

Leviticus 27 Commentary

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LEVITICUS THE BOOK OF SANCTIFICATION AND WORSHIP

[Adapted and modified from C. Swindoll](#)

Leviticus 1-17	Leviticus 18-27
The Way to God Access	The Walk with God Lifestyle
The Approach: Offerings	Practical Guidelines
The Representative: Priest	Chronological Observances

The Laws: Cleansing Physically & Spiritually	Severe Consequences Verbal promises
Ritual for Worship Worshipping a Holy God	Practical for Walking Living a Holy Life

Location: Mt Sinai for one full year

Theme: How sinful humanity can approach and worship a holy God

Key Verses: Lev 17:11, 19:2, 20:7-8

Christ in Leviticus: In every sacrifice, every ritual, every feast

Time: about 1446BC

Key words:

Holy - 90x/76v (with forms of the root for holy 152x) more than in any OT book (Lev 2:3, 10; 5:15f; 6:16f, 25-27, 29f; 7:1, 6; 8:9; 10:3, 10, 12f, 17; 11:44-45; 14:13; 16:2-4, 16f, 20, 23f, 27, 32f; 19:2, 8, 24; 20:3, 7, 26; 21:6-8, 22; 22:2-4, 6f, 10, 14-16, 32; 23:2-4, 7f, 20f, 24, 27, 35-37; 24:9; 25:12; 27:9f, 14, 21, 23, 28, 30, 32f);

Atonement - 51x/45v - (Lev 1:4; 4:20, 26, 31, 35; 5:6, 10, 13, 16, 18; 6:7, 30; 7:7; 8:15, 34; 9:7; 10:17; 12:7f; 14:18-21, 29, 31, 53; 15:15, 30; 16:6, 10f, 16-18, 24, 27, 30, 32-34; 17:11; 19:22; 23:27f; 25:9)

Offering - 326x/199v (Lev 1:2-4, 6, 9f, 13f, 17; 2:1-16; 3:1-3, 5-9, 11f, 14, 16; 4:3, 7f, 10, 14, 18, 20f, 23-26, 28-35; 5:6-8, 15f, 18f; 6:5f, 9f, 12, 14f, 17f, 20f, 23, 25, 30; 7:1f, 5, 7-11, 13-16, 18, 20f, 25, 29f, 32-35, 37f; 8:2, 14, 18, 21, 27-29, 31; 9:2-4, 7f, 10, 12-18, 21f, 24; 10:12-17, 19; 12:6, 8; 14:10, 12-14, 17, 19-22, 24f, 28, 31; 15:15, 30; 16:3, 5f, 9, 11, 15, 24f, 27; 17:4f, 8; 19:5, 21f, 24; 21:6, 21; 22:12, 18, 21-23, 25, 27; 23:8, 12-14, 25, 27, 36-38; 24:7, 9; 27:9, 11)

Tent of meeting - 43x/41v (Lev 1:1, 3, 5; 3:2, 8, 13; 4:4f, 7, 14, 16, 18; 6:16, 26, 30; 8:3f, 31, 33, 35; 9:5, 23; 10:7, 9; 12:6; 14:11, 23; 15:14, 29; 16:7, 16f, 20, 23, 33; 17:4ff, 9; 19:21; 24:3)

Law - 16x/16v; (Lev 6:9, 14, 25; 7:1, 7, 11, 37; 11:46; 12:7; 13:59; 14:2, 32, 54, 57; 15:32)

Sacrifice - 41x/34v; (Lev 3:1, 3, 6, 9; 4:10, 26, 31, 35; 7:11-13, 15-18, 20f, 29, 32, 34, 37; 9:4, 18; 10:14; 17:5, 7f; 19:5; 22:21, 24, 27, 29; 23:19, 37)

Anoint - 17x/15v; (Lev 4:3, 5, 16; 6:20, 22; 7:36; 8:2, 10-12, 30; 10:7; 16:32; 21:10, 12)

Sin - 111x/90v (Lev 4:2f, 8, 14, 20-29, 32-35; 5:1, 5-13, 15-18; 6:2-4, 17, 25f, 30; 7:7, 37f; 8:2, 14; 9:2f, 7f, 10, 15, 22; 10:16-19; 12:6, 8; 14:13, 19, 22, 31; 15:15, 30; 16:3, 5f, 9, 11, 15f, 21, 25, 27, 30, 34; 19:17, 22; 20:20; 21:21; 22:9; 23:19; 24:15; 25:1, 27; 26:18, 21, 24, 28, 46; 27:34)

Iniquity - 10x/8v (Lev 7:18; 16:21f; 19:8; 26:39-41, 43)

Death - 17/16v (Lev 16:1; 19:20; 20:2, 4, 9-11, 15f, 27; 24:16f, 21; 27:29)

Die - 15x/15v (Lev 7:24; 8:35; 10:2, 6f, 9; 11:39; 15:31; 16:1f, 13; 17:15; 20:20; 22:8f)

Blood - 86x/65v (Lev 1:5, 11, 15; 3:2, 8, 13, 17; 4:5-7, 16-18, 25, 30, 34; 5:9; 6:27, 30; 7:2, 14, 26f, 33; 8:15, 19, 23f, 30; 9:9, 12, 18; 10:18; 12:4f, 7; 14:6, 14, 17, 25, 28, 51f; 15:19, 25; 16:14f, 18f, 27; 17:4, 6, 10-12; 18:6, 12f, 17; 19:26; 20:18f; 25:49)

Sabbath - 13x/10v (Lev 16:31; 23:3, 11, 15f, 32; 24:8; 25:2, 4, 6)

The LORD spoke to Moses - 28x/28v - (Lev 4:1; 5:14; 6:1, 8, 19, 24; 7:22, 28; 8:1; 12:1; 13:1; 14:1; 16:1; 17:1; 18:1; 19:1; 20:1; 21:16; 22:1, 17, 26; 23:9, 23, 26, 33; 24:1, 13; 27:1)

