

# Leviticus 26-27

Bible Study

## Review

### Chapter 23—Chapter listing God's festivals

- God calls them "My feasts"
- Lists seven annual festivals and seven Holy Days
- Holy Convocation occurs eleven times= a calling together; an assembly

### Chapter 24

- Importance of the continual burning of the lampstand
- Instructions regarding the table of showbread
- An incident that leads to legislation concerning blasphemy—put to death

### Chapter 25—Sabbath principles applied to the land

- "When you come into the land"—key phrase
- Six years to work the land, it rests the seventh
- Jubilee year—50<sup>th</sup> year the land returned to its original owner

## Chapter 26

- Blessings and Cursings chapter-- [Deut. 28]
- A pivotal prophecy of OT—with a warning
  - [Dual] Pertains to ancient Israel and our day

<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> You shall keep My Sabbaths and reverence My sanctuary: I *am* the Lord.

God begins the blessings and cursings chapter by stressing the prohibition against idolatry [v.1] and Sabbath breaking [v.2]

- Two test commandments

v.1 “**idols**” (Heb. *Elil*) = “something worthless [particularly as an object of worship” (TWOT)

[margin]= Molten gods; clay or terra cotta ‘gods’

“idols” 1<sup>st</sup> occurred in Lev. 19: 4– “Do not turn to idols, nor make for yourself molded gods”

v. 1 “**carved image**” [OKJ] “graven image” (Heb.) *pesel* = an idol of wood or stone

<sup>1</sup> 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.

**“sacred pillar”** [OKJ] “standing image” (Heb.) *Mazzebah*= a sacred pillar

(Zondervan Bible Backgrounds) “From very early times, other ancient Near Eastern people set up religious standing stones....were objects of veneration and worship...representations of a deity.”

v. 1 **“engraved stone”** [OKJ] “image of stone” —occurs only here  
(Heb. *Maskith*: “ a sculptured or painted stone” (Companion)

(Zondervan Bible Backgrounds) “Comparison with an Assyrian text has led.. to propose that the ‘carved stone’ is a stone slab placed in the ground, possibly in a doorway, decorated with engraved divine symbols and bowed down upon, enabling the supplicant to kiss the ground with the purpose of having his or her wish granted. We may translate it ‘decorated wishing stone’.

<sup>3</sup> **'If** you walk in My statutes and keep My commandments, and perform them,

<sup>4</sup> **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.

<sup>5</sup> Your threshing shall last till the time of vintage, and the vintage shall last till the time of sowing; you shall eat your bread to the full, and dwell in your land safely.

A focus on the commandments [v. 3]  
which were in force long before the covenant at Sinai

The formula: For obedience [v.3]—God would give:

[v.4] the blessings promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob

- These blessings for obedience a primarily physical blessing not spiritual

v. 5 Wealth from the land—bumper crops and harvests

<sup>6</sup> 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.

<sup>7</sup> You will chase your enemies, and they shall fall by the sword before you.

<sup>8</sup> Five of you shall chase a hundred, and a hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight; your enemies shall fall by the sword before you.

v. 7-9 The blessings included military prowess and power

<sup>9</sup> 'For I will look on you favorably and make you fruitful, multiply you and confirm My covenant with you.

<sup>10</sup> You shall eat the old harvest, and clear out the old because of the new.

v. 9 A most favored nation status

v. 10 Continued abundant crops to replace the old

Dependable food supply—British and America from the 18<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries

<sup>11</sup> I will set My tabernacle among you, and My soul shall not abhor you.

<sup>12</sup> I will walk among you and be your God, and you shall be My people.

v. 11 “I will set my tabernacle among you”

Sums up the blessings: **Israel would have God’s presence with them**

‘my soul’—figure of speech (ascribing human attributes to God)

(Fig. Speech used in the Bible) “soul”— “a soul is attributed to God in condescension, so that we may understand His essence and will”

v. 12 “I will **walk** among you”

“**will** walk among you”—future tense: prophecy fulfilled by Christ

John 1:14

“And the word became flesh and **dwelt** among us...”

▪Some translations— ‘tabernacled’ among us

<sup>13</sup> 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.

v. 14-39—Five-fold threatening for **disobedience**

v. 14-17 General warnings

<sup>14</sup> ‘But if you do not obey Me, and do not observe all these commandments,  
<sup>15</sup> 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,

<sup>16</sup> 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.

<sup>17</sup> I will set My face against you, and you shall be defeated by your enemies. Those who hate you shall reign over you, and you shall flee when no one pursues you.

v. 16 “**terror**” (Heb. *Behalah*)= to tremble inwardly; be suddenly alarmed...

