

Our Daily Homily - Leviticus

by F.B. Meyer

F.B. Meyer explores the significance of Levitical offerings as types of Christ's sacrifice and our call to live in devotion and communion with God.

Scripture: Leviticus 1:9, Leviticus 20:26, Leviticus 22:4, Leviticus 26:6, Romans 12:1, Ephesians 5:2, Philippians 4:7, Hebrews 10:14, 1 Peter 2:9, 1 John 1:9

Topics: "Consecration", "Sacrifice"

Description

F.B. Meyer emphasizes the significance of offerings in Leviticus, particularly how Christ's sacrifice is a sweet-smelling savor to God, reflecting His complete devotion and obedience. Meyer draws parallels between the burnt offerings and our own lives, urging believers to present themselves as living sacrifices, filled with the Holy Spirit and producing a sweet fragrance of good works. He highlights the importance of continual cleansing from sin and the necessity of confession, as well as the joy of participating in God's peace through Christ. Ultimately, Meyer calls for a deeper commitment to God, encouraging believers to remain in His presence and reflect His love in their lives.

Transcript

A sweet savor unto the Lord - Leviticus 1:9,13,17

How sweet the offering up of the Son was to the Father! "Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor" (Eph v.2) The burnt-offering was an imperfect type of His entire devotion to His Father's will. When Jesus saw the inability of man to keep the holy law, and volunteered to magnify it, and make it honorable; when He laid aside His glory, and stepped down from His throne, saying, "I delight to do Thy will, O my God"; when He became obedient even to the death of the cross - it was as sweet to God as the fragrance of a garden of flowers to us.

Let us never forget the Godward aspect of the cross. The sacrificial fire fed on every part of the sacrifice, on the inwards as well as the carcase ; so did the Holy God delight to witness the spotless and entire devotion of the Son to the great work in which the entire Godhead was most deeply interested. The fragrant graces of Christ were made manifest on the cross, and are perpetuated in His intercession.

There is a sense also in which our consecration to God is fragrant and precious. When we see His claims, and yield to them; when we submit to His will, and commit our lives wholly to His direction; when we offer and present ourselves to Him, a living sacrifice, keeping nothing back - His heart is gladdened, and His fire

of complacency feeds on our act. Always count on this; you may feel no thrill, and see no light, but reckon on God, believe that He accepts what you give, and will crown your sacrifice with the fire of Pentecost.

Who to-day will surrender to God, and become an offering of a sweet savor?

Fine flour, and He shall pour oil upon it and put frankincense thereon - Leviticus 2:1

This type is only true in its fullest extent of the blessed Master; but as we are to be conformed to His image, we may humbly take the ingredients of the meat offering as indicating various qualities in our personal character and behavior.

Fine flour. - There should be nothing coarse-grained or rough to the touch; but all even and tender. So that however great the pressure brought to bear on us, we should meet it with perfect grace and gentleness. Jesus reviled not again, but was led as a lamb to the slaughter. David Livingstone said that the promise of Christ was the word of a perfect gentleman. This should be our character.

Oil upon it. - We must be mingled with oil - that is the Holy Spirit must have access into the secret places of the inner life, and we must have the anointing of the Holy Ghost for service. In Christian work nothing is of any value or permanence, useful to man or pleasing to God, in which the Holy Spirit is not first.

Frankincense. - Every act of our life should emit sweet fragrance toward God. Always moving forward in Christ's triumphant procession, bearing aloft the incense - bowls of thought, action, word, filled with love and praise.

Salt. - " Let your conversation be always with grace, seasoned with salt." The words of Jesus were full of grace, and also of truth. There was a pungency and purity and uncorruptness in His speech, which have in every age arrested the progress of the world's evil. Let us give Him our lips.

No leaven - the symbol of the rising of pride and self. No honey - that which is merely attractive and sensuous.

A sacrifice of Peace-offering - Leviticus 3:1

In the burnt-offering the priest burnt all, but in the peace-offering a part only was burned, "the fat, kidneys, and caul." The inner parts were consumed as God's portion, whilst Aaron and his sons fed on the breast and the shoulder. In that feast God and the priests participated; and it is an emblem of our participation in the joy of God, over the person and work of Jesus.

Think of this blessed feast with God. We who were once far off in the wicked and hostile imaginings, are now made nigh; we sit at God's table as His children, and hear Him say, Let us make merry and be glad; this My son was dead, and is alive again.

We have Peace with God. - We are justified by faith in Jesus. In Him we stand before God, accepted and beloved. The curse is exchanged for blessing; distance for presence; the husks of the swine for the fatted calf. The past is forever under the blood; above us is the clear heaven of God's love.

