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DAILY *manna*

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GENERAL EDITOR

Rev Isaac Ong

Daily devotions for reading through the Bible

Dear *Daily Manna* readers,

Welcome again to *Daily Manna*.

In this quarter, we cover 14 of the 27 chapters from Leviticus, the third book of the Pentateuch. Leviticus is one of those books that most Christians skip because its contents are alien to us. It records strange offerings and rites, which the Church does not practise today. Some would even say that Leviticus is obsolete because our Lord Jesus has fulfilled all the ceremonial and religious laws.

However, one commentator, Joseph A. Seiss, wisely entitled his commentary on this book, *The Gospel in Leviticus*. The reason is this. In Leviticus, we see our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Seiss writes that it is amazing “how completely Christ is woven into its entire texture”. He continues, “Open the book anywhere, and we are sure to find something of Jesus.” I certainly hope you do, too.

A note to new Daily Manna readers

In this book, you’ll find a reading plan that will guide you through reading the Bible in two years. You will also find a simple exposition based on the reading of the day. From the day’s Bible passages, *Daily Manna* highlights biblical principles which may be applied in the Christian’s daily living. We pray that the *Daily Manna* readings will make your reading through the Bible a more meaningful experience. Over the next two years, our focus will be on the Old Testament with the aim of giving you a more in-depth study of the OT books.

A step-by-step approach

1. Read the day’s Bible chapters assigned in *Daily Manna*.
2. Review the Bible chapters to get an overview of what you have just read.
3. Read the accompanying devotions in *Daily Manna* and reflect on the lessons learnt.
4. Pray and ask God to help you apply His Word to your life.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Isaac Ong
Calvary B-P Church

BIBLE LESSON

Exodus 37:1–9

LESSON

The Ark of God

VERSE I

And Bezaleel made the ark of shittim wood: two cubits and a half was the length of it, and a cubit and a half the breadth of it, and a cubit and a half the height of it.

Though the description of the various items in the Holy place given in this chapter is almost word for word as the one contained in the earlier command of God to Moses [Exodus 25:1–40], it should not be regarded as a useless repetition of details. The artificers did not vary in the smallest point from the rule prescribed to them. They did not omit even the most minute detail.

The order of the furniture commences from the Holy of Holies and moves through the Holy Place to the outer court. It is recorded that the Ark was made by Bezaleel, the chief artificer [Exodus 35:30–31]. The mention of his name is emphatic, indicating his employment of the highest artistic skill on that which was the most precious of all objects connected with the Tabernacle. Indeed, the best was to be made by the best. However, he entrusted most of the rest of the work to others.

The cover overspreading the Ark represented our sins as being covered, so that they no longer appear in the eye of divine justice to displease, irritate and call for punishment. It signified propitiation [Hebrews 9:5]. The Mercy Seat, between the cherubims, is the place that God had chosen to manifest Himself. Moses came here to consult the Lord on behalf of the people.

By His blood, our Lord Jesus has made atonement for the sins of the world. And in the Mercy Seat, God has reconciled the world unto Himself in Christ [2 Corinthians 5:19].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PROVERBS 18
COLOSSIANS 1

PRAYER

Almighty God, we praise Thee that Thou abide with Thy people when Thy Son tabernacled among us.

BIBLE LESSON*Exodus 37:10–16***LESSON****The Table of the Shewbread****VERSE 10**

And he made the table of shittim wood: two cubits was the length thereof, and a cubit the breadth thereof, and a cubit and a half the height thereof.

The Table of the Shewbread was part of the furniture in the holy place. The shewbread (literally in Hebrew ‘bread of faces’ or ‘presence bread’) symbolises God’s presence. They were set immediately before the ‘face or presence of God’, which the Ark signified.

As instructed, the table consisted of 12 very large baked bread made of fine flour. The shewbread was to be always on the table [Exodus 25:30]. By God’s providence, He spreads a table for all His creatures. No part of God’s family is ever overlooked or neglected.

The shewbread symbolises an everlasting covenant on behalf of the children of Israel [Leviticus 24:8]. This practice was to be maintained for perpetuity. The bread of the presence must never cease before God, just as Israel never ceases before Him. Shewbread was baked for every Sabbath, with the old bread eaten by priests in the holy place because the cakes were “most holy” [Leviticus 24:8–9]. In like manner, God’s grace constantly spreads a table for all believers in furnishing them with the bread from heaven. Jesus came to offer Himself as the Bread of Life [John 6:35]. On Him we feed spiritually and from Him we receive understanding and truth.

This is a fitting picture of God’s willingness to fellowship with man. It is like an invitation to share a meal with Him, which is an extension of friendship. God is willing for man to enter into His presence to fellowship with Him, and this invitation is always open. Oh, what a privilege!

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

PROVERBS 19
COLOSSIANS 2

PRAYER

We thank Thee, heavenly Father, for the Bread from heaven to satisfy our innermost soul to the fullest.

BIBLE LESSON

Exodus 37:17–24

LESSON

The candlestick

VERSE 17

And he made the candlestick of pure gold: of beaten work made he the candlestick; his shaft, and his branch, his bowls, his knops, and his flowers, were of the same.

The candlestick or lampstand was the only source of light in the Holy Place, without which the priests would have to grope around in the dark. The light also shone upon the Table of the Shewbread and the altar of incense, enabling the priests to minister to God and intercede on behalf of God's people.

The lamps, seven in number, were fed with beaten olive oil [Exodus 27:20–21] and would burn all night in the sanctuary. The light that illuminated the darkness of the tabernacle represented the Holy Spirit of God, who illuminates the dark places of the earth, especially the recesses of the heart of man [Revelation 4:5].

Moreover, just as the lampstand was placed in God's dwelling place so that the priests could approach God, Jesus stands as the "true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world" [John 1:9]. He came into the world so that man could see God and not live in spiritual darkness anymore. Thus, it is necessary to share the Gospel, for "if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them" [2 Corinthians 4:3–4.]

We are called to take the Gospel to the world. May the Lord give us the courage to begin where we are to let our light shine so that people will see the light and come to the Saviour for salvation.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PROVERBS 20
COLOSSIANS 3

PRAYER

O heavenly Father, make us as the light of the world so that man can see Thy truth and believe it for Thy sake.

BIBLE LESSON*Exodus 37:25–29***LESSON****The altar of incense****VERSE 25**

And he made the incense altar of shittim wood: the length of it was a cubit, and the breadth of it a cubit; it was foursquare; and two cubits was the height of it; the horns thereof were of the same.

The ‘altar’ was what God had earlier declared to be made to Him in the place where He should “record His name” [Exodus 20:24]. The place for the altar of incense was in the Holy Place of the Tabernacle. It was a little in front of the veil. Its purpose was to offer incense to God Himself. This was to be done by the officiating priest, twice a day, morning and evening, and in practice was performed before the morning and after the evening sacrifice. The altar would be regarded as so essential an element in divine worship that no worship could be without one.

The main purpose of the altar was expiation. The altar witnessed to the guilt of man in God’s sight, and an atonement being made for him before he could be reconciled to “the High and Holy One”. As such, we are reminded that we can only look for pardon and atonement in the cross of Christ, and to Him Who on that altar gave His life for man.

The making of the golden altar, on which incense was to be burnt daily, also signifies both the prayers of saints [Psalm 141:2; Luke 1:10] and the intercession of Christ [Hebrews 10:11–12], for which our prayers are acceptable and successful before the throne of grace.

We are deeply indebted to Jesus Who came to bear our sins and gave Himself to the demands of the Holy God so that we can stand before His holy presence with confidence, having been clothed in the righteousness of His Son.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PROVERBS 21
COLOSSIANS 4

PRAYER

Holy Father, may Thou be pleased with our humble services and prayers on the basis of what Christ has done on our behalf on the Cross and now at Thy right hand.

BIBLE LESSON

Exodus 38:1–8

LESSON

Giving willingly

VERSE 8

And he made the laver of brass, and the foot of it of brass, of the lookingglasses of the women assembling, which assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

After the completion of the Tabernacle, Bezaleel and his helpers focused on furnishing the court. Work was first begun on the altar of burnt offering [v. 1–7; Exodus 27:1–8], followed by the bronze laver [v. 8; Exodus 30:18]. Special notice must be given to the women who assembled at the entrance of the Tabernacle for sacred worship. One such woman was Hannah, who was also mentioned later [1 Samuel 1:9–12].

This great altar inside the court of the Tabernacle, known as the Altar of Burnt Offering, was for whole burnt offerings as well as other animal sacrifices offered to the Lord. It was also called the brazen altar to distinguish it from the golden altar or altar of incense [Exodus 39:38–39; Exodus 40:5–6].

Bezaleel made the laver and its foot out of the mirrors given by the women [v. 8]. Such love for God was shown in the women's willingness to part with their precious possessions. These women worshipped God not just in word only but also in deed and in truth. They readily gave of their best for God's service. That was evidence of their true inward piety over external vanity. Regeneration is the true beautifier [1 Peter 3:1–5].

The brazen altar and laver are symbolic of God's atoning love for mankind. His willingness to sacrifice His Son Jesus Christ was the first outward sign of His loving forgiveness [John 3:16]. It is the best illustration of sacrificial, forgiving love.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PROVERBS 22
I THESSALONIANS I

CHALLENGE

Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. – 2 Corinthians 9:7

BIBLE LESSON*Exodus 38:9–20***LESSON****Coming to God****VERSE 9**

*And he made the court: on
the south side southward
the hangings of the court
were of fine twined linen,
an hundred cubits.*

As the work progressed, the final task was to see to the hangings, pillars, connecting-rods, hooks and pins for the circuit of the court [v. 9–20; Exodus 27:9–19]. ‘Pins’ are small stakes used to fasten the ropes of a tent. This passage explicates the meticulous workmanship of Bezaleel and his assistants.

The construction of the courtyard symbolised the great truth that God is approachable. The courtyard built in the middle of the wilderness was a visible symbol for God’s people to approach Him. God’s loving invitation to sinful man is found throughout Scripture [Genesis 7:1; Isaiah 1:18; Matthew 11:28; Luke 14:17; Revelation 22:17].

Even more than a symbol was the beautiful truth of Noah and his family entering the ark in preparation for the Great Flood. Noah’s family of eight literally escaped the judgement of God during the flood at that time. Be warned that the final day of judgement is coming soon. Having been forewarned, let us also be forearmed.

Countless blessings will come our way when we accept God’s invitation to go to Him. How amazing that God saw fit to allow sinful man to approach Him. As the Rev James Smith said, “Everything out of Christ is under the curse; all blessings are treasured up in Him, and can only be received and enjoyed by union to and communion with Him.” Are you ready for the Lord’s coming? If not, what is holding you back? Don’t delay. Come to Jesus right now.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PROVERBS 23
1 THESSALONIANS 2

THANKS

... him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out. – John 6:37b

BIBLE LESSON*Exodus 38:21–31***LESSON****Joyful commitment in service****VERSE 21**

This is the sum of the tabernacle, even of the tabernacle of testimony, as it was counted, according to the commandment of Moses, for the service of the Levites, by the hand of Ithamar, son to Aaron the priest.

The inventory list in this passage shows the faithfulness of the people in their labour for God. Every important detail in building the Tabernacle was itemised by Moses. For instance, the Levites compiled the figures, Ithamar, the son of Aaron, recorded them and Bezaleel supervised its construction. Furthermore, his capable assistant, Oholiab, was a craftsman skilled at engraving, designing and embroidering.

The furniture of the Tabernacle points us to our Lord Jesus Christ. God's perfect sacrifice of His Son on Calvary's cross is seen in the altar of burnt offering. Our souls are cleansed through the regeneration of the Holy Spirit, as typified by the laver. Thank God for reaching out to sinful man in this symbolic picture.

The precise workmanship of these workers should inspire us to be diligent and dedicated in our service for God. Added to their skill is the fact that the people gave of the best of their substance. Valuable materials such as gold, silver and brass were used in the making of the Tabernacle and its furnishings. Holding nothing back, their offerings showed their love for God. Indeed, our Creator and Saviour deserves nothing but the best from His creatures.

Abraham's willing sacrifice of his son Isaac and Hannah's obedience for her son Samuel to serve God in the temple are apt illustrations of joyful, obedient giving in service. What is your motive in serving our Lord Jesus? Beware of being men-pleasers in your service for God. Do a personal inventory and self-check now.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PROVERBS 24
1 THESSALONIANS 3

THOUGHT

God's work, done God's way, will never lack God's supply. – Hudson Taylor

BIBLE LESSON*Exodus 39:1–7***LESSON****Holy garments of service****VERSE 1**

And of the blue, and purple, and scarlet, they made cloths of service, to do service in the holy place, and made the holy garments for Aaron; as the LORD commanded Moses.

This chapter gives an account of the finishing of the work of the Tabernacle. And now the last things to be prepared are the holy garments for the priests who serve in the Tabernacle. The instructions that God gave to Moses earlier were to be carefully followed [Exodus 28]. God was personally involved in the design of the garments for the priests.

His command to Moses was to specially take Aaron and his sons to minister in the holy place. They were His choice to perform these holy functions. These garments were not to be used on ordinary occasions but only in the public worship of God. The ‘glory and beauty’ [28:2] bestowed upon them were for service to Him in the midst of the people, not for their own spiritual pride.

Obviously, these priestly garments represented the holiness, purity and dignity of the office. Take note here that their priesthood actually typified that of our Lord Jesus Christ. Those holy and glorious garments prefigured the infinite dignity, excellence and spiritual beauty of our Saviour Jesus Christ, the great High Priest.

The writer of Hebrews has this to say to us: “Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession” [Hebrews 4:14]. Our Lord’s priesthood far exceeds that of Aaron in glory, for it is eternal. As such, we are to be continually attached to Him and not depart from Him.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PROVERBS 25
I THESSALONIANS 4

PRAYER

Blessed Father, Thou hast given us Christ Who is the Way that leads us to the throne of grace with much confidence and boldness.

BIBLE LESSON

Exodus 39:8–21

LESSON

Breastplate with 12 stones

VERSE 14

And the stones were according to the names of the children of Israel, twelve, according to their names, like the engravings of a signet, every one with his name, according to the twelve tribes.

Since the office of the priesthood was of God's Appointment, its garments must have such insignia. There is nothing left to any individual's taste or liking. The articles of their attire, the shape, material, colour and workmanship, and the manner of their ornamentation are all fixed after a divine pattern.

Note the colours of the breastplate: 'gold', which so often signifies deity in manifestation; 'blue', for heavenliness; 'purple', for royalty; and 'scarlet', for sacrifice. The material, 'fine linen', speaks of personal righteousness, as indicated in Scripture: "And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints" [Revelation 19:8]. These are "indicative of the official dignity, of the sacred character, and of the honourable prerogatives of the wearers of them" (Homilies by J. Orr).

The breastplate is certainly the most striking and brilliant object in the whole attire of the high priest, exhibiting him as the representative of the 12 tribes [v. 14]. The names of the 12 tribes were arranged in four rows, with three in each. There were 12 precious stones [v. 10–13]. Furthermore, a ring was attached to each corner, through which the golden chains were passed to fasten this brilliant piece of jewellery at the top and bottom tightly on the breast of the ephod.

Consider that our Lord Jesus Christ now stands before the throne of God on our behalf as our Representative and pleads our cause before God the Father. Whatever may be lacking on our part, Christ will richly supply.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PROVERBS 26
I THESSALONIANS 5

PRAYER

Abba Father, we come before Thee through our Representative, the last Adam, with much assurance, knowing Thou will hear us.

BIBLE LESSON*Exodus 39:22–31***LESSON****Holiness to the Lord****VERSE 30**

And they made the plate of the holy crown of pure gold, and wrote upon it a writing, like to the engravings of a signet, HOLINESS TO THE LORD.

Underneath the ephod and breastplate, the high priest was to wear a robe, wholly of blue. This robe was to have a hole for the head at the top, and was to be woven without seam [v. 23]. It was put on over his head, like a ‘habergeon’ or coat of mail, and probably reached below the knee.

There was yet another part of the vestment that was important: the mitre [v. 28]. It is placed directly in front over the forehead. Its inscription reads, “HOLINESS TO THE LORD”, giving it great significance. It would certainly attract attention and catch the eye of the worshippers, even more than the breastplate.

This served to remind the worshippers that all their sacrifices offered to God require themselves to be atoned for. Thus it was granted to the high priest in his official capacity to make the necessary atonement, and so rendered the people’s gifts acceptable. For this purpose, he was invested with an announced holiness by the inscription. Here again, Christ, the Holy One Who as the type and representative of His people, through whom alone can any real atonement be made to the heavenly Father, is exhibited.

We should be grateful in knowing that while we are sinners and our best efforts mean nothing to God, in Christ our poor sacrifices become accepted and even pleasing to the Holy God. Paul points out, “As Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour” [Ephesians 5:2].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

PROVERBS 27
2 THESSALONIANS 1

PRAYER

Holy Father, we are grateful for the gift of Thy Son to be the propitiation for our sinfulness.

BIBLE LESSON*Exodus 39:32–43***LESSON****Good works worthy of
praise****VERSE 43**

*And Moses did look upon
all the work, and, behold,
they had done it as the
LORD had commanded,
even so had they done it:
and Moses blessed them.*

Finally, all work done on the Tabernacle, with its furniture and garments for the priests, were promptly completed. The work was finished before the year was out. Thus it appears that six months was sufficient for the completion of everything. This was due in part to the intelligence and diligence of those who contributed to the work of the Lord. But ultimately it was God who gave them the spirit of wisdom and knowledge, as well as the willingness and readiness of hearts to complete this monumental task [Exodus 28:3; 31:3, 6].

