

**Message #53****Leviticus 27:26-34**

There have been many lessons that we have learned from Leviticus—God is a holy God and He expects us to become holy. Becoming holy is accomplished by concrete obedience in many areas of life.

It is interesting to me that the final section of Leviticus deals with vows and tithes. Perhaps we are becoming more and more holy as we sense the importance of honoring God with our promises and with our money.

**BEING HOLY MEANS CAREFULLY AND FAITHFULLY OBEYING THE WORD OF GOD IN ALL AREAS OF LIFE.**

That is what we have seen all through this book of Leviticus. There are three main areas in which one is challenged to be holy:

**AREA #1 – God’s people are to be faithful in their promises. 27:26-29**

When God’s people dedicate something to God or promise something to God, they are to be faithful in following through with what they have promised or vowed.

**(Subject #1) - The dedication of animals. 27:26-27**

**Verse 26** makes it clear that firstborn animals were not candidates to be dedicated to the Lord because they were already the Lord’s. In other words, no man could dedicate something to God that was already dedicated to God.

Now **verse 27** makes it clear that if an unclean animal was involved, it could be redeemed by adding 20% of the value. If the unclean animal was not redeemed, then it could be sold according to the determined evaluation.

**(Subject #2) - The dedication of a person. 27:28-29**

If a man were dedicated to God, he shall not be redeemed. Once one had been set aside for sacred use by God, he could not be redeemed. The only way out of service was death.

There are a couple of ways in which a person would be given the death penalty: 1) Captured in battle (Num. 31:7, 13-17; 2) Commit murder (Num. 35:31-34). Once one had been given the death penalty, he could not be redeemed out of it.

I believe there are many who are dead spiritually and emotionally because they once dedicated themselves to God or they took some position of responsibility and never followed through with it. Such people do not blossom in their spiritual lives.

**(Subject #3) - The dedication of land. 27:28**

Land that was dedicated to God could not be redeemed. To “set apart” something to God means to devote it completely to God or else it would be subjected to utter destruction.

**AREA #2 – God’s people are to be faithful with their tithes. 27:30-33**

The word “tithes” is related to the word ten. Giving God ten percent was something that actually was biblical before the O.T. Law. It was in the book of Genesis (Gen. 14:20) when Abraham gave 10% to Melchizedek. Jacob made a promise to God that he would give him 10% of everything.

The purpose of the tithes was to maintain the Levites so there could be God’s priestly ministry (Num. 18:21-24, 25-32). Now there were three tithes in the O.T.: 1) The general tithe (Lev. 27); 2) The sacred meal tithe to the Levite (Deut. 14:22-27); 3) The tithe to the poor every three years (Deut. 14:28-29).

There is no question that God’s people were expected to think in terms of God with 10% of what they had and made. If a man wanted to redeem any portion of his tithe, he needed to add 20% to the amount.

Apparently, according to **verse 32**, every tenth animal who passed under the shepherd’s rod was God’s. It was not to be redeemed.

In Israel’s history there seems to have been two extremes when it came to tithing:

- 1) Imbalanced value placed on it which was not biblical (Amos 4:4). People thought they could be right with God by tithing.
- 2) Neglect of tithing (Mal. 3:8-10). People thought they could be right with God without tithing.

Somewhere in the middle is the truth. Giving is part of worship. Giving is part of holiness. But it is not giving that makes one right with God; it is the blood sacrifice. Once one is right with God, then giving becomes part of being holy.

**AREA #3 – God’s people are to realize that being holy is based on the realization that we view God’s Word as His commands and we are to obey them. 27:34**

Leviticus has been a book designed to make God’s redeemed people holy. Carefully notice how the book ends—totally focused on the written Word and commandments of God. No one will ever be holy from God’s classification until God’s Word is taken seriously. God expected these people to carefully apply every verse of Leviticus to their lives. The holier we are becoming the more we will see the importance of the written Word of God and if one book in the Bible communicates that theme, it is Leviticus!