

Bible Survey 3.1.1 Exodus 25-Leviticus

Introduction of Jewish ceremonial [ritual] worship – this material works to integrate Heaven and earth in the Old Covenant includes Exodus 25 -40, all of Leviticus, and Numbers 19. In this material God shows Moses the rituals His people are to employ in their worship. All of this has implications for the New Covenant which of course they had no understanding of. Such is the “diachronic” progressive revelation of God through redemptive history. Here we start with the basics of Jewish Ritualized Worship:

1. Definition of Ritual Worship:

- a. Religion has 2 parts... an inner and an outer expression. The inner devotional life of the faithful believer where one meets with God in their heart; and the outer form where one meets God in community.
- b. The inner life has its conception in the Spirit that animates life and faith through redemptive history.
- c. The outer life has its expression in rituals that integrate the inner life with heaven itself.
- d. Ritual was the community life form that held sway in the Tabernacle and Temple eras of the Old Covenant where the Spirit was not yet joined with humanity because of the sin-gulf separation. In the New Covenant, the Spirit holds sway in the era of worship in Spirit and Truth – John 4:23.
- e. Ritual may be defined as the socially established and regulated holy-acts and words where consecrated priests mediate and intercede for practitioners in which the encounter and communion between the deity and the congregation is established, developed, and brought to its ultimate goal.
- f. Such ritual should be taken as the expression of religious experience in concrete external actions performed within the congregation or community. This does not include individual personal and spontaneous feelings and expressions of piety, but it obviously entails certain limitations and constraints.
- g. Ritual faith expression emphasis:
 - i. The concrete and material →over against →spiritual feelings
 - ii. The community →over against →the individual
 - iii. Regulated set forms and occasions →over against →spontaneity

2. Function of Ritual in the Old Testament:

- a. Symbolic function:
 - i. It symbolizes the relationship of humanity toward God:
 1. Inner feelings are modeled in outward forms of expression.
 2. The Hebrew word for ‘worship’ is to ‘bow down’... it is to demonstrate reverence before a King... it is not debasement as the worthless before the worthy, but rather respectful and deferential attitude of the flawed and mortal before the Greatest and most Holy Eternal.
 3. The ‘ascending smoke’ of incense and the burnt offering symbolizes prayers ascending to God in a pleasing way to receive His favor.

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4. The 'raising of hands' symbolizes dependence.
 5. 'Kneeling' symbolizes brokenness and humility.
 6. The human monarch [vassal king] 'sitting quietly' in the house of the Lord symbolizes dependence before the Suzerain King.
- ii. It symbolizes the relationship of God towards humanity, and how He mediates His Will to His people through word and symbol:
 1. The concept of Holy space – that is one place being more holy than another illustrates that God is totally 'other' in being above all things.
 2. The Ark of the Covenant and Cherubim symbolize God's Sovereignty over all things.
 3. The lamp-stand suggests illumination, while the laver reflects cleansing.
- b. Typical function... as a pattern for faith life:
- i. A 'type' is a visible form that portrays not only what is symbolic in heaven, but also something that will become a reality in the future.
 - ii. In the OT, one did not separate the earthly replica from the heavenly reality.
 - iii. In the OT the earthly replica was used/seen as a psychological and physical gateway into the Spiritual world. This was rendered useless with the coming of Messiah and the release of the Spirit.
 - iv. The books of Hebrews and Galatians deal with the Christian-Jewish heresy of holding onto the symbolic shadows of the OT expressions when the Living Word of the NT had rendered them useless. Many Christian-Jews felt they needed to continue to abide by the Law, not willing to accept that Grace had replaced it.
 - v. OT saints saw past the symbolic shadow into the NT reality. David, Joel, Isaiah, Jeremiah, etc all saw Grace and the Spirit as God's ultimate intention. Even though it hadn't yet been released in fullness, they foresaw that it would be.
 - vi. Even in many 'modern' church faith expressions, the old forms of faith are enticing even though they tend to keep humanity in bondage to the Law and restrict the flow of the Spirit. Occasionally the Spirit breaks free of this status quo and reduces the old forms of worship to shadow.

