

Leviticus 5 - Thursday, September 10th, 2009

- Woven into the fabric of Leviticus 5, we have what is perhaps one of the most powerful life changing principles in the pages of scripture.

5:1 'If a person sins in hearing the utterance of an oath, and is a witness, whether he has seen or known of the matter -- if he does not tell it, he bears guilt.

- As we round a corner from the sin offering to the trespass offering, we go from dealing with the sin nature to dealing with specific sins.
- Here we start with the sin of "lying under oath." In other words, if you've been a witness to an oath and don't tell the truth, you're guilty.

2 'Or if a person touches any unclean thing, whether it is the carcass of an unclean beast, or the carcass of unclean livestock, or the carcass of unclean creeping things, and he is unaware of it, he also shall be unclean and guilty.3 Or if he touches human uncleanness -- whatever uncleanness with which a man may be defiled, and he is unaware of it -- when he realizes it, then he shall be guilty.

- Here, we go from "lying under oath" to touching something that is unclean. When he becomes aware of it, then he will be guilty of it.

4'Or if a person swears, speaking thoughtlessly with his lips to do evil or to do good, whatever it is that a man may pronounce by an oath, and he is unaware of it -- when he realizes it, then he shall be guilty in any of these matters.

- This is interesting because it deals with saying you're going to do something but you don't follow through and keep your word to do it.
- This means that this is sin. For one to not have the integrity to keep a promise or fulfill a contract or a vow is actually guilty of sin.

5 'And it shall be, when he is guilty in any of these matters, that he shall confess that he has sinned in that thing;

- This is where we find that powerful principle that I mentioned; notice that the one who is guilty needs to confess that he's sinned.
- This is how God has wired us and made us. We don't need to confess to God so He knows; we need to confess to God that we know.
- There is a releasing that comes in and through the confessing. When we confess, we free ourselves from the grip that sin has over us.

Romans 6:14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. KJV

"The longer we hide sin, the longer it goes on condemning us and we get more and more under its dominion. ...The sin is one thing, but the superstructure of guilt the devil builds on it is another, and is sometimes far greater than the original sin on which it is built. To understand, then, the true nature of the dominion of sin and what are the devil's intentions in it is the first step into freedom. ... if at that cross sin lost its power to condemn our Substitute, it has also lost its power to condemn all those whose Substitute He became. If each one of them now returns to the Cross in confession, they may all reckon on this fact, lose their burden of guilt, and step into freedom. Whereas the law demands that we do our utmost (with no result but further condemnation...), grace points to Christ as having done all for us and bids us to reckon ourselves dead with Him to the power of our sins to condemn us any longer. ...If we take a long time to confess, we will be a long time under the dominion of sin. But the moment we humble ourselves and confess it all, we are forgiven, cleansed, set free from guilt and declared right with God -- and all because of the age-abiding value in the eyes of God of the blood of Jesus. The foundation of guilt on which Satan built his superstructure is removed by God Himself; the superstructure itself comes tumbling down and the one imprisoned within it is set free."

Roy Hession

6 and he shall bring his trespass offering to the LORD for his sin which he has committed, a female from the flock, a lamb or a kid of the goats as a sin offering. So the priest shall make atonement for him concerning his sin.

- Subsequent to the confession is the atonement. In other words, when I confess my sin to God, I am reunited and "at one" with God.
- This is the reason that confession is so important. Without the confession, there is no forgiveness nor is there any "atonement."

Confession is all important. We must confess our sins, if the faithful Lord is to forgive them. Confession is taking God's side against ourselves. It is the act of judging evil in the light of the Throne. It is like the unpacking of a box, in which one begins with the lighter things at the top, and works steadily down to the heavy articles underneath. It is the repetition in the heart of Joshua's calling the roll of Israel until Achan, the son of Carmi, was taken. When the atonement has been made as touching sin "in any of these things," there is forgiveness. Dare to believe that this is so, O penitent soul, who hast made Christ's soul an offering for thy sin. He says: "I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins."