We have the Peace of God. - The very peace that fills our Father's heart, undisturbed by the storms of care and strife which sweeps this lower world, is ours also. We sit in heavenly places; His peace, like a sentry, keeps our hearts and minds against molestation; the peace of God rules in us, bringing every thought into subjection to itself. We have perfect peace because our mind is stayed on Him.

We have the God of Peace. - According to the Apostle's fervent hope and prayer, He is with us. Not the gift, but the Giver; not I, but He; not the river only, but the source. We may well open our doors to admit such a guest, in having whom we received the Author and Giver of concord, unity, and unbroken rest.

If a soul shall sin through ignorance - Leviticus 4:2

Sin is something more than that of which our conscience convicts us. Our conscience may excuse or palliate our sins, or may fail to detect them for want of proper enlightenment, or may be misled by the practices and sentiments of those around. Therefore we may do things which are grievously wrong in God's sight without realizing their evil or bemoaning it.

All such sin must be met and atoned for ere God can admit us into His holy presence. Sin must be dealt with and put away, not only as it appears to us, but as it is in itself and in the sight of the All-Holy. So, in the types of Leviticus, provision was made for sins of ignorance; and the blood of Jesus cleanseth from all sin, whether known to us or not.

There is more sin in us than any of us know. If we think we have passed a day without conscious sin, we have only to wait till an intenser light is flashed on our motives and intentions - for firelight to be exchanged for electric light - and we shall see specks and flaws. If we do not actually violate known commands, there may be a grievous coming short of the infinite standard of the Divine perfection. Who shall dare to say that he has loved God with all his heart, and soul, and strength? Besides, there is always the liability to sinfulness; and this needs to be perpetually met and atoned for.

It is very needful, then, for us to be perpetually cleansed in the precious blood of Christ. We must ask to be forgiven for the many sins which we know not, as well as for those we know. The work of confession and forgiveness must therefore go on to life's end, applied to each heart and conscience by the Holy Spirit.

He shall confess that wherein he hath sinned, and bring his Guilt-offering - Leviticus 5:5,6

It is said that sometimes a soldier will come from the battle bleeding from a hidden wound which he has received without knowing it. So in the rush of life we may contract defilement by touching uncleanness, or speaking rashly, which in the sight of God will leave a foul stain upon the white robe of the soul.

The presence of unconscious sin with us is the reason why we are often unable to pray or read the Word of God at night. We are aware of a certain distance, a veil, a cloud, which has settled down between us and the beatific vision. At such times we do well to examine ourselves and the past more critically; for probably we shall be able to detect the hidden cause, which, when we know it, must be confessed and placed on the head of our guilt-offering, whilst we yield ourselves to God as a whole burnt-offering, in a new act of self-surrender.

But confession is all important. We must confess our sins, if the faithful Lord is to forgive them. Confession is taking God's side against ourselves. It is the act of judging evil in the light of the Throne. It is like the unpacking of a box, in which one begins with the lighter things at the top, and works steadily down to the heavy articles underneath. It is the repetition in the heart of Joshua's calling the roll of Israel until Achan, the son of Carmi, was taken.

When the atonement has been made as touching sin "in any of these things," there is forgiveness. Dare to believe that this is so, Open-tent soul, who hast made Christ's soul an offering for thy sin. He says: "I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins." Go thy way, and sin no more.

Fire shall be kept burning upon the altar continually; it shall not go out. - Leviticus 6:13

This is an emblem of the perpetual work of God for man.

The Love of God. - There never was a time when God did not love. The bush that Moses saw gave no fuel to maintain the holy flame that trembled around it, because the love of God to Israel and to the human race demands no sustenance. Through the ages it burns and will burn; however much indifference and neglect and rejection are heaped upon it, or poured over it, like barrels of water over Elijah's sacrifice, it never goes out. It is as fresh and vigorous today as ever, and waits to consume your sin and mine; for God is a consuming fire.

The Intercession of Christ. - As the ages pass, this sacrifice retains its merit. What He did as Priest on the cross, He does as Priest on the throne. It is always "this same Jesus." What He was, He is, and will be; and as generations of saints bring their gifts to the altar, He takes them, and lifts them up to God, as the fire bears up the substances which are submitted to it. He ever liveth to make intercession; and the fire that burned through the long night in the Tabernacle bore witness to the undimmed, unwaning virtue of our Saviour's work.

The Ministry of the Holy Ghost. - The fire that was lit on the Day of Pentecost burns still in the Church. There has been no intermission to its presence from the first day till now. Multitudes of unknown sects and persecuted saints have kept that fire burning in the world. On the perpetuity of its existence in our midst depends the constancy of our own love and purity and prayer. If the fire shall never go out in our hearts; if the life in our spirits is indeed ever-lasting - it is because He lives and loves always.