3. Aspects of Ritual Life:

a. Sacred Sites:

- i. The 1st Sacred Site for Israel was a Tabernacle – a portable tent of meeting which suited the tribal nomadic journeying.
 1. Later the site in Canaan was Mt Zion – where the Arc and the Tabernacle remained. Zion would become part of the people's identity in perpetuity.

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2. God generally met with Moses and later the priests on the mountain top – suggesting that mountains symbolized the axis point between heaven and earth (Ex 25:17, 20:24; Deut 12:1; Mat 28:16; Mark 9:2; Heb 8:5, 12:18; Rev 21:10).
- ii. Mount Sinai – after Israel had a holy pilgrimage of 3 days, God descends in a supernatural Theophany – with thunder, lightening, and a fiery storm demonstration of His power and presence.
 1. Although God continued to speak to His chosen instruments, He did not remain with them or among His people.
 2. God’s decision to “Tabernacle” or sojourn with His people represents a reversal of the expulsion of humanity Adam and Eve experienced from the Garden.
 3. Mt Sinai is where God reveals His specific covenant to Moses and Israel and where Israel again proves itself unworthy.
- iii. Reflection on the Tabernacle:
 1. Pharaoh had a methodology for setting a war camp tent that Moses would have known and employed – it arrayed a rectangular tent with a stove, water, lamp, table for food, and a footstool. These would have been appropriate for the king traveling with his army.
 2. God’s Tabernacle contained these same components though in far grander terms worthy of the Great King – the Altar being the stove, the lavvy being the water source, a lamp-stand, provision-table, and the Ark as His footstool.
 3. The camps of the tribes arrayed around the central Tabernacle was symbolic of God being the Warrior-King in the midst of His people as they move toward the land of Promise.
 4. The Tabernacle is representative of Eden’s garden sanctuary – a walled enclosure:
 - a. The Cherubim arrayed as supernatural guardians of the Ark of the Presence of God reflect their presence in the Garden (Ex 25:18-22, 26:31; Gen 3:24; Ezk 28:13ff).
 - b. The table with the showbread demonstrating bountiful provision God has provided for humanity (Lev 24:5-9; Gen 2:9a).
 - c. The Lamp – a stylized candelabra representing the tree of life and the Law that gives knowledge to humanity [illumination] (Ex 25:31-36; Deut 10:1-5, 4:6; Gen 2:9b).
 - d. Priests who are to guard and preserve the holiness of the sanctuary reflect God’s charge to Adam to care for the Garden... the place where God and humanity interact (Num 3:7-8, 8:26, 18:5-6; Gen 2:15).
 - e. Precious materials listed reflect the worthiness of the King whose dwelling place it represents (Gen 2:12).

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- f. The Tabernacle had areas of graduated levels of holiness, and represents Mt Sinai with the stated graduated levels of Holiness culminating in its peak which was clouded in fire of the Presence of God (Ex 28:14, 16).
 - g. God's joy in the details of creation and sharing it with humanity is reflected in His choice and ordination of Bezalel and Oholiab to create the Tent of Meeting or Tabernacle along with all of its furnishings and instruments (Ex 31:1-11).
 - h. The observance of the Sabbath is a sign of the covenant humanity entered into with God... acknowledging that it is God who makes humanity holy, and culminating with the Tablets of the Testimony (Ex 31:12-18).
- b. Sacred Objects:
- i. God makes the distinction between things that are common or profane, and things that are sacred or holy.
 - ii. There is a ritual that will apply for sanctifying a common object rendering it sacred. This ritual involves the sprinkling with consecrating oil, which when performed properly and with the proper attitude of reverence and respect, renders the common object sacred – that is rendering it the unique property of God.
 - iii. Such consecration must be offered for the ordination of specified individuals as well as the ordination of specified objects.
 - iv. Some of the objects include Moses' staff, the Ark of the Covenant [symbolizing God's 'Footstool' or Throne on Earth established on 10 Commands of Righteousness], the Tent of Meeting or Tabernacle [symbolizing that place where humanity could meet with God], the Lamp stand [symbolizing the light of God's presence radiating out in Revelation and Illumination], the bread [symbolizing the food of communion], the Lavvy (symbolizing humanities need to be ceremonially cleansed or pure to enter the Presence of God), the Ephod, utensils, the 'Urim and Thummin', etc.
- c. Sacred Seasons:
- i. The 7 feasts of Leviticus 23 symbolize God's sacred calendar.
 - ii. They integrate the natural agricultural seasons [creation] with God's historical acts of salvation in Israel's redemptive history. These memorial events keep fresh that all things great and small come from God, who alone is humanities redeemer.
 - iii. Passover, First Fruits, Atonement, Sanctification, etc. – all have their OT inception that ultimately comes to fruition in Messiah Jesus.
- d. Sacred Personnel:
- i. God ordains that specific people will serve Him in specific functions for His purpose in blessing humanity and creation.
 - ii. OT – Priests & Levites, and later Kings and Prophets... these people are set apart from the others and consecrated by rituals.