One outstanding remark in all the works done by the people was, “According to all that the LORD commanded Moses, so the children of Israel made all the work” [Exodus 39:42]. Every detail was exactly as God had instructed them to make. All was done according to His will.

The whole project was then brought to Moses for his approval and was judged by him according to the pattern that he had seen on the mount [Exodus 25:40]. God, through the hand of Moses, was quick to show His approval and blessing towards those who have given and served to the best of their abilities.

Every faithful service to the Lord will be rewarded by blessings that will far exceed all that we can ask or think. “For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward His name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister” [Hebrews 6:10].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PROVERBS 28
2 THESSALONIANS 2

PRAYER

**Merciful Father, receive Thou from our hands
what we heartily offer to Thee for Thy Son’s sake.**

BIBLE LESSON*Exodus 40:1–11***LESSON****The Ark of the Testimony****VERSE 3**

*And thou shalt put therein
the ark of the testimony, and
cover the ark with the vail.*

This final chapter of Exodus records the erection and consecration of the Tabernacle. The work for which God had begun to give instructions more than nine months ago had now been completed. Moses was ordered to select the first day of the year for the operation of the services. This first year of Abib, or Nisan, was the ‘New Year’s Day’ of Israel and it was a suitable day for the inauguration of a place of worship. The Tabernacle would serve as the visible presence of God among His people.

The first thing to be placed within the Tabernacle was the Ark of the Testimony. And in the Ark there were three very unusual items placed in it. They were not treasures and precious gems but three unlikely items: a pot with manna, a rod and two stones [Hebrews 9:4]. One may wonder why God wanted those items in His ark.

These articles were preserved in the Ark throughout Israel’s history as unpleasant symbols of Israel’s sins and shortcomings, a reminder of how they had rejected God’s provision, authority and standard for living. However, they were covered by a necessary object—the atonement cover and so unseen by God.

We ought to thank God that all our sins are covered in the blood of the Lamb, forgiven and forgotten by the holy God. As our High Priest, Jesus has entered the veil to offer Himself on our behalf so that we may now enter freely and boldly into the Holiest of all.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PROVERBS 29
2 THESSALONIANS 3

PRAYER

Holy Father, our hearts are grateful for Thy provision for our entry into the Holy of Holies by the blood of Christ!

BIBLE LESSON*Exodus 40:12–16***LESSON****Sanctified for service****VERSE 13**

*And thou shalt put upon
Aaron the holy garments,
and anoint him, and
sanctify him; that he may
minister unto me in the
priest's office.*

Aaron and his sons were brought to the door of the Tabernacle before the whole congregation [v. 12] and washed with water as an act of inaugurating the priests. It was accompanied by ceremonial solemnities for the purpose of not only leading the people to entertain exalted views of the priestly office but also to impress them with a profound sense of its magnitude and importance.

The washing with water [v. 12] indicated that purity and holiness were necessary for the priests of the Lord, who bore the vessels or minister in His sanctuary [Isaiah 52:11]. In like manner, the investiture with the holy garments [v. 13] signified their being clothed with righteousness [Revelation 19:8]. The anointing with oil [v. 15] denoted that the priests were to be filled with the influences of the Spirit [Isaiah 61:1]. These preparations were for the purpose of initiating them before they performed in their holy office.

However, Israel's High Priest would serve in some way as a type of Christ who will come in all perfection. Christ or Messiah, the Anointed One "is holy, harmless, and undefiled, separate from sinners" and He presents Himself before God for us [Hebrews 7:26]. He is the fittest person to take away sin by His sacrifice, and to be an advocate for His people, fully qualified to offer as the Representative of His people.

We stand on a very firm foundation, for Christ's sacrifice has been well accepted by His heavenly Father. Let your heart be assured when you approach the throne of grace in prayer. God will warmly receive you.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PROVERBS 30
I TIMOTHY I

PRAYER

Holy Father, on the basis of the sacrifice of Christ Thy Son, we make our humble approach to Your holy throne.

BIBLE LESSON*Exodus 40:17–33***LESSON****Unquestioning obedience****VERSE 25**

*And he lighted the lamps
before the LORD; as the
LORD commanded Moses.*

The phrase, ‘as the LORD commanded Moses’ appears nearly 20 times in this and the preceding chapter. Here, it is used seven times, in verses 19, 21, 23, 25, 27, 29 and 32. It shows how careful Moses was in making sure all things go according to the pattern shown him by the Lord, and not as he or others would imagine. The pattern of the Tabernacle given by the Lord was a simple and modest-looking structure. It was a far cry from the fantastic pyramids and sphinxes of Egypt.

Nevertheless, one would without fail see the careful obedience of Moses so that everything was carried out in accordance with the divine instructions. Workmen put everything in its proper place, exactly according to the will of God. No one dared to pursue his own fancy and private judgement, but all consulting the mind of God, and acting according to that. This is the surest way of promoting His glory, and of obtaining His blessing. Moses went on to be used by God and did great things because he was obedient to God’s instructions.

Obedience is the key word in our earthly sojourn. We can learn to obey God not in relying on our own abilities but in trusting in His promises. With it, we will be sustained through whatever we are about to go through, whether it be facing temptations or dealing with sorrow in our lives, or overcoming our addictions to things of this world.

On our own, it would be impossible. But with God’s help, all things are possible.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

PROVERBS 31
1 TIMOTHY 2

PRAYER

O Father, help us to learn unquestioning obedience as a child would.

BIBLE LESSON*Exodus 40:34–38***LESSON****The glory of the Lord****VERSE 34**

Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.

The ‘cloud’ was a well-known symbol of the divine presence. In it God had hitherto been present with His people. He guided and protected them during their journeying with it [Exodus 13:21–22]. But here it came down upon the Tabernacle and filled the dwelling with it. It is the gracious presence of the Lord.

There was something very striking in this refulgent glory, which was far glorious even to Moses who had been used to conversing with God. Moses had gone into the midst of the cloud where the Lord was but now could not or dared not go into the Tabernacle.

Moses, who was previously not deterred by the sight of the glory of God, which was like devouring fire [Exodus 24:16], now could not or at least thought it not proper and advisable to enter into the holy place erected for the service and worship of God. If not for a call to enter, as he then had, he would linger outside the Tabernacle [Leviticus 1:1]. Indeed, this theophany was too intense in its splendour to permit even him to come close within the holy place where only the Holy One can abide.

It is proper to be reminded that due to the weakness of human nature, none can endure the glory of God [1 Timothy 6:16]. But thankfully, we can all now by an exercise of faith look unto Jesus, Who reflects the brightness of the Father’s glory. Christ as the Forerunner has entered within the veil, and He invites us to come boldly to the mercy seat.

**TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ECCLESIASTES 1
I TIMOTHY 3**

PRAYER

Holy God, show us Thy glory in the person of Thy Son, Jesus Christ.

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 1:1***LESSON****The Lord spake ...****VERSE 1**

And the LORD called unto Moses, and spake unto him out of the tabernacle of the congregation, saying,

The Bible is the inspired Word of God. God breathed out His word and used men as instruments by which His Word would be recorded [2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21]. The Bible writers were merely scribes. “Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost” [2 Peter 1:21b], but they also took into account their individual experiences and idiosyncrasies even as they wrote Scripture. For example: in his epistles, Peter wrote about his witness of our Lord Jesus at the Transfiguration. Luke, being a close companion of Paul, wrote about his conversion on the road to Damascus.

Leviticus, however, is unique in the sense that God spoke directly to Moses. In Leviticus, Moses was in fact taking dictation from God. The Lord told Moses to speak to the children of Israel and gave him the very words that he was to say. In other words, as Andrew Bonar wrote in his commentary, Leviticus “carries within itself the seal of Divine origin”.

Leviticus is about offerings and sacrifices that Israel had to make in their worship of the Lord. Every sacrifice is a type pointing to some spiritual truth that is relevant to believers today, though they are millennia removed in Moses’ time. These sacrifices are “a shadow of good things to come” [Hebrews 10:1], even our Lord Jesus Christ.

Thus, the divine origin and content of Leviticus makes it compelling that we, as God’s redeemed people, have a supreme interest to know what God has to say about Who He is and the way we should approach Him.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ECCLESIASTES 2
I TIMOTHY 4

THOUGHT

Do you know the Lord, Who He is and what He has done? Paul’s prayer is that he might ‘know’ Christ [Philippians 3:10].

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 1:1***LESSON****And the Lord called ...****VERSE 1**

And the LORD called unto Moses, and spake unto him out of the tabernacle of the congregation, saying,

In the Hebrew Scriptures, Leviticus is simply known by its first phrase, “And the LORD called” [Leviticus 1:1]. The name ‘Leviticus’ was first used in the Latin Septuagint [LXX], the Greek translation of the Old Testament. This name was given to indicate that the book had for its main subject the duties and functions of the priestly tribe of Levi.

God had set apart the Levites for His service, where the eldest son of each family was consecrated to the Lord and assumed the priest’s office. At Sinai, God laid the groundwork for a hereditary priesthood in the family of Aaron [Exodus 28:1] after the children of Israel worshipped the golden calf [Exodus 32]. The tribe of Levi came out, separated themselves unto Moses [Exodus 32:26], and “the children of Levi did according to the word of Moses: and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men” [Exodus 32:28].

From that time onwards, the Levites occupied a distinct position in Israel because they recognised that the holiness of God is more important than natural relationships; and that the work of God required them to love Him above all else [Luke 14:26]. As God’s representatives, the Levites would receive no land. They would be scattered among the tribes to ensure that the knowledge of God is kept alive among the children of Israel.

Today, the institution of the Levitical priesthood is defunct but believers in Christ continue to play the role of the priesthood in teaching the Word and intercession before the Lord. After all, we are a “royal priesthood” [1 Peter 2:9].

**TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ECCLESIASTES 3
1 TIMOTHY 5**

THOUGHT

Our Lord Jesus has “kings and priests unto God” [Revelation 1:5–6]. Are you living as a priest of God?

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 1:1***LESSON****The Lord spake unto
Moses****VERSE 1**

*And the LORD called unto
Moses, and spake unto him
out of the tabernacle of the
congregation, saying,*

Leviticus begins where Exodus ends – at the foot of Mount Sinai. The Tabernacle had just been constructed [Exodus 35–40]. The Lord was pleased and His “glory filled the tabernacle” [Exodus 40:35]. Whenever the children of Israel were encamped, the presence of the Lord was visible upon the Tabernacle [Exodus 40:38]. So God was ready to teach His people how they should worship Him, and the “LORD spake unto Moses”.

We may think that it was nothing extraordinary, as God had spoken to the patriarchs before Moses. Even Miriam and Aaron failed to see the unique relationship between the Lord and Moses. They expressed that Moses did not deserve his position because God spoke to them just as He did to Moses.

But the Lord said to them, “If there be a prophet among you, I the LORD will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream. My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house. With him will I speak mouth to mouth” [Numbers 12:6–8a]. “And the LORD spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend” [Exodus 33:11a].

Many believers would yearn to be in Moses’ position to have God speak to us face to face, and as a friend to a friend. And He does – through His living Word [Hebrews 1:1–2]. We think that God is silent because we have a hearing problem. There is too much noise in our lives, fighting for our attention that we do not and cannot hear Him. Therefore, be still in the Lord, wait upon Him and hear Him.

**TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ECCLESIASTES 4
I TIMOTHY 6**

THOUGHT**Speak, LORD; for thy servant heareth. – 1 Samuel 3:9**

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 1:2***LESSON****Bring an offering to the Lord****VERSE 2**

Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, If any man of you bring an offering unto the LORD, ye shall bring your offering of the cattle, even of the herd, and of the flock.

When the Lord issued the Ten Commandments, He spoke from the Mount. The Israelites were not allowed to come near or touch the Mount [Exodus 19:12–13]. With the Tabernacle completed, God drew near to the people, and the sacrificial system was instituted as the means by which they drew near to Him.

The word ‘offering’ is ‘korban’ [Matthew 7:11], derived from a verb meaning ‘to draw near for the sake of presentation.’ It is also translated ‘oblation’ [Leviticus 2:4–5], to denote something that is ‘brought near’ to God as an offering. This word appears 82 times and all but four occurrences are outside Leviticus and Numbers. For that reason, ‘offering’ is usually taken to refer to gifts for religious purposes.

The first seven chapters of Leviticus contain five types of offerings: burnt offering [Leviticus 1], meat offering [Leviticus 2], sin offering [Leviticus 3], trespass offering [Leviticus 4], and peace offering [Leviticus 5]. Each served a specific purpose. The burnt offering [Leviticus 1] required a whole animal – from the head to hoofs – to be consumed in the fire on God’s altar, signifying the entire self-surrender on the part of the person making the offering. The offering symbolises two things: the penalty for sin; and one life must be given (the animal’s death) so that another may be saved.

But no sinner even on the account of his total and self-sacrifice can earn the right to come before the Lord. So the burnt offering typifies the Lord Jesus Christ, Who offered Himself as a sacrifice to redeem us from our sins. He died so that we might be saved.

**TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ECCLESIASTES 5
2 TIMOTHY 1**

THOUGHT

The love of God is such that He gave His Son, and His Son gave His life so that we might live.

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 1:3***LESSON****A male without blemish****VERSE 3**

If his offering be a burnt sacrifice of the herd, let him offer a male without blemish: he shall offer it of his own voluntary will at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the LORD.

The first offering prescribed by the Lord is a burnt offering. There are two chief conditions for this offering. It must be a male and it must be without blemish. Both conditions point unmistakably to our Lord Jesus Christ. The unblemished animal signifies the moral perfection as well as the perfect sacrifice that is demanded of a holy God. Peter reminded us that we are “not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold ... but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot” [1 Peter 1:18–19].

Here we see the doctrine of the vicarious atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ. God demands a perfect and total sacrifice, one that no sinner can provide. A sinner could not afford to give up his own life and still live, so a substitute must be found for him. Christ is that substitute. He was made sin for us [2 Corinthians 5:21], and He, being just, died for us who are unjust [1 Peter 3:18].

The Gospel is free for all, but not all would come. Jesus said, “Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me” [Mark 8:34]. The one who comes must be willing. Yet we must also recognise that it is the Lord Who makes us willing in the first place. No sinner comes of his own free will if the Lord has not called him first.

Are you willing to present yourself before the altar? If you are, come to “the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the LORD” [Leviticus 1:3]. Come and submit to the Lord, and be saved.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

ECCLESIASTES 6
2 TIMOTHY 2

THOUGHT

Are you thirsty for the living God? Are you willing to come?

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 1:4***LESSON****Hand upon the head****VERSE 4**

And he shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt offering; and it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him.

To put one's hand upon the head of the animal is the most essential part of the sacrifice. This is an act of identification. It symbolises that the animal now represents the person making the offering. The animal's life is the offerer's life. The former's life is taken so that the latter could live.

To 'put his hand upon' is also translated as 'lieth hard' [Psalm 88:7], in which the Psalmist, speaking prophetically of Christ, writes that God's wrath 'lieth hard upon' His Son. The sacrifice of an animal foreshadows the blood of Christ. Even as the Old Testament saint lays his hand on the animal, so we likewise lay our souls on Christ, upon whom the Lord's wrath 'lieth hard'.

Again, here is the concept of vicarious atonement. It is more than just the taking away of sin. It is also the covering of the sinner. Man deserves nothing but God's judgement. Now, on account of the sacrifice of Christ, the sinner is covered by His blood. He becomes an object of God's benevolence and mercy.

This act of laying one's hand upon the offering is also an act of faith. The offerer lays his hands but the effect of the laying of hands is the Lord's work. It requires faith on the part of the offerer to do as the Lord has instructed and to return with confidence and joy knowing that he has laid his hand on the head. Likewise, for New Testament saints, it is enough to know that if we confess with our mouths the Lord Jesus, and believe in our hearts that God hath raised him from the dead, we shall be saved.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

ECCLESIASTES 7
2 TIMOTHY 3

THOUGHT

Faith in the Lord's testimony was the ground of an Israelite's peace of conscience. – Andrew Bonar

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 1:4***LESSON****Atonement****VERSE 4**

And he shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt offering; and it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him.

The offering was given to make atonement. The verb ‘atone’ occurs over 100 times in the Old Testament, and it has several meanings. The basic meaning of ‘atone’ is ‘to cover’. It consists of the words ‘at’ and ‘one’, and ‘atonement’ means ‘at-one-ment’. The real meaning of ‘atonement’, however, is more than just being at one. Atonement and forgiveness are closely related [v. 4]. Atonement requires an act of sacrifice.

Blood was necessary for atonement. “Without shedding of blood is no remission” [Hebrews 9:22]. Guilt of sin demands death. To atone, therefore, requires payment of lifeblood in exchange for the life of the sinner. Life is in the blood [Leviticus 17:11]. That does not mean that there is some supernatural power in the blood, but blood is the symbol of life. And blood atonement represents the judicial act of substitution of the sacrifice for the sinner. God, by His grace, instituted the blood atonement as the means by which sinners can draw nigh to Him.

The good news for the children of Israel was that God instituted the way and provided the sacrifices so that they could come into His presence, even though the animal sacrifices were by no means perfect. The good and better news for sinners is that God has provided His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, as the perfect sacrifice for our sins.

