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The Message of Leviticus

The book of Leviticus for the most part is a book that is read by very few Christians and appreciated by even less.

Some of the remarks expressed by Christians are;

- Christians are not under the law any longer so why do I need to read it.
- Leviticus is boring and difficult to understand.
- I don't like reading about the killing of animals and blood.
- The God of the New Testament is a God of love, so I'll just read the New Testament, as if there were two distinct Gods!

I hope and pray that in a week and months to come, that you come to understand it's content and purpose for which it was given.

* A very simple division reveals two fold prayers.

I. To know how to worship God. ch.1-17

- A. The laws of the offerings. ch.1-7
- B. The laws of the Priesthood. ch.8-10
- C. The laws of the people. ch.11-16
- D. The laws of the alter. ch.17

II. To know how to walk with God ch.18-27.

- A. Personal holiness for all the people. ch.18-20
- B. Personal holiness for all the priesthood. ch.21-22.
- C. Proclaimed Feast of Tabernacle care. ch.23-24
- D. Personal instructions for the promise land. ch..25-27

Based on this simple division of worshipping God and walking with God, there are four important things about God that His people were to know.

- I.** God is holy. (Purity)
- II.** God walked in the midst of His people. (Presence)
- III.** God initiated the covenant. (Promise)
- IV.** God made fellowship possible through sacrifice. (Provision).

I. God is holy. (Purity)

- A. The Word holy is a key word to the book of Leviticus appearing about 83 times and a total of 131 times with its cognates.
 - 1. The people related to Him, must be holy. - 11:44-45, 19:2, 20:26 .("1 Pet.1:16").
 - 2. The very name of God is holy. 20:3, 22:2, 32

3. The Tabernacle and all in it were to be holy. Ex.40:9
- B.** The priest was God's representative and the peoples, living a stricter life of holiness.
1. The mitre on his head read "Holiness unto the Lord" Ex.39:30
 2. He could not marry a sexually defiled woman, one divorced but a virgin of his own people. 21:13-14
 3. He could not have a physical defect 21:17-23
- C.** The people were to be separated unto God and from the people of the land.
1. They were not to live after the manner of the Egyptians or Cannites. 18:1-5
 2. They were not to commit incest within the family. 18:6-19
 3. They were not to commit adultery 18:20
 4. They were not to sacrifice their children to Molech. 18:21
 5. They were not to practice homosexuality. 18:22
 6. They were not to commit beast uality. 18:23
 7. They were not to commit idolatry 19:4
 8. They were not to seek mediums. 19:32, 20:6
 9. They were to be socially just and upright towards their fellow man. 19:13, 18, 34

10. The consequences are very clear. 18:24-28
* God's will is our sanctification in Christ Jesus 1Thess. 4:3
- D.** The fear of God was the foundation for holy living. 19:14, 32, 25:17, 36, 43
* Sins committed by God's people were shown to have personal consequences, social consequences and spiritual consequences with God!

Purity was to be the mark of God's people!

II. God walked in the midst of His people. (Presence)

- A.** He chose the meeting place, called literally "The tent of appointment" Ex.29:43-45
- B.** He manifested His visible glory before all of Israel. Ex.40:34-38, Lev.9:23
- C.** He spoke to Moses from the tabernacle of meeting 1:1
1. Twenty of the twenty-seven chapters begin with formats like "The Lord said to Moses", 56 times.
 2. "To Aaron and his sons" 6:9, 25, 8:1-2
 3. "To Aaron and Moses" 11:1, 13:6, 15:1

- D. He executed judgement on the sons of Aaron for offering strange fire in the first sacrifice. 10:1-3
- E. He appeared before the High Priest once a year in the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement. 10:1-3
- F. He would walk among them as long as they obeyed. 26:11-12

Presence was to be in the consciousness of God's people!