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iii. NT – every believer is a minister of the Gospel of Jesus... consecrated by the Spirit... although Pastors and Missionaries are ordained and consecrated by prayer.

e. Sacred Actions-ceremonies:

- i. OT – Circumcision, sacrifice-offerings, processions 3 times a year.
- ii. NT – Communion, Baptism, regular worship.

4. Outline of Leviticus:

a. Laws for Sacrifices – 1:1-7:38

i. Instructions for the Laity – 1:1-6:7

1. The burnt offering [translated as Holocaust in the Vulgate] 1:1-17
2. The cereal offering 2:1-16
3. The peace offering – 3:1-17
4. The purification [sin] offering – 4:1-5:13
5. The guilt [reparation] offering – 5:14-6:7

ii. Instructions of the Priests – 6:8-7:38

1. The burnt offering – 6:8-13
2. The cereal offering – 6:14-18
3. The priest's cereal offering – 6:19-23
4. The purification [sin] offering – 7:1-10
5. The peace offering – 7:11-36
6. Summary – 7:37-38

b. Institution of the Priesthood – 8:1-10:20

- i. Ordination of Aaron and his sons – Lev 8:1-36
- ii. Aaron begins his priestly duties – Lev 9:1-24
- iii. God's judgment on Aaron's sons Nadab and Abihu – Lev 10:1-20

c. Clean and unclean pronouncements and remedies – Lev 11:1-15:33

- i. Unclean animals and eating prohibitions – 11:1-47
- ii. Unclean pronouncement on people and living conditions – 12:1-15:33
 1. Childbirth purification – 12:1-8
 2. Leprosy – 13:1-17
 3. Skin diseases – 13:18-44
 4. Regulation for lepers – 13:45-46
 5. Leprosy of clothes – 13:47-59
 6. Purification of lepers – 14:1-32
 7. Leprosy of homes – 14:33-57
 8. Sexual impurities of men – 15:1-18
 9. Sexual impurities of women – 15:19-33

d. Purification – the Great Day of Atonement – 16:1-34 – Theological center of Leviticus

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- e. **Laws of practical holiness – 17:1-27:34**
 - i. **Sacrifice and food – 17:1-16**
 - ii. **Sexual behavior – 18:1-30**
 - iii. **Community worship and social responsibility – 19:1-37**
 - iv. **Social Penalties for holiness violations – 20:1-27**
 - v. **Rules for priests – 21:1-24**
 - vi. **Holiness and sacraments – 22:1-33**
 - vii. **Rules for feasts – 23:1-44**
 - viii. **Rules for the Tabernacle – 24:1-9**
 - ix. **Rules for blasphemy – 24:10-23**
 - x. **Rules for Sabbatical and Jubilee years – 25:1-55**
 - xi. **Exhortation to obey the Law – blessings and curses – 26:1-46**
 - xii. **Redemption requirements – 27:1-34**

5. **Literary Structure of Sinai Covenant** – Ex 19-Num 10 – God forming covenants with humanity is a major theme of Judaic-Christian Scripture. Covenants were common between leaders and governments, and typically followed the Ancient Near East legal formula between a Suzerain King [AKA Super-powerful regional dominion] and a Vassal King [a lower order of king of a small region or city-state]. demonstrate God’s desire for relationship between the Kingdom of Heaven [God’s Spiritual Domain] and the kingdom of earth [humanities physical domain]. This literary structure is Chiasitic and demonstrates the central theological importance of God’s Glory filling the Tabernacle:

A Ten Commandments – rules for humanity and God’s Holiness on Mt Sinai – Ex 19:3-20:21

- **Begins – Israel’s unique Sojourn with God begins at Mt Sinai**
- **Dates – are approximate extrapolated from known historical events:**
 - **Birth of Moses – 1520 BC**
 - **Moses as Prince of Egypt – 1520-1480 BC**
 - **Moses as Shepherd of Midian – 1480-1440 BC**
 - **Moses as the Prophet-Leader of the Hebrews during the Exodus – 1440-1400 BC**
 - **10 Commandments given on Mount Sinai early in the Exodus – 1441-1442 BC**
- **Begins – God’s Glory displayed on Mt Sinai in cloud and fire**
- **Theme – holiness**
- **Commandments given**

B Civil Laws – moral and ethical purity – Ex 20:22-24:11

- **Focus on moral and ethical behavior**
- **Prohibition against sexual perversion [bestiality] – not to follow practices of the Canaanites**
- **Prohibition against food perversion – eating ‘road-kill’**

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- Ritual use of blood, fat – for ceremonial cleansing not for food

C Tabernacle Instructions – sacrificial altar – Ex 24:12-34:28

- Instructions for the Altar – for all sacrifices
- Climax – priests' ordination prescribed
- Concluding narrative of wayward humanity – Aaron & golden calf idol
- Israel's idolatrous worship nature displayed – drunken debauchery

X Climax – Tabernacle built and filled with God's Glory – Ex 34:29-40:38

C' Sacrificial Instructions – sacrificial altar – Lev 1-10

- Instructions for proper sacrifices on altar
- Climax – priest's ordination described
- Concluding narrative of wayward priests – Aaron's sons Nadab & Abihu
- Israel disciplined worship nature – no drunkenness or debauchery

B' Purity Laws – ritual and moral purity – Lev 11-18

- Moral & ethical behavior
- Prohibition against sexual perversion [bestiality] – not to follow the practices of the Canaanites
- Prohibition against food perversion – eating 'road-kill'
- Ritual use of blood, fat – for ceremonial cleansing not for food

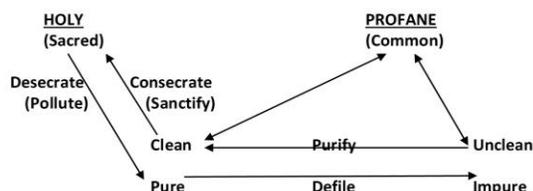
A' Holiness Laws – most of the 10 commandments repeated – Lev 19:1-Num 10:10

- Ends – Israel departs from Mt Sinai with God in their midst
- Date
- God's Glory on Tabernacle displayed in cloud and fire
- Ends – silver trumpets sound orders from God's Tabernacle
- Theme – holiness throughout
- Commandments

6. Theology of Leviticus: Requirements of people functioning in the Presence of a Holy God.

- a. Leviticus makes the distinctions between what is Holy [Sacred] and what is common [profane].

Diagram of the movement between Holy and Profane:



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These distinctions apply to people, time, purity, and space:

- i. **People:**
 1. High Priest – is most holy
 2. Priests are next behind High Priest
 3. Levites are next
 4. Israelites are the least holy
 - ii. **Time:**
 1. 6 days are common – the Sabbath 7th day is Holy
 2. 6 years are common – the 7th is the Sabbatical year and is Holy
 3. 49 years are common – the 50th is the Jubilee year and is Holy
 - iii. **Purity:**
 1. The world is segregated into clean and unclean... contact of the clean with unclean renders the clean unclean
 2. Ritual to make clean again what has become unclean
 3. When the camp is functioning properly God's blessing is on the people
 - iv. **Space:**
 1. Holy of Holies – is the most Holy
 2. The Holy Place is next in Holiness
 3. The Tabernacle courtyard is next in Holiness
 4. The Camp of the consecrated people is next
 5. Outside the camp is the least Holy place
- b. **God's Presence is manifested in His Glory which can only be present among the people when they are clean and consecrated. When something renders them or an object as unclean or desecrated... there must be rituals performed to restore the state of being clean.**
- i. **Glory is not identical with Holiness... Glory stresses power or demonstrates the manifestation of power – it is an outward demonstration of an inward condition.**
 - ii. **Holiness is an inward condition of God's intimate nature.**
 - iii. **God's Holiness is so 'other' and commanding, that unclean cannot stand in His presence.**
 - iv. **Note Isaiah 6:5 where the prophet finds himself in the presence of God... God's Holiness leads Isaiah to judge himself... expressing his deficiency. God agrees with this judgment and renders a solution. This is the dynamic representative of the Levitical order.**
 - v. **Humans may either retreat in dread from God's Holy Being, or bow in contrite worship... the later is the desired response.**
 - vi. **God's Holy nature requires Him to be separated from the unclean, impure, immoral, unethical, and corrupt – these deficiencies cannot tolerate proximity with God's perfect presence.**
 - vii. **God's nature of being zealous for purity motivates Him to create that which is good, and to redeem that which was created good and fallen into a deficient state of being.**

