

# Why Is This in the Bible? Summing up Leviticus

Leviticus 27

## I. Leviticus 27 –Rules for Vows and Dedicated Offerings

### A. Why is Leviticus 27 here?

- 1-7 – Sacrifices – Approaching God
- 8-10 Institution of Priesthood
- 11-15 Clean/Unclean in daily life
- 16 Day of Atonement**
- 17-20 Holy/Profane in daily life
- 21-22 Legislation of the priesthood
- 23-27 Sacred Time & Sacrifices – Walking with God

### B. Let's look at Leviticus 27

1. A vow is a pledge or commitment or promise.
2. In offerings to God, these vows could be:<sup>1</sup>
  - a. A gift of thankfulness to God.
  - b. An appeal for deliverance by God.
3. Examples: Gen 28:20-22, Psalm 56:12, Psalm 116:12-14.

### C. What sort of things could be dedicated to God in vows?

1. People (27:1-8, compare to Romans 12:1)
2. Animals (27:9-13)
3. Houses (27:14-15)
4. Property (27:16-25)

### D. What happens when someone decides they don't want to give what they vowed?

1. Vower's Remorse...He must "add a fifth to the valuation" (13, 15, 19, 27, 31).

**Prov. 20:25** It is a snare to say rashly, "It is holy," and to reflect only after making vows.

**Ecc. 5:4-5** When you vow a vow to God, do not delay paying it, for he has no pleasure in fools. Pay what you vow. <sup>5</sup>It is better that you should not vow than that you should vow and not pay

2. People might be tempted to "double count" a gift to look generous when they are not (vv. 26-27).
3. People might want to try and redeem things that must be devoted to destruction (28-29).
4. The final area is that of the tithe (30-33).

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<sup>1</sup> As mentioned in the session on Lev 1-7, we aren't given all these details here because the original audience knew the details. It is like watching a broadcast of a sport that you are not familiar with. The commentator, and the insiders, know what is meant when he says, "it was a foul ball." He doesn't stop and explain it. But you may not understand it without watching the game for a while.

## II. Summarizing and Locating Leviticus in the Story of Redemption

### A. What is the purpose of Leviticus, of the commandments, in the storyline?

1. Recall that at the end of Exodus the people had built the tabernacle as God commanded.
  - a. This was the place for God's special presence among them.
  - b. But it ends this way, *"Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud settled on it, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle"* (Ex. 40:34-35).
2. Enter Leviticus – How can they have his glorious presence and not be consumed?
  - a. The people can be holy (set apart to God and forgiven of sin) and cleansed from the stench of death to stand in the presence of the God of life (Lev. 17:11).
  - b. Thus, the theme of Leviticus is the holiness of God.
  - c. But the GOAL is that the people can enjoy God's blessing presence and glorify him (Lev 26:11-13).
3. Thus, at the end of Leviticus, we see in the next book, *"The Lord spoke to Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the tent of meeting"* (Num 1:1).

### B. How does Leviticus point forward in the storyline?

1. Leviticus 8-10 points to the final and faithful high priest (Hebrews 4:14).
2. Leviticus 11-15, points to our need to be made clean—transferred from death to life (see Gospels when Jesus heals lepers and the woman with the flow of blood).
3. Lev 16 points to the atonement for our sins being made finally and fully (Hebrews 13:12, 9:11-15).

### C. How does Leviticus apply to us?

1. We are under the New Covenant, not the Mosaic Covenant God made with Israel (Heb. 8:13, Gal. 3:15-29 "until" language, Gal. 4:24, 30-31).
2. Nonetheless, Romans 15:14 says, *"For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope."*
  - a. First, we must learn to treasure Christ, who is the fulfillment of all the promises of God to us and the one who took the curse for us (see point B above).
  - b. Second, we must (and get to) walk in holiness (1 Peter 1:15-21).