In the Old Testament, the blood atonement looked ahead to the perfect, once-and-for-all offering of Jesus Christ to truly take away the guilt of sin for those who will repent and believe.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ECCLESIASTES 8
2 TIMOTHY 4

THOUGHT

What can wash away my sin? Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 1:5–6***LESSON****Kill ... sprinkle ... flay
... cut****VERSE 5**

*And he shall kill the
bullock before the LORD:
and the priests, Aaron's
sons, shall bring the blood,
and sprinkle the blood
round about upon the
altar that is by the door
of the tabernacle of the
congregation.*

The awfulness of sin is seen in the gruesome manner in which the animal was killed. First, the bullock was killed in front of the Tabernacle before the brazen altar. One life must be taken for another to live. That is the very definition of substitutionary atonement.

Second, the blood that represented life [Leviticus 17:11] was drained and then sprinkled round the altar. Bonar writes, "It is as if the living soul of the sinner were carried, in its utter helplessness and in all its filthiness, and laid it down before the Holy One!" This is a picture of our Lord Jesus, Who gave His life and "became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" [Philippians 2:8b]. At the Lord's Supper, we are reminded of His shed blood [Matthew 26:28].

Third, the animal is flayed, removing the skin covering and totally exposing it. Adam and Eve could not hide behind the coverings of leaves. Likewise, we cannot hide behind our self-righteousness from the all-seeing God. In the final act of the ritual, the animal is cut into pieces, representing the final outcome of God's wrath against sinners. This is terror of God's perfect justice. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" [Hebrews 10:31].

As gruesome as the method of the sacrifice is from the human perspective, the ritual is deliberate and determined by God. The awfulness of sin must be matched by the gruesomeness of the sacrifice. Let us remember that God Who does not delight in the death of sinners has prescribed the gruesome and torturous death of His Son for our redemption.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

**ECCLESIASTES 9
TITUS 1**

THOUGHT

For even the Son of man came ... to give his life a ransom for many. – Mark 10:45

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 1:7–9***LESSON****Sweet savour unto the Lord****VERSE 9**

But his inwards and his legs shall he wash in water: and the priest shall burn all on the altar, to be a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD.

The fire upon the altar is a picture of God's wrath. God is "a consuming fire, even a jealous God" [Deuteronomy 4:24; 9:3; Hebrews 12:29]. The altar is an important element of worship in the Old Testament. Even before Moses, the patriarchs built altars: Noah [Genesis 8:20], Abraham [Genesis 12:7], Isaac [Genesis 26:25] and Jacob [Genesis 35:7]. The altars were made of uncut stones, not altered by human hands. In the Tabernacle, the Lord gave specific details for the construction and the dimensions of the altar.

On this altar, the sacrifice was laid in a specific order—the head, the fat, the innards and the legs—and burnt. The word 'burn' does not mean 'to destroy by fire' but 'to make a sacrifice go up in smoke.' It is used to describe the burning of incense [Exodus 30:7]. The life of the animal had already been offered in the blood. Now its whole substance was made, as it were, to ascend to the Lord.

That which ascends is to be a sweet savour unto the Lord, implying that the sacrifice would be acceptable and well-pleasing to the Lord. This sweet savour is applied only to the burnt offering, the meat offering, and the peace offering [Leviticus 2:2; 3:5] but not to the sin and trespass offerings.

Paul explains that burnt offering typifies our Lord Jesus Who "hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour" [Ephesians 5:2]. It is neither the savour of burnt animals nor of our own sacrifice that pleases God. It is only in His Son that the Father is well pleased.

**TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ECCLESIASTES 10
TITUS 2**

THOUGHT

Praise God that He has "made us accepted in the Beloved" [Ephesians 1:6].

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 1:10–14***LESSON****Burnt offering of sheep
or goats****VERSE 10**

*And if his offering be of the
flocks, namely, of the sheep,
or of the goats, for a burnt
sacrifice; he shall bring it a
male without blemish.*

Different animals were also offered. It seems that the more well-to-do would choose the bullock [v. 5] and those less well-off, sheep or goats. Those who were poorer still could offer turtledoves and young pigeons [v. 14]. The lesson here is that all who desire can come to God. The way to God is not restricted to the rich but to whosoever will come. Paul writes, “For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed” [Romans 10:11].

It is also not restricted to the social elite. “Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all” [Colossians 3:11]. Our Lord Jesus, as the High Priest, welcomes all sinners. “All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out” [John 6:37]. Bonar writes that “the advancing footsteps of a sinner to His altar, whether he be great or small, is a sweet sound” in the ear of our Lord Jesus Christ.

There are two lessons here. First, God is no respecter of persons. His law applies to all classes of men. The rich man’s bullock is no more efficacious than the poor’s turtledoves. So also is God’s mercy. The sacrifices may differ in size and value but the heart attitude must be the same: an absolute surrender to God

The second lesson is that all who come to God can and must give something. It is not the absolute amount that matters but what we give surely is a reflection of our consecration.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

**ECCLESIASTES II
TITUS 3**

THOUGHT

**“What can I give Him, Poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd I would bring a lamb,
If I were a wise man I would do my part,
Yet what can I give Him, Give my heart.**

– Christina Rossetti

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 1:14–17***LESSON****Burnt offering of
turtledoves or pigeons****VERSE 14**

*And if the burnt sacrifice
for his offering to the
LORD be of fowls, then he
shall bring his offering of
turtledoves, or of young
pigeons.*

By God's sovereign grace, He provides the means for the people to approach Him. He also freely accepts what the people could afford to offer. Kings have been known to exact from their subjects more than what they could afford. Rehoboam, who foolishly ignored the counsel of old men, made the burden upon Israel heavier than what his father, Solomon, had done [1 Kings 12:10].

But God delights in the offerings of turtledoves as He does the offering of bullock. God is no respecter of persons [Acts 10:34]. This is the grace of God, and the glory of the Gospel. No one is denied access to God on account of his poverty.

God does not delight in costly offerings. Turtledoves and pigeons were common birds in those days, which the poor could easily afford. What God delights in is the offering of the heart—a surrender of the self. Rich or poor, no one is excused from bringing an offering to the Lord. One writer comments that God is displeased “to see the mite retained in the pocket [of the poor] as the gold which the wealthy refuse to part with”.

This also applies to the use of our talents. Do not refuse an opportunity to serve God on account of your ‘meagre’ talent. If you think you have only one talent, you can be sure that there is a ministry in the church that fits that talent. Note again the grace of God. The offerings of the bullock and the turtledove are equally accepted. They are both offerings “made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the Lord”.

**TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ECCLESIASTES 12
PHILEMON**

THOUGHT

**Do not hide your talent in a napkin. Read
Matthew 25:14–30.**

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 1:14–17***LESSON****Sacrifice of sweet savour****VERSE 17**

And he shall cleave it with the wings thereof, but shall not divide it asunder: and the priest shall burn it upon the altar, upon the wood that is upon the fire: it is a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD.

As noted in the last lesson, no one is exempted from bringing an offering. The key point here is the total and absolute consecration of the people of God. The children of Israel, regardless of their social status, were expected to express that consecration. The poor who could only afford to offer “turtledoves” or “young pigeons” were just as welcome at the Tabernacle. Their offerings were as acceptable and pleasing to God as those who come with bullocks, sheep and goats.

The poor widow who gave her two mites made a more glorious consecration than the rich who gave out of their abundance. Anna’s service of fasting and prayers in the temple was just as pleasing to God as that of the high priest. Total consecration, therefore, is not the prerogative of a class of believers; it is and should be the desire of all.

There is not a more appropriate hymn that conveys the idea of consecration than Frances Havergal’s ‘Take My Life and Let it Be.’ While visiting in a home of some unhappy Christians, Ms Havergal was struck with a great longing that they would come to know the joy of the Lord as she did. She herself had known some months earlier that she could not have the full blessedness of a Christian without a full surrender to Christ. Ms Havergal prayed for the people in that home, and spent the last night with them writing this hymn, closing with these words.

Take my love; my Lord, I pour
At Thy feet its treasure-store.
Take myself, and I will be
Ever, only, all for Thee.
Total consecration! Total joy!

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
SONG OF SOLOMON I
HEBREWS I

THOUGHT

Consecration is an idea that can be carried by any person regardless of his earthly condition.

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 2:1***LESSON****Meat offering (I)****VERSE 1**

And when any will offer a meat offering unto the LORD, his offering shall be of fine flour; and he shall pour oil upon it, and put frankincense thereon.

What is a ‘meat offering’? It is clear from the text that it is different from a burnt offering [Leviticus 1]. There is also a distinction between ‘sacrifice’ and ‘offering’ [1 Samuel 3:14, Psalm 40:6], as there is one between ‘sacrifice’ and ‘oblation’ [Daniel 9:27].

The meat offering is a gift made by a subordinate to his superior. Abel and Cain both made offerings to God [Genesis 4:3–4]. Jacob gave a present to his brother Esau [Genesis 32:13, 18, 20]. The sons of Jacob were told to bring a present to Egypt [Genesis 43:11]. The words ‘offering’ [Genesis 4:3–4] and ‘present’ [Genesis 32:13; 43:11] are the same word that is translated ‘meat’ [v. 1].

From here, we see that a meat offering is a gift of homage—one in which the giver recognises the superiority of the one to whom the gift is made. Furthermore, in making the gift, the giver also pledges obedience to the one who receives the gift. There is a connection between the burnt offering, which is needed for the forgiveness of sin, and the meat offering, which Bonar says “represents the offerer’s person and property, his body and his possessions” (Bonar, p. 31). The two offerings often go together and in the same order: the burnt offering first, then the meat offering.

When our sins have been forgiven by our Lord Jesus Christ, the natural follow-up is that we are to give of ourselves to Him. The forgiveness of sins must lead to the consecration of the redeemed sinner. Deliverance of the sinner must be followed by the devotion of the saint.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
SONG OF SOLOMON 2
HEBREWS 2

THOUGHT

**What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost ... and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.
– 1 Corinthians 6:19–20**

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 2:1***LESSON****Meat offering (II)****VERSE I**

*And when any will offer
a meat offering unto the
LORD, his offering shall be
of fine flour; and he shall
pour oil upon it, and put
frankincense thereon.*

The meat offering is a picture of the presentation of a person and his possessions because he has been redeemed by the burnt offering of another. The burnt offering must necessarily precede the meat offering. Cain's offering would have been acceptable if it were preceded by a burnt offering. We know that Cain did not. He thought that the fruit of the ground was good enough for God. Cain presented the labour of his hands as if his hands were pure. Cain's offering was made as if he "had been under no curse that needed blood first ... He sought to be accepted by his holiness, and so overthrew salvation by Christ" (Bonar, p. 33). What a tragic mistake!

Likewise, we cannot substitute the work of Christ by our acts of righteousness, self-denial and self-sacrifice. We cannot rush past the blood of Christ and approach God on account of the good and our service for Him. Our works for God are acceptable to Him only if we are first made acceptable in the Beloved. Bonar describes this as "putting sanctification before justification" (Bonar, p. 33).

The offering of ourselves as sacrifices to God without Christ is meaningless because without Christ we are dead in sin and can never be "a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God" [Romans 12:1]

The meat offering ultimately points to our Lord Jesus Christ. Just as the burnt offering is a type of His sacrifice, the meat offering is a type of His absolute obedience and consecration. Christ is the perfect meat offering. And so as the Saviour is, so must we be: to yield ourselves and our substance to the glory of God.

**TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
SONG OF SOLOMON 3
HEBREWS 3**

THOUGHT

**O LORD, truly I am thy servant; I am thy servant.
– Psalm 116:16**

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 2:1***LESSON****Fine flour, oil and frankincense****VERSE 1**

And when any will offer a meat offering unto the LORD, his offering shall be of fine flour; and he shall pour oil upon it, and put frankincense thereon:

The meat offering has three basic ingredients: fine flour, oil and frankincense. Fine flour represents the hard work of a consecrated person. It is the best work of consecrated hands that he can present. Oil, which is poured on the fine flour, is usually taken as a symbol of the Holy Spirit. The fine flour must be anointed with oil. Our Lord Jesus is the perfect meat offering. He is the Bread from heaven [John 6:31–32] and He was anointed. “The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me; because the LORD hath anointed Me to preach good tidings unto the meek; He hath sent Me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound” [Isaiah 61:1].

We too must be anointed by the Holy Spirit because the offering of our best labour means nothing without the unction of the Spirit of God. “Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God” [2 Corinthians 1:21; 1 John 2:20, 27].

The frankincense—a plant resin that emits a fragrance—denotes the pleasantness of the offering. Frankincense was one of the three gifts presented to the Christ Child [Matthew 2:11], and it is a picture of God’s delight in His Son, and His work.

These three substances (fine flour, oil and frankincense) represent consecrated effort, Spirit-anointed and God-pleasing service for God. That is how we should serve God. God’s people must never settle for mediocrity. If we are to serve God, we should always do our best with the help of the Holy Spirit and present a work that is well-pleasing to God.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
SONG OF SOLOMON 4
HEBREWS 4

THOUGHT

“Give of your best to the Master; Naught else is worthy His love ... Give Him your heart’s adoration; Give Him the best that you have.”
Excellence should be the standard in our ministry for God.

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 2:2–3***LESSON****Memorial upon the altar****VERSE 2**

And he shall bring it to Aaron's sons the priests: and he shall take thereout his handful of the flour thereof, and of the oil thereof, with all the frankincense thereof; and the priest shall burn the memorial of it upon the altar, to be an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD.

The meat offering was brought to the priests and the high priest would take a handful of the flour and some of the oil, but he would take all the frankincense. The frankincense was taken in its entirety “because all was needed to express the complete acceptance” (Bonar, p. 37). The meat offering was a memorial of two things: it was a grateful memorial to the worshipper of God’s goodness and grace, and it was memorial of the worshipper on the part of God.

In the New Testament, the prayers of Cornelius “come up for a memorial before God” [Acts 10:4]. Cornelius’ prayers represented his dedication and his prayers caused God to think of him, not that God needed to be reminded but the Almighty takes to heart even the little that we do in our worship of Him.

The meat offering expresses man’s gratitude of God’s grace. As one author puts it, “to remember God is to be remembered in turn by God”. The second part of the meat offering would be given to Aaron and his sons, and rightly so because the high priest was a type of Christ [Hebrews 3:1; 8:1; 9:11]. The priests, on the other hand, represent the people. A communion of the priests is a picture of the communion between God and His people.

In the New Testament, this relationship is made even clearer. Because we have Christ as our High Priest, we are to “draw near [to God] with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water” [Hebrews 10:22].

**TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
SONG OF SOLOMON 5
HEBREWS 5**

THOUGHT

**Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you.
– James 4:8a**

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 2:4–8***LESSON****Oven, pan or frying pan****VERSE 8**

And thou shalt bring the meat offering that is made of these things unto the LORD: and when it is presented unto the priest, he shall bring it unto the altar.

While the ingredients were basically the same—fine flour and oil—different cooking utensils were used for making the meat offering. Some was baked in an oven [v. 4], some in a pan [v. 5], and some in a frying pan [v. 7]. The different baking utensils denoted the different economic status of the people. As with burnt offerings, a lamb or a pigeon may be used for the sake of the less well-off.

The rich man used the oven to prepare the meat offering. The word ‘furnace’ was also used for oven [Nehemiah 3:11; 12:38]. The middle class would bake their meat offering in a pan. The poor would do it in a frying pan.

In the explanation offered by John Gill, the pan is flat and therefore the mixture for the meat offering had to be thick. The frying pan, on the other hand, is concave in shape, and the mixture therefore could be runny. It was an all-purpose utensil. If a man were so poor that he could only afford one cooking utensil, it would be the frying pan. Besides, frying pans also meant that the poor could use a more runny mixture for making the meat offering. “Both for the shewbread, and for the fine flour for meat offering, and for the unleavened cakes, and for that which is baked in the pan, and for that which is fried, and for all manner of measure and size” [1 Chronicles 23:29].

Regardless of measure and size, and the cooking utensil used—oven, pan or frying pan—no one was excused from bringing a meat offering to God.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
SONG OF SOLOMON 6
HEBREWS 6

THOUGHT**Serve God with what He has given you.**

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 2:9–11***LESSON****No leaven! No honey!****VERSE 11**

No meat offering, which ye shall bring unto the LORD, shall be made with leaven: for ye shall burn no leaven, nor any honey, in any offering of the LORD made by fire.

The meat offering would be presented to the Lord and burnt on the altar. Two ingredients were banned from being used in the meat offering: leaven and honey [v. 11]. Leaven is a symbol of sin and corruption. Paul comments that “a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump” [1 Corinthians 5:6b]. Since the meat offering was a type of Christ, it was therefore fitting that anything that suggested of corruption be excluded.

Leaven was also a reminder of deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt. They were to leave the land of their oppression in haste [Exodus 12:39]. For us, the reminder is that in our salvation, we take nothing of the old world with us. We leave behind the old man so that all things can become new [2 Corinthians 5:17].

Honey denoted anything that is sweet. It could be the honey that came from figs or grapes, and not restricted to that which came from bees. Honey was forbidden because it was a mark of carnal pleasures. “It is not good to eat much honey: so for men to search their own glory is not glory” [Proverbs 25:27].