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- viii. The proper response to Holiness draws a person to God and that which is noble and good. The regulations and laws of ritual and personal purity sought to ingrain the concepts of the Holy into the social consciousness of the people.
 - ix. The clean, pure, whole, and just are conditions of holiness – while the opposite were the unclean, imperfect, confused and false. The Pagans were confused – driven by their animal appetites rather than guided by their noble disciplines.
 - x. The priests were to lead people into greater discipline and holiness – with the High Priest in the Old Covenant a type for the Messiah who would mediate a new and better covenant.
 - xi. Reverential ‘fear of God’ is the proper response to God’s Holiness. Such is a mixture of love, respect, and deferential honor. By practicing justice and mercy, people demonstrate their ‘fear of God’.
- c. The ‘Presence of God’ is central to the legislation in Leviticus. A Holy life is a blessed life – a life of personal growth... a life of purpose, meaning and joy. It is a life lived in communion with God.
- i. God’s presence arouses happiness and wonder, as well as fear and respect.
 - ii. Because of God’s being present with His people there is a sense of His ‘general presence’ throughout the camp as well as His ‘localized presence’ in the Holy of Holies.

7. The Theme of Sacrifice

- a. Sacrifice as presented in Biblical context is about returning humanity to a state of being where they may remain in the presence of a Holy and Righteous God.
- i. In the Pagan world, sacrifice was more about satisfying or placating an angry and vengeful God, or inducing a positive response or help through gifts presented... like a bribe to secure a desired response.
 - ii. In the Pagan world, gods were capricious and inconsistent, and offerings were the means to curry their favor and support.
 - iii. In the Bible, sacrifice was a means toward restoration and wholeness permitting relational intimacy and proximity of imperfect humanity to a perfect God... both personally and in community.
 - iv. Sacrifices were substitutionary in that something of value was given in exchange of something of value.
- b. Words used to describe sacrifice:
- i. ‘Gorban’ – an offering or gift – to bring a gift near to God.
 - ii. ‘Minchah’ – Tribute brought from a vassal to their king. Expresses dependence and gratitude.
 - iii. ‘Zebach’ – a fellowship meal of God with His people. Expresses solidarity within the community.