Every one that is clean shall eat thereof - Leviticus 7:19

In Lev 7:13, it is admitted that leaven must be present in this holy feast, inasmuch as it stands for the essential principle of evil, which intrudes into our holiest worship. The self-life is an all-pervasive leaven. We may not be conscious of it; there may be no sufficient recognition of its distastefulness to the holy God: but it follows us even into the Holy place.

The worshipper was not allowed, however, to be knowingly unclean. There must be no stain on the conscience, which he might remove by confession and repentance. If there were, he must be cut off; that is, he must be debarred from all participation in holy rites, and suspended from entering the sacred enclosure of the Tabernacle.

This cutting off answers to the suspension of a believer's communion with God, because of unconfessed sin. The presence of the leaven of the self-life is no barrier to the enjoyment of the Divine fellowship, for we meet God in Jesus. But permitted sin makes such fellowship impossible, because we have not availed ourselves of the gracious arrangements made by God for the perpetual cleansing of the soul in the precious blood of Jesus Christ. For "it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul."

How many excommunicate Christians there are! You can easily see that they have been cut off; their joyless faces and powerless prayers,- their inability to bear testimony for God - all tell the sad story. If you have been cut off, search your past history to discover the cause. Put away your sin, and seek the blessed cleansing of John 13.; then come to feast with God, in holy communion, as at a common table.

Ye shall not go out - Leviticus 8:33

For seven days Aaron and his sons, newly consecrated by the blood and oil, waited together in the Holy Place. They were prohibited from going beyond the door, but fed on the consecrated food till the eighth day summoned them to begin their priestly duties. Similarly we are shut in with our Great Aaron, the High Priest of our profession. We are in Christ in the purposes of God, for we were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world. We are in Him, as Noah was in the ark, and as the child is in the home; as the member is in the body, and the branch in the vine; as the sponge in the ocean, or the jewel in the sunbeam. We are in Him as a strong enclosure, through which the malice and strength of our foes cannot break - a fortress, a strong tower, a castle keep. We are in Him, as a banqueting-hall, a Tabernacle with its shewbread, an upper room with its descending fire.

It is highly necessary that we should maintain our walk and experience on this blessed elevation. The great enemy of our souls is perpetually tempting us to leave our abiding-place, and to try issues with him in the plains beneath. What is temptation but his subtle solicitation to come out from the secret place of the Most High. Beware! the bait may be very attractive, but the end is death. Keep the charge of the Lord, and abide day and night in the company of the Great High Priest. "He shall dwell among them."

On what viands do such happy souls feast with Christ! A table is provided before them by the Lord Himself, and they feast on all that pertains to Him in blessed partnership. "Son, thou art ever with Me, and all that I have is thine."

Aaron lifted up his hand toward the people, and blessed them - Leviticus 9:22

The eighth day is evidently the type of the bright millennial morning. During the present age we are hidden with Christ in God; the world knoweth us not, as it knew Him not; our hopes, and joys, and aims, are largely secret. But the day is not far distant when He shall be manifested, and then we shall be manifested with Him in glory. That group of priests, following the high priest out from the recesses of the Holy Place, is a picture of the Second Advent, when Christ and His own shall come forth to bless the world. When Jesus was parted in the Ascension from His disciples, He was in the act of blessing them; and in that attitude He will return. Who can doubt that all through the intervening ages those blessed hands have still been outstretched, that heart ever going forth, in blessing.

What a Saviour is ours! In Him are combined meekness that bears all insult and hatred, and mercy that retaliates on wrongdoing in ministries of love. He fulfills His own idea of blessing those that hate, and praying for those that spitefully use. How truly can it be said of Him, as of Archbishop Ussher, that to do him a wrong is to make him your friend forever!

Let us imitate Him in this, and let the going forth of our lives be one incessant stream of benediction to men, until they shall fall on their faces and acknowledge the overwhelming power of love. But in order to this we must be much in company with our blessed Lord; gazing on His face we shall reflect His likeness; the lineaments of the Divine beauty shall pass into our life, and light it up with a loveliness which is not of earth. Thus shall we bring glory to our God.

Aaron held his peace - Leviticus 10:3

His heart must have been rent with paroxysms of grief, as he beheld the bodies of his beloved sons on the floor of the Tabernacle, stretched out in death. He repressed the cry, choked back the sob, stanchd the flowing tear, and continued to perform the holy duties with which he was charged. He was no stoic, and tears are not wrong for our dead; but his relationship to God was so overmastering as to still the

expressions of nature.