As leaven and honey mingled with the meat offering, it would become marred. The prohibition of leaven and honey with regard to meat offering therefore emphasises the fact that God demands purity in our worship of Him. There must be nothing that resembles earthly corruption and carnal pleasures in our worship of God. Keep out the stuff that we think will make us feel good, and keep to the things that manifests God’s holiness.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

SONG OF SOLOMON 7
HEBREWS 7

PRAYER**Keep your worship pure and simple.**

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 2:12***LESSON****Firstfruits****VERSE 12**

As for the oblation of the firstfruits, ye shall offer them unto the LORD: but they shall not be burnt on the altar for a sweet savour.

The firstfruits refer to the first fruits ripened on the tree. Firstfruits denoted the offering of one's self and substance. They are usually offered together with the meat offering. But firstfruits should "not be burnt on the altar for a sweet savour" [v. 12]. Firstfruits were not put before the altar because "they shew us ... Christ glorified, or raised up, after suffering. Hence there is no burning of any part of them, for the suffering is done" (Bonar, p. 43). Paul writes, "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept" [1 Corinthians 15:20]. Our Lord Jesus is also known as "the firstborn from the dead" [Colossians 1:18].

What is the purpose of presenting firstfruits unto God? One aspect of the meat offering denotes the consecration of self to God. The firstfruits, which were part of the increase in God's blessings, was therefore to be included in that act of consecration as an offering of thanksgiving.

God claims a special right to the firstfruits of our increase. It goes beyond our substance. We must also present to God the first day of the week (Sunday) and the first of our children [Exodus 13:1–16].

The offering of the firstfruits is also an act of faith on the part of the people. Put God first even before your needs are met. It is seeking God's kingdom and His righteousness first in the assurance that all the things that we need shall be added unto us [Matthew 6:33]. Render your firstfruits to Him and you will experience abundant blessings from on high.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

SONG OF SOLOMON 8
HEBREWS 8

THOUGHT

First things first: Let Christ be preeminent in our lives.

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 2:13***LESSON****The salt of the covenant****VERSE 13**

And every oblation of thy meat offering shalt thou season with salt; neither shalt thou suffer the salt of the covenant of thy God to be lacking from thy meat offering: with all thine offerings thou shalt offer salt.

Whereas leaven is a symbol of corruption and honey represents carnal pleasures, salt is a symbol of spiritual purity [Matthew 5:13; Mark 9:49; Luke 14:34; Colossians 4:6]. Salt is both a preservative and a preventive. The meat offering, as God commanded, was to be seasoned with salt, indicating the removal and prevention of corruption.

Salt is also a taste enhancer. It is described as an emblem in the covenant between God and man [v. 13]. Salt intimates a friendship between God and man. That salt is applied to the meat offering implies that God's friendship extends to the worshipper—a friendship that never wanes. That is why it is called 'the salt of the covenant' [Numbers 18:19; 2 Chronicles 13:5]. Salt is a symbol of the perpetuity of the covenant.

The use of salt is not confined to the meat offerings. "With all thine offerings thou shalt offer salt" implies that the savour of these offerings was neither incidental nor particular but it is to be substantial and universal. "All thine offerings" covers every aspect of a person's life and his various relationships. Just as the sacrifices are salted, so are Christians to be salted with fire [Mark 9:49]. Our Lord Jesus calls us to be the salt of the earth [Matthew 5:13], meaning to say that believers, having been themselves salted with fire, are now to become the salt that saves the world from perishing in its own corruption.

The believer's speech is to be "always with grace, seasoned with salt" [Colossians 4:6], meaning that our words must enhance our relationships with others [Ephesians 4:29].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

ISAIAH 1
HEBREWS 9

THOUGHT

Are you a savoury Christian?

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 2:14–16***LESSON****The offering of corn****VERSE 14**

And if thou offer a meat offering of thy firstfruits unto the LORD, thou shalt offer for the meat offering of thy firstfruits green ears of corn dried by the fire, even corn beaten out of full ears.

If thou offer ..." [v. 14] indicates that the meat offering is voluntary, unlike that in verse 12. Whether it is a necessary or free will meat offering, God stipulated the manner in which the firstfruits would be offered. The meat offering would be the "green ears of corn," dried by fire beaten out of full ears. Bonar believes that the 'ears of corn' is a type of Christ. Our Lord said to His disciples, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit" [John 12:24]. This is a reference to His sacrificial death.

"Green ears of corn" denotes the corn was harvested while it is still green. Our Lord was at the prime of humanity when He was crucified. The phrase 'green ears' appears eight times in the Old Testament, and it is translated as Abib, the first month of the Hebrew year and also the month of the Passover, elsewhere [Exodus 13:4; 23:15; 34:18; Deuteronomy 16:1].

Drying the corn indicated the fierce wrath of God upon His Son as He bore the sins of humanity. The Psalmist describes the effects of this divine wrath upon our Lord Jesus as the drying up of His strength [Psalm 22:15] and the withering of His heart [Psalm 102:4].

The meat offering "beaten out of full ears" again shows a picture of our suffering Lord, as "though he were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered" [Hebrews 5:8]. The way of the Cross—beaten and crucified—is the path that our Lord had trodden to be the meat offering for our souls.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

ISAIAH 2
HEBREWS 10

THOUGHT

Christ took every blow, and suffered every stroke for us. The totality of His sufferings made Him the perfect substitute for our sins.

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 3:1***LESSON****The peace offering****VERSE I**

*And if his oblation be a
sacrifice of peace offering,
if he offer it of the herd;
whether it be a male or
female, he shall offer it
without blemish before the*

LORD.

The burnt offerings [Leviticus 1], the meat offerings [Leviticus 2] and now the peace offerings are all connected [Amos 5:22]. The burnt offerings represent the act of justification. The meat offerings denote consecration of believers. The peace offerings denote the desire for communion with God. God “takes for granted that such a soul, having free access to him now, will make abundant use of that access” (Bonar, p. 50).

Like the burnt offering, the animal used for the peace offering must be without blemish. It could be cattle [v. 1], lamb [v. 7] or goat [v. 12] but not turtledoves or pigeons. The reason fowl offerings were omitted was because the peace offering was voluntary.

Unlike the burnt offering, the gender of the animal does not matter. In the peace offering, both male and female animals could be offered. The reason was that whereas the male animal used for the burnt offering was a type of Christ; the focus was not on the type in the peace offering but on the effects represented by the sacrifice.

The intent of the peace offering was to show the blessedness and joyousness of communion between God and man. The breach in the communion is mended by the burnt offering, and the blessedness of the communion is the reason for the peace offering. One writer points out, “Conscious unworthiness must first be taken away by the shed blood of bull or lamb, and then priest and people might rejoice together before the Lord. First purity, then peace ... First, penitence at the cross of the Redeemer and trust in His atoning sacrifice; then fellowship with God and his people.”

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

ISAIAH 3-4
HEBREWS 11

THOUGHT

First to the Cross (for redemption), and then to the Church (for worship and fellowship).

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 3:2***LESSON****Killed at the door****VERSE 2**

*And he shall lay his hand
upon the head of his
offering, and kill it at the
door of the tabernacle of the
congregation: and Aaron's
sons the priests shall
sprinkle the blood upon the
altar round about.*

The worshipper would lay his hand on the head of the animal and kill it at the door of the Tabernacle. Bonar points out, “We cannot cross the threshold of his Father’s house, and enter his many mansions, except by his peace-speaking blood. Being justified by faith, we have peace—we have access into His grace” [Romans 5:1–2].

The essential part of the burnt offering is that it is wholly consumed on the altar. The essential part of the peace offering is that it is a festive meal upon the sacrifice. Later we will read that the worshipper must also present three kinds of bread [Leviticus 7:11–13] together with the peace offering. The worshipper would also receive a portion of the peace offering. The portion to be returned to the worshipper must be consumed by the next day [Leviticus 7:15].

The peace offering affords the people of God the duty as well as the privilege of celebrating a festive meal, eaten with reverence and thanksgiving in the house of God. The offering was killed at the door of the Tabernacle so that God’s people might experience the blessedness of being in union with God as His covenant people.

The burnt and meat offerings denoted the total surrender of the worshipper to God. The peace offering took a step further in realising that the worshipper, having surrendered to God, is now in communion with Him. In this sense, the peace offering typified the confidence and joyfulness of those who, having totally surrendered themselves to God, had become his children, and could delight in communion with Him.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ISAIAH 5
HEBREWS 12

THOUGHT

Jesus has a table spread / Where the saints of God are fed, / He invites His chosen people, “Come and dine.”

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 3:3–4***LESSON****The fat that covered the inwards****VERSE 3**

And he shall offer of the sacrifice of the peace offering an offering made by fire unto the LORD; the fat that covereth the inwards, and all the fat that is upon the inwards,

There is a parallel account of today's verses in Exodus 29:13. Comparing the two accounts, it is clear that the worshipper was to take "all the fat that covereth the inwards" [Exodus 29:13]. The whole animal was not burnt, only the fat and the stipulated portions.

The stipulated parts, fat that covered the entrails, fat that was upon the entrails, the kidneys and the caul above the liver, were chosen because they were the richest parts. There is much debate over 'caul of the liver'. One commentator describes it as the "the lobe of the liver, an appendage of the liver that is found only in cows, sheep and goats, though not in humans". Others claim that it is the gall bladder. What we know for certain is that the caul is some form of fat near the liver.

God commanded that all the fat belonged to Him. It was to be a sweet savour unto Him. The Israelites were not allowed to take any fat at all, which was why when the sons of Eli—Hophni and Phinehas—took the meat before the fat was burnt, their act was described as a "very great [sin] before the LORD: for men abhorred the offering of the LORD" [1 Samuel 2:14–17].

The word 'fat' is also translated as 'best' [Numbers 18:12] in reference to "the best of the oil, and all the best of the wine" [Numbers 18:29–30, 32]. As we approach God and commune with Him, which is typified in the peace offerings, we come with our best. As one author puts it, "We bring but the most inward feelings, all of the richest kind, and all, from the depth of the soul."

**TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ISAIAH 6
HEBREWS 13**

THOUGHT

Give of your best to the Master; / Give Him first place in your heart; / Give Him first place in your service; / Consecrate every part.

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 3:5–11***LESSON****Upon the burnt sacrifice****VERSE 5**

And Aaron's sons shall burn it on the altar upon the burnt sacrifice, which is upon the wood that is on the fire: it is an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD.

Every action that is prescribed by God has meaning and intent. The fat parts were not placed upon the altar at random. The peace offering was placed upon the burnt offering previously laid upon the fire. Symbolically, the burnt offering served as the foundation of the peace offering. The sacrifice of our Lord Jesus is the basis for our peace with God.

The point, as Bonar points out, is “our daily acts of communion with God, our daily praise, our daily thanksgiving, must be founded afresh on the work of Jesus” (Bonar, p. 54). Paul reminds us, “But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us” [Ephesians 2:13–14].

The writer of Hebrews says, “By [Christ] therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His name [Hebrews 13:15]. God also stipulated that “Aaron’s sons shall burn [the fats] on the altar upon the burnt sacrifice” [Leviticus 3:5]. “The fire upon the altar shall be burning in it; it shall not be put out: and the priest shall burn wood on it every morning, and lay the burnt offering in order upon it; and he shall burn thereon the fat of the peace offerings” [Leviticus 6:12].

In these precise stipulations by God, we see the continual sacrifice of the peace offering, the continual fire, portraying a continual intercession that calls forth continual communion between God and man.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

ISAIAH 7
JAMES 1

THOUGHT

The sacrifice of Christ is the cause of the peace between God and man. And the surrender of the self to God is the continual enjoyment of that peace.

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 3:6***LESSON****Without blemish****VERSE 6**

And if his offering for a sacrifice of peace offering unto the LORD be of the flock; male or female, he shall offer it without blemish.

Besides the cattle, animals from the flock or a lamb might also be used. Cattle or lamb, the type and size of the animal did not matter. What mattered was that the animal used for the peace offering must be “without blemish” [v. 1, 6].

In Hebrew, it is just one word that is applied to various situations. Noah was described as a “perfect” man [Genesis 6:9]. Abram was commanded by God to be “perfect” [Genesis 17:1]. The works of the Lord are rightly said to be “perfect” [Deuteronomy 32:4], as are His ways and His law [Psalm 18:30; 19:7]. Joshua commanded the people to “serve [the Lord] in sincerity” [Joshua 24:14]. David testified that he “was also upright before the LORD” [2 Samuel 22:24; Psalm 15:2; 18:23, 25]. The word is also translated as ‘undefiled’ [Psalm 119:1] and ‘sound’ [Psalm 119:80].

When we put all these words together, we get a full picture of what it means for an animal to be ‘without blemish.’ The acceptability of the peace offering was not in the size of the value of the animal but in the care of the person making the offering.

Our Lord Jesus is described as “a lamb without blemish and without spot” [1 Peter 1:19]. God did not redeem us with “corruptible things, as silver and gold” [1 Peter 1:18]. It is only in Christ that God is fully satisfied. Our redemption is perfectly secured in Him. Likewise, in our worship of God, we must come with a heart that is perfect, sincere, upright, undefiled and without blemish. God does not expect sinless perfection but He demands of us a wholehearted effort.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

ISAIAH 8
JAMES 2

THOUGHT

LORD, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? Who shall dwell in thy holy hill? He that walketh uprightly [without blemish], and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart. – Psalm 15:1–2

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 3:7–11***LESSON****The lamb for the peace offering****VERSE 9**

And he shall offer of the sacrifice of the peace offering an offering made by fire unto the LORD; the fat thereof, and the whole rump, it shall he take off hard by the backbone; and the fat that covereth the inwards, and all the fat that is upon the inwards,

Whether the animal was taken from the herd (cattle) or the flock (lamb), the fats of the animal were to be burnt, the only difference being in the lamb the rump was included [v. 9; v. 3–4, 15]. The rump is the fat tail of a sheep or ram. It was used for the ordination of priests [Exodus 29:22]. Apparently, there is fat in the tail of the sheep and none in the cattle or goat.

Bonar gives this interesting insight, “In Syrian sheep, [the rump] was a part of the animal which the shepherd reckoned very valuable; it is large, and, being composed of a substance between fat and marrow, is not inferior in taste and quality to marrow ... and it is said that the tail he shall remove close by the backbone ... take it entire and complete – leaving nothing behind” (Bonar, p. 56).

Take note that God did not allow even one small portion of fat to be kept from Him. Every portion of fat was offered to God. The Psalmist writes, “My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips” [Psalm 63:5]. God’s satisfaction comes from our offering to Him every rich portion.

God, through the prophet Isaiah, intimates the same thought: “Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto Me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness” [Isaiah 55:2]. Likewise for us, offer to God everything that is due Him so that you may also enjoy the fullness of your communion with Him.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

ISAIAH 9
JAMES 3

THOUGHT

Give your best and your all to the Lord.

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 3:12–16***LESSON****Food of the offering****VERSE 16**

And the priest shall burn them upon the altar: it is the food of the offering made by fire for a sweet savour: all the fat is the LORD's.

Just as in the burnt offering, God provided an alternative for those who could not afford to give a peace offering from the herd. In this case, the alternative is a goat [v. 12]. According to Bonar, “the goat represents Jesus as one taken out of the flock for the salvation of the rest”. He offers this imaginary account of a lion: “It rushes upon this flock; one is seized, and is soon within the jaws of the lion! This prey is enough; the lion is satisfied, and retires; the flock is saved by the death of one” (Bonar, pp. 57–58).

The efficacy of the sacrifice of the peace offering is not dependent on the size or the value of the animal but on the act of sacrifice that was exacted on them, whether it is bullock, lamb, turtledove or goat. Regardless of the animal, it must be killed, its blood must be shed, and fire must consume it.

We know that the peace offering of the goat was fully accepted because it is described as the “food of the offering made by fire for a sweet savour” [v. 16]. The word ‘food’ is also translated ‘bread’ [Genesis 3:19; Leviticus 8:26] and ‘meat’ [Leviticus 22:11, 13]. Food is an essential component in times of celebration [Luke 15:23]. God looks upon His repentant children as the prodigal son returning to his father.

Having a meal together at the table is a picture of fellowship. The peace offering is “the food of the offering made by fire for a sweet savour” [v. 16]. Here is God with His people at the table; feasting together. When God communes with us, He is no longer our foe but our friend.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

ISAIAH 10
JAMES 4

THOUGHT

“Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God” [James 2:23]. What honour it is to be called a ‘friend of God’!

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 3:17***LESSON****A perpetual statute****VERSE 17**

It shall be a perpetual statute for your generations throughout all your dwellings, that ye eat neither fat nor blood.

There were two more stipulations in the peace offering: a prescription and a prohibition.

The prohibition was to eat neither fat nor blood because these belonged to God. The fat was His portion in the peace offering. The blood was presented to Him in all animal sacrifices as representing life [Leviticus 7:22–27]. The fat portions represented the best parts of the animal and were reserved for Him. Likewise, the best parts of our lives and resources are to be reserved for God’s use. Let the best part of your day, your best thoughts and the best of your abilities be set apart for your service to God.

The peace offering was to be a perpetual statute for the children of God. This is the prescription. ‘Perpetual’ is also translated ‘ever’ and ‘forever’. It is also rendered ‘everlasting’, speaking of God’s covenant with Noah [Genesis 9:16]. The peace offering was equally binding for all generations in the Old Testament—“a perpetual statute for your generations throughout all your dwellings”. The present generation had the responsibility to instruct and show the next generation the manner in which God was to be worshipped.