Jubilee - 20x/18v (Lev 25:10-13, 15, 28, 30f, 33, 40, 50, 52, 54; 27:17-18, 21, 23-24)

Consecrate - 24x/23v - (Lev 6:18, 27; 7:35; 8:10-12, 15, 30; 11:44; 12:4; 16:19; 20:7; 21:8, 10; 25:10; 27:14-19, 22, 2)

Covenant - 10x/8v (Lev 2:13; 24:8; 26:9, 15, 25, 42, 44f)

Fat - 52x/33v (Lev 3:3f, 9f, 14-17; 4:8f, 19, 26, 31, 35; 6:12; 7:3f, 23-25, 30f, 33; 8:16, 25f; 9:10, 19f, 24; 10:15; 16:25; 17:6)

The LORD spoke to Moses - 93x in 93v - Exod. 6:10; Exod. 6:13; Exod. 6:28; Exod. 6:29; Exod. 7:8; Exod. 13:1; Exod. 14:1; Exod. 16:11; Exod. 19:21; Exod. 25:1; Exod. 30:17; Exod. 30:22; Exod. 31:1; Exod. 31:12; Exod. 32:7; Exod. 33:1; Exod. 40:1; Lev. 4:1; Lev. 5:14; Lev. 6:1; Lev. 6:8; Lev. 6:19; Lev. 6:24; Lev. 7:22; Lev. 7:28; Lev. 8:1; Lev. 12:1; Lev. 13:1; Lev. 14:1; Lev. 16:1; Lev. 17:1; Lev. 18:1; Lev. 19:1; Lev. 20:1; Lev. 21:16; Lev. 22:1; Lev. 22:17; Lev. 22:26; Lev. 23:9; Lev. 23:23; Lev. 23:26; Lev. 23:33; Lev. 24:1; Lev. 24:13; Lev. 27:1; Num. 1:1; Num. 2:1; Num. 3:5; Num. 3:11; Num. 3:14; Num. 3:44; Num. 4:1; Num. 4:17; Num. 4:21; Num. 5:1; Num. 5:5; Num. 5:11; Num. 6:1; Num. 6:22; Num. 7:4; Num. 8:1; Num. 8:5; Num. 8:23; Num. 9:1; Num. 9:9; Num. 13:1; Num. 14:26; Num. 15:1; Num. 15:17; Num. 16:20; Num. 16:23; Num. 16:36; Num. 16:44; Num. 17:1; Num. 18:25; Num. 19:1; Num. 20:7; Num. 20:23; Num. 25:10; Num. 25:16; Num. 26:1; Num. 26:52; Num. 27:6; Num. 28:1; Num. 31:1; Num. 31:25; Num. 33:50; Num. 34:1; Num. 34:16; Num. 35:1; Num. 35:9; Deut. 32:48; Jos. 14:6

Jehovah spoke to Moses so the words you are reading in Leviticus 27 (and of course all the Bible - 2 Timothy 3:16-17 [note](#)) are the actual words of the Lord Himself (regardless of what higher critics try to say to impugn the integrity of the Word!). It behooves all of us to take our shoes off and listen to Him speak for we are on holy ground beloved (Exodus 3:5).

Grieve - This final chapter of the book of Leviticus seems almost to be an appendix. It brings together regulations regarding the redemption of vows and tithes. (What the Bible teaches – Leviticus and Deuteronomy.)

John Hartley outlines this chapter:

- I. Introductory formula (Lev 27:1)
- II. Speech (Lev 27:2–33)
 - A. Commission to speak (Lev 27:2aα)
 - B. Speech proper (Lev 27:2aβ–33)
 - 1. Concerning vows (Lev 27:2aβ–13)
 - a. Of person (Lev 27:2aβ–8)
 - b. Of animals (Lev 27:9–13)
 - 2. Concerning dedications to the sanctuary (Lev 27:14–25)
 - a. Of a house (Lev 27:14–15)
 - b. Of a field (Lev 27:16–24)
 - 1) Inherited land (Lev 27:16–21)
 - 2) Purchased land (Lev 27:22–24)
 - c. Statement on value of a shekel (Lev 27:25)
 - 3. Restrictions on objects that may be vowed (Lev 27:26–33)
 - a. Concerning first-born (Lev 27:26–27)
 - b. Concerning things devoted (Lev 27:28–29)
 - 1) With regard to animals (Lev 27:28)
 - 2) With regard to humans (Lev 27:29)
 - c. Concerning tithes (Lev 27:30–33)
 - 1) Of crops (Lev 27:30–31)
 - 2) Of animals (Lev 27:32–33)
- III. Summary formula (Lev 27:34)

Chuck Smith - Now if you make a vow unto God and say, "God, I'm gonna give You my life," wonderful. "Now I want to take my life back. Lord, I've decided not to give You my life." Well hey, He won't play Indian giver with you. You want to take yourself back now? You don't want to give your life to God? Okay, drop fifty shekels of silver into the pot. You had to buy yourself back from the Lord. You made a vow; you made a commitment. "God, I'm giving my life to You, now I'm gonna take my life back." Okay, you can buy your life back from God for fifty shekels, or six? What is it? Fifty, sixty shekels of silver. Fifty shekels of silver. That's if you're a man. If you're a girl, you get better off; you only get valued at thirty shekels of silver.

Now the main idea is be careful what you promise God. You know the Bible says, "When you come into the presence of God don't be swift to speak. You know, really weigh your words. The Psalmist prayed, "Lord don't let me sin with my lips." I think of how many times we actually sin with our lips when we're making promises and vows to God.

Now the Bible says, "It's better not to make a vow at all" (Ecclesiastes 5:5). God doesn't require you to make vows. So it's better that you don't make any vow at all, then to make a vow to God and break it, because God takes you serious.