(TH.Wordbook OT)“in the four passages where *behalah* is employed, God is always the agent bringing terror on Israel...because of their disregard for him”[Jer. 15:8] [Ps78:33, Isa. 65:23]– “trouble”

Ps. 78:33 [OKJ] “Therefore their days did He consume in vanity, and their years in trouble”

➤ Refers to the whole generation who died out

v. 17 “those who hate you shall reign over you—invaded, conquered and become slaves again as they had been in Egypt



The 'seven times' punishment v.18-21

<sup>18</sup> 'And after all this, if you do not obey Me, then I will punish you seven **times** more for your sins.

In prophetic language a "time" represents the length of a year

Numbers 14:34—prophetic principle of each day for a year

<sup>34</sup>According to the number of the days in which you spied out the land, forty days, for **each day** you shall bear your guilt **one year**, *namely forty* years, and you shall know My rejection.

<sup>19</sup> I will break the pride of your power; I will make your heavens like iron and your earth like bronze. [drought and poor harvests]

<sup>20</sup> 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.

<sup>21</sup> ‘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.

v. 19 “break the pride of your power”—national punishment

Prophetically: Great tribulation  
(Jer. 30: 5-7; Dan. 12: 1; Mat. 24:21-22)—descendants of Israel in trouble at time of Christ’s return

v. 21 “**seven times**”—refers to the intensity of the punishment

v. 22 3<sup>rd</sup> curse—wild animals

<sup>22</sup> 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.

v. 23-26 4<sup>th</sup> curse—war leading to famine

<sup>23</sup> 'And if by these things you are not reformed by Me, but walk contrary to Me,  
<sup>24</sup> then I also will walk contrary to you, and I will punish you yet seven times for your sins.

<sup>25</sup> 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.

<sup>26</sup> 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.

5<sup>th</sup> curse—war and exile

<sup>27</sup> 'And after all this, if you do not obey Me, but walk contrary to Me,  
<sup>28</sup> then I also will walk contrary to you in fury; and I, even I, will chastise you seven times for  
your sins.

<sup>29</sup> You shall eat the flesh of your sons, and you shall eat the flesh of your daughters.  
<sup>30</sup> 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.

Aspects of war:  
v. 29 cannibalism  
v. 30-31 destruction of sanctuaries and cities

v. 30 I" I will destroy your high places....cast your carcasses on the idols"  
➤ Prophetic : [II Chron. 34: 4, 5]

<sup>31</sup> I will lay your cities waste and bring your sanctuaries to desolation, and I will not smell the  
fragrance of your sweet aromas.  
<sup>32</sup> I will bring the land to desolation, and your enemies who dwell in it shall be astonished at it.

<sup>33</sup> I will scatter you among the nations and draw out a sword after you; your land shall be desolate and your cities waste.

<sup>34</sup> 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.

<sup>35</sup> As long as *it* lies desolate it shall rest— for the time it did not rest on your sabbaths when you dwelt in it.

v. 33 scattering among the nations allowing the land to have its Sabbath rests

<sup>36</sup> '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.

<sup>37</sup> 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.

<sup>38</sup> You shall perish among the nations, and the land of your enemies shall eat you up.

<sup>39</sup> 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.

v. 40-46—Repentance and restoration

Was partially fulfilled by the Jews return from Babylon...the complete fulfillment will be realized in the future after Christ's return

<sup>40</sup> *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,  
<sup>41</sup> 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—  
<sup>42</sup> 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.

<sup>43</sup> 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.  
<sup>44</sup> 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.  
<sup>45</sup> 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.”  
<sup>46</sup>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.

## Intro. Ch. 27—**Vows**

➤ A **voluntary** expression of devotion

Vows were popular in the near eastern ancient world...evidence of vow making in Mesopotamia, Egypt, Hittites, Phoenicians and others

### Vow (Heb. *nadar*)

(Int. St. Bible Enc. ) “A solemn promise that some gift or service will be given to God, always conditional upon God’s fulfillment of a specific request by the worshiper.

Vows generally arose from times of distress, and the promised gift was often related to the petitioner’s request.”



Jacob vowed allegiance to God, the building of a sanctuary, and the payment of tithes... in return for provision during his journeys and a safe return home. [Gen. 28: 20-22]

However, rash vows were warned against in the scriptures (Prov. 20:25; Deut. 23: 21-23)

➤ A **high price** is placed here in chapter 27 on the computation of vows to discourage rash vows

## Chapter 27

### Vows, gifts and tithes (for the sanctuary)

<sup>1</sup>Now the Lord spoke to Moses, saying,

<sup>2</sup>“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,

<sup>3</sup>if your valuation is of a male from twenty years old up to sixty years old, then your valuation shall be fifty shekels of silver, according to the shekel of the sanctuary.