“Remove not the ancient [same word translated ‘perpetual’] landmark, which thy fathers have set” [Proverbs 22:28; 23:10]. While it is true that every generation had to fight its own spiritual battles, the present generation nonetheless had the responsibility to prepare the next generation to continue in the spiritual heritage. This instruction must go on “throughout all your dwellings”, meaning that regardless of where the next generation lives, they must keep near the Cross.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ISAIAH 11
JAMES 5

PRAYER**Jesus, keep me near the Cross.**

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 4:1–2***LESSON****Sinning through
ignorance****VERSE 2**

*Speak unto the children
of Israel, saying, If a
soul shall sin through
ignorance against any of
the commandments of the
LORD concerning things
which ought not to be done,
and shall do against any of
them.*

Leviticus 4 gives an account of the sin offering. It begins with a ‘sin through ignorance’, one that was not committed consciously. It was the unintentional failure to keep the law, an act of omission and not one of deliberate defiance. For example, if something holy was inadvertently eaten, the offending person had to restore the lost offering and add a penalty of one-fifth [Leviticus 22:14]. The word is used, interestingly, to describe the errors made by kings [Ecclesiastes 10:5].

This is the sin for which David prayed, “Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from secret faults. Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression” [Psalm 19:12–13].

This is also the sin of those who had a direct hand in crucifying our Lord. On the Cross, He prayed, “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do” [Luke 23:34], meaning to say that even for those who had carried out an act of gross injustice, a sin offering might be made. Here we see the depravity of man, and how sinful he is. Man has a heart inclined to sin, a mind prone to wander, and a body subject to the weakness of the flesh. How sad, as Bonar, puts it “that we grieve the Lord in so many hidden ways”.

We also see the abundant grace of God. The holy God cannot condone even sins of ignorance but the merciful and loving God prescribes a way of atonement for such sins. Such is the mercy of God that He exercises “compassion on the ignorant” [Hebrews 5:2].

**TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ISAIAH 12
I PETER 1**

THOUGHT

We have no excuse for our sins, only our pleas in the name of Christ.

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 4:3–4***LESSON****The priest's sin****VERSE 3**

If the priest that is anointed do sin according to the sin of the people; then let him bring for his sin, which he hath sinned, a young bullock without blemish unto the LORD for a sin offering.

The priest who was anointed is the high priest. Because all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, it should not shock us that even the high priest can sin. Because of his position, his sins were more serious. The phrase ‘according to the sin of the people’ may be taken to mean the high priest sinned to the sin of the people.

His sins could have caused grave damage to and have a multiplier effect on the common people, as did a stumbling block. It could “injure thousands of souls ... destroy the comfort ... misrepresent the way of acceptance to thousands, and thereby ruin their souls” (Bonar, p. 65).

Iniquity in church leadership can result in great scandals. It is most hurtful in its effects and it is most offensive to God. Case in point: King David’s adulterous sin gave “great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme” [2 Samuel 12:14]. It has been said that the children of privilege are the heirs of responsibility. The more we have from God, the more He expects from us, and the more heinous our sin will be in His sight if we depart from His ways.

But the Lord knows “our frame” [Psalm 103:14] and has provided a way for the high priest to atone for his sins. His sin must be brought to the altar. He must also bring “a bullock”, no less. As the representative of the nation, his offering must equal the value presented by the whole congregation. The high priest comes to God—as all sinners do—on account of God’s provision for the atonement for our sins, and our faith and obedience towards Him.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

ISAIAH 13**1 PETER 2****THOUGHT**

You are part of the royal priesthood, a double privilege and responsibility of royalty and piety. Live like the child of the King!

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 4:5–12***LESSON****Blood before the veil****VERSE 6**

*And the priest shall dip
his finger in the blood,
and sprinkle of the blood
seven times before the
LORD, before the veil of the
sanctuary.*

We cannot get away from the sight and the smell of the blood and slaughter that was going on during these sacrifices. This is an apt picture of the terribleness of sin. The priest, after having slaughtered the bullock, dipped his finger in its blood and sprinkled the blood seven times before the veil of the sanctuary.

‘Seven’ in the Scriptures denotes ‘completeness’. The blood had to be sprinkled seven times, indicating that a life was completely sacrificed before the Lord. There is some debate over whether the blood was sprinkled on the ground before the veil or on the veil itself.

To those who claim that the blood was sprinkled on the veil, I painted a picture that the blood of the bullock could not yet rend the veil. The veil represented the body of our Lord Jesus [Hebrews 10:20] and it is the giving of His life and the shedding of His blood that rends the veil. If the blood were sprinkled on the ground before the veil, it would mean that the ground before the holy of holies was stained with blood. And on the Day of Atonement, the high priest must cross this threshold of blood to enter into the Holy of Holies.

In any case, whether the blood was sprinkled on or before the veil, blood must be shed. A life must be given for one to go through the veil. Without the shedding of blood, it is impossible for a sinner to come before the presence of God.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

ISAIAH 14
1 PETER 3

THOUGHT

**Some through the fire, some through the flood ...
but all through the blood.**

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 4:7***LESSON****Blood on the altar****VERSE 7**

And the priest shall put some of the blood upon the horns of the altar of sweet incense before the LORD, which is in the tabernacle of the congregation; and shall pour all the blood of the bullock at the bottom of the altar of the burnt offering, which is at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

The high priest performed two more things. He put some blood on the altar of sweet incense. Then he poured the rest of the blood at the bottom of the altar of the burnt offering. This altar of sweet incense was placed just before the veil that separated the holy place from the Holy of Holies. The fragrant incense rising up to God represented the praise and prayers and the service of God's people.

The high priest then put some of the blood on the horns of the altar, denoting that even our acts of praise and prayer and devotion would be inefficacious if they were not made through the blood. Then the high priest took a few steps back to the entrance of the Tabernacle, where the altar of burnt offering was situated, and poured the blood of the sacrifice at the foot of the altar. From the veil at the front end of the holy place to the altar of the burnt offering, blood was applied.

Atonement must be by blood alone. "Within and without the Holy Place, the voice of atonement was now heard ascending from the blood ... Atonement is the essence of it – atonement needed for even one sin, and applied as soon as the sin was known" (Bonar, p. 69).

What a powerful illustration of the terribleness of sin, and the high price of redemption. Sin presents itself to us as pleasant, albeit but for a moment. But consider this: for that moment of sinful pleasure, the ransom that has to be paid for our redemption is the life of the Son of God.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

ISAIAH 15
I PETER 4

THOUGHT**God does not trifle with sin, and so must we not!**

BIBLE LESSON
Leviticus 4:8–12

LESSON
Outside the camp

VERSE 12

Even the whole bullock shall he carry forth without the camp unto a clean place, where the ashes are poured out, and burn him on the wood with fire: where the ashes are poured out shall he be burnt.

The high priest is to remove all the fat of the bullock and burn it before the altar of the burnt offering. At this point, the sin offering was treated as a peace offering [v. 10]. The other parts of the bullock, the skin, flesh, head, legs, inwards and dung (referring to the contents of the stomach), were carried outside the camp, where the ashes were poured out and burnt. This concluding act of burning the rest of the animal served as a reminder of the terribleness of sin.

The burning of the skin and head, the dung, and even “the whole bullock” [v. 12] represented the law exacting its fullest demands on sin. Here is God’s unsparing and unrelenting justice. God does not overlook sin. On the contrary, God’s justice and holiness demands that the price must be paid in full, and not a drop of blood less.

And yet there is more. All this must be done outside the camp. The complete burning of the animal outside the camp is a picture of our Lord Jesus Christ. He came to give His life a ransom for sinners. He was crucified outside the holy city [Hebrews 13:12].

And He did all these for the sake of His elect, who were once sinners, “without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For He is our peace” [Ephesians 2:12–14].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ISAIAH 16
1 PETER 5

THOUGHT

We are separated from God on our own accord, saved unto God on Christ’s work.

BIBLE LESSON
Leviticus 4:13–21

LESSON
National sin

VERSE 13

And if the whole congregation of Israel sin through ignorance, and the thing be hid from the eyes of the assembly, and they have done somewhat against any of the commandments of the LORD concerning things which should not be done, and are guilty.

A nation may become guilty of national sin in different ways: by a direct violation of the expressed law of God; by condoning sin and refusing to carry out judgement on an act that is clearly in violation of God's law; or by a failure of the leaders of the land to instruct the truth concerning God's law. The sin of ignorance by the congregation of Israel fell into the last category.

But the people were not excused. The prophet Hosea sounded this warning, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children" [Hosea 4:6]. The priests were derelict in their duties but the people suffered the consequences [Leviticus 22:14].

This also applies to individuals. Eli failed to restrain his sons when they sinned against God. His indifference towards the sins of his sons led to grave consequences. The sin of ignorance can be applied to the church, too. When a congregation denies a fundamental truth in God's Word, when it allows a minister to preach another Gospel, when believers shut their eyes to the truth or wink their eyes at heresies, we have sinned.

The seriousness of this sin is seen in that it requires the same offering as that committed by the priest. The hope is that just as forgiveness is given to the individual, it is also extended to a congregation [2 Chronicles 7:14].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ISAIAH 17–18
2 PETER 1

THOUGHT

Pray for personal, congregational and also national revival.

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 4:22–26***LESSON****The Lord his God****VERSE 22**

*When a ruler hath sinned,
and done somewhat
through ignorance against
any of the commandments
of the LORD his God
concerning things which
should not be done, and is
guilty;*

Sin is an equal-opportunity affliction. All have sinned. And all who sin bears the same consequences [Romans 6:23]. The sin offering for the ruler is “a kid of the goat” [v. 24], different from that offered by the priest or the congregation. But the nature of the atonement is the same: the goat must be killed and its blood shed. All sin must be atoned by blood.

But unlike the sin offering for the priest, the blood for the sin offering is applied only to the altar of burnt offering. “The altar of incense in the Holy Place was peculiarly the scene of the priest’s intercession ... The sins in holy things pointed inward, toward the Holy Place. On the other hand, a ruler’s sins pointed toward the camp. Hence, the blood that atones for [the ruler’s] sin is sprinkled on the horns of that altar where it would be publicly observed” (Bonar, p. 78).

The atonement for the sins of the ruler is singled out because of his position of leadership and influence. “If a ruler hearken to lies, all his servants are wicked” [Proverbs 29:12]. The sins of kings had effect on the commoner.

The phrase ‘the LORD his God’ [v. 22] highlights the fact that the ruler had publicly acknowledged the Lord as his God. It means that a ruler must be a man of God. Before his death, David said to Solomon, “Keep the charge of the LORD thy God, to walk in His ways, to keep His statutes, and His commandments, and His judgements, and His testimonies, as it is written in the law of Moses” [1 Kings 2:3].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

ISAIAH 19–20
2 PETER 2

THOUGHT

He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God. – 2 Samuel 23:3b

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 4:27–35***LESSON****Sin of the common man****VERSE 27**

*And if any one of the
common people sin through
ignorance, while he doeth
somewhat against any of
the commandments of the
LORD concerning things
which ought not to be done,
and be guilty;*

When a commoner sinned, the sin offering was “a kid of the goats, a female without blemish” [v. 28]. The difference was that a female animal was used, perhaps to make the point that the “atonement was not intended equally for the daughters of Zion” (Bonar). Others have suggested that a female offering was used to show that the sin of the people had lesser effects as that of the ruler. One indisputable fact is that the atonement required the killing of the animal. The sin of the commoner was still a sin in the eyes of God.

Despite being a female animal, the offering was still “a sweet savour unto the LORD” [v. 31]. There was full acceptance by God and therefore and full favour shown to the commoner as to the ruler or the priest. All, regardless of status, were accepted by the Beloved.

There are two great truths. First, all have sinned: priest, people and prince. All sins are equally guilty before a holy God. No one can make light of sin by claiming ignorance. Not one can be exempted from the penalty of sin by claiming special status. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Second, God has made it possible for all to be reconciled to Him, not on account of the type of gift but on account of the nature of the atonement: the remission of sins by the blood of our Lord Jesus.

And this lays upon believers the responsibility of bringing to the world the word of reconciliation, that we are to “preach the gospel to every creature” [Mark 16:15].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

ISAIAH 21
2 PETER 3

THOUGHT

**Praise the Lord that the great atoning sacrifice
has been offered to one and all.**

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 5:1–4***LESSON****If a soul sins ...****VERSE 1**

And if a soul sin, and hear the voice of swearing, and is a witness, whether he hath seen or known of it; if he do not utter it, then he shall bear his iniquity.

The first six verses of Chapter 5 state three specific cases for which sin offerings were required: the sin of being a silent witness, the sin of defilement and the sin of making reckless oaths.

If a person “hear[d] the voice of swearing,” then he was a witness to an oath [v. 1]. If he remained silent and did not give evidence to what he had seen or heard, he was regarded as guilty, and a sin offering must be made. Today, a person has the right not to speak so that he does not incriminate himself. Choosing to be a silent witness is a sin to the all-knowing God.

The second case involved ceremonial defilement [v. 2–3]. When a man came into contact with an unclean thing—animal carcass or the impurities of a man—he was deemed unclean. Even if the unclean thing was hidden from him, a sin offering must be made. This tells us that any degree of sin (big or small, hidden or known) is offensive to our pure and holy God.

The third case refers to someone who made a reckless and thoughtless oath “to do evil, or to do good” [v. 4]. An example is Jephthah making a vow that he would give the first thing that come out of his house to the Lord as a burnt offering [Judges 11:30–31]. Jephthah’s vow was unnecessary and reckless and made at a moment of great zeal for God. This is a reminder to us about the deceitfulness of sin that even in the midst of doing great things for God, the wiles of the devil are not far off.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ISAIAH 22
I JOHN 1

THOUGHT

Much sin is committed by omissions and indifference to truth.

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 5:5–6***LESSON****Confessing sin****VERSE 5**

And it shall be, when he shall be guilty in one of these things, that he shall confess that he hath sinned in that thing.

For the sins mentioned in the first four verses, there must be first a confession of the sin before making the sin offering [Numbers 5:6–7]. Even though the sins may be hidden, the person must confess that he is a sinner. Why?

The confession of sins vindicates God. David committed the sin of adultery and made a public confession that he had sinned against God and that “[God] mightest be justified when [He] speakest, and be clear when [He] judgest [Psalm 51:4]. Confessing that we are sinners—when we may appear good and respectable in the eyes of the world—affirms what God says that “there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not” [Ecclesiastes 7:20].

Joshua told Achan, “My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the Lord God of Israel, and make confession unto him; and tell me now what thou hast done; hide it not from me” [Joshua 7:19]. It is therefore in our confession that we become witnesses for God. We testify that we have come to see sin for what it is and affirms what God says about sin and sinners. In that sense, confession is also praise. In the Hebrew tongue, the word is also translated ‘praise’ [Genesis 29:35; Psalm 28:7; 30:9; 33:2].

It is only after the confession that “he shall bring his trespass offering unto the LORD for his sin which he hath sinned ... and the priest shall make an atonement for him concerning his sin” [v. 6]. It is first to the Lord in confession before going to the altar with an offering.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

ISAIAH 23
I JOHN 2

THOUGHT

Confession is our affirmation and praise to the holiness of the Lord.

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 5:7–13***LESSON****If not a lamb, then ...****VERSE 7**

And if he be not able to bring a lamb, then he shall bring for his trespass, which he hath committed, two turtledoves, or two young pigeons, unto the LORD; one for a sin offering, and the other for a burnt offering.

Because all are sinners, all must therefore confess and bring an offering [v. 7–13]. But not all are of equal means. So God allowed different offerings: turtledoves, pigeons or the “tenth part of an ephah of fine flour” [v. 7, 11]. With regard to the burnt offering, it seems that only one bird was required [Leviticus 1:15]. The reason two birds are needed was because “one for a sin offering, and the other for a burnt offering” [v. 7].

In the sin offering, portions were left for the priest [Leviticus 7:28–38] but the turtledove was too small for that and so a second bird was given as a burnt offering. In the offering of the turtledoves, it was specifically stated that its neck be wrung off but not severed from its body, a picture of Christ of whom the Psalmist wrote, “He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken” [Psalm 34:20].

For those who were so poor that they could not even afford two turtledoves or pigeons, they might bring a tenth part of an ephah of flour. But there must be no oil in the flour to render it tasteful and no frankincense to give it fragrance. “It is a sin offering” and a part of it shall be given to the priest as a “meat offering” [v. 13].

God stipulated these concessions for the less well-off to show that none was to be deprived of His grace on account of his worldly means. The Gospel is to be preached to all, even the poor.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

ISAIAH 24
I JOHN 3

THOUGHT

Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. – Isaiah 55:1

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 5:14–19***LESSON****The trespass offering****VERSE 15**

If a soul commit a trespass, and sin through ignorance, in the holy things of the LORD; then he shall bring for his trespass unto the LORD a ram without blemish out of the flocks, with thy estimation by shekels of silver, after the shekel of the sanctuary, for a trespass offering.

Some people see no distinction between the sin and trespass offerings. But from the text, there are noticeable differences. First, the trespass offering was always a ram. Second, in the trespass offering, the person was to make amends [v. 16]. This would imply that while the sin offering dealt with a person's relationship with God the trespass offering had the added dimension of making restitution. On top of the ram, the offerer must also bring an "estimation by shekels of silver, after the shekel of the sanctuary, for a trespass offering. And he shall make amends for the harm that he hath done in the holy thing, and shall add the fifth part thereto" [Leviticus 5:15–16].