He saw the wrong from God's standpoint. - It was of great importance that the Divine regulations and enactments should be maintained, and that the ministering priests should always prefer God's work and service above their own ideas. Aaron was able to appreciate that position, and saw the sin of which his children were guilty. They had forgotten the voice which said, Sanctify thou Me. Obedience is the foundation of reverence, honor, and service; and if it were relaxed with the priests, how for the people! How careful they should be who bear the vessels of the Lord! With what fear and trembling must they work, who work with God!

He acquiesced in the Divine dealings. - To take the yoke, and meekly bear it; to put the hand on the mouth, and bow in the dust - this is rest and peace. In this way we drink Christ's cup and become partakers of His sufferings.

He felt that his work as priest must take precedence. - It was a solemn and awful thing to be God's anointed priest, and the office must come first, even to the denial of the dues of nature, if that were necessary: so always with us, there must be the subordination of everything to our service and work for God.

Whatsoever parteth the hoof and cheweth the cud - Leviticus 11:3

The animals, in which these two characteristics met, were reckoned clean, and therefore fit for food. It is certain that the minute particularity of these words has some further reference than to the diet of Israel, important though that was, or to accentuate with every meal the necessity of their being a separate people. We, at least, may gather this lesson, that in our daily experience we must combine meditation and separation.

Meditation. - The cattle do not simply browse on the pastures, but they lie down to chew the cud. It is not enough to peruse our allotted Scripture portion; we must ruminate upon it, comparing spiritual things with spiritual, and scripture with scripture. The Holy Ghost will take of the things of Christ and show them unto us, and He will bring all things to our remembrance.

Separation. - "Whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God." "The Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart." We have not meditated to good purpose unless we have felt its keen edge. Detachment from the world must follow on true attachment to Christ. Love to Naomi will draw Ruth from Moab across the Jordan.

The two must be combined. - The swine divideth the hoof, but cheweth not the cud, and was therefore unclean. A man may profess to love his Bible, but the supreme test is his daily separation from evil. On the other hand, our daily life ought to emanate, not from without, which is Pharisaism, but from within, where we chew the cud of holy meditation.

Two young pigeons - Leviticus 12:8

These were the offerings of the poor, of those whose means did not suffice to buy a lamb. All these offerings pointed to the one great Sacrifice which was to be offered on Calvary.

The blood of Christ is within the reach of the poorest and feeblest. - None can say that it is beyond them, that they cannot afford to procure it, that they are too poor. To the poor the Gospel is preached. The Divine call is to those who have no money. Salvation is to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly. "It is nigh thee."

The faith that apprehends but a part of the Saviour's work saves. - The pigeon may stand for the meagre apprehension of Christ that is the portion of the faltering and timid; but it saves equally with that fuller conception of His saving work, which might be compared to the bullock of the priest. The question is not as to the quantity but the object of faith. Is it fixed on Jesus? All faith directed to Him cannot but be genuine. It may but touch His garment's hem, yet it saves.

The beneficence of God's law. - What tender touches there are through this strong ancient code! There is such a one here, framed partly in anticipation of the mother of our Lord, who gladly availed herself of its provision. What a glimpse into our Master's humiliation! He owned the cattle on a thousand hills, yet He so emptied Himself that His parents were compelled to bring the poorest offering the law allowed. He stooped that we might rise; emptied Himself that we might be full; became poor that we might be made rich; was made human that we might be made Divine.

Behold, if the leprosy have covered all his flesh, he shall pronounce him clean - Leviticus 13:13

At first sight this seems a very extraordinary provision. When the leprosy was beginning to show itself, and whilst the marks were hardly distinguishable, the poor patient was treated as unclean; but, when it was fully developed, from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, the priest pronounced the leper clean.

As long as we palliate and excuse our sins, and dream that there is much in us which is noble and lovely, we are not fit subjects for God's saving grace. But when we take our place as helpless and undone, without one plea or one redeeming trait, we are in the position in which the free grace of God can have its blessed way with us.

We must come to an end of ourselves, and fall prostrate, in the very helplessness of our despair, in the very dust at our Saviour's feet; we must confess that from the crown of our head to the sole of our foot we are full of need and sin - then we are nearest Christ, and in a fit condition to be richly blest, and made the channel of blessing to others.

Would you rise? then you must humble yourself before God. God's thrones are approached, not by steps up to them, but by steps down to them. It is the publican who beats his breast, saying, "God be merciful to me the sinner," that goes clown justified to his house. It is when sin abounds, that grace much more abounds. He that humbleth himself shall be exalted. "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones" (Isa 57:15).

Shall let go the living bird into the open field - Leviticus 14:7

That is thou, O trembling soul. Thine iniquities have come between thee and freedom, like the bars of a cage to a bird caught from its native woods and imprisoned. See the quickly-palpating breast, beaten against the bars, pining for the open field - is not that an apt symbol of thy deep yearning for deliverance from the tyranny and thrall of besetting sin?