III. God initiated the covenant. (Promise)

- A. The covenant of Redemption was given to Adam and Eve regarding Jesus Christ.
- Gen.3:15, Is. 7:14, Matt. 1:18
- B. The covenant was given to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
- Gen. 12:1-3, 15:1-21
 - 1. All the families of the earth would be blessed. Gen.12:3
 - 2. God promises the land of promise. Gen. 15:1-8.
 - 3. God alone was responsible for the covenant as He walked between the sacrifices. Gen.15:10, 17.

- 4. God promised to keep Abrahams descendants captive in Egypt for 40 years and judge Egypt because the time given by God to the Amorites to repent or be given up had to be fulfilled. Gen. 15:13-16.
- C. The covenant was given to Moses. Ex. 19-24.
 - 1. Covenant of obedience. Ex. 19:5-6, Lev. 26-27
 - 2. Covenant affirmed by the people. Ex.24:1-8

Promise was to be the hope and expectation of God's people!

IV. God made fellowship possible through sacrifice. (Provsions)

- A. The standard was established with Adam and Eve in the sacrificing of an animal. Gen.3:21.
 - 1. Cain and Abel practiced it. Gen.4:3-4
 - 2. Noah offered sacrifice to God. Gen. 8:20
- B. The standard was required at the Exodus for Passover. Ex. 12:1-5

C. The standar was categorized for various needs of followship. Lev. 1-7

1. Free will offerings. ch.1-3
 - a. Burnt offering for dedication and conservation to the Lord.
 - b. Meal offering for service unto God.
 - c. Peace offering for fellowship and communion.
2. Mandatory offerings. ch. 4-6:7
 - a. Sin offering for failing or missing the mark
 - b. Tresspass offering for willful diobedience
 - * Both of these were to expriate sin and be forgiven, to be reconciled in fellowship with God. Is. 59:1, Ps. 66:18

D. The key to the atoning power was the blood.

1. The blood on the door in Egypt was a sign of redemption and fellowship, exempting a person from judgment. Ex. 12:7, 12:3
2. The blood was for atonement. Lev.17:11, 14
 - * Atonement in Hebrew means to cover, the sacrifice and blood were a temporary provision.

Provision was to be for the ongoing fellowship with God!

V. God's teaching to us from Leviticus.

* In reverse order from what we studied.

A. The provisions of sacrifice in the book of Leviticus are the foundation and prophetic picture of the sacrifice of Jesus for fellowship with God.

1. The lamb of God who would take away the sins of the world. Jn.1:29
2. His blood was precious without blemish able to redeem us. 1Pet.1:18-19
3. He offered one sacrifice for sins forever. Heb. 10:12

B. The promise of a better hope has been initiated and fulfilled in Jesus by the new covenant.

1. The New Covenant is called a better hope through which we draw near to God. Heb.7:19
2. The New Covenant is called a better covenant based on a better and an untransferable priesthood. Heb.7:22-24
3. The New Covenant has made the first obsolete. Heb.8:13

C. The presence of God walking in the midst of His people is promised to those who listen to

Jesus who tabernacled among men and obey His word.

1. God who spoke in times past by..Heb.1-22
2. God tabernacled in a human body and spoke to men the will and revelation of God. Jn.1:1,14
3. Jesus said He was the only way to God. Jn. 14:6
4. God promises to dwell and walk in and among us in our body the temple of God. 2Cor.6:16

D. The purity that is necessary to be one with God is possible only in a personal relationship with Jesus.

1. Responding to His invitation to cease from all our labor and burdens to receive rest. Matt.11:28-30
2. He is our faithful High Priest before the throne of grace able to import to us mercy and grace in times of need. Heb. 4:14-16.
3. He is transforming us by His Holy Spirit. 2 Cor.3:18

Conclusion

- I. God is holy and therefore we are to be holy in purity!

- II. God walks in the midst of His church therefore we are to be conscious of His presence!
- III. God initiated the covenant of Grace therefore we are to value His promise!
- IV. God made fellowship possible through the sacrifice of Jesus therefore we are to live in fellowship with God!