What are the "holy things of the LORD" [v. 15–16]? The holy things would be those that were set apart for God, such as tithes. "All the tithes of the land ... is the LORD's: it is holy unto the LORD" [Leviticus 27:30].

Thus, if a man failed to pay his tithes and offerings to the Lord, which Malachi considered as robbery, he must bring his trespass offering. If a man defrauded his neighbours [Leviticus 6:2], he must bring his trespass offering. His trespass offering would not be received until he had made restitution to the person he had wronged, and paid one-fifth of the value of the item that he had wrongfully appropriated.

So whether it is with God or man, a person cannot gain by withholding what is not his rightfully or by defrauding another. "What we withdraw from [God], He will withdraw from us in another way" (Bonar, p. 100).

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

ISAIAH 25
I JOHN 4

THOUGHT

You can never gain by stinging on God.

BIBLE LESSON
Leviticus 5:14–19

LESSON
Making amends

VERSE 16

And he shall make amends for the harm that he hath done in the holy thing, and shall add the fifth part thereto, and give it unto the priest: and the priest shall make an atonement for him with the ram of the trespass offering, and it shall be forgiven him.

In the trespass offering, the atonement had the added element of making amends or restitution. That is how the phrase ‘make amends’ is translated [Exodus 22:3, 5, 6]. Restitution could mean restoring all that had been wrongfully taken or it could mean restoring all that had been taken and more (a fifth part) to make up for the wrong and to compensate the person suffering the loss.

However, don’t think of restitution as meritorious in any way. Restitution implies a wrong has been committed. Zacchaeus said that he would restore fourfold to those from whom he had wrongfully taken [Luke 19:8]. His act was the result of and not the reward for his salvation.

Thus, the person making amends must do so in a penitent spirit, having no regard for what he is required to do additionally but only for what our Lord Jesus has done for him unconditionally. These two aspects of making amends point to the atoning work of Christ. “Do we not see set forth in symbol the great fact that God in atonement must get back all the honour that his law lost for a time by man’s fraud; and also must have the honour of his law vindicated by the payment of an amount of suffering? The active obedience of Christ gave the one; His passive obedience provided the other” (Bonar, p. 100).

The law in the trespass offering is to make amends. The spirit of the law is to give our lives to serve our Lord. Where we have failed in our service for God in the past, we redouble our efforts in the present.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

ISAIAH 26
I JOHN 5

THOUGHT

Love God with all our heart. Serve Him with all our strength.

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 5:14–19***LESSON****Erring and knowing not****VERSE 18**

And he shall bring a ram without blemish out of the flock, with thy estimation, for a trespass offering, unto the priest: and the priest shall make an atonement for him concerning his ignorance wherein he erred and wist it not, and it shall be forgiven him.

Paul writes, “By the law is the knowledge of sin” [Romans 3:20]. Sin and guilt imply the sinner’s power of discernment. When a man sins, there is a consciousness of error and wrongdoing the moment he sins. Adam and Eve knew that they were naked the moment they ate the forbidden fruit. The consciousness of sin is immediately followed by remorse and self-reproach. But when a man sins and has no sense of guilt, he has “erred and wist it not” [v. 18; Luke 12:47–48].

Can one sin and not know that he had sinned? The Bible does allow for such a situation in which a person sins without knowing. There are several possibilities. There are some who do not know, and they sin. The Jews ought to have known that Jesus was the promised Messiah but their ignorance led to grave sin. Some may have forgotten about the law and sin. The Jews would fall into this category. They failed to remember God’s mighty works and sinned against Him.

There are some whose consciences have been so warped that their spiritual vision are obscured by prejudice and pride, and don’t have the slightest tinge of guilt when they sin. We see this in the Jews who demanded for Christ to be crucified.

A man’s ignorance of sin and absence of a sense of guilt does not exempt him from making atonement. Paul “was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious ... because I did it ignorantly in unbelief” [1 Timothy 1:13] but was quick to add that “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief” [1 Timothy 1:15].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

ISAIAH 27
2 JOHN

THOUGHT

Do not think of reasons to excuse your sins. Run to Christ instead.

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 6:1–7***LESSON****The sin of violence and deceit****VERSE 2**

If a soul sin, and commit a trespass against the LORD, and lie unto his neighbour in that which was delivered him to keep, or in fellowship, or in a thing taken away by violence, or hath deceived his neighbour;

There are several scenarios where such sins may be committed. First, under normal interactions between friends and neighbours, a man may commit something to his friend for safekeeping but the friend misappropriates it. He has sinned against God and the owner. The second scenario is a man taking another man's possession by violence, like Ahab taking Naboth's vineyard [1 Kings 21:9–14]. The phrase 'taken by violence' is also translated 'robbery' [Psalm 62:10; Isaiah 61:8; Ezekiel 22:29].

Third, a man sins when he deceives his neighbour. The word 'deceived' can describe a situation where an employer underpays and overworks his employees. Fourth, when a man finds something, keeps it and does not return to the owner, lying about it at the same time, this man has no concern for the owner who has lost his property. Finder's keepers is not biblical teaching. We must never build our joy on someone's sorrows and we must never make our gain at someone's loss.

All these sins—cheating, dishonesty and exploitation—are common realities in our society. This is evident from news reports. We also see here that we have a God Who is just looking at the big picture of His creation. God cares about the minute details of daily living. The fact that the trespass offerings are needed for these sins—sins which society today would wink at—tells us that God intends for His people to love one another, and He wants them to live holy lives.

Truly, when we live by God's rule, the society will be blessed.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ISAIAH 28
3 JOHN

THOUGHT**The selfish and dishonest man is an unholy man.**

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 6:8–13***LESSON****The ever-burning fire****VERSE 13**

*The fire shall ever be
burning upon the altar; it
shall never go out.*

The various offerings discussed in earlier chapters are revisited in Chapter 6 but with special instructions for the priests. One of the instructions is that the fire must be kept burning from night till the morning. Night is always a time of rest and respite but in this case the fire is burning through the night, perhaps denoting that there is no rest in hell.

The Bible describes the “smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name” [Revelation 14:11]. There will be no rest for the wicked. The torment will never cease.

What a graphic demonstration of the awfulness of sin. The flames from the offering and the smell of burning flesh serve as a reminder to the people that sin exacts an awful price. Yet the burnt offering is also a picture of the grace of God. The sinner should have been the one on the altar, but there was another that took his place instead. Because there was a substitute sacrificed on his behalf, the children of Israel could rest easy at night under the light and the smell of the ever-burning sacrifice because their sins had been taken care of.

Here is also a picture of the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus. The Son of God took our place on the cross, suffered on our behalf and paid the price for our sins so that we too may rest secure under the shadow of the Cross.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

ISAIAH 29
JUDE

THOUGHT

**Hallelujah for the cross!
The grace of God here shone
Thru Christ, the blessed Son,
Who did for sin atone –
Hallelujah for the cross!**

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 6:14–18***LESSON****A portion of God's offerings****VERSE 17**

It shall not be baked with leaven. I have given it unto them for their portion of my offerings made by fire; it is most holy, as is the sin offering, and as the trespass offering.

This section concerns the duties of the priest with regard to the meat offering. The priest would take the offering from the worshipper and present it before the altar. After the offering had been made, a portion of it was given to Aaron and his sons, who would eat the offering in the holy place. There are several things to note.

First, it must not be baked with leaven. The flour offering when offered to the Lord was considered holy. Likewise, all that we do—in worship and ministry—is considered holy, which means there must be no intrusion by the world.

Second, this flour offering, which had the the least value than the rest, was considered most holy. Nothing too small offered to God that can be taken lightly. The Lord says that this offering of flour “is most holy, as is the sin offering, and as the trespass offering” [v. 17]. We should not consider the smallest offerings as unimportant. The Lord Jesus highly esteemed the widow’s two mites saying that she “hath cast in more than they all: For all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God: but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had” [Luke 21:3–4].

Third, the Lord gave a portion of the offerings to the priest. He said, “I have given it unto them for their portion of my offerings.” This is a picture of the communion and fellowship between God and His people. Both the Redeemer and the redeemed feast upon the same holiness and purity, found in the Righteous One.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

ISAIAH 30
REVELATION 1

THOUGHT

Despise not small things in the hands of the Almighty God.

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 6:19–23***LESSON****Wholly burnt****VERSE 23**

For every meat offering for the priest shall be wholly burnt: it shall not be eaten.

This is the offering made on the day of ordination of Aaron and his sons. Look at the biblical data: It was of “fine flour” [v. 20; Exodus 29:2]. The measure of the flour must be “the tenth part of an ephah” (or an omer), which was also the amount of manna they were to gather for each person. The flour was to be baked in a pan [v. 21]. This particular meat offering was divided into two portions: one for the morning offering and the other for the evening offering.

The Lord called this the ‘meat offering perpetual’. The word ‘perpetual’ is also translated ‘continual’ [Leviticus 24:2–4, 9], implying that this was regular ongoing offering. It also means that this would be the meat offering that was practised in all ages by the priests.

One final note: this offering must be “wholly burnt: it shall not be eaten” [v. 23; Leviticus 6:30] because it was a priest’s offering. This is a picture of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who gave Himself, entirely and completely, as the offering.

“For every meat offering for the priest shall be wholly burnt: it shall not be eaten” [v. 23]. The lessons are these. First, every ministry must begin with a consecration service that impresses upon the weight of the obligations that the ministry incurs, and the demands that it exacts. No one should come into the ministry without first being fully committed to the work. Second, what we have presented to the Lord must be given wholly and utterly, with no thought of receiving it again. When we put our hands to the plough, there is no turning back.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

ISAIAH 31

REVELATION 2:1–7

THOUGHT

My utmost for his Highest. – Oswald Chambers

BIBLE LESSON
Leviticus 6:24–30

LESSON
Most holy (I)

VERSE 25

Speak unto Aaron and to his sons, saying, This is the law of the sin offering: In the place where the burnt offering is killed shall the sin offering be killed before the LORD: it is most holy.

Here are the where, who and why of the sin offering of the priests.

Where: The offering was to be made at the same place where the burnt offering was killed [v. 25; Leviticus 1:11].

Who: The offering was also to be killed before the Lord. The presence of God was at once judicial and merciful. The Lord, Who has the right to judge also has the right to forgive.

Why and in what sense is the reason that the sin offering is most holy? It is what it represents. The sacrifice of our Lord Jesus, by which sin is removed out of the sight of God, is indeed ‘most holy’. Had Jesus not been ‘most holy’, He could never have accomplished the miracle of saving grace.

We must not take lightly the gift of God’s grace. We must look at the Cross and see the death of our Lord Jesus as our own selves: all our sins and iniquities, suffering and satisfying the just and righteous wrath of God.

The sin offering is described as most holy, and its holiness is seen even in inanimate objects such as garments [v. 27] and earthen vessels and brass pots [v. 28], which were deemed holy when they came into contact with the sin offering. Thus God gave special instructions to handle these things. The garment must be washed in the holy place, the earthen vessel must be broken and the brass pot must be scoured.

How much holier should we be who have been washed by the blood of the Lamb of God? Every believer has been purified by the blood of Christ and set apart for holy purposes.

**TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ISAIAH 32
REVELATION 2:8–11**

THOUGHT

Let us seek to draw near unto our God by the Living Way, having our hearts sprinkled and bodies washed.

BIBLE LESSON
Leviticus 7:1–10

LESSON
Most holy (II)

VERSE 6

Every male among the priests shall eat thereof: it shall be eaten in the holy place: it is most holy.

The trespass offering is described as most holy [v. 1, 6]. If all these offerings seem repetitive, they are meant to be because “the Lord is not weary of repeating these types, both because of His wondrous love to the sinner, and His still more unfathomable love to [the Christ] whom He holds out to fallen man in each of these figures” (Bonar).

However, there are some minor differences. For example, the blood from the trespass offering was not sprinkled on the horns but “round about the altar”. Minute details were also given with regard to the disposal of the various parts of the animal [v. 3–4, 8]. Special directions were also given regarding the preparation and eating of the offerings by the priests [v. 6–10].

The instructions from God were precise. They were certainly neither superfluous nor redundant. Careless Christians may give common excuses like “It is a small matter, what is wrong with what I do as long as I am sincere.” It is like sincerity is the cover for doing what we feel like doing and sincerity supersedes God’s expressed will. But there are good reasons. First, God called for these small differences so that the people would learn to worship Him with spiritual discernment. Second, God is not indifferent to the way we approach Him in worship. Third, we cannot hide behind the excuse that as long as we are sincere, we can overlook a small deviation from the truth.

The point here is that we are to take the utmost care to draw nigh to His throne of grace in the right spirit—a spirit of reverence, trust, expectation and holy joy.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ISAIAH 33
REVELATION 2:12–17

THOUGHT

God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. – John 4:24

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 7:11–21***LESSON****The offering that became
an abomination****VERSE 18**

And if any of the flesh of the sacrifice of his peace offerings be eaten at all on the third day, it shall not be accepted, neither shall it be imputed unto him that offereth it: it shall be an abomination, and the soul that eateth of it shall bear his iniquity.

**TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ISAIAH 34
REVELATION 2:18–29**

There are three types of peace offering: thanksgiving offerings [v. 12–15], votive offerings or offerings made as a promise to God [Acts 21:26] and voluntary offerings [v. 16–18]. Thanksgiving offerings were made to remember and thank God for His past mercies. Votive offerings were made in fulfilment of a vow. Voluntary offerings were offered without reference to any special mercy received or fulfilment of any vow.

The thanksgiving offering must be eaten by the worshipper on the same day that it was offered. The votive and voluntary offerings might be kept for a second day [v. 17]. If any of the flesh remained by the third day, it must be “burnt with fire” [v. 17]. If it were eaten after the second day, it would not be “accepted, neither shall it be imputed unto him that offereth it” [v. 18]. In fact, the offering should be considered as an “abomination, and the soul that eateth of it shall bear his iniquity” [v. 18]. The word ‘abomination’ has the connotation of meat that had become a stench.

The Bible gives no reason prohibiting the consumption of the meat beyond the second day. It could be for health reasons. However, that does not explain why eating the three-day-old offering was considered sinful with severe consequences [v. 19–21]. The plausible reason is that to withhold eating the offering, which is a picture of one’s fellowship with God, suggests the worshipper’s hesitance, reluctance or indifference in wanting to commune with God.

Partial obedience is not better than complete disobedience. The person who makes the offering but delays in the full keeping of it will find himself and his whole offering rejected.

THOUGHT

Following the Lord half way is as good as not following Him at all.

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 7:22–27***LESSON****Blood and fat****VERSE 26**

Moreover ye shall eat no manner of blood, whether it be of fowl or of beast, in any of your dwellings.

The prohibition of the eating of fat and blood was mentioned earlier. “All the fat is the Lord’s. It shall be a perpetual statute for your generations throughout all your dwellings, that ye eat neither fat nor blood” [Leviticus 3:16–17].

This prohibition of fat was to ensure that worshippers did not intrude into what is solely the Lord’s. The prohibition of the blood was to preserve the idea of atonement. The blood was regarded as the life of the soul, which God had stipulated that it would be the means by which atonement would be secured. Only God alone could demand the blood of His creatures. Man cannot make any claim on or for the atonement. It is exclusively the Lord’s.

In these two prohibitions, we see the supremacy and the exclusivity of God’s claims. We should take care that we don’t rob God of anything to which He had claimed to be His own. We must also never make an offering to the Lord and draw it back again for our own use. The punishment for breaking the prohibitions was that the offender would be “cut off from His people” [v. 25, 27]. We may be tempted to say, “What’s the big deal?” The big deal is that these prohibitions come from the Lord Himself. They are binding because the Lord said so.

So we see the awful sin of breaking and despising even the smallest precept that comes from the mouth of the Lord. Never trifle with the words of God.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ISAIAH 35
REVELATION 3:1–6

THOUGHT

These are the words which the LORD hath commanded, that ye should do them. – Exodus 35:1b

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 7:28–38***LESSON****In his own hands ...****VERSE 30**

His own hands shall bring the offerings of the LORD made by fire, the fat with the breast, it shall he bring, that the breast may be waved for a wave offering before the LORD.

In presenting the peace offerings, the one making the offering had to do several things. First, he had to bring his oblation unto the Lord. The oblation here is the corban [Mark 7:11], which means a ‘gift to God’. The oblation refers to the portion of the sacrifice (the fat with the breast and right shoulder) that was specially claimed by God.

Second, the one making the offering must bring it in his own hands [v. 30]. He must come in his own person. In the Old Testament, there was always a veil of separation between man and God. This was the only time that a worshipper could present the offering in his own hands.

That veil was torn from top to bottom at the death of our Lord Jesus so through Him we can now “draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to [us]” [James 4:8a]. The privilege of the New Testament saints is that we can come to God in our own persons—each of us for ourselves—and enter into fellowship with Him for our own souls.

Third, he had to bring the fat with the breast and “waved it for a wave offering before the LORD” [v. 30], and the right shoulder for “an heave offering” [v. 32]. The breast, which is near the heart, is said to be a picture of whole-heartedness. The right shoulder denotes action. Together, they present the picture of one whose whole heart and life is devoted to the service of God.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ISAIAH 36
REVELATION 3:7–13

THOUGHT

We cannot save our souls by proxy. We cannot acceptably serve God by proxy.