We are made free from the penalty of sin through the blood of Him who died. - One of the birds was killed in an earthen vessel over running water - here is symbolized the precious death of thy Saviour, in the earthen vessel of His human nature, and in connection with the living power of the Holy Spirit, which bore forth the tidings into all the world. We have been dipped into the crimson tide and are freed - as the leper was - from the taint of our disease. He might go freely among men, and join the congregation of worshippers: and we may mingle with the saints, and enter the very presence-chamber of God.

We are made free from the power of sin through the grace of Him who rose. - He has passed into the resurrection life, and we in Him. When He rose through all the heavens to His native home, we ascended too. We are made free from the thralldom of evil by identification with the risen Lord; and the Holy Spirit, entering our hearts from our exalted Head, makes us possessors of all the privileges which are ours in the Divine purpose (Rom 8:3-4)-Fly away, happy soul, to thy nest in the heart of God! Seek those things which are above! It is your privilege to live in the heavenlies with Christ. Sursum Carda!

He that toucheth, shall be unclean - Leviticus 15:7

There were doubtless great sanitary reasons for many of these enactments. This book is one of the greatest sanitary codes in existence. God made religious duty enforce regulations essential to the physical health and well-being of His people. But there were deeper reasons yet. The whole of these arrangements were contrived to teach profound lessons to us all of the nature and evil of sin, and of the need of being continually cleansed in the precious blood of Jesus Christ.

The unclean saul spreads uncleanness. - Whatever the ceremonially unclean touched, used, or sat on, was polluted. Even those who came into contact with him were defiled. How wary all true Israelites must have been of their associates, lest they should contract pollution! Let us adopt similar precautions, and not voluntarily associate with the unholy or unclean. And if our business calls us into their daily company, let us seek cleansing for ourselves as we return to our homes, that any adhering germs of evil may be removed.

The urgent demand for holiness. - The ordinary processes of life are not necessarily clean because they are natural. The foul heart may vitiate the most natural functions. We must bring the thought of God into the simplest, the commonest, and the most secret acts. Nothing is outside His jurisdiction. Though hid from sight, yet He is ever near the child of God. His grace, and blood, and cleansing, are always requisite, and ever ready. Amidst and after every act, incident, and episode of life, we should be quiet before God, considering if we have aught to confess, and asking to be ever kept from staining our white robes.

Unto a solitary land - Leviticus 16:22

This chapter is full of Christ in His most precious death for men. Its various aspects are set forth under these diverse sacrifices, as light reflected from the many facets of a diamond. We think now only of the live goat which was led away into the wilderness. We see in it: -

Christ made sin. - With both hands Aaron, in symbol, transferred all the iniquities, sins, and transgressions of the people to the head of the goat, which became so identified with them that it was accounted an unclean thing; and even he who led it away must needs wash his clothes and bathe. This is what the apostle means when he says that Jesus was made sin for us. Our sins met in Him; were assumed by Him; He stood before God as though, in some mysterious sense, they were His own.

Christ bearing sin away. - As the goat went away, the eyes of the people followed it, and they were taught to believe that sin was no longer reckoned to them. Aaron put off his linen garments and arrayed himself in festal robes, and came forth to bless the congregation. What rejoicing must have broken from the crowds! So Jesus, in His matchless grace, has borne away the sin of the world into a land of forgetfulness. "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more."

Christ's loneliness. - He was alone in His mediatorial work. None could bear Him company. Loved ones might stand beside His cross, or in after ages suffer, as He did, deaths of martyrdom; but none could do what He did as the sacrifice for sin. Ah, how lonely He was! Even the Father seemed to have forsaken Him! Before the universe, in that dread hour, the Saviour stood in awful, unapproachable solitude!

The life of the flesh is in the blood - Leviticus 17:11

There is probably a deeper truth in these words than man has ever fathomed. The R. V. marg. translates "life," soul. Why that reverence for blood; that horror when it is unrighteously shed and gurgles forth; that perpetual reference of Scripture to the blood of Christ? Probably the answer to such questions would be given, if we perfectly understood the affirmation of this remarkable verse.

When Jesus gave His blood, He gave His life, the life of His holy soul. - We are accustomed often to speak about the blood of Christ, by which we mean the life of Jesus, shed forth for us substitutionally and sacrificially. The sinner takes this blood, this life, in his hands, and presents it to God as his plea. Does the broken law require satisfaction, homage, acknowledgment? Here it is in this priceless, pure, and sinless blood, never infected by pollution, never heated by passion. Let this shed life atone for thee! "God be propitious (because of the sacrifice on the altar) to me the sinner."

