

Time belongs to the Lord and must be utilized as a stewardship from the Lord (Eph. 5:16; Col. 4:5; 1 Cor. 15:34). It is time to check on our time!

b. Devotionally. vv. 3,4.

Here is a repetition of the second command in the Table of Laws (Ex. 20: 4, 5). No images, no sculptures, no statues, and no pictures! Idols were ridiculed by the prophets (Isa. 44:9-20, etc.). The Psalmist left no place for them (115). Their helplessness is illustrated (1 Sam. 5:3-5). Although Israel was led astray to them so frequently, the Word of God inveighs against them from the beginning (Ex. 23:24). An idol, quite obviously, came between the living God and the Israelite to hinder true worship.

The final exhortation of the beloved apostle John is against idolatry (1 John 5:21). This is not Israelitish, but for the grace dispensation believer. Why? Because the Spirit of God knows one does not need wood or stone to have idols. Other things and persons may easily displace the Son of God! Holiness cannot allow idolatry!

c. Sacrifically. vv. 5-8.

This peace offering is clearly described earlier in the Book (Lev. 4:1-17). It was to be eaten before the Lord (vv. 6, 17), by the entire family, including the slaves (vv. 7, 17), as a feast of joy (v.18), and was part of God's food for the offerer (v. 11). It was all a great time of fellowship! But according to the text here, it had to be done properly (vv. 5-6) for if not, then serious results would be known (vv. 7,8). The thought is like crystal: Even what a man brings to God must be pure and holy. Anything does not go; just what is in line with His will. The peace offering was a "voluntary offering" (v. 5 cf. with 7:16). It could be a vow offering or a thanksgiving offering (7:16, Psa. 66:16).

Conclusion: God's Word stands! His standard is patent. Those who are of faith will seek His glory, whether personally, in home or practice. Oh, for a willing heart!

THE BOOK OF LEVITICUS

"Be Ye Holy"

Leviticus 19:1-8

Introduction

1. The source of any material usually connotes the authority of the statements. Hence, it is a matter of continual concern that what is indicated be accepted as the Word of God. This is the claim of the present text (v. 1). It is God's revelation through Moses.

2. The previous chapter inveighed against perversions in sex conduct. The ultimate basis for appeal there is the phrase repeated five times: "I am the Lord your God" (vv. 2, 5, 6, 21, 30). If this relationship does not command obedience, nothing will (cf. 1 Cor. 6: 19, 20; Rom. 6:14-23).

3. A new set of examples is provided in this chapter to point out God's standard for the Israelite. At least 16 times the nation is again reminded of the fact that the Lord is their God (cf. vv. 2, 3, 10, etc.). Although many of the matters here do not find specific application to the dispensation of grace believer, by virtue of their nature, there are abiding principles one needs to catch. Furthermore, under grace, in opposition to the law, the motivation for performance is one of appeal rather than command. But in both Testaments, it is the matter of faith on the Lord that will permit the performance (cf. Judges 16:20; Phil. 2:13).

4. Look at three major injunctions which have application for any true child of God:

1. THEOLOGICALLY v. 2.

a. God's position.

The thrust of this section is that God is inherently holy. This is His chief attribute. Throughout

the O.T. and the N.T., holiness is God's foremost essential (cf. Ex. 3:5; Lev. 11:44, 45; Rev. 4:8). To say that God is holy is to claim that He is absolutely pure both in His nature and conduct. Thus, a regulative principle is provided for all His communicable attributes, including love. It shows the direction which the other attributes should take.

b. Man's relation.

Unlike the prevailing philosophies of men, the Word of God here raises up the highest standard. Men are called upon to "be holy" because God is holy! This standard of excellence is not limited to the O.T. (cf. 1 Pet. 1:15, 16). Whereas some would lower this high standard and plead for the inclusion of "faults" to account for man's depraved nature, the Scriptures adhere incontrovertibly to the truth that what God is, men are to become! Under "law" men had this high standard in order to shut them up to "faith" (Gal. 3:23). There was no other way out! Now, under grace, the high standard is there with the revelation that the Holy Spirit has been given as the resident Dynamic for living (Eph. 5:18; Gal. 5:16). God intended Israel to be a testimony to the nations in the O.T. and He intends the believer today to be a testimony to the world (Deut. 7; Isa. 44, 45; 2 Cor. 4:6).

2. DOMESTICALLY v. 3.

Perhaps nowhere is the standard of the Bible more pertinently out of step with moderns than here. But then, what else would one expect! Man is always opposed to God! Clearly, concisely, and with a frankness which is undeniable, the Bible affirms that "every man" is to "fear" his parents. There are no exceptions to the rule as the individual phrase "every man" implies. The N.T. repeats this injunction, but omits the peculiar Jewish promise of the land (cf. Eph. 6:1, 2 with Ex. 20:12). It is reported that the last days of this dispensation will be

characterized by an antipathy to this injunction of God (2 Tim. 3:2). Even a careless observer knows that the current scene has much to commend itself to this failure!

The verb "fear" is not to be weakened. Its primary significance is "to tremble". Surely, thoughts of "reverence" and "honor" are implicit, but there is no question that offspring are taught by this text that one's attitude toward his parents is in a large measure his personal attitude toward God Himself. The verb is used of Lot (Gen. 19:30), of a king (1 Kings 3:28), of a sacred place (Gen. 28:17), and of God (Lev. 19:14, 32). Those who violate God's principle here cannot expect the blessing He promises (Joshua 1:8; Psa. 19:11; 119:128).

3. SPIRITUALLY vv. 3-8.

a. Temporally. v. 3.

The plural of the word "sabbaths" notes that more than one "sabbath" is in view. Indeed, there was the sabbatic year, the year of Jubilee, and certain sacrificial sabbaths (cf. Lev. 25 and 23:32). Interestingly, all of these notices of days and periods of time belonging to God acknowledge that time belongs to Him! The O.T. saint had this whole array of days to keep, but the N.T. raises the issue higher and points to all days being the Lord's (cf. Gal. 4:9, 10; Col. 2:16, 17).

The weekly sabbath is part of the Decalogue (Ex. 20). All of the commands given there are repeated under grace instructions, except the fourth one dealing with the sabbath (See Acts 14:15 for the first commandment; 1 John 5:21 for the second; James 5:12 for the third; Eph. 6:1 for the fifth; 1 John 3:15 for the sixth; 1 Cor. 6:9, 10 for the seventh; Eph. 4:28 for the eighth; Col. 3:9 for the ninth; and Eph. 5:3 for the tenth).