Now what if we tried to treat each other in our transactions like we treat God? "Oh friend, I'd like to give you my car. Here let me sign

over the pink slip." "Oh praise the Lord that's wonderful. I need a car." Then I come back the next day and say, "I've decided I don't want to give you the car; I want it back." "Oh man, I've already put new tires on it." "Well, I want it back, my car you know." We do that with God so often. "God I want to give You this. Lord, I want it back." The Lord takes it serious. He doesn't play those kinds of games with you. "All right if you want it back, put in the kitty what it's worth."

That's what the whole chapter is about. Anything that you vowed to God, anything that you promised to God, if you wanted to take it back, then God charged you. You'd have to come and give the estimate for it, and you'd have to pay the estimated value of that thing. You just don't get it back from God. He doesn't just give back to you. You have to buy back what you've given to God if you want it for yourself.

So it starts out with people promising their lives. "Oh God, my life is Yours. I give my life to You." "Fine, I'll take it." "Oh God, I want my life back." "All right fifty shekels." "Oh God, I give You my lamb Lord; it's Your little lamb." "Fine, I'll take it." "Oh Lord, it's growing up to look so nice, and all, I could probably-" "Okay, buy it back from Me." See but then if you bought the lamb back, not only did you have to pay the estimated price, but you had to add twenty percent. God wanted interest on His money. It's not so easy. The bank hasn't really gotten quite as heavy as God, as far as interest rates. God always said, "Add a fifth part thereto."

So here in the twenty-seventh chapter are the things that have been dedicated to God. God accepted them. They belonged to God. God considered ownership of them. Now, if you're trying to renege, take it back, God will allow you to do it, but you'd have to pay for it. Then in a matter of things, you had to add a twenty percent surtax on it unto the Lord. The various ages by which things were valued, and the thing is you couldn't make any switcheroos on God. You couldn't give Him a lamb and it grows up to be real nice, and then you had one that was sort of sick, you switch it, you know, and do a switcheroo on God and give Him this poor one. He wouldn't go for that either. So you try to switcheroo, they both belong to God. It's so no switcheroos on Him. He wouldn't go for that kind of a bit. You try that kind of stuff you get in trouble, because then He'll take them both.

Ray Stedman - These promises, as you well know from your own experience, are made in times of danger, or in moments of strong desire, or sometimes out of gratitude and thanksgiving as God has blessed our hearts. If you have ever said, "Lord, if you'll just do such-and-such, then I'll do such-and-such for you," then you will be very interested in what this chapter has to say.

I must point out immediately that in all the Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments alike, God never commands a vow. Vows are never mandatory, never obligatory, upon the people of God. You don't have to promise God anything in order to get something from him. God is a Giver. He delights in giving; that is his nature. "Every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change," James tells us (James 1:17 RSV). Because God is a God of love, he delights in giving. John Oxenham says,

Love ever lives
and ever stands with open hands
and while it lives, it gives
for this is love's prerogative
to give and give and give.

God is always giving, and there is nothing that you need from God which, in order to obtain, you must promise him something in return. All this is voluntary on your part.

And yet it is significant that there is something innate in human beings which makes us want to vow, to promise new resolutions or determinations to God. So God recognizes that tendency and makes room for it, and he gives us instructions about it. You remember that when he left home Jacob made a vow in an attempt to bargain with God. There are records in the Scriptures of many others who made various vows before God. This is certainly something with which we all identify. And what the Scriptures everywhere also teach is that once you make a vow, God expects you to fulfill it. ([Leviticus 27](#))

Leviticus 27:2 "Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, 'When a man makes a difficult vow, he shall be valued according to your valuation of persons belonging to the LORD.

Hyatt - Speak to the sons of Israel, and you shall say to them, When a man would fulfill wonderfully your evaluation of a vow of persons to Jehovah,

NET Leviticus 27:2 "Speak to the Israelites and tell them, 'When a man makes a special votive offering based on the conversion value of persons to the LORD,

LXE Leviticus 27:2 Speak to the children of Israel, and thou shalt say to them, Whosoever shall vow a vow as

the valuation of his soul for the Lord,

NLT Leviticus 27:2 "Give the following instructions to the people of Israel. If anyone makes a special vow to dedicate someone to the LORD by paying the value of that person,

KJV Leviticus 27:2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When a man shall make a singular vow, the persons shall be for the LORD by thy estimation.

ESV Leviticus 27:2 "Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, If anyone makes a special vow to the LORD involving the valuation of persons,

CSB Leviticus 27:2 "Speak to the Israelites and tell them: When someone makes a special vow to the LORD that involves the assessment of people,

NIV Leviticus 27:2 "Speak to the Israelites and say to them: 'If anyone makes a special vow to dedicate persons to the LORD by giving equivalent values,

NKJ Leviticus 27:2 "Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: `When a man consecrates by a vow certain persons to the LORD, according to your valuation,

NRS Leviticus 27:2 Speak to the people of Israel and say to them: When a person makes an explicit vow to the LORD concerning the equivalent for a human being,

YLT Leviticus 27:2 'Speak unto the sons of Israel, and thou hast said unto them, When a man maketh a wonderful vow, by thy valuation the persons are Jehovah's.

NAB Leviticus 27:2 "Speak to the Israelites and tell them: When anyone fulfills a vow of offering one or more persons to the LORD, who are to be ransomed at a fixed sum of money,

NJB Leviticus 27:2 'Speak to the Israelites and say: "If anyone vows the value of a person to Yahweh and wishes to discharge the vow:

GWN Leviticus 27:2 "Tell the Israelites: If any of you makes a special vow to give a person to the LORD, you may give money instead of the person.

BHT Leviticus 27:2 DaBBēr ´el-Bünê yiSrā´el wü´amarTā ´älêhem ´îš Kî yapli´ ne^oder Bü`erKükä nüpäšöt lyhwh(la|´dönäy)

BBE Leviticus 27:2 Say to the children of Israel, If a man makes a special oath, you will give your decision as to the value of the persons for the Lord.