(Expositors) “The presence of the word ‘valuation’ suggests that a common practice was to give the money equivalent, not the person, for the tabernacle service”

A male offered as a vow—worth fifty shekels of silver that would be paid to the priests  
▪ In later periods this would help with maintenance of the sanctuary

(BKC) “Since the 50 shekel evaluation was equivalent to about 50 months wages, this system tended to discourage rash vows!”



<sup>4</sup>If *it is* a female, then your valuation shall be thirty shekels;

<sup>5</sup>and if from five years old up to twenty years old, then your valuation for a male shall be twenty shekels, and for a female ten shekels;

<sup>6</sup>and if from a month old up to five years old, then your valuation for a male shall be five shekels of silver, and for a female your valuation shall be three shekels of silver;

<sup>7</sup>and if from sixty years old and above, if *it is* a male, then your valuation shall be fifteen shekels, and for a female ten shekels.

<sup>8</sup>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.

(Word) “The dedication of Samuel to the sanctuary was an exception, although it is conceivable that a dedicated person could have been made part of the maintenance staff at the sanctuary.

In any case, an Israelite who makes a vow of oneself or of a family member to God is to fulfill that vow by contributing to the sanctuary a predetermined payment.”

Verse 8 places a reduced amount for the poor, the value set by the priest, at a realistic level so the person could keep their vow

v. 9-13 Vows of animals—(had to meet the standards previously given)

<sup>9</sup>If *it is* an animal that men may bring as an offering to the Lord, all that *anyone* gives to the Lord shall be holy.

<sup>10</sup>He shall not substitute it or exchange it, good for bad or bad for good; and if he at all exchanges animal for animal, then both it and the one exchanged for it shall be holy.

<sup>11</sup>If *it is* an unclean animal which they do not offer as a sacrifice to the Lord, then he shall present the animal before the priest;

<sup>12</sup>and the priest shall set a value for it, whether it is good or bad; as you, the priest, value it, so it shall be.

<sup>13</sup>But if he *wants* at all *to* redeem it, then he must add one-fifth to your valuation.

v. 10 (Tyndale) “Once an animal had been vowed, it could not be replaced with one of inferior quality or one of a different species. If an equal exchange was made, both the original animal and its substitute were to be considered holy, and neither could be used for secular purposes.”

v. 11-13 “unclean animal”

(Tyndale) “Animals regarded as unclean by virtue of a blemish could also be vowed to the Lord, and these were accorded monetary value by the priest (v.12).

If a situation arose whereby a man wished to discharge his vow and redeem his animal, he was required to pay a penalty amounting to one-fifth of the valued price.

v. 14- Houses and land as vows

<sup>14</sup>And when a man dedicates his house *to be* holy to the Lord, then the priest shall set a value for it, whether it is good or bad; as the priest values it, so it shall stand.

<sup>15</sup>If he who dedicated it *wants to* redeem his house, then he must add one-fifth of the money of your valuation to it, and it shall be his.

v. 15 If the original owner wanted to buy the house back he had to add one-fifth to the valuation price

(Tyndale) 'Once the house passed into the control of the sanctuary priests they could presumably use it as they saw fit, since it would be in a walled city and thus not associated with any land' (Lev. 25: 29-30).

- The jubilee rule did not apply to property in a walled city

<sup>16</sup>If a man dedicates to the Lord *part* of a field of his possession, then your valuation shall be according to the seed for it. A homer of barley seed *shall be valued* at fifty shekels of silver.

<sup>17</sup>If he dedicates his field from the Year of Jubilee, according to your valuation it shall stand.

<sup>18</sup>But if he dedicates his field after the Jubilee, then the priest shall reckon to him the money due according to the years that remain till the Year of Jubilee, and it shall be deducted from your valuation.

v. 16-17 “according to the seed for it” [1<sup>st</sup> criteria for setting the value]

(Tyndale) “The land being vowed was valued by the priest in terms of the amount of seed required for sowing it annually , each homer of barley representing a price of fifty shekels for the forty-nine year period.”

v. 18 [2<sup>nd</sup> criteria for setting the value]

The value of the field is determined by the number of years until the next jubilee

<sup>19</sup>And if he who dedicates the field ever wishes to redeem it, then he must add one-fifth of the money of your valuation to it, and it shall belong to him.

<sup>20</sup>But if he does not want to redeem the field, or if he has sold the field to another man, it shall not be redeemed anymore;

<sup>21</sup>but the field, when it is released in the Jubilee, shall be holy to the Lord, as a devoted field; it shall be the possession of the priest.

(Tyndale) “A 20% premium was payable to the priests if the field was redeemed subsequently by the owner.