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 8:1–3***LESSON****The priesthood of Aaron****VERSE 2**

Take Aaron and his sons with him, and the garments, and the anointing oil, and a bullock for the sin offering, and two rams, and a basket of unleavened bread;

Chapter 8 records the institution of the priesthood as well as the consecration of Aaron and his sons. Aaron and his sons were brought to the door of the Tabernacle, together with all that was necessary for the act of consecration, which was what the Lord commanded to be done [v. 5].

Most people are fascinated with grand convocations, such as a king's coronation, the birth of a royal prince, a royal wedding, all of which have little effect on most of the spectators. They are sidelined. They watch and little of what they see affects their lives. But this was not so with the consecration of the priests. It was through the mediation of the priests that the people were accepted by God. Think of what harm a high priest like Eli and his sons (Hophni and Phinehas), who were also priests, had done to the nation. Consider the good that Ezra, who was also a priest, did in bringing about spiritual revival to Israel.

John Owen writes: "The priests are for the people, not the people for the priests." Another writer adds that this consecration "is no idle ceremony ... but one having to do with our daily sins, fears, trials, troubles, joys, and blessings".

The relevance of this for us today is that the priesthood was a type of our Lord Jesus, the great High Priest. Through Christ, we are a royal priesthood [1 Peter 2:9]. How foolish then it is for us to fix our eyes on the pomp and pageantry of man-made convocations and overlook the privileges of our own God-ordained consecration.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

ISAIAH 37
REVELATION 3:14–22

THOUGHT

The greater the sacrifice, the more fire there is. God's fire falls only on sacrifice. An empty altar receives no fire.

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 8:4–6***LESSON****Purified priests****VERSE 6**

*And Moses brought Aaron
and his sons, and washed
them with water.*

This is the thing which the LORD commanded to be done" [v. 5]. The ordination was commanded by God, and it was witnessed by the people. It was, after all, a work that would affect them directly. The consecration process included washing [v. 6], clothing [v. 7–9], anointing [v. 10] and sacrificing [v. 14]. The washing took place at the door of the Tabernacle before the congregation. The whole person except the linen breeches (inner garments) was washed [Exodus 28:42]. The symbolic significance is clear.

There must first be the cleansing from sin before they could put on the clothing of the office, before the anointing and even before the carrying out of the duties of the office. The consecration was done in public for several reasons. It intended to impress upon the children of Israel the dignity of the priesthood as well as the need for holiness for this sacred work. It also represented the people's willingness to obey and support the priesthood.

How important is this process of the consecration in our churches today? The work of the church must not be left to unqualified, ill-equipped and unsanctified men. No one who is called to serve the Lord ought to be flippant.

At the same time, Christians must also realise the importance of their presence at every holy convocation. That the people were present at the consecration of the priest meant that they too were, in a sense, consecrated. Just as the priest ought to be faithful in discharging his duties, the people should be faithful in discharging theirs, that is, supporting the priest.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ISAIAH 38
REVELATION 4

THOUGHT

The Lord's work has no room for light-hearted pastors and half-hearted believers.

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 8:7–10***LESSON****The clothing of the priest****VERSE 7**

And he put upon him the coat, and girded him with the girdle, and clothed him with the robe, and put the ephod upon him, and he girded him with the curious girdle of the ephod, and bound it unto him therewith.

Following the washing, the second step of the consecration process is the clothing: coat, girdle and ephod [v. 7]. The coat was an inner garment bound close to the body by a girdle, signifying purity and truth in the inner parts. The ephod was a short vest-like garment. The curious girdle of the ephod was a sash. The robe of the ephod was the outer garment, usually in dyed blue deemed to be the colour of divinity.

The breast plate on which the names of the 12 tribes of Israel were engraved showed the preciousness of the children of Israel to God that they were close to his heart. The Urim and Thummim were also set on the breastplate [Exodus 28:29–30]. They were used to determine God’s approval or disapproval on a matter.

The mitre was a linen headdress, something like a turban, and regarded as an ornament of honour. The golden plate on the front of the mitre was also known as “the holy crown” [v. 9], on which was engraved the words, “HOLINESS TO THE LORD” [Exodus 28:36].

These items of clothing defined what the priest should be like and what the divine High Priest, our Lord Jesus Christ, is. In the New Testament, Christians are also given a set of garments. We should put on the girdle of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, shoes of the gospel of peace, helmet of salvation [Ephesians 6:14–17]. Besides these, we have to don the robe of humility [1 Peter 5:5], the garment of faith [Matthew 22:11–12] and one day we have the crown of righteousness [2 Timothy 4:8].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

ISAIAH 39
REVELATION 5

THOUGHT

Reader, are you clothed for heaven?

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 8:11–13***LESSON****The anointing of Aaron****VERSE 11**

And he sprinkled thereof upon the altar seven times, and anointed the altar and all his vessels, both the laver and his foot, to sanctify them.

After the washing and the clothing, the next step in the consecration process was anointing, which was the consecration proper. The anointing had been applied to the furniture of the Tabernacle [Exodus 30:22–25]. By this act, they were set apart for holy purposes. This anointing of the Tabernacle and all therein was repeated a second time here, where the Tabernacle and its furniture were sprinkled not once but seven times.

There is a difference between the anointing of the holy things and that of Aaron. The oil sprinkled on holy things sanctified them as a means of grace. The oil, which represented the Holy Spirit, was poured upon Aaron. This act represented the grace of the Holy Spirit coming from without and covering the whole consecrated man. Second, the holy things were sprinkled; Moses anointed Aaron by the pouring of “the anointing oil upon Aaron’s head”.

The Psalmist provides a vivid description of this pouring: “It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron’s beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments” [Psalm 133:2].

The Psalmist used this anointing to portray the unity in the body of believers. “Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!” [Psalm 133:1]. Unity of the brethren is not achieved by some external means or subscribing to man-made institutions. True unity of the brethren is achieved by the profuse diffusion of the Holy Spirit into the hearts of the brethren, from which flows the abundance of genuine love.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ISAIAH 40
REVELATION 6

THOUGHT

By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. – John 13:35

BIBLE LESSON
Leviticus 8:14–36

LESSON
**Sacrifices for the
consecration**

VERSE 35

*Therefore shall ye abide at
the door of the tabernacle
of the congregation day and
night seven days, and keep
the charge of the LORD,
that ye die not: for so I am
commanded.*

Following the consecration of Aaron and his sons, Moses then carried out a series of offerings. The order of the sacrifices was as follows: sin offering [v. 14–17] and burnt offering [v. 18–21]. These offerings represent the expiation of our sins and our acceptance by God.

In this, we see the saving faith resting upon the universal necessity of man—including the high priest—for saving grace and the universal provision by God of that saving grace. Many illustrations from the history of man's religions show how this basis has been ignored.

It is also in this that the Christian faith stands apart from all other religions. In other religions, the priests are raised above the people as though they are holy in themselves, promoted as if they were of different nature. Not so in the Christian faith. The high priest (Aaron) stood between the holiness of God and the sinfulness of men, yet he stands as a servant of the covenant and not a mediator.

The fact that the sin and burnt offerings had to be made for the consecration of the high priest is the confession of imperfection, and that in itself was an appeal to God to supply one who is not a servant of the covenant but the mediator. And the true and only mediator is our Lord Jesus Christ [1 Timothy 2:5]. He is the mediator of a new and better covenant [Hebrews 8:6; 9:15; 12:24]. Christ is not only the sinless High Priest but He is also the perfect sacrifice actually offered for our sins.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ISAIAH 41
REVELATION 7:1–8

THOUGHT

**When free grace awoke me by light from on high,
Then legal fears shook me I trembled to die;
No refuge, no safety in self could I see –
Jehovah Tsidkenu my Saviour must be.**

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 9:1–14***LESSON****Calf for an offering****VERSE 2**

*And he said unto Aaron,
Take thee a young calf for a
sin offering, and a ram for
a burnt offering, without
blemish, and offer them
before the LORD.*

The consecration of Aaron and his sons lasted seven days. On the eighth day, Aaron made his first offering: a sin offering and burnt offering for himself [v. 7]. On all great public occasions, the high priest began by presenting these two offerings for himself. Aaron also made offerings for the people: a sin offering [v. 15], a burnt offering [v. 16], a meat offering [v. 17] and a peace offering [v. 18].

Aaron was first of all to offer a calf for a sin offering. We do not know if that was any intent on God's part but it was certainly on Aaron's part. The offering of the calf might have brought back the memory of a sordid event in his past, when he fashioned a gold calf and proclaimed to the children of Israel, "These be thy gods ... which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt" [Exodus 32:4].

Aaron had done a great evil in the sight of God. He repented and his sin was cleansed. He had the assurance of forgiveness or else he would not have stood as God's high priest. Yet sin can leave an indelible mark on a man's soul. While the sin cast a long shadow from which Aaron could not totally escape, the grace of God was such that Aaron now stood between God and His people.

We do not know the thoughts in Aaron's mind. However, we do know God's. The Almighty says, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins" [Isaiah 43:25].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ISAIAH 42
REVELATION 7:9-17

THOUGHT**God defines forgiveness as "I do require you to pay".**

BIBLE LESSON
Leviticus 9:15–23

LESSON
Offering for sin

VERSE 15

And he brought the people's offering, and took the goat, which was the sin offering for the people, and slew it, and offered it for sin, as the first.

After making sacrifices for himself, Aaron went on, according to God's instructions, to perform the duties of his office for the people for whom he was ordained. He was to offer a sin offering, a burnt offering, a peace offering and a meat offering.

The animal offerings were all slaughtered in the presence of the people. They were slain, cut into several parts and arranged in the order prescribed. Aaron did all that as commanded, with some of the offerings burnt, some waved and some with their blood sprinkled.

We can never get away from the scene of slaughter and blood. The theme of redemption by blood runs through the Holy Scriptures, from beginning to end, from the altar at the Tabernacle to the Cross at Calvary. Aaron "brought the people's offering, and took the goat, which was the sin offering for the people, and slew it, and offered it for sin" [v. 15]. Literally, it reads 'he made it a sin offering,' meaning that the sin was laid on the sin offering so that it became the sinful one, not actually, of course, by imputation. The animal that had no sin was made a sin offering, and on it was laid the sins of sinners.

This brings us to the sacrificial work of Christ, whose death was not that of a martyr but as the sin-bearer. Isaiah said, "The LORD hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all" [Isaiah 53:6b]. Paul said that Christ Who knew no sin was made "sin for us ... that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him" [2 Corinthians 5:21].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ISAIAH 43–44
REVELATION 8

THOUGHT

Meditate what our Saviour had to go through when the Father laid on Him the "iniquity of us all"—that is no small iniquity.

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 9:23–24***LESSON****The glory of the Lord****VERSE 23**

And Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle of the congregation, and came out, and blessed the people: and the glory of the LORD appeared unto all the people.

After offering the sacrifices at the altar, Aaron raised his hand to bless the people [v. 22]. Following that, “Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle of the congregation” [v. 23], hidden from the view of the people. Nothing is recorded of what happened in the Tabernacle.

Aaron entered the Tabernacle with the atoning blood of animal sacrifices. The high priest had to daily “offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people’s” [Hebrews 7:27] and he entered into the holy of holies “once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people” [Hebrews 9:7].

But our Lord Jesus, our great High Priest, “neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us” [Hebrews 9:12]. When Aaron emerged from the Tabernacle, “the glory of the LORD appeared unto all the people” [v. 23], signifying that the offering was accepted. However, the glory was not Aaron’s; it was the glory of the Lord.

Our Lord Jesus, too, emerged from the grave, and Scripture tells us that “God ... hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” [Philippians 2:9–11].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ISAIAH 45–46
REVELATION 9

THOUGHT

One day, we shall see “the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory” [Luke 21:27]. Prepare yourself for that glorious day!

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 10:1–2***LESSON****Nadab and Abihu****VERSE 1**

And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the LORD, which he commanded them not.

Chapter 10 is a small departure from the general tenure of the Book of Leviticus. It gives an account of a tragic event that took place during the worship at the Tabernacle. The sin of Nadab and Abihu cast a dark cloud on what was a joyous and glorious occasion.

Nadab and Abihu were the sons of Aaron, Israel's first high priest. Nadab was the eldest. Abihu was the second. They were the nephews of Moses. They were born into a family of great heritage. They had been chosen and consecrated into the priesthood. They helped their father in his inaugural offering. If there were any two sons that had the opportunity to make their lives count, it would have been Nadab and Abihu. But they failed.

They failed because they thought the details prescribed by God did not matter. They "offered strange fire before the LORD, which He commanded not" [v. 1]. The Bible record is not very specific but we can infer that it was the sin of presumption. They decided to choose their own method of worshipping God, a manner that God did not command. Their punishment was death. "There went out fire from the LORD, and devoured them, and they died before the LORD" [v. 2]. Nadab and Abihu were plunged into eternity in a flash. Their judgement was as swift as they were sincere.

Such is life, like a pendulum that swings between joys and sorrows. Such is death and judgement as well. They are no respecter of persons and they are no discerners of times. Death strikes all, and it strikes when it strikes. Be prepared!

**TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ISAIAH 47
REVELATION 10**

THOUGHT

No sinner should ever take his life for granted because judgement is certain.

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 10:3–5***LESSON****God being sanctified****VERSE 3**

Then Moses said unto Aaron, This is it that the LORD spake, saying, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified. And Aaron held his peace.

The sons of Aaron were children of great privilege. Nadab, the eldest, would probably be the person to succeed Aaron. However, he was warned that the closer you are brought near to God, the more is demanded of you. What could have been dealt with a lighter hand for others, Nadab and Abihu faced God's instant and full judgement.

Why? They were God's priests. Why did they offer strange fire before the Lord? Following God's judgement, a prohibition was issued to Aaron and his sons: "Do not drink wine nor strong drink, thou, nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations" [v. 9].

It was probable that Nadab and Abihu were drunk. Perhaps they were celebrating their ordination to the priesthood and had one drink too many. They could become incapacitated for distinguishing between the holy fire and its unholy counterfeit. However, it was not just wine that intoxicated them. They could also be drunk with 'success' and their newfound status. Pride, wealth, success and status can be just as intoxicating. There are people who "for the love of money ... erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows" [1 Timothy 6:10].

Whatever brought about their downfall, God said, "I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified" [v. 3]. This is a solemn reminder to all who come into His holy presence. Come reverently, not complacently. Come humbly, not haughtily. Come boldly in Christ, not brashly in our flesh.

**TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ISAIAH 48
REVELATION 11:1-13**

THOUGHT

Never underestimate our own propensity for pride and complacency.

BIBLE LESSON
Leviticus 10:3–5

LESSON
Dangers to avoid

VERSE 3

Then Moses said unto Aaron, This is it that the LORD spake, saying, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified. And Aaron held his peace.

The priests were responsible for presenting the animal sacrifices and offerings before the Lord. Priests represented the people before God in worship. Nothing is more important to God than the worship of His people. He said, “I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified” [v. 3]. The implication is that God was neither sanctified nor glorified by the deeds of Nadab and Abihu. Their sin was that they, moved with pride, acted without God’s direction and introduced confusion in the worship of God. How then should we worship God?

Obey God’s commands. A common excuse for circumventing God’s law is this: “I know God’s purpose and His law, but it is slavish to be bound by the letter of the law. So, I will do my own thing.” The spirit of the law cannot trump the letter of the law if we are to diminish and ignore the law in the first place. In so doing, we make ourselves judges of God’s laws.

God’s law concerning worship is especially to be obeyed. In the Old Testament, God prescribed a system of worship because He knew how He wanted to be worshipped. We cannot understand God’s mind unless He reveals it. When He does, we cannot do what we think is best. We have to obey Him.

If Nadab and Abihu (assuming they were not drunk) were acting out of sincerity with the intention to improve the worship of God and offered that strange fire, they acted without the authority of God and were guilty of presumption, and bore the consequences of their deeds.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ISAIAH 49
REVELATION 11:14–19

THOUGHT

Worship is not just an act, it is an attitude.

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 10:4–7***LESSON****No tears****VERSE 6**

*And Moses said unto
Aaron, and unto Eleazar
and unto Ithamar, his sons,
Uncover not your heads,
neither rend your clothes;
lest ye die, and lest wrath
come upon all the people:
but let your brethren,
the whole house of Israel,
bewail the burning which
the LORD hath kindled.*

Moses told Aaron and his remaining sons that they were not to mourn the deaths of Nadab and Abihu. Whatever remained of their bodies were taken outside the camp. This is the first time two individuals were consumed by fire as God's judgement. The other is the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah by brimstone and fire, also by God's judgement. Moses called their deaths a "burning which the LORD kindled" [v. 6]. In view of this, Christians should consider carefully the significance of cremation as a form of disposing of the bodies of deceased loved ones.

Aaron and his sons were not to allow their bereavement to interfere with their priestly service and consecration. Their brethren and Israel might mourn the deaths of Nadab and Abihu but not Aaron and his sons. They could remove their priestly garments or even leave the tabernacle [v. 6–7]. "Aaron held his peace" [v. 3]. There is nothing more painful for a father than to see the death of his child, but Aaron knew that this was the Lord's just doing. He 'held his peace' because the glory of God was more precious to him than his sons.