Five bleeding wounds He bears,

Received on Calvary;

They pour effectual prayers,

They strongly plead for me:

"Forgive him, oh, forgive," they cry,

"Nor let that ransomed sinner die."

When we are bidden drink His blood, it is of His life that we partake. - At the table of our Lord we symbolically drink of His blood; in doing this we identify ourselves with His death, and give up our self-life to the cross. Yea, we do more; we testify our desire to receive into our natures more and more of the soul and life of our Blessed Lord, so that we may dwell in Him, and He in us.

Therefore shall ye keep My charge - Leviticus 18:30

Literal obedience was God's perpetual demand of His chosen people. Why should we claim to be exonerated from an equally exact obedience to the commands of Jesus? And yet how few of us do exactly as He has bidden! Let us take some tests.

The Lord's Supper is a case in point. In the present day there are many who, from year's end to year's end, never go to the Table, though Jesus said that His disciples were to do it in remembrance of Him.

Baptism is another. Christians shelter themselves under the excuse that it is not essential, and therefore may be omitted. But what do they mean by essential? It is not essential to salvation, because that has been achieved by our Lord; but it may be essential to show that we love Him, that we have a genuine faith, that we are ready to take Him as King. Surely a soldier is not freed from obeying the command of his officer because he cannot see it to be essential!

Going to law is another. If there is one thing clearer than others, it is the reiterated charge of the New Testament that we should rather suffer wrong than avenge ourselves. Yet how many professing Christians will this day issue a County Court summons against defaulters!

Forgiveness is another. "If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." Yet there are hundreds of Christ's professing followers who are at feud with their relatives or fellow members.

Let us remember the imperative tone of these words, and ask God to work in us to will and to do of His good pleasure.

I am the Lord your God - Leviticus 19:3

This is the refrain of the entire chapter; count how many times it recurs. Evidently the thought of God should ring in our lives, as a perpetual chime.

Sometimes as an inspiration to duty. We should seek to be holy because He is holy. "Imitators of God." Or as a remonstrance against yielding to temptation. Lo, God is in this place; His pure eye is upon me: how can I do this great wickedness! Or as an incentive to liberality. We can afford to be generous to the poor and hireling, because we are children of so great and rich a parent. Or as a reason for mercy and gentle kindness. How can we act otherwise than lovingly, when His love encompasses us with its persuasive bands?

Thus the perpetual consciousness of God becomes the source of holy and happy living. But how may it become ours? We may make many resolutions, only to break them. We forget after our most definite purposing. There is no help but in the Holy Spirit, whose office it is to teach us all things, and bring all things to our remembrance. He is able also to help our infirmity: "for we know not how to pray as we ought; but the Spirit Himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered."

In the morning let the thought of God's presence with you in your secret closet sink well into your heart. Wait till His presence is made real to you, and you cry, Lo, God is here. Then entrust yourself to the Holy Spirit, asking Him to keep you in the current of the love and thought of God. Reckon on Him to do so. Now and then in the course of daily duty stop and remember God. Thus you will live in His fear and love all the day long.

I have separated you from the peoples, that ye should be Mine - Leviticus 20:26

"Separate me Barnabas and Saul," said the Holy Ghost. And in after days Paul spoke of himself as being separated unto the Gospel of God. It is a mistake to make the act of separation our own resolve and deed. We shall inevitably drop back unless God has come into the transaction, and has set us apart for Himself. We must be separated from sin and sinners unto a holy God.

We are needed for a specific purpose. - God can bless men only through men. As once He used the Jews to be the medium of communicating His truth to men, so now He is eager to use His Church; if only she will allow Him to deliver her from the taint of sin and the world, and separate her for a peculiar possession unto Himself. Let us individually yield ourselves to the blessed influences of the Holy Spirit, that He may realize in us the purpose for which He has called us.

We are required to satisfy God's heart. - He needs love for love. Throughout the world He seeks for those who can afford Him pleasure, as His enclosed gardens, His sealed fountains, His peculiar treasure.

This separation is effected by the Holy Ghost, and is referred to in the word "sealing." "He hath sealed us unto the day of redemption."

What an honor is this! To be for God Himself: to do His errands, to fulfill His behests and give Him pleasure! Rejoice greatly when God says, "Thou art Mine." We also can take up His words, and answer back, "Thou also art mine." Let us be glad, if we know that the oil of separation has come on our heads, and let us walk worthily of our high calling, separated to the Holy Ghost, and counting it sacrilege to be used for any unholy purpose.