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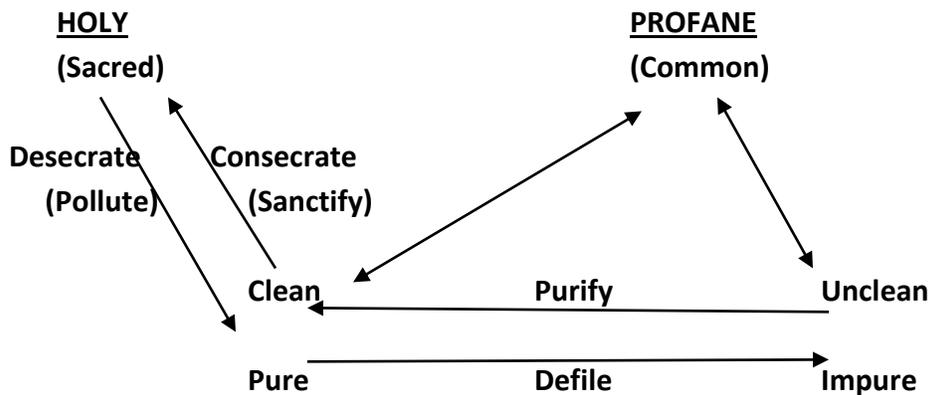
- iv. 'Olah' – burnt offering meaning 'to go up' as in smoke rising with earthly prayer. Used most often as an atonement for human sin.
 - v. 'Shelem' – peace offering means to thank and acknowledge when God answered prayer or gave a blessing. It is a celebrative thank you.
 - vi. 'Neder' – a votive offering usually more of an SOS type of prayer of distress as often found in Psalms when the king was in distress or great need... a sign of penitence and dependence.
 - vii. 'Nedibah' – freewill offering given spontaneously from the heart. An 'I love you' sort of a gift.
 - viii. 'Hattah' – sin offering to atone for something that should not have been done.
 - ix. 'Asham' – a guilt offering... in the process of sinning, one had wronged God, the community, the Tabernacle/Temple, and family. This was a type of payment for the wrong.
 - x. 'Bikkurim' – first fruits... refers to the first and the best offered back to God in declaration of gratitude for His provision.
- c. Regulations for sacrifice:
- i. Necessity to be clean and pure – this is not hygiene but the inner state of the person before God.
 - ii. Everything exists as clean or unclean, Holy or common.
 - 1. Common things are divided into 2 groups – clean or unclean.
 - 2. Holy things are divided into 2 groups – consecrated or desecrated.
 - iii. Cleanness is a state between holiness and uncleanness. Sanctification can elevate the clean to holy, while pollution degrades the clean to unclean.
 - iv. Uncleanness arises from natural causes [disease] or human action [sin]. Sin is not simply wrong doing... but wrong being. Action was seen as an externalization of the internal condition.
 - v. The unclean condition is contagious, and will make the clean unclean. However, things that are permanently unclean [certain animals] do not pass on their uncleanness but simple may not be consumed.
 - vi. The penitent who desires to be holy feels the wrong they commit very personally, and desire to remedy the matter or make restitution. The wicked on the other hand, feel no remorse other than they may have been caught or their wrongdoing discovered.
 - vii. A main point of the book of Leviticus is that humanity has a role to play in seeking atonement... we have a contribution toward sanctification to make. God has provided the means and the method by His Grace, but we in faith have to make the personal application. The good and the noble will pursue this and will be made righteous, the wicked care nothing for this and will be held accountable for their error.

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d. Difference between OT and NT:

- i. In the OT – If someone was unclean and they touched someone who was clean, they clean is rendered unclean. The unclean always degrades the condition of the clean, while the reverse is not true.
- ii. In the NT – when Jesus came in contact with the unclean, He rendered them clean... such as the woman who touched Jesus cloak and was healed. Her unclean state was transformed by Jesus. This demonstrates a vastly superior covenant mediated by a vastly superior individual... Moses as prophet could only acknowledge what was clean or unclean, Jesus as God can render the unclean clean.

e. Movement between Holy and profane:



- i. This was the OT world view that was prevalent when Jesus came and taught.
- ii. Jesus had to correct His disciple's errant thinking with a drastically different concept of what was clean and unclean.
- iii. Peter struggled with this even after Pentecost – this was the nature of the sheet descending with all manner of 'unclean' food on it – Acts 10:11-15.

f. Offerings as Symbolic

- i. They were expected to be the very best one had to bring to God.
- ii. Secondary offerings were not received well – Cain.
- iii. Offerings given in the wrong spirit were not received well.
- iv. Offerings had to be accurately performed as the ritual was symbolic. If the symbols were not in strict conformity, the worshipper's understanding of God behind the symbol became distorted – Lev 8-10.

g. Functions of Offerings

i. Voluntary:

1. Burnt offering [olah] and cereal offering [minchah] were gifts to express dependence and appreciation.
2. Peace offerings [shelamin] expressed gratitude for what God had done.
3. Sacrifice [zebah] meant to make or reaffirm a covenant or agreement.

ii. Involuntary:

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1. Ritual cleansing to transfer something from the realm of death to life – Lev 14; Num 19.
2. Substitute for 1st born – each life is made by God... it belongs to Him and has great value to Him – Ex 34:19-20.
3. Sin offering [hattach] and atonement [kippur] are designed to pay for the damages of sin.
4. Guilt offering [asham] was given to compensate for damage done against the sanctuary or community.