WTT Leviticus 27:2 וְדַבֵּר אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם אִישׁ כִּי יִפְלֵא נָדָר בְּעַרְכּוֹ נַפְשֹׁת לַיהוָה

- **When:** Ge 28:20-22 Nu 6:2 Nu 21:2 De 23:21-23 Jdg 11:30,31,39 1Sa 1:11,28

VOWS OF PERSONS

Lev 27:2-8

[Click for Application](#) of the principles in Leviticus 27.

Rayburn - The presupposition of the chapter we are about to read is that believers are to keep the commitments they have made to the Lord. In particular, these laws explain *how* they are to keep those commitments, whether voluntary commitments – the subject of vv. 1-24 – or commitments stipulated in the law, such as the tithe (vv. 26-33). In each case, whatever was given to the Lord went to the tabernacle to be used by the priests. ([Sermon](#))

Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, 'When a man makes a difficult vow- God views the words one speak very seriously. Note that it was not a sin to refrain from making a vow for, but once a vow was made, it had to be kept as described below. These instructions give Israel guidelines as to how a dedicated person could be redeemed without incurring the wrath of God. These payments would be place in the Sanctuary coffers.

Deuteronomy 23:21-23 **"When you make a vow to the LORD your God,** you shall not delay to pay it, for it would be sin in you, and the LORD your God will surely require it of you. 22 "However, if you refrain from vowing, it would not be sin in you. 23 "You shall be careful to perform what goes out from your lips, just as you have voluntarily vowed to the LORD your God, what you have promised.

Numbers 30:2 **"If a man makes a vow to the LORD,** or takes an oath to bind himself with a binding obligation, he shall not violate his word; he shall do according to all that proceeds out of his mouth.

Ecclesiastes 5:4-6 **When you make a vow to God**, do not be late in paying it; for He takes no delight in fools. Pay what you vow! 5It is better that you should not vow than that you should vow and not pay. 6Do not let your speech cause you to sin and do not say in the presence of the messenger of God that it was a mistake. Why should God be angry on account of your voice and destroy the work of your hands?

Grieve - At first glance, it seems odd that anyone would find it necessary to make a vow to dedicate a person to the Lord. There are, however, several circumstances where this may occur:

1. A man might decide to dedicate a slave to the Lord, although there is no record of such in the Scriptures.
2. A woman may dedicate her child to the Lord, as Hannah did (1 Sam 1:11).
3. A man or woman could conceivably dedicate himself or herself to the Lord.
4. Jephthah made a vow that necessitated his daughter being dedicated (or devoted—see Lev 27:28-29) to the Lord (Jdg 11:30-35). (What the Bible Teaches - Leviticus and Deuteronomy)

He shall be valued according to your valuation of persons belonging to the LORD- "If any of you makes a special vow to give a person to the LORD, you may give money instead of the person."

Rayburn - One could promise to dedicate a person — himself or someone else – for service to the Lord. Hannah did this with her son Samuel as you remember (1 Sam. 1:11). The point was to offer oneself or one's child as a servant of God, usually making such a promise in hopes that the Lord would do something in return for the maker of the vow. Such vows were perhaps usually made in desperation – vow-making was a custom in that culture much more so than it is today – so, it was not unnatural for Hannah to make the promise she did – and thus the law made provision for monetary redemption precisely in order to offer people a way out of a vow that at least sometimes should not have been made. [Wenham, 337] Vows are more often made in times of trouble and difficulty than in times of prosperity. It is simply a fact of human life. Louis Zamperini, the subject of the book and movie *Unbroken*, if you remember, made a vow to God when he had been for days in a life raft in the middle of the Pacific Ocean despairing of his life. He didn't keep that vow until much later in his life and only because he had become a Christian. What we say in times of desperation is often forgotten in times of calm. ([Sermon](#))

Leon Hyatt - Jehovah had already mentioned vows in three previous MESSAGES in the Book of Leviticus. In [MESSAGE 7](#), He had told Moses that when a person paid a vow, he was to accompany it with a slaughter-offering at The Tabernacle (see comments on Lev. 7:16-21 in [MESSAGE 7](#)). In [MESSAGE 28](#), He had given specific instructions about the makeup of that slaughter-offering (see comments on Lev. 22:17-25 in MESSAGE 28). He also had briefly mentioned vows in MESSAGE 34 (see comments Lev. 23:38 in [MESSAGE 34](#)). However, regulations concerning how to make and fulfill the vows themselves had not been given. This MESSAGE provides that information.

Making vows meant promising to give God something in the future that was to be used for His service. Gifts that could be vowed to God could be persons, animals, houses, or land. Jehovah gave instructions concerning how to fulfill vows in each of those cases. Making vows was not a required obligation of Israelites. However, it was something a grateful Israelite would want to do to express appreciation for the land and the blessings God gave him. Once a vow was made, it became an obligation. In Numbers 30:1-16, God commanded the Israelites to faithfully keep their vows and warned them against making vows lightly or rashly. In Deuteronomy 23:21-23, on the plains of Moab before Moses handed over the leadership of the nation to Joshua, he stressed that failing to fulfill a vow was a sin.

First, Jehovah dealt with fulfilling a vow to give a person to God. Obviously, a person could vow to God only another person over whom he had control. Such a person would be a slave or a child. Slaves and children were considered to be personal property and part of a man's holdings. They could be given as gifts, and they could be inherited, though Jehovah put firm restrictions on ownership of slaves by Israelites (see comments on Lev. 19:20-22 in [MESSAGE 23](#) and on Lev. 25:39-55 in [MESSAGE 37](#)) However, Jehovah only desired to have servants who wanted to serve Him, so He provided a way for people to substitute a money payment in the place of person who had been vowed to Him. Also a money payment could be substituted if the person who had been vowed died before the vow was fulfilled. Making a monetary payment in place of a person, animal, or object that had been vowed to Jehovah was called "redeeming" that person or object. The Hebrew word that was used for that kind of redeeming was entirely different from the word that meant to kinsman redeem" (see comments on Lev. 25:25-28,47-55 in [MESSAGE 37](#)). Both kinds of redemption are mentioned in this MESSAGE, and the two should be carefully distinguished, which many interpreters have failed to do.