I the Lord, which Sanctify you - Leviticus 21:8,15,23

This chapter is full of restrictions and cautions against anything that might defile the priests, the sons of Aaron. The holiness of God was set in a clear light by the care that there should be no ceremonial pollution or personal defect in those who ministered before His presence. What Aaron and his sons were in the ancient typical worship, that Jesus and His people are in the spiritual dispensation which has taken its place. "Ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession."

How holy we should be "in all manner of living"! What may be innocent and natural for others would be wrong and inconsistent in us. Even the pointing of the beard after the fashion of the nations around, and for appearance' sake, was forbidden them; and contact with death in the home of domestic mourning. These, with many such like cautions, indicate that our spiritual separation for the service of God must enter into the minutest details. The clothes we wear, the books we read, the amusements we engage in, the details of the home-life - will all be affected by the thought, "I have been set apart for God; the anointing of the Spirit is on me; I am called to offer Him the bread of a holy life; I may not do as others, who have not realized the sacredness of life, as I do; and who may permit without compunction what I forego."

This is a high ideal; and it is only practicable to those who realize the thrice-made announcement of our text, that God will sanctify us: setting us apart for Himself - by the precious blood of Christ, by the anointing of the Spirit, and by the separation of our thoughts, and aims, and practices.

He shall not eat of the holy things till he be clean - Leviticus 22:4

The holy things referred to here are the offerings made by Israel to Jehovah, a part of which was presented to God in fire, and the rest partaken of by the priests and their families. None, however, might feed on them whilst ceremonially unclean. This suggests some useful precautions for ourselves, if we would fully enjoy the privileges and blessings attending the worship of the holy God.

We must be clean before we can enjoy the private reading of the Word of God. - We would wash our hands, soiled with the dust and grime of toil, before opening an exquisitely printed copy of the Scriptures;

how much more should we seek cleansing at the hands of Christ before we feed on the holy things of Scripture!

We must be clean before entering the House of God. - It is a holy habit for each intended worshipper to be quiet before leaving the house on the Lord's day; or to use carefully the moment of the bent head at the commencement of the public service, in order that the soul may be made clean from any contracted stain, and resolve henceforth to abstain from all evil.

We must be clean before partaking of the Lord's Supper. - There we feed upon the bread of God; and as we wash our hands before we sit at the table of a friend, so should our hearts be cleansed ere we partake of the emblems of the body and blood of Christ. Holiness becomes God's house. Those that ascend the hill of the Lord must have clean hands and a pure heart. The reason why religious exercises do not profit you, may lie in your failure to comply with this demand. "He shall not eat of the holy things until he be clean."

Ye shall afflict your souls - Leviticus 23:27,29,32

Whilst Aaron was making the solemn atonement for the people, confessing their sins on the victims and sending them away, the camp was pervaded with the atmosphere of the Sabbath rest. No servile work was done on penalty of death. Probably for the most part the people abode in their tents. No sound was heard save sighs, and groans, and cries of penitence. The people afflicted themselves for their sins.

Sin is forgiven by God, but it should not be forgotten by us. - We should remember it, in order to refresh our memory of God's great grace in patting it away; in order to deepen our sense of gratitude and to promote our self-humiliation; in order to make us watchful and careful in our daily walk and conversation. Holding the hand of our Saviour, we need not dread to look down into the abyss from which He has redeemed us. We shall turn from it to Him with tenderer love and gratitude.

Repentance is once for all; penitence is perennial. - We repent when we turn from the kingdom of darkness to that of God's dear Son; it is the act of the will, the utter reversal of the course we had been pursuing. But we are penitent after we have seen the face of Jesus: it is the act of the emotions; the sense of Christ's love and of our unworthiness together makes us weep, as the forgiven sinner did at His feet.

Penitence does not purchase forgiveness, but accompanies and follows it. - Could our tears forever flow, they could not bring God's pardon into our souls. That is secured by the offering of our Substitute on Calvary. But being forgiven, we wash His feet with our tears, we break our alabaster boxes on His head, and love much.

Before the Lord continually - Leviticus 24:4-8

The light of the candlestick and the twelve cakes of fine flour were to be before the Lord continually, as symbols of the twofold office His people were to sustain, on the one hand to the world's darkness, on the other to God Himself.

We must shine as lights in the world. - As a candle in the hand of the housewife, who sweeps her house diligently; as a lamp in the hand of the virgin expecting the bridegroom; or as the lighthouse on a rocky coast. We must dispel the darkness, and guide wanderers through the murky night. Light is soft and still, and is thus a fitting emblem of the influence of a holy life, which burns steadily on before the Lord continually, and is unaffected by the heed or comment of man. If no one seems the better for our

consistent testimony, aim to satisfy the Lord. The lamps of the pure candlestick of a holy life are not for man only, but for Him. But they can only be maintained through the constant supply of the pure oil of the Holy Ghost, ministered by Him who walks amid the seven golden candlesticks. "Ye are the light of the world."