8. Development of the theme of ritual in Scripture:

a. Patriarchs:

- i. God ‘walked’ with Adam... that is He walked alongside him to teach him and guide him.
- ii. Abel expressed dependence and reverence, while Cain displayed neither.
- iii. Seth was said to have walked with God... in the manner of Abel.
- iv. Abraham trusted in and walked with God.
- v. Patriarchs initially employed Pagan rituals – such as the oak of Moreh, rocks as testimony [Ebinezor]. When God provided a new theology (contrast Gen 28:22 and Deut 16:22), the former Pagan rituals were prohibited.

b. Moses:

- i. Ritual is secondary to ethics [10 commandments preceded the building and equipping of the Tabernacle]. The state of the human mind and heart are more important than ritual worship observances.
- ii. By carefully examining the rituals of the OT, you can see points of continuity and discontinuity with Pagan worship practices – reflecting some of the nature of the supernatural in both, and the vast difference between the Holy God of the Universe YHWH, and the petty gods of the Pagan nature and ancestor worship.
- iii. There are a couple of ‘paganesque’ references such as where God is said to ‘smell the savor’ of a burnt offering indicating He accepted it, and reference that a sacrifice is the ‘food of God’ (Lev 21:6) – these both obviously fail to tell the whole truth about God who has no nose to smell and needs no food as He is Spirit.
- iv. Not unlike this is the use of the Roman Sun-day and Moon-day as the 1st 2 days of our week without investing any religious significance.
- v. The form of ritual in this era was appropriate for a nomadic people in a Bronze age culture.

c. David and Solomon:

- i. Ritual religious life had continuity with the past in the Ark of the Covenant, the Cherubim who guarded it, and the festival and sacrifice occasions. It had a discontinuity with the

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- change from the Tabernacle befitting a nomadic tribal existence to the formal Temple and a new national identity in the establishment of the Monarchy.
- ii. David added the artistry of the Psalms and Solomon the artistry of Wisdom literature which gave rise to worship and contemplation to the Mosaic Law. The 5 books of the Psalms are a reflection of the 5 books of the Pentateuch.
 - iii. The king now becomes a central figure in ritual worship practice, and it is not accidental that David wrote 75% of the Psalms and led Israel in worship of God. David's passion and focus on God galvanizes the nation.
 - iv. The key figures are now the Prophet, the King, and the Priests.
 - v. These changes reflect the growing national identities surrounding Israel in the early Iron Age culture, and Israel's prominence as the hub of trade and travel.
 - vi. Pre-Exilic Prophets:
 1. The nation had taken their eyes and hearts away from God and fell into idolatry, social oppression, and the pursuit of wealth and pleasure.
 2. While they maintained the ritual worship, their hearts were far from God as the prophets repeatedly warned – 1 Sam 15:22; Amos 5:21; Isa 1:10-17; Micah 6:1-8.
 3. The leadership stubbornly reason that God would not allow for the desecration of Jerusalem and the Temple... although God's Glory had already left.
 - vii. Exilic and Post-exilic Prophets:
 1. The destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem changes everything. The ritual worship is now forcibly subordinated to ethics and the individual's heart attitude.
 2. A new figure arises in these prophecies – the "Servant of the Lord" who will become the guilt offering for the world and cleanse the nations... not merely Israel. Is 52:13-53:12
 3. Israel had been commissioned by God as His ambassadors to the world, but instead they turned inward. The Servant of the Lord will remedy this critical error.
 4. Ezekiel's apocalyptic vision is a literary representation of the Ritual worship of Israel. To this priest in exile in Babylon God gives a vision of a perfect Temple in terms suitable for the day... thus in their imagination the faithful remnant of Israel could live their life in the vision of the ideal Temple – Ez 40-48.
 5. This vision is highly symbolic with the River flowing from God's throne depicts the River of Life of the Spirit – John 7.
 6. The end of one era is the beginning of another – Mal 1:7-2:9.
 - viii. The New Covenant in Jesus Messiah:
 1. The call to holiness is intensified in Jesus. Jesus repeatedly demonstrates God's salvific power, and the fact that He cannot be defiled – when unclean comes in contact with Jesus, it is pronounced clean. This is a major development.