Most English versions translate verse 2 in such a way as to make it refer to a special kind of vow. (See note below) However, the actual wording means, not that the vow was special, but the way of fulfilling the vow was to be special. It was important to fulfill a vow to give a person to God in a way that was correct and that would please God. The noun used in that verse is the ordinary word

for “vow” and has no accompanying adjective. The verb means “to make wonderful” or “to do wonderfully.” The idea is that, if a man wanted to fulfill his vow to give a person to God in a way that was wonderful or well pleasing to God, he was to do it by substituting in place of the person a money payment at The Tabernacle. The payment was to be determined by the status of the person he or she had vowed to give. ([Leviticus 27:1-34](#))

Note - 1 KJV renders the phrase “make a singular vow”; RSV, HCSB, NEB, BBE, MV, LB use “make a special vow”; GNB “in fulfillment of a special vow”; CJB “makes a clearly defined vow”; “LITV “makes an extraordinary vow”; NASB “makes a difficult vow”; NRSV “makes an explicit vow”; “SGV “makes a special votive offering.” DV, JB, MSG, and CEV use much freer and less accurate renderings: DV uses “made a vow and promised his soul to God”; JB “vows the value of a person”; MSG “wants to vow the value of a person “; and CEV “free someone who has been promised to me.” All of those versions make significant statements, but the problem is they are not translations. ASV, RV, and NEV seek to genuinely translate the phrase by using “accomplish a vow,” but they still fall short of communicating its true meaning.

Gilbrant - Holiness is practical and disciplined. It involves consistent follow-through. All life is to be lived under the lordship of the Lord and in relationship to His holiness. Therefore, one’s words must be taken seriously. Everything we say should be said as though we were in the presence of God, because we really are. This is a principle in the third commandment. Certainly vows, promises and commitments to God must be made with great care and thoughtfulness, and then kept with all diligence. Holiness involves commitments that must be followed through (cf. Deut. 23:21ff). Chapter 27 reminds God’s people that they are accountable for keeping their word and for giving the Lord what they promised Him. Ecclesiastes 5:4-7 says it is better not to make a vow than to make one and not fulfill it. As people who are supposed to be holy how good is our word? This chapter also suggests that true reverence for the holiness of God will not try to get by with a less costly offering after having promised God the expensive one in some moment of emotion. People attempting to be holy must be concerned with the holiness of God. We must appreciate Him as one’s Savior and as owner of all. We should never ask how little we may get by with giving back to the Lord. Christians should not question the need to continue giving at least a tenth of their income to the work of the Lord, because that was the minimum before Christ came, going all the way back to Abraham and before the Law. The grace of Christ should motivate us to go beyond that, (2 Cor. 8:7ff). Tithing is simply paying the “rent” to God. Holiness is generous. Holiness keeps in mind the universality of His presence so that every word and deed is done before Him. Anything less than total honesty is utterly foolish. Holiness means living in God’s presence his way—in repentance, faith, and gratefulness. Keeping promises and giving to the Lord exemplify this, and make an excellent conclusion to the message of Leviticus—be holy as He is, because He has saved you, and it is your obligation. (Complete Biblical Library Commentary – Leviticus-Numbers)

Difficult ([06381](#))([pala](#)) is a verb which means properly, be *exceptional*, surpassing all expectations – going beyond the “norm” and what people can explain or anticipate; be inexplicable and unexpected – surprising to *human* standards because so extraordinary, i.e. to marvel at what is *so fully exceptional*; wondrous, incomprehensible, wonderful; astonishing, outside the range of expectation. It means to be difficult, to be hard, to be extraordinary or amazing, be surpassing or to cause a wonderful thing to happen. To be beyond one’s power to do. To do something wonderful, extraordinary or difficult = Wonders, Marvels, Marvelous works.

In most of its OT occurrences, **pala** refers to acts that are performed by Jehovah expressing actions that are beyond the bounds of human powers or expectations, especially His deliverances of Israel (Ex 3:20, Ps 106:22, 136:4). He has done things beyond the limits of human powers or expectation. God showed His people miracles when they came out of bondage in Egypt and as they were going into the freedom of the promised land - "Then Joshua said to the people, “Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will do wonders among you.” (Josh 3:5)

When **pala** is used with reference to men, the idea conveyed is of something being too difficult to accomplish or comprehend. (Job 42:3NIV). Things which are too marvelous or too difficult for man to understand are described in Pr. 30:18. Deut 17:8 refers to a "case (which) is too difficult (Lxx = *adunateo* = means to be powerless, to be unable and them to be impossible) for you to decide." Nu 6:2 the phrase "**makes a special vow**" connotes the idea of a **difficult vow** (which in the context of Nu 6 = a Nazarite vow).

he shall be valued according to your valuation of persons belonging to the LORD- The idea is that one may give money instead of the person they vowed. "Instead of offering a person to the LORD one could redeem that person with the appropriate amount of money delineated in the following verses." (NET)

Ray Stedman - First of all, you will notice that the nature of this vow is that it was made about persons, either about the individual who made the vow himself, or often it was a vow made out of desire for the benefit of someone else a parent, a child, a servant, or a friend. As we all know, there are times when we become concerned about someone and tend to pray, "Lord, if you'll just do such-and-such for this person, then I'll do something for you. I'll invest to an unusual degree in your work." What it amounts to here is that in Israel they were saying to God, "I'll support the work of the priesthood and give above and beyond what I ordinarily would give if you'll just benefit or bless or help so-and-so."