F.B. Meyer Devotionals on Leviticus (http://preceptaustin.org/leviticus_sermon_illustrations_2.htm)

7'If he is not able to bring a lamb, then he shall bring to the LORD, for his trespass which he has committed, two turtledoves or two young pigeons: one as a sin offering and the other as a burnt offering.⁸ And he shall bring them to the priest, who shall offer that which is for the sin offering first, and wring off its head from its neck, but shall not divide it completely.⁹ Then he shall sprinkle some of the blood of the sin offering on the side of the altar, and the rest of the blood shall be drained out at the base of the altar. It is a sin offering.¹⁰ And he shall offer the second as a burnt offering according to the prescribed manner. So the priest shall make atonement on his behalf for his sin which he has committed, and it shall be forgiven him.

11'But if he is not able to bring two turtledoves or two young pigeons, then he who sinned shall bring for his offering one-tenth of an ephah of fine flour as a sin offering. He shall put no oil on it, nor shall he put frankincense on it, for it is a sin offering.¹² Then he shall bring it to the priest, and the priest shall take his handful of it as a memorial portion, and burn it on the altar according to the offerings made by fire to the LORD. It is a sin offering.¹³ The priest shall make atonement for him, for his sin that he has committed in any of these matters; and it shall be forgiven him. The rest shall be the priest's as a grain offering."

- Here again if one could not afford animals, they could bring birds. In other words, the offering was not to be out of anyone's reach.
- The question is often asked, how do Jews today receive forgiveness for their sins without offering these sacrifices for their sins?
- Jews today believe their prayers, and good works are an acceptable substitute for the required animal sacrifices with these offerings.

14 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying:¹⁵ "If a person commits a trespass, and sins unintentionally in regard to the holy things of the LORD, then he shall bring to the LORD as his trespass offering a ram without blemish from the flocks, with your valuation in shekels of silver according to the shekel of the sanctuary, as a trespass offering.¹⁶ And he shall make restitution for the harm that he has done in regard to the holy thing, and shall add one-fifth to it and give it to the priest. So the priest shall make atonement for him with the ram of the trespass offering, and it shall be forgiven him. ¹⁷ "If a person sins, and commits any of these things which are forbidden to be done by the commandments of the LORD, though he does not know it, yet he is guilty and shall bear his iniquity.¹⁸ And he shall bring to the priest a ram without blemish from the flock, with your valuation, as a trespass offering. So the priest shall make atonement for him regarding his ignorance in which he erred and did not know it, and it shall be forgiven him.¹⁹ It is a trespass offering; he has certainly trespassed against the LORD."

- This speaks of the restitution required in addition to the offering. In other words, when there was a wrong done, it had to be made right.
- Notice there was no restitution in addition to the sin offering in chapter four. That's because we can't make restitution for our sin nature.
- However, we are able to make restitution for specific sins which is why it is in addition to the trespass offering here in chapter five.

- It's interesting to note that specific acts of sin carried with it a twenty percent penalty that was paid to the person who was wronged.
- One has suggested that this wasn't to punish the person who sinned rather; it was to liberate the person from the guilt of their sin.
- In other words, this is God's way of saying that when there is restitution there can be restoration in our relationship one with another.

- As we get into chapter six, we will see more detailed instructions that are given for these five offerings that we studied in chapters 1-5.
- We have a tendency to not really find detailed instructions very interesting, and actually, if the truth be known, they can be really boring!
- Let's be honest, how many of us get excited about reading an instruction book, or operating manual? That's sort of what we have here.

- Perhaps we can approach this with a different outlook so as to better understand the "why" behind the "what" of this instruction manual.
- When you purchase something that has to be assembled, how important is the "instruction manual" to insuring it is completed correctly?
- Now think of these detailed instructions that we have here in Leviticus in the context of how God wants us to be "completed correctly."