

Lesson for October 19, 2008

Old Testament Survey

Book of Leviticus Part I

The Book of Leviticus was written by Moses as an instruction book for the nation of Israel. The book outlines the pattern for which the nation was to follow in regard to the lifestyle, the worship and the service of the people. The key word in Leviticus is holiness, which means to be set apart to God. Leviticus unfolds the mechanics of how this was to be accomplished by the nation of Israel. These mechanics involved the Mosaic Law, the Levitical Offerings, the Feasts of Jehovah and the Tabernacle.

The Mosaic Law

The Mosaic Law was more than just the Ten Commandments. The Law of Moses consisted of over 600 laws in three distinct categories: the Moral Code, the Spiritual Code and the Social Code. The Mosaic Law was given to the entire nation of Israel, believer and unbeliever alike. A part of the Law was the offerings (sacrifices). Therefore, it is necessary to briefly outline the Mosaic Law and its purpose before we study the Levitical Offerings, the Feasts of Jehovah and the Tabernacle.

The Moral Code (Exodus 20:1-26; Deuteronomy 5:6-21)

This code is *the Commandments* from God, including the Ten Commandments, defining morality and man's responsibility before God. The inability of a person to keep God's moral code demonstrated that mankind was a sinner and in need of a Savior.

The Spiritual Code (Exodus 24:12-31:18; Hebrews 10:1)

This code is a complete shadow of Christology (the study of Christ) and Soteriology (the study of salvation). The Spiritual Code is often referred to as *the Ordinances* and includes the Levitical Offerings, the Tabernacle, the Holy Days, the Priestly dress and the believer's worship for this age.

The Social Code (Exodus 21:1 - 24:11)

This code is called *the Judgments* and is the Law of Divine Establishment and establishes certain principles for privacy and freedom for the nation. These principles set the standard for the formation of a national entity and lay out the procedures for dietary laws, sanitation laws, taxation, marriage, divorce, military service, etc.

The Purpose of the Law

The Mosaic Law was not designed to provide salvation, but rather to point mankind to Christ. Salvation has always been and will always be by faith alone in Christ alone. Those under the Law looked forward to the Cross, as we look back to the Cross. Everything in the Mosaic Law was designed to show the nation of Israel their sinful condition, their helplessness to do anything about it and their need for a Savior. The Moral Code demonstrated man's inability to produce perfect righteousness, the Spiritual Code demonstrated God's divine solution to that problem and the Social Code provided the privacy and freedom necessary to allow the rituals to be taught and practiced. (Romans 3:20,28; Galatians 2:16; 3:21-24; Philippians 3:9)

The Levitical Offerings

There were five Levitical offerings for the nation of Israel. Three of these offerings were associated with salvation and two were associated with confession of sin.

Salvation Offerings

The first of these was the *Burnt Offering*, which portrayed the *work of Christ* or the doctrine of Propitiation (complete satisfaction). It portrayed the death of Christ on the Cross as the full payment for man's sin and God's satisfaction with Christ's spiritual death for sin. This offering demonstrated the perfect Lamb of God, Jesus Christ, as our substitute (the guiltless for the guilty). Just as the sacrificial lamb that was brought as the burnt offering was innocent, Jesus Christ was innocent (sinless). The individual was to bring a lamb without spot or blemish to represent Christ's perfection. The priest would transfer the sins of the individual to the lamb on the altar as a symbol of what Jehovah (Jesus Christ) would accomplish for them in the future. The priest would lay one hand on the individual and one on the offering, symbolizing the transfer of sin. (Leviticus 1:2-17; Isaiah 53:9; Matthew 26:39-42; John 1:29; Romans 3:25; Hebrews 9:14; 10:1-14; I John 2:2)

There were three kinds of animals that could be used for this offering:

- 1) A male from the herd of oxen
- 2) A sheep or goat
- 3) A bird

The second salvation offering was the *Meal Offering*. This offering portrayed the *Person of Christ* or the doctrine of Impeccability (sinlessness). The substitutionary spiritual death of Christ is still in view here, though the emphasis is on His Person. The fact that Christ was uniquely qualified to go to the Cross and make the payment for mankind's sin is demonstrated by the fine flour used to make this meal offering. Fine flour represented the holy character of Christ. Upon the meal offering was poured oil and frankincense, the oil representing the indwelling and filling ministries of the Holy Spirit and the frankincense representing God's complete satisfaction with the Person of Christ. There was to be no honey used in the preparation; the absence of honey representing the bitterness of Christ's death. The fine flour had no leaven (leaven represents sin); Christ was sinless. And salt was added for flavor and preservation, representing the quality of Christ's sacrifice and His ability to keep those that He saves. Finally the meal offering was put into fire, representing judgment. (Leviticus 2:1-16; II Corinthians 5:21; Mark 9:49; Colossians 4:6)

The third salvation offering was the *Peace Offering*. This offering portrayed the *work of Christ in reconciliation*. The doctrine of Reconciliation is the removal of the barrier of sin by Christ that separated God and man, bringing peace. This offering was different than the burnt offering, which required the sacrifice to be a male animal, in that the sacrifice could be a male or female animal. This is illustrating that reconciliation is man-ward (God doesn't need to be reconciled to man, but man does need to be reconciled to God), for male or female. This offering speaks of our permanent fellowship with God (positional sanctification and ultimate sanctification), which can never be broken. (Leviticus 3:1-17; Romans 5:1-8; II Corinthians 5:17-20; Ephesians 2:14-17; Colossians 1:20)

Fellowship Offerings

The final two offerings had to do with confession of sin for fellowship with God in time (experiential sanctification). Remember that confession means to name, admit or acknowledge your sins. In the Age of Israel confession was done before a priest from the tribe of Levi, who acted in behalf of the believer.

The first of these offerings was the *Sin Offering*. This was an offering for unknown sins or sins done in ignorance. From time to time the believing Israelite would bring an offering of a bull, goat, bird or meal, to be sacrificed for any sin he may have committed in ignorance. It must be remembered that "sin is sin" regardless if it is committed in ignorance or cognizance and must be dealt with in accordance with God's system (Rebound) (Leviticus 4:1-35)

The second of these offerings was the *Trespass Offering*. This was an offering for known sins. When a believer knowingly sinned, he was to “keep short accounts”, by bringing an offering of a bull, goat, bird or meal, to be sacrificed for his known sin. In the same manner, the believer in the Church Age is to keep “short accounts” by naming his sin immediately in order to spend a maximum amount of time in fellowship with God and stay under the control of God the Holy Spirit. (Leviticus 5; 6:1-7)

These offerings parallel I John 1:6-9 in the Church Age, which is called the Rebound Technique. The Rebound Technique is a non-meritorious system of naming, admitting or acknowledging your sin directly to God and then moving forward in your Christian life. The Rebound Technique is God’s recovery system from personal sin after salvation, which assures the believer that he will be able to execute the Christian Way of Life.

Failure to utilize God’s recovery system results in a life of reversionism (back-sliding), as the believer is in a state of continued carnality (being controlled by the sin nature). As a result, the believer out of fellowship for a prolonged period of time is the most miserable person on the face of the earth. This person is under divine discipline and is experiencing the concept of “reaping what you sow” (sin has it’s own misery).

Using the recovery system from God, on the other hand, restores fellowship with God and restores the filling or control of the Holy Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit Who provides the supernatural power necessary to fulfill God’s supernatural plan, purpose and will. (I Corinthians 11:31-32; Hebrews 12:3-15; Galatians 6:7; I John 4:18; Galatians 5:16; Ephesians 5:18)