When a promise of this nature was made there was a scale of values predetermined by God which Moses was to transmit and from which he was not free to deviate in any degree. If the person in question were a certain age and sex then there was an amount set for him or her, and that had to be paid if the blessing was received. God gave careful instructions to his people regarding this kind of promise.

From the Women's Liberation point of view, Moses here is a male chauvinist pig, for this scale of values differs between the male and the female. But we must remind ourselves that this is not at all an assessment of the worth of the persons before God. In both the Old and the New Testaments, there are clear statements that men and women are of equal value and standing as persons before God. As Paul says in Galatians, "In Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male nor female..." All distinctions, including sex, are wiped out when we are standing in the presence of God and our worth to him is being evaluated.

Rather, this is a reckoning of the opportunity for service before men. Differences of age and sex, in Israel, made for varying opportunities to serve and thus for different values. That is what is recognized here -- the obligation of service which could be rendered to the priesthood to further its outreach and strengthen its ministry within the nation of Israel, on the basis of the person who received the benefit, who was blessed. ([Sermon](#))

[William MacDonald](#) Notes on Leviticus 27 - This chapter deals with voluntary vows made to the Lord. It seems that in gratitude to the Lord for some blessing, a man could vow to the Lord a person (himself or a member of his family), an animal, a house, or a field. The things vowed were given to the priests (Num. 18:14). Since these gifts were not always of use to the priests, provision was made that the person making the vow could give the priest a sum of money in lieu of the thing vowed.

A "singular" or "difficult" vow means a special one (Lev 27:2).

If a person was vowed to the Lord, then the redemption price to be paid to the priest was as follows:

- A man from 20-60 years old—50 shekels
- A woman from 20-60 years old—30 shekels
- A male from 5-20 years old—20 shekels
- A female from 5-20 years old—10 shekels
- A male from 1 month to 5 years old—5 shekels
- A female from 1 month to 5 years old—3 shekels
- A male 80 years old and above—15 shekels
- A female 60 years old and above—10 shekels

If a man could not redeem his vow according to this chart, then the priest determined some figure according to the poor man's ability.

If the vow was an animal (Lev 27:9-13), the following rules applied:

A clean animal, suitable for sacrifice, could not be redeemed (Lev 27:9). It was to be offered to the Lord upon the altar (Num. 18:17); nothing could be gained by exchanging one animal for another, because both would then become the Lord's (vv. 10, 33); an unclean animal could be redeemed by paying the value placed upon it by the priest, plus one-fifth (Lev 27:11-13).

If a man vowed his house to the Lord, he could change his mind and buy it back by paying the priest's estimate of its value, plus one-fifth (Lev 27:14, 15).

Appraising the value of a field was complicated by the fact that it reverted to the original owner in the Year of Jubilee (Lev 27:16-25).

If it was vowed by its original owner, then the rules in Lev 27:18-21 applied. It was valued according to the seed sown in it. For example, if an homer of barley seed were sown in it, it would be valued at 50 shekels.

If the field was vowed near or at the Year of Jubilee, then the above appraisal was effective (Lev 27:17). But if some years after the Year of Jubilee, then the value of the field decreased accordingly. In other words, the field would be worth only 30 shekels if it was vowed 20 years after the Year of Jubilee (Lev 27:18).

If the field was redeemed, then an added payment of one-fifth was required (Lev 27:19).

If, after giving the land to the Lord, the owner did not redeem it before the Year of Jubilee, or if he secretly sold it to someone else, it could no longer be redeemed but became the property of the priests at the Year of Jubilee (Lev 27:20, 21). The land was then

“devoted” or “holy” to the Lord.

If a field was vowed by someone who was not its original owner, then Lev 27: 22-25 applied. The priest set a value on the property, depending on how many crops could be raised on it before the Year of Jubilee. In that year, the field went back to its original owner.

The firstborn of a sacrificial animal could not be vowed to the Lord, because it belonged to Him anyway (Lev 27:26).

The firstborn of an unclean animal could be redeemed by paying the priest’s valuation of it, plus one-fifth. Otherwise the priest could sell it (Lev 27:27).

Nothing that was under sentence of death or destruction could be redeemed (Lev 27:28, 29). This is what was meant by a devoted or proscribed thing. Thus a son who cursed his parents could not be redeemed but must be put to death.

It should be noted that there is an important distinction in this chapter between what is consecrated (NASB) or sanctified (KJV) and what is proscribed (NASB) or devoted (KJV). Things sanctified by vow—that is, set apart for divine use—could be redeemed. Devoted things were given completely and finally, and could not be redeemed.

A tithe or tenth of the grain and fruit belonged to the Lord. If the offerer wanted to keep it, he could pay its value plus one-fifth (Lev 27:31).

In Lev 27:32, the expression “whatsoever passeth under the rod” refers to the practice of numbering sheep or goats by causing them to pass under the shepherd’s rod. “With rod in hand, he [the shepherd] would touch every tenth one. He could in no way contrive to change their order so that a good animal would escape tenth place. If he tried to alter the order, both the real tenth and the attempted switch would be the Lord’s.”⁵³ This first tithe was called the levitical tithe, because it was paid to the Levites (Num. 18:21-24). A second tithe, which apparently is a different one, is prescribed in Deuteronomy 14:22-29.

Leviticus 27:3 'If your valuation is of the male from twenty years even to sixty years old, then your valuation shall be fifty shekels of silver, after the shekel of the sanctuary.

Hyatt - And your evaluation [is] for a man from twenty years old up to sixty years old, then your evaluation shall be fifty silver shekels according to the shekel of The Holy Place.

NET Leviticus 27:3 the conversion value of the male from twenty years old up to sixty years old is fifty shekels by the standard of the sanctuary shekel.

