

Promise & Punishment – Lev. Ch. 24-27

God is holy, and His people must be holy.

Class Outline

1. Offerings (*Ch. 1-7*)
2. Holiness and Cleanness (*Ch. 8-15*)
3. The Day of Atonement (*Ch. 16*)
4. Laws and Feasts (*Ch. 17-23*)
5. **Promise & Punishment (*Ch. 24-27*)**

Opening Discussion

- What are you practicing in your life right now? Is there any skill or talent you are trying to gain? Has it come easily? Has it been difficult? Why?

Lesson

Leviticus 24:10-16—Punishment for Blasphemy

Leviticus 24:17-23—An Eye for an Eye

- Are these two sections somehow related? What clues does Moses give that they are?
- Why do you think blasphemy is punishable by death? Does it seem to fit with the “Eye for an eye” idea?

Leviticus 25:1-7—The Sabbath Year

Chapters 25 and 26 form a single speech: “The Lord spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai, saying...”
As we read these chapters, think on how the content of these two chapters might be related.

- If the land gets a Sabbath, how do the people feed themselves?

Leviticus 25:8-24—The Year of Jubilee

- How often is the year of Jubilee? What was it for? How is this a means of God’s providing for his people?

Leviticus 25:35-46—Kindness for the Poor

- What do these verses tell us about the importance of kindness to strangers? Why should the people of Israel care about strangers?

Leviticus 26:3-16—The Blessings of Obedience

- Are God's blessings earned? Why are they given? How are we supposed to understand these verses?
- What is the purpose of God's warning?

Leviticus 26:34-39

- What does the Sabbath have to do with the blessings of God? Why should the land's need for a Sabbath impact the people of Israel?
- How are chapters 25 and 26 related?

Leviticus 26:40-45

- What do these verses tell us about God's other punishments?

Group Discussion

- Have you ever made a promise to God which you've failed to keep?

Leviticus 27:1-8

Daily Devotions Schedule

Day 1 — An Eye for an Eye

Read Leviticus 24:17-23

What's Jesus say about this command (see **Matthew 5:38-42**)? How might Jesus' own life give us a clue as to what Jesus means here?

Day 2 – Redemption

Read Leviticus 25:23-34

Who owns the land? Why does this matter for the people of Israel?

The laws regarding redemption mean that no one in Israel could be poor forever. Each person's mistakes and failures were temporary, but God's promise for them—the land itself—was not temporary. God's promises were a permanent possession, sure and lasting (and they still are, today!).

Day 2 – Redeeming the Poor Man

Read Leviticus 25:47-55

It is easy to miss what God says in verse 55, that the people of Israel are *his* servants. In a sense, not only does God own the land, but he owns the people, too. What does this mean for people who sell themselves to pay off debts? (Hint: see yesterday's rules regarding redemption of the land).

Day 3 – Promise and Punishment

Read Leviticus 26

Six periods of chastisement are described (Lev. 26:16–17, 18–20, 21–22, 23–26, 27–31 and 32–39), the last one being the most severe. In the first five, Jehovah punishes the people in their own land; but in the sixth judgment, they're taken out of the land and dispersed among the nations.¹

Everything threatened in these verses came to pass. Yet God remained faithful, just as he promised.

¹ Warren W. Wiersbe, *Be Holy*, "Be" Commentary Series (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 140.

Day 4 – Vows and the valuation of persons

Read Leviticus 27:1-8

Vows are made in the heat of the moment. In retrospect, when the crisis is over, they may well seem foolish and unnecessary, and the person who made the vow may be tempted to forget it or only fulfil it partially. Scripture includes a number of warnings about such an attitude... Eccl. 5:3–4 (4–5), “When you vow a vow to God, do not delay paying it; for he has no pleasure in fools. Pay what you vow. It is better that you should not vow than that you should vow and not pay” ... It may well be part of the purpose of this chapter to discourage rash swearing by fixing a relatively high price for the discharge of the vows, and penalizing those who change their minds. If a man tries to substitute a different animal for the one he has promised, he forfeits both animals (vv. 10, 33). If he wishes to redeem the property he vows, he must pay 20 percent extra (vv. 13, 15, 19, 27, 31).²

These verses on vows are mysteriously separate from the rest of the laws and decrees.

Day 5 – Vows and the valuation of persons

Read Leviticus 27:30-34

The book of Leviticus ends with this section on vows and dedication. Why do you think that this is the appropriate place for Leviticus to end?

With these laws on vows and tithes Leviticus closes. On first reading it seems a strange point at which to end. But the theme of vowing is in fact closely related to the principal concerns of the whole book. Men who dedicate themselves to God become as it were God’s slaves, holy to the Lord... This theme runs through chs. 11–20: the elect people of God must visibly embody the character of God. In their choice of food, in sickness and in health, in their family life, in their honest and upright dealing, and in their love of neighbor, they show the world what God is like.³

² Gordon J. Wenham, *The Book of Leviticus*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1979), 337–338.

³ Ibid, 342–343.