In the event that the land was also sold for some reason after having been dedicated to the Lord, it became the perpetual property of the priests at the next jubilee year”

<sup>22</sup>‘And if a man dedicates to the Lord a field which he has bought, which is not the field of his possession,

<sup>23</sup>then the priest shall reckon to him the worth of your valuation, up to the Year of Jubilee, and he shall give your valuation on that day *as a holy offering* to the Lord.

<sup>24</sup>In the Year of Jubilee the field shall return to him from whom it was bought, to the one who *owned* the land as a possession.

(NICOT) “Verses 22-24 consider the slightly different case of land which has been bought but does not belong to the family estate. In the year of jubilee it will revert to the original owner [v.24].

It may however be dedicated to the Lord at any time prior to the jubilee, but in that case it must be immediately redeemed at the valuation fixed by the priest [v.23].”

<sup>25</sup>And all your valuations shall be according to the shekel of the sanctuary: twenty gerahs to the shekel.

<sup>26</sup>But the firstborn of the animals, which should be the Lord'S firstborn, no man shall dedicate; whether *it is* an ox or sheep, *it is* the Lord'S.

<sup>27</sup>And if *it is* an unclean animal, then he shall redeem *it* according to your valuation, and shall add one-fifth to it; or if it is not redeemed, then it shall be sold according to your valuation.

v. 26 A firstborn animal was considered to belong to God already and could not be vowed

v. 27 An unclean animal, vowed, must be redeemed at its set value plus one-fifth, or else it is sold at its set value

<sup>28</sup>Nevertheless no devoted *offering* that a man may devote to the Lord of all that he has, *both* man and beast, or the field of his possession, shall be sold or redeemed; every devoted *offering* is most holy to the Lord.

(Tyndale) “To discourage irresponsible acts of piety, dedicated things (Heb. *Herem*: to devote or ban) were regarded as the exclusive property of the Lord, and therefore could not be disposed of or redeemed”

(Theological Wordbook OT) “Whatever is devoted to the Lord, whether man, animal, or property, is considered most holy by God and is therefore not to be sold or redeemed by substituting something else.

According to Num. 18:14 and Eze. 44:29, all such objects are to be given to the priests for the support of religious ceremonies.”

<sup>29</sup>No person under the ban, who may become doomed to destruction among men, shall be redeemed, *but* shall surely be put to death.

v. 29 [OKJ] “None devoted, which shall be devoted of men, shall be redeemed; but shall surely be put to death”

v. 29 (NIV) “No person devoted to destruction may be ransomed; he must be put to death”

(Word) “How does a person in Israel come to be classified as a ‘devoted thing’? The law in Ex. 22: 19, 20 provides an explanation. It states that a person who sacrifices to a pagan god becomes **devoted** and falls under the death penalty. That party was most likely declared devoted by a judicial body.

Another example is found in Deut. 13: 13-19; any group of wicked men who lead the community away from service to God become devoted to destruction.”



<sup>30</sup>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 to the Lord.

<sup>31</sup>If a man wants at all to redeem *any* of his tithes, he shall add one-fifth to it.

<sup>32</sup>And concerning the tithe of the herd or the flock, of whatever passes under the rod, the tenth one shall be holy to the Lord.

<sup>33</sup>He shall not inquire whether it is good or bad, nor shall he exchange it; and if he exchanges it at all, then both it and the one exchanged for it shall be holy; it shall not be redeemed.”

Certain dedicated property could be redeemed through paying the valuation plus an additional one fifth...

This could be done with tithes of produce [v.30-31], but not with the tithe of livestock [v.32-33]

v. 32-33

(NSB) “Every tenth animal was part of the tithe that belonged to God. The owner was not allowed to adjust this procedure so that the animal for the tithe was small, weak, or sickly, nor could he substitute a poor animal for a better one”

<sup>34</sup>These *are* the commandments which the Lord commanded Moses for the children of Israel on Mount Sinai.

(Expositors) “The last chapter adds a footnote, as it were, to the main body of laws concluded in chapter 26.

There were yet a few more laws to be given at Mount Sinai that were concluded in the early chapters of Numbers”

**Leviticus**—encompassed one month of time at the foot of Mt. Sinai

Israel would be camped at Sinai for nearly a year [Ex. 19: 1—Num. 10:10]

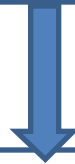
(A History of Old Testament Israel, Merrill) “There are significant oases and grazing lands in southern Sinai, but these could not possibly have provided adequate water and food for the immense human and animal populations involved....

The whole enterprise from beginning to end –from Egypt to Canaan—was an unending series of **miraculous acts**”

## Lesson of Leviticus

(An exposition of the Pentateuch, Allis)

“The great lesson of the book of Leviticus is that the holy God must have a holy people, and that this holiness must embrace the whole of life.”



### **1 Peter 2:9**

<sup>9</sup>But you *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;