LXE Leviticus 27:3 the valuation of a male from twenty years old to sixty years old shall be-- his valuation shall be fifty didrachms of silver by the standard of the sanctuary.

NLT Leviticus 27:3 here is the scale of values to be used. A man between the ages of twenty and sixty is valued at fifty shekels of silver, as measured by the sanctuary shekel.

KJV Leviticus 27:3 And thy estimation shall be of the male from twenty years old even unto sixty years old, even thy estimation shall be fifty shekels of silver, after the shekel of the sanctuary.

ESV Leviticus 27:3 then the valuation of a male from twenty years old up to sixty years old shall be fifty shekels of silver, according to the shekel of the sanctuary.

CSB Leviticus 27:3 if the assessment concerns a male from 20 to 60 years old, your assessment is 50 silver shekels measured by the standard sanctuary shekel.

NIV Leviticus 27:3 set the value of a male between the ages of twenty and sixty at fifty shekels of silver, according to the sanctuary shekel;

NKJ Leviticus 27:3 `if your valuation is of a male from twenty years old up to sixty years old, then your valuation shall be fifty shekels of silver, according to the shekel of the sanctuary.

NRS Leviticus 27:3 the equivalent for a male shall be: from twenty to sixty years of age the equivalent shall be fifty shekels of silver by the sanctuary shekel.

YLT Leviticus 27:3 When thy valuation hath been of the male from a son of twenty years even unto a son of sixty years, then hath been thy valuation fifty shekels of silver by the shekel of the sanctuary.

NAB Leviticus 27:3 for persons between the ages of twenty and sixty, the fixed sum, in sanctuary shekels, shall be fifty silver shekels for a man,

NJB Leviticus 27:3 "a man between twenty and sixty years of age will be valued at fifty silver shekels -- the sanctuary shekel;

GWN Leviticus 27:3 The amount you must give for a man from 20 to 60 years old is 20 ounces of silver. Use the standard weight of the holy place.

BHT Leviticus 27:3 wühâyâ `erKükä hazzäkär miBBen `eSřim šänâ wü`ad Ben-šiššim šänâ wühâyâ `erKükä Hámışšim še°qel Ke°sep Būše°qel haqqō°deš

BBE Leviticus 27:3 And you will put the value of a male from twenty years to sixty years old at fifty shekels of silver, by the scale of the holy place.

NAS Leviticus 27:3 'If your valuation is of the male from twenty years even to sixty years old, then your valuation shall be fifty shekels of silver, after the shekel of the sanctuary.

WTT Leviticus 27:3 וְהָיָה עֲרֻכְךָ הַזָּכָר מִבֶּן עֶשְׂרִים שָׁנָה וְעַד בֶּן־שִׁשִּׁים שָׁנָה וְהָיָה עֲרֻכְךָ הַזָּכָר כְּסֶקֶל בְּשֶׁקֶל הַקֹּדֶשׁ

- **If your valuation:** Lev 27:14 5:15 6:6 Nu 18:16 2Ki 12:4 *marg:
- **after the:** Lev 27:25 Ex 30:13

Ryrie on Lev 27:3-7 The estimation of the worth of a man or woman dedicated to the Lord was evidently based on his or her worth as a worker for a given number of years.

If your valuation is of the male from twenty years even to sixty years old- The worth of a person varied, working aged males being worth the most.

Then your valuation shall be fifty shekels of silver, after the shekel of the sanctuary- If one considers the average wage was 12 shekels a year, one can see this is a very large **valuation**. One would think twice about making a vow of a 20-60 male!

Hyatt - Varying the values did not indicate that one person is more precious to God than another. It was measured by what it would cost the person to give up such a person. Jehovah later gave instructions that, if the person was redeemed, the amount due for his redemption was to be taken to The Tabernacle to be used by the priests as a part of their support (Num. 18:8). ([Leviticus 27:1-34](#))

Hyatt - Jehovah established the values that were to be used in making money payments to substitute for persons who had been vowed to Him. All the values were to be paid in silver shekels, measured by a standard to be kept in The Tabernacle courtyard (see comments on Lev. 5:15 in [MESSAGE 3](#) under the heading [worth] by your evaluation [at least three] silver shekels, in the shekel of The Holy [Place]). The values were determined according to the age and sex of the individual, as follows:

- A man **from 20-60 years old 50 shekels**
- A woman **from 20-60 years old 30 shekels**
- A male from 5-20 **years old 20 shekels**
- A female from 5-20 years old **10 shekels**
- A male from 1 **month to 5 years old 5 shekels**
- A female from 1 month to 5 years old **3 shekels**
- A male **60 years old and above 15 shekels**
- A female 60 years and above **10 shekels**

Leviticus 27:4 'Or if it is a female, then your valuation shall be thirty shekels.

Hyatt - And if she is a female, then your evaluation shall be thirty shekels

NET Leviticus 27:4 If the person is a female, the conversion value is thirty shekels.

LXE Leviticus 27:4 And the valuation of a female shall be thirty didrachms.

NLT Leviticus 27:4 A woman of that age is valued at thirty shekels of silver.

KJV Leviticus 27:4 And if it be a female, then thy estimation shall be thirty shekels.

ESV Leviticus 27:4 If the person is a female, the valuation shall be thirty shekels.

CSB Leviticus 27:4 If the person is a female, your assessment is 30 shekels.

NIV Leviticus 27:4 and if it is a female, set her value at thirty shekels.

NKJ Leviticus 27:4 `If it is a female, then your valuation shall be thirty shekels;

NRS Leviticus 27:4 If the person is a female, the equivalent is thirty shekels.

YLT Leviticus 27:4 And if it is a female -- then hath thy valuation been thirty shekels;

NAB Leviticus 27:4 and thirty shekels for a woman;

NJB Leviticus 27:4 a woman will be valued at thirty shekels;

GWN Leviticus 27:4 If it is a woman, give 12 ounces.