We must be as bread to God. - In a blessed sense we feed on God, but God also feeds on us. He finds satisfaction in beholding His people's unity and love, in receiving their sacrifices of praise, and in watching their growing conformity to His will. The two rows of six cakes foreshadow the unity and order of the Church; the fine flour, its holy, equable character; the pure frankincense, the fragrance of Christian love. There is a testimony in all these to the world; but we do not always realize the satisfaction afforded to the great God, who has made such costly sacrifices on behalf of His Church.

His kinsman that is next unto him - Leviticus 25:25

In the case of Naomi this was Boaz; in our case it is Jesus Christ. Redemption, as described in this chapter, had to do with persons and lands; and each illustrates Christ's work on behalf of believers throughout all ages.

He has redeemed our Persons. - It often happened that a Hebrew waxed poor, and was compelled to sell himself to some wealthy Gentile who sojourned in the land. He who had owned his own patrimony now wrought as a bondservant for another. But after he had sold himself he might be redeemed by his next kinsman. So we had sold ourselves for nought; we wrought the will of the flesh; we were enslaved to the fashions of the world; we obeyed the promptings of the prince of the power of the air. Alas for us! But we have been redeemed, not with corruptible things, but with the precious blood of Christ. We have been made free by right, and have only to claim and act upon the freedom with which the risen Christ has made us free.

He has redeemed our Inheritance. - What we lost in the first Adam we have more than regained in the second. For innocence, we have purity; for external fellowship with God, His indwelling; for the delights of an earthly paradise, the fullness of God's blessedness and joy.

He is our nearest Kinsman. - " My brother, my sister," He says of each who will do the will of His Father. He has made Himself one with us by taking on Himself our nature, and identifying Himself with our race. We know that Jesus, our God and Redeemer, liveth; and that He will come to redeem us from the power of the grave, and receive us to Himself.

None shall make you afraid - Leviticus 26:6

But we are afraid, often very greatly so. How can we be secured from the dread of men and things which so easily besets us?

We must be absolutely right with God. - To walk in God's statutes, and keep His commandments, was the first condition of Israel's immunity from fear. When we know that there is no cause of controversy between us and God, we feel able to count confidently on His protection and deliverance.. 'Perfect love casteth out fear.'

We must count on God's faithfulness. - He has put us where we are, and we dare not think He will withdraw from us, as Joab did from Uriah. We are His partners, summoned to cooperate with Him: will He allow us to incur responsibilities in His name, and then leave the burden on our unassisted resources?

Fear will yield before a clear sense of God's might; but it is still more likely to yield before a deep sense of God's perfect faithfulness.

We must rely on the environment of angel keepers. - When David, during his flight before Absalom, slept in the open, he believed that the Angel of the Lord encamped around him. More are they which are for us than those that be against us. The mountain is full of horses and chariots of fire. Lord, open our eyes that we may see!

We must believe that our enemies are less formidable than they seem. - They surround us with their bluster and threatenings, they come against us in embattled array; but if we dare to go forward and do the right thing in the sight of God, they will vanish like a puff of smoke. "For, lo, the kings assembled themselves.

They were arrayed, they were dismayed, they hasted away."

No devoted thing, shall be sold or redeemed - Leviticus 27:28

There is a great principle involved in these words. When once a person or possession had been solemnly dedicated to God, it was not permissible to withdraw from the obligations which had been assumed. Once given, the offering was regarded as God's property, and might not be resumed by the offerer, or placed to any inferior use.

This regulation is specially applicable to our conception and practice of consecration. We are Christ's; by the gift of the Father, by the purchase of the blood of Christ, by the sealing of the Spirit; but a moment often comes in the life of the earnest believer when the Lord appears to claim a more earnest recognition of His rightful claim. Then thoughtfully and earnestly, spirit, soul, and body, are laid upon the altar, and we solemnly declare, "I am Thine, O Lord!"

When once this is done, we must reckon that God has accepted us, and that we cannot repeat the gift. We may perpetually refer to it, and acknowledge its abiding obligation, and apply its principle to all those new departments and functions which are perpetually increasing on us; but we can no more repeat it, than could the Israelite give God the firstling lamb, since it was already His (Lev 27:26).

If we go back from the attitude we have once taken up, we must confess our relapse with tears and deep contrition, asking to be restored, waiting to be put back again into the old place by our merciful and compassionate High Priest. We cannot undo that past; but we may ask Him to restore us to the place we occupied before we went astray. Oh that we might never withdraw from the altar of entire consecration!

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