.

21 But the field, when it goeth out in the jubile, shall be holy unto the LORD, as a field devoted; the possession thereof shall be the priest's.

22 And if a man sanctify unto the LORD a field which he hath bought, which is not of the fields of his possession;

23 Then the priest shall reckon unto him the worth of thy estimation, even unto the year of the jubile: and he shall give thine estimation in that day, as a holy thing unto the LORD.

24 In the year of the jubile the field shall return unto him of whom it was bought, even to him to whom the possession of the land did belong.

25 And all thy estimations shall be according to the shekel of the sanctuary: twenty gerahs shall be the shekel.

26 Only the firstling of the beasts, which should be the LORD'S firstling, no man shall sanctify it; whether it be ox, or sheep: it is the LORD'S.

27 And if it be of an unclean beast, then he shall redeem it according to thine estimation, and shall add a fifth part of it thereto: or if it be not redeemed, then it shall be sold according to thy estimation.

28 Notwithstanding no devoted thing, that a man shall devote unto the LORD of all that he hath, both of man and beast, and of the field of his possession, shall be sold or redeemed : every devoted thing is most holy unto the LORD.

29 None devoted, which shall be devoted of men, shall be redeemed; but shall surely be put to death.

30 And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the LORD'S: it is holy unto the LORD.

31 And if a man will at all redeem ought of his tithes, he shall add thereto the fifth part thereof.

32 And concerning the tithe of the herd, or of the flock, even of whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the LORD.

33 He shall not search whether it be good or bad, neither shall he change it: and if he change it at all, then both it and the change thereof shall be holy; it shall not be redeemed.

34 These are the commandments, which the LORD commanded Moses for the children of Israel in Mount Sinai.

~ We have discovered an area of Scripture where we can test and examine our Christian faith and see whether it's real or not. What have you vowed to God? Have you ever presented yourself to Him? Have you ever REALLY presented your children to Him? What about your grandchildren? Have you presented your possessions to God? There are no commands to make any vows - but we can. Just remember, if you do make a vow then it will be mandatory that you make good on it! This is really an amazing section of Scripture. All of Leviticus has been amazing to me. What is REALLY amazing is that I completed it; however inadequately I may have presented it. One day, the poor are going to get a fair deal from God; and I like that promise - because I just happen to be amongst the poor.

Ananias and Sapphira made the mistake of vowing a vow and then not making good on it. In fact, they conspired to lie about it. So, they dropped dead in their tracks! Peter had told them they didn't have to give anything. That was their money, and they could have done whatever they wanted with it. God didn't demand it, but they promised it - and didn't make good. This thing is real, my beloved – this Book of Leviticus is VERY applicable in our reality. You are dealing with the God of right now and forevermore, friends.

The home of the man is the most sacred place there is on earth. I think the home and the occupants, and the furnishings should all be dedicated to the Lord! How about your house? Is it dedicated? You can live in your own home and pay rent to God; that's what we need to do as Christians in a Christian home. I know it's that literal with God. God has taken us to the nitty gritty now where you and I move and leave footprints on the ground. We prove and we demonstrate whether we are genuine by our vows and whether or not we keep them in light of our free will.

There is so much detail we could go into here that the rest of our lives could be taken up with the commandments we have studied and learned; but it's time to go DO them! God insists that His rites always be observed by anyone that desires to come to Him. God wants you, but you are going to come to God on His terms – not yours. God wants all of the dedicated things in your life to pass through His hands in some fashion or another!

And with that, our Spiritual Safari will conclude the Levitical leg of our expedition through the entire Word of God. The believer can be thankful for the grace of God in this day in which we live. What we do for God we do voluntarily! We have missed so much more in Leviticus than we have learned, and for that - I am truly sorry! We have, however, completed what may be the finest and most important book in the Word of God – it is all important for God's people to know the myriad spiritual truths in this writing of Leviticus! If we love God, we will want to do the things that please Him! I just can't stress enough the importance of the truths found in this book of the Bible. Jesus said, *"....if you love Me, keep My commandments!"* ~