BHT Leviticus 27:4 wū'im-nūqēbâ hiw' wūhâyâ `erKükä šülöšîm šä°qel

BBE Leviticus 27:4 And if it is a female, the value will be thirty shekels.

WTT Leviticus 27:4 וְאִם-נִקְרְבָה הוּא וְהִיא מִרְבֵּב שְׁלִשִׁים שֶׁקֶל

- Zec 11:12,13 Mt 26:15 27:9,10

VALUATION OF FEMALES

Or if it is a female, then your valuation shall be thirty shekels- In America even this statement would be deemed as "politically incorrect!"

Rayburn - The different valuations for males and females was apparently based on the amount of heavy work each could be expected to perform ("labor value" not "intrinsic value" [Sklar, 328]). [Hartley, 481] Others have suggested that the varying prices reflected the price such an individual would command in a slave market. In other words, the market determined what a person was worth so far as a monetary value could be assigned to a human being. [Wenham, 338] ([Sermon](#))

Leviticus 27:5 'If it be from five years even to twenty years old then your valuation for the male shall be twenty shekels and for the female ten shekels.

Hyatt - And if from five years old up to twenty years old, your evaluation for a male shall be twenty shekels and for a female ten shekels.

BGT Leviticus 27:5 ν δ π πενταετο ς ως ε κοσι τ ν στα τιμ το ρσενος ε κοσι δ δραχμα τ ς δ θηλε ας δ κα δ δραχμα

NET Leviticus 27:5 If the person is from five years old up to twenty years old, the conversion value of the male is twenty shekels, and for the female ten shekels.

LXE Leviticus 27:5 And if it be from five years old to twenty, the valuation of a male shall be twenty didrachms, and of a female ten didrachms.

NLT Leviticus 27:5 A boy between the ages of five and twenty is valued at twenty shekels of silver; a girl of that age is valued at ten shekels of silver.

KJV Leviticus 27:5 And if it be from five years old even unto twenty years old, then thy estimation shall be of the male twenty shekels, and for the female ten shekels.

ESV Leviticus 27:5 If the person is from five years old up to twenty years old, the valuation shall be for a male twenty shekels, and for a female ten shekels.

CSB Leviticus 27:5 If the person is from five to 20 years old, your assessment for a male is 20 shekels and for a female 10 shekels.

NIV Leviticus 27:5 If it is a person between the ages of five and twenty, set the value of a male at twenty shekels and of a female at ten shekels.

NKJ Leviticus 27:5 `and if from five years old up to twenty years old, then your valuation for a male shall be twenty shekels, and for a female ten shekels;

NRS Leviticus 27:5 If the age is from five to twenty years of age, the equivalent is twenty shekels for a male and ten shekels for a female.

YLT Leviticus 27:5 and if from a son of five years even unto a son of twenty years -- then hath thy valuation been of the male twenty shekels, and for the female, ten shekels;

NAB Leviticus 27:5 for persons between the ages of five and twenty, the fixed sum shall be twenty shekels for a youth, and ten for a maiden;

NJB Leviticus 27:5 "between five and twenty years, a boy will be valued at twenty shekels, a girl at ten shekels;

GWN Leviticus 27:5 For a boy from 5 to 20 years old, give 8 ounces and for a girl give 4 ounces.

BHT Leviticus 27:5 wū`îm miBBen-Hâmêš šânîm wū`ad Ben-`eSrîm šânâ wühâyâ `erKükâ hazzäkâr `eSrîm šüqälîm wülannüqêbâ `áSe^oret šüqälîm

BBE Leviticus 27:5 And if the person is from five to twenty years old, the value will be twenty shekels for a male, and ten for a female.

- **ten shekels (KJV):** Lev 27:5

VALUATION OF YOUTHS

If it be from five years even to twenty years old then your valuation for the male shall be twenty shekels and for the female ten shekels.

Leviticus 27:6 'But if they are from a month even up to five years old, then your valuation shall be five shekels of silver for the male, and for the female your valuation shall be three shekels of silver.

Hyatt - And if from a month old up to five years old, your evaluation shall be for a male five silver shekels and for a female three silver shekels.

BGT Leviticus 27:6 π ὄ μηνια ου ως πενταετο ς σται τιμ το ρσενος π ντε ὄ δραχμα ργυρ ου τ ς ὄ θηλε ας τρ α ὄ δραχμα

NET Leviticus 27:6 If the person is one month old up to five years old, the conversion value of the male is five shekels of silver, and for the female the conversion value is three shekels of silver.

LXE Leviticus 27:6 And from a month old to five years old, the valuation of a male shall be five didrachms, and of a female, three didrachms of silver.

NLT Leviticus 27:6 A boy between the ages of one month and five years is valued at five shekels of silver; a girl of that age is valued at three shekels of silver.

KJV Leviticus 27:6 And if it be from a month old even unto five years old, then thy estimation shall be of the male five shekels of silver, and for the female thy estimation shall be three shekels of silver.

ESV Leviticus 27:6 If the person is from a month old up to five years old, the valuation shall be for a male five shekels of silver, and for a female the valuation shall be three shekels of silver.

CSB Leviticus 27:6 If the person is from one month to five years old, your assessment for a male is five silver shekels, and for a female your assessment is three shekels of silver.

NIV Leviticus 27:6 If it is a person between one month and five years, set the value of a male at five shekels of silver and that of a female at three shekels of silver.

NKJ Leviticus 27:6 `and if from a month old up to five years old, then your valuation for a male shall be five shekels of silver, and for a female your valuation shall be three shekels of silver;

NRS Leviticus 27:6 If the age is from one month to five years, the equivalent for a male is five shekels of silver, and for a female the equivalent is three shekels of silver.

YLT Leviticus 27:6 and if from a son of a month even unto a son of five years -- then hath thy valuation been of the male five shekels of silver, and for the female thy valuation is three shekels of silver;

NAB Leviticus 