

## THE BOOK OF LEVITICUS

### "Concerning Vows"

Leviticus 27:1-29

#### Introduction

1. The five books of Moses have specific messages; Genesis is for showing man ruined. Exodus is man redeemed. Leviticus is man worshipping. Numbers is man serving and Deuteronomy is man obedient. The Book of Worshipping is at its end now. What is next?

2. The answer is simple (Psa. 116:12). Elsewhere this same concern is expressed (Micah 6:8; Rom. 12:1,2). To do anything less is to pronounce your life wretched and profitless.

3. The word "singular" with "vow" means "extraordinary." Here is something special which is now being offered to God. It is above and beyond his common duty. Here it is for Israel (vv. 1, 34). It is wrong to make interpretation for the Gentiles of the Church (cf. 1 Cor. 10:32). The N.T. is explicit for the believer of this day (2 Cor. 5:14, 15). There is no room for a vow with that! Examine the vows:--

#### 1. FOR PERSONS vv. 2-8

a. Stipulations. Age and sex are primary considerations in this matter. Children of 1 month to persons over 60 are considered. The text is clear and forward.

b. Valuations. The shekel is mentioned, not as a ransom, but as a visible declaration of one's devotion. It was a plain way of making over one's person (cf. Ex. 21:32; Zech. 10:12; Matt. 26:15). It is a sort of way to get into the Lord's service. We might well sacrifice all that we have to enter into the service of the Lord. How blessed to stand in His service. Apparently there was a standard measure kept in the sanctuary (v. 25). By this all was regulated (cf. 1 Sam. 2:3). This speaks of a great truth: God's justice. He knows the want in Cain's faith; the zeal of Jehu; the love of Ephesus, and the life of Sardis (2 Cor. 5:10).

c. Exceptions. A poor person was not excluded from making a vow. Provisions were made (v. 8). This shows the unchanging grace of our God. How transcendent!

#### 2. FOR BEASTS vv. 9-13.

a. Selection. It is noteworthy that the beasts could be of any sort, but once given they were not to be changed. Mind you, certain animals could not be offered, but they could if an evaluation were given in exchange (v. 12, e.g.

camel or asses). Furthermore, if one sought to substitute an animal for another, both the substitute and the original would become the Lord's (v. 10). There was never to be a decline in a vow. God sought to show that one should never regret anything he gives to the Lord.

b. Redemption. Should one in some way give his best animal and desire then to redeem it, this could be done. There was a penalty for doing this: an additional 1/5th was added to the evaluation. This was like a trespass (cf. 5:16). The move away from the original gift showed some sort of coldness and a decline. He paid for it!

3. FOR HOUSES vv. 14, 15.

The same regulations as for the animals are given here. The redemption feature is also provided.

4. FOR FIELDS. vv. 16-24.

a. Owned. vv. 16-21. The portion of the field involved was valued according to the amount of seed sown (v. 16). So that the man might not pretend to give a liberal vow when in fact a small one, due to the rules of the Jubilee (cf. 25:8ff. the priest was involved in checking it all out carefully (cf. vv. 18, 20, 21). Here again, if love cooled, redemption was possible, but with the payment of a trespass (v. 19). If not redeemed, the land lay with the Lord forever. The original owner would have no more claim on it. (vv. 20, 21). No temporizing in these matters.

b. Rented. vv. 22-24. Land bought up to the Jubilee could not be given. Only what was patrimony could be given. Nothing borrowed. Give to the Lord only that which is of value and would give us grief if not given to HIM.

5. FOR EXCLUSIONS vv. 26-29.

a. Firstlings. vv. 26, 27. This already belonged to God and could not be given (Ex. 13:2). Unclean beasts could be redeemed but with the trespass added (v. 27).

b. Bans vv. 28, 29. The word "devoted" means "doomed" and refers to men and beasts and things given over to destruction. Hard as this may be to understand, the truth remains that what God had intended for the flames of divine wrath could not be given (cf. Josh. 6:17; 1 Sam. 15:3; 2 Sam. 1:21; 1 Kings 20:42).

Conclusion All here obviously is for Israel. Applications for the believer today abound, the core of which is: deal honestly with God. No vows for believers today.