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2. **The Beatitudes profess God’s blessing... not the blessings and curses of the Old Covenant. Jesus thus announces that He is mediating a vastly superior covenant atoned for in His own Blood.**
3. **All foods are proclaimed clean... symbolic that the Gentile [Pagan] Nations are also now made clean. The traditionalists resist this move, but the faithful remnant embraces it. Jesus’ resurrection and Pentecost establish the church age where the Temple of God is now the heart of the faithful followers of Jesus.**
4. **Jesus is King and High Priest – a major change from the old faith along with the Spirit of Prophecy which is poured out on humanity.**
5. **There is no distinction between Jew and Gentile – it is one people in Jesus. Baptism replaces circumcision as the rite of entry into the Kingdom, and the Lord’s Supper is the new sign of the Covenant in Jesus.**
6. **Instead of animal sacrifices, the acceptable sacrifice is a living sacrifice of faith – Rom 12; 1 Cor 12.**
7. **Revelation 21-22 presents the final vision of the New Heaven and New Earth – where God and humanity live in peace in unity of the Spirit.**

9. Andy Lewis Blog on the relevance of Leviticus:

The least read book in my personal bible is the book of Leviticus. This is for good reason because I’ll be honest: it’s hard to be inspired by a bunch of liturgical rules, animal sacrifice, barbecuing specifications and prohibitions about molds, skin diseases, and more. I do go into it wondering, “What does this have to do with me?”

And yet, right now as I read through Leviticus I’m really being struck in the face with the grave seriousness of sin. You read Leviticus and you quickly see how committed God was to show His people that sin was serious, costly, and damaging. All the rituals of worship and of atonement teach the sober reality of the cancer of sin that we in our western culture are very uncomfortable facing. In addition, all the seemingly silly rules about skin rashes, molds, and human discharges (yes that is in the bible) reveal this complete picture of a God who wants to help His people be – not just spiritually whole – but also emotionally, and physically whole. Interestingly these same truths found in Leviticus point forward when they are viewed in completeness in the New Testament where I see the seriousness and cost of sin in the crucifixion of Jesus in my place. There I also see the commitment God has made through the presence of the Holy Spirit to bring me into spiritual, emotional and physical wholeness.

I like that title! My good friend, Pastor Ben Hartell, suggested I read “[Sabbath As Resistance](#)” by Walter Brueggemann. Yes, Ben is right. It is a good book worth reading as we all enter into the summer season. Here’s an excerpt. Be careful it will challenge you so if you don’t want to be challenged don’t read any further:

The celebration of Sabbath is an act of both resistance and alternative. It is resistance because it is a visible insistence that our lives are not defined by the production and consumption of commodity goods. Such an act of resistance requires enormous intentionality and communal reinforcement amid the barrage of

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seductive pressures from the insatiable insistences of the market, with its intrusion into every part of our life from the family to the national budget. In our anxious society, to cite a case in point, one of the great 'seductions of Pharaoh' is the fact that 'soccer practice' invades the rest day. Families, largely contained in market ideology, think of themselves as helpless before the requirements of such commitment. In context it requires . . . enormous, communal resolve to resist the demand.

But Sabbath is not only resistance. It is alternative. It is an alternative to the demanding, chattering, pervasive presence of advertising and its great liturgical claim of professional sports that devour all our 'rest time.' The alternative on offer is the awareness and practice of the claim that we are situated on the receiving end of the gifts of God. To be so situated is a staggering option, because we are accustomed to being on the initiating end of all things. We neither expect nor even want a gift to be given, so inured are we to accomplishing and achieving and possessing. Thus I have come to think that the fourth commandment on sabbath is the most difficult and most urgent of the commandments in our society, because it summons us to intent and conduct that defies the most elemental requirements of a commodity-propelled society that specializes in control and entertainment, bread and circuses . . . along with anxiety and violence.