Our Lord Jesus reminds us: "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me" [Matthew 10:37].

When we come to see things in the light of God's glory, every human affection ebbs and we are left with nothing but to say, "Praise be unto the Lord!"

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

ISAIAH 50
REVELATION 12

THOUGHT

But the LORD is in His holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before Him. – Habakkuk 2:20

BIBLE LESSON
Leviticus 11:1–42

LESSON
Clean and unclean

VERSE 2

Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, These are the beasts which ye shall eat among all the beasts that are on the earth.

Aaron, having now been consecrated high priest, joined Moses to receive the laws on clean and unclean food. Why were there restrictions, including some over minute differences? Why did God make a distinction between an animal with split hoof and chewed cud and another that chewed cud but had no split hoofs [v. 3–4]?

These food restrictions were essentially a lesson on sin. The distinctions were made by God, the only One who determines what is right and wrong, clean and unclean. God was preparing Israel to move into the Promised Land, which was then occupied by Canaanites. The diet regimen was put in place with the intent that the children of Israel would keep themselves apart from the lifestyle of the Canaanites. In one word, the Israelites were to be holy.

The distinction of clean and unclean food was a daily lesson in holiness in the routines of life, such as the food they could or could not eat. The people of Israel could not miss the point that what they saw and touched could render them holy.

We are no longer bound by these dietary laws but these laws serve to warn us that sin is all around us. Sin is also pervasive; it comes in many forms: in the clothes we wear, the places we hang out, the kind of entertainment we enjoy. The only way to be schooled in the ways of holiness is to live our lives in obedience to the Word of God, even in the mundane things of life.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ISAIAH 51–52
REVELATION 13:1–10

THOUGHT

Sin is on every hand and all around us; worse, it is within us. Pray therefore “Lord, cleanse thou me from secret faults” [Psalm 19:12].

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 11:44–47***LESSON****Clean and unclean for the mind****VERSE 46**

This is the law of the beasts, and of the fowl, and of every living creature that moveth in the waters, and of every creature that creepeth upon the earth:

This is the law of the beasts—of the fowl and of every living creature—to make a difference between the unclean and the clean. From our point of view, these laws may seem arbitrary and even cumbersome. But these laws were no different from the one law that God gave Adam: the fruit “of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die” [Genesis 2:17].

Stringent as these laws might seem to be, and even redundant, these laws teach a very important lesson that, as believers, we have to be careful in choosing the right things every day, such as the right food for our body. One writer commented, “Many men are less devout, less useful, less excellent and admirable in heart and life, because of the unguarded and intemperate way in which they eat and drink. We may be neither gluttons nor drunkards; yet we may lower our character and lessen our influence by ill-regulated appetite.”

Regarding right thoughts for the mind, our Lord Jesus says, “Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man” [Matthew 15:11]. It makes a difference what we consume mentally: the books we read and the company we keep. What we have put into our hearts and minds will find expression in our speech and life.

Regarding right desires for the soul, the desires of our heart will be brought to fruition in our deeds. “A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things” [Matthew 12:35a].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ISAIAH 53–54
REVELATION 13:11–18

THOUGHT

Choose the right food to be healthy. Choose the right thoughts to be wise. Choose the right desires to be holy.

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 11:43–47***LESSON****Being holy****VERSE 44**

*For I am the LORD your
God: ye shall therefore
sanctify yourselves, and
ye shall be holy; for I am
holy: neither shall ye defile
yourselves with any manner
of creeping thing that
creepeth upon the earth.*

**TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ISAIAH 55
REVELATION 14**

Man was created in the image of God [Genesis 2:7]. Paul says that image is that of “righteousness and true holiness” [Ephesians 4:24]. After the Fall, God’s image, though not totally destroyed, was no longer reflected in man, except in a blurred and distorted reflection, like in a cracked mirror. Man ceased to be holy and lost his communion with God.

The Levitical system of worship and sacrifices was intended to recover that lost image and restore the broken communion between God and man. But man’s holiness was only symbolically, by the sacrifices and burnt offerings, and his communion with God was not totally and fully restored. There was still a thick veil that separated God from man.

It is only through Christ that the command “ye shall therefore be holy” [v. 45] can be actualised. The born-again person is a new man “which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness” [Ephesians 4:24]. Under the law, the ground of holiness is abstinence from ceremonial uncleanness or defilement. “Ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves ... neither shall ye defile yourselves with any manner of creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth” [v. 44], an outward observance. Under grace, it is an inward conformity to the image of the Son [Romans 8:29], which is obedience from the heart [Romans 6:17].

Thus the Christian’s holiness is no longer mere ritualistic purification but the pursuit of the highest spirituality. Paul urges, “Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God” [2 Corinthians 7:1; 2 Peter 3:11].

THOUGHT

The Christian’s holiness consists not of just carnal and moral cleanness but holiness that is manifested in Christ.

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 11:43–47***LESSON****Sanctifying yourselves****VERSE 44**

*For I am the LORD your
God: ye shall therefore
sanctify yourselves, and
ye shall be holy; for I am
holy: neither shall ye defile
yourselves with any manner
of creeping thing that
creepeth upon the earth.*

Ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves.” This is a command that is based upon the very character of God. It is also a requirement He imposed as the basis for His relationship with His people. In Chapter 11, this act of sanctification involves abstinence from eating certain foods to distinguish between the clean and unclean. In the New Testament, these laws were lifted. God told Peter in a vision, “What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common” [Acts 10:15]. “For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving” [1 Timothy 4:4].

While these laws no longer apply to us today, we are required to distinguish between holy and common things. How to do it? “Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal” [Matthew 6:19]. “Mind [not] earthly things” [Philippians 3:19]. “Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. [Colossians 3:2]

Sanctification involves some loss on our part, as it did the children of Israel. They had to clean or even destroy a vessel or seed if an unclean carcass came into contact with it [v. 32–35, 38]. Sanctification is also a lifelong, day-by-day process. If an Israelite comes into contact with an unclean animal, he would become unclean and had to wash himself and his clothes [v. 24–25, 28]. This implies constant vigilance to avoid things that were unclean.

While we are no longer bound by Old Testament laws, there is a new law that binds our hearts. As God’s people, we are to renounce the things that do not reflect our identity as God’s redeemed people.

**TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ISAIAH 56
REVELATION 15**

THOUGHT

What the Lord is and loves, the servant must also be and love.

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 11:45***LESSON****I am holy.****VERSE 45**

*For I am the LORD that
bringeth you up out of the
land of Egypt, to be your
God: ye shall therefore be
holy, for I am holy.*

The holiness that God requires is personal holiness. It is everything that concerns the man himself: holiness in his life, manners, habits and pursuits. Holiness must also be the characteristic of God's people. The Church must be a holy Church.

What does it mean to be holy? The usual response is that we keep away from things that are sinful. That is the negative definition of holiness: to abstain from sin. The positive definition of holiness is the pursuit of the very nature of God. While we must keep off the unclean, more than that, we must pursue that which is godly. The opposite of 'to be holy' is not 'to sin' but 'to make common.' When David asked Ahimelech, the high priest, for bread, he replied, "There is no common bread under mine hand, but there is hallowed bread" [1 Samuel 21:4]. The opposite of 'hallowed bread' (holy bread) was common bread.

Holiness therefore demands that we do not make common that which God has made holy. "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy" [Exodus 20:8]. We are not to use the Sabbath day for doing common things. "If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on My holy day ... not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the LORD" [Isaiah 58:13-14].

To be holy as God is holy is therefore not just doing that which is right but, more importantly, that which delights the Lord.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ISAIAH 57
REVELATION 16

THOUGHT

The lack of God-delighting holiness is the greatest hindrance to the advancement of the Gospel.

BIBLE LESSON
Leviticus 12:1–8

LESSON
Birth sin

VERSE 2

Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If a woman have conceived seed, and born a man child: then she shall be unclean seven days; according to the days of the separation for her infirmity shall she be unclean.

A woman is made unclean by the birth of a child because the child is born a sinner by birth, and she had to make an offering for her atonement. This was the law that Mary obeyed when she brought two doves as an offering in her poverty for a sacrifice unto the Lord [Luke 2:22], even though her Child was sinless in birth.

Why is childbirth associated with sin? Where does the sin come from? The sin by birth does not involve the committing of any actual sin. This sin manifests itself from within. It is a sin that cleaves to nature and is linked with the very transmission of life. It is a sin that is transmitted from parent to child, from one generation to the next. “Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me” [Psalm 51:5].

One writer says, “There is not a corner of the earth, nor a member of the race, which the great contamination has not touched. The soil of sin is upon every conscience, and its uncleanness is more or less in every heart.” Therefore a man does naturally what he is. We should not discount the inherent sin in us that somehow it is less serious than actual sins that we commit. God does not see it that way. Hence, we see here also the Law’s demand for a burnt offering for atonement.

Likewise, we should never discount our sinful nature. No one can be saved except by the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. Praise the Lord that He is the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ISAIAH 58
REVELATION 17

THOUGHT

We do (sin) what we are by nature (sinners). And what we are by nature, we do.

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 13:1–17***LESSON****Leprosy****VERSE 15**

And the priest shall see the raw flesh, and pronounce him to be unclean: for the raw flesh is unclean: it is a leprosy.

It is a leprosy.” That is a dreadful diagnosis. There must be other diseases in those days that are far more painful, fatal and contagious. Yet nothing was said about them. Other than leprosy, there is no other physical disease in the Bible that is given more detailed description.

Leprosy is used as a metaphor for sin. Like leprosy, sin is a corrupting and dehumanising disease. It affects not only the person but also all that he does and associates with. It is said that leprosy is in the body system many years before it manifests itself in the body. Leprosy begins with a few small spots in a few isolated places. It is also gradual in its development. From these small spots in isolated places, the disease becomes full blown.

Sin begins and manifests itself the same way. Small sins usually go unnoticed. Parents usually brush off their child’s sin as part of growing up. Teenagers dismiss sin as fads common to their peers. Adults regard sin as infrequent indiscretions. But soon there is sin everywhere. One sin makes the next easier. By an ever-increasing momentum, it manifests itself in a vile and wicked person.

In the Old Testament leprosy was to be treated by the priest. Likewise, the cure for sin today is found in the High Priest. We must come as the leper who pleaded with our Lord Jesus, “Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean” [Matthew 8:2]. The gracious answer from our Saviour: “I will; be thou clean” [Matthew 8:2–3]. May that be your prayer, too.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

ISAIAH 59
REVELATION 18

THOUGHT

Beware! A sin unchecked is a seed and root for another.

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 13:18–46***LESSON****“Unclean, unclean”****VERSE 44**

He is a leprous man, he is unclean: the priest shall pronounce him utterly unclean; his plague is in his head.

In the Old Testament, a leper was not only horribly diseased but also cursed as a result of his disease. He was barred from participating in any religious services. He was cut off from the community. Wherever he went, he must cover his upper lip and shout, “Unclean, unclean.”

As long as he had the disease, he was considered unclean. He lived alone because anything he touched became unclean. He could not have any contact with his family and friends. His hopes were forever cut off. His joys all turned to mourning. Nobody would look upon him favourably. His plight earned him little sympathy.

So it is with the sinner. The sin bars him from the community and fellowship of God’s people. He cannot have any meaningful fellowship with the saints. He cannot participate in the worship of God. He has no righteousness whatsoever, and whatever he has are filthy rags. He is cut off from the joy that comes from being in the presence of God. Just as the leper was an outcast from the community, so is the sinner a spiritual outcast cut off from the body of saints.

The bleakness associated with the sin disease and the sin-affected person can only be removed by divine grace offered through Jesus Christ. “They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance” [Luke 5:31–32].

**TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ISAIAH 60
REVELATION 19**

THOUGHT

So look to Jesus. Call upon Him today and be saved. Call upon Him in humble repentance, and have the disease of sin removed.

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 13:47–59***LESSON****The leprosy of garments****VERSE 52**

He shall therefore burn that garment, whether warp or woof, in woollen or in linen, or any thing of skin, wherein the plague is: for it is a fretting leprosy; it shall be burnt in the fire.

Leprosy also affected clothing and houses. If clothing made from the wool of diseased sheep was worn and warmed by the body heat of the wearer, the clothing would fall apart. Such was considered a ‘fretting’ or ‘destructive’ leprosy. The only recourse for a leprosy garment was to be burnt in the fire.

The garment is a picture of the life of a man. It includes all the circumstances in which he is in, the business he is engaged with, and the social systems under which he lives and interacts. Reverting to the analogy that leprosy is sin, then leprosy of the garment is not sin that comes from within a person but sin that comes from the things around him. This implies the real possibility that Christians can be tainted by their earthly surroundings. Society is more than able to exert its negative influences on the Christian.

One example is Lot. Lot was “vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds)” [2 Peter 2:7–8]. Living in Sodom and Gomorrah, Lot lost his moral discernment when he offered his daughters to the men of Sodom [Genesis 19:8]. Lot also lost his testimony among his sons-in-law [Genesis 19:14].

The immoral environment that Lot was in afflicted his soul. What was the recourse? “The LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire” [Genesis 19:24]. There may be times in our lives when it becomes necessary to ‘burn’ all our associations with the world so as not to be afflicted by it.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ISAIAH 61
REVELATION 20

THOUGHT

Be an influence for God, and not be influenced against God.

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 14:1–7***LESSON****The law of cleansing****VERSE 2**

This shall be the law of the leper in the day of his cleansing: He shall be brought unto the priest.

The cure of the leper is wholly that of divine grace. The performance of the law of the cleansing took place after the cure. The priest first examined the leper to see if he had been healed [v. 3]. If he had, then the law of cleansing came into effect. In the Gospels, we have a record of our Lord Jesus commanding a leper to observe this law [Matthew 8:4; Mark 1:44; Luke 5:14]. This account not only proves the law true but it is a wonderful picture of the grace of God.

Lepers were cut off from the rest of society. How could they possibly draw the attention of the priest but cry out when the priests walked by. That was what the 10 lepers did. As our Lord Jesus entered a village, the lepers “stood afar off: and they lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us” [Luke 17:12–13].

A leper may call on the priest but it depends on the willingness of the priest to stop and listen to his pleas. The priest, however willing, might be too busy. The leper’s hope really was at the mercy of the priest.

But our Lord Jesus Christ, the great High Priest, is never too busy or unwilling to hear the pleas of a sin-leper. The grace of God runs deeper than just stopping to hear the pleas of lepers. He heals them. What manner of love is it to know that the God Who gives the law for the cleansing first sends His Son for the healing of the disease.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ISAIAH 62
REVELATION 21:1–8

THOUGHT

What God requires of us, He has first provided for in His Son.

BIBLE LESSON*Leviticus 14:8–57***LESSON****Washing and shaving****VERSE 8**

And he that is to be cleansed shall wash his clothes, and shave off all his hair, and wash himself in water, that he may be clean: and after that he shall come into the camp, and shall tarry abroad out of his tent seven days.

The priest is responsible for performing the cleansing. The leper would “wash his clothes, and shave off all his hair, and wash himself in water, that he may be clean” [v. 8]. This was his own work and done by the leper himself.

This is a picture of the sinner’s repentance and renewal. A forgiven sinner must cleanse himself from his old self. He must put off the old man and “put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness” [Ephesians 4:24] and be “renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him” [Colossians 3:10].

A truly born-again person cuts himself from all his old sinful habits and forsakes all false ways. “Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil” [Isaiah 1:16]. He who is saved, is saved to sin no more. There are some who think that there is too much emphasis on grace in our preaching and not enough emphasis on repentance and holiness, meaning that many are quick to jump on the bandwagon of professing faith in Christ without showing obedience to Christ.

However, the Gospel simply is that way: We are saved by grace through faith. But if that grace is not powerful enough to bring about complete renewal in our lives, and if our faith does not lead us to obey and follow Christ, that ‘grace’ will avail us nothing before God, and our ‘faith’ is empty.

**TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ISAIAH 63–64
REVELATION 21:9–27**

THOUGHT

**Faith must obey our Father’s will,
As well as trust His grace;
A pardoning God is jealous still
For His own holiness.**

BIBLE LESSON
Leviticus 14:8–57

LESSON
The seventh day

VERSE 9

But it shall be on the seventh day, that he shall shave all his hair off his head and his beard and his eyebrows, even all his hair he shall shave off: and he shall wash his clothes, also he shall wash his flesh in water, and he shall be clean.

After the leper's first washing and shaving, the whole process was repeated again on the seventh day. Seven full days were required for him to rejoin his community. This schedule was deliberate.

It is a picture of the lifelong process of sanctification. No one is completely sanctified in this present life. This is seen in our Lord Jesus washing His disciples' feet on the night of the Passover. When Peter protested, our Lord Jesus said, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me" [John 13:8]. But when Peter wanted Jesus to wash his hands and head, He said to him, "He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit" [John 13:10].

Our sins have been removed. We are justified by the blood of our Lord Jesus. We have been admitted to God's household and numbered God's people. But the principle of sin is not yet totally removed. Paul confesses, "Evil is present with me" [Romans 7:21]. "I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members" [Romans 7:23]. The influences of sin still linger in us until our High Priest comes again, "who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body" [Philippians 3:21].

That was the last act of the leper on the seventh day. Finally, he is home a cleansed person. Our Lord Jesus coming again will be the last act of our sanctification. We too will be home at last. Hallelujah!

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ISAIAH 65–66
REVELATION 22

THOUGHT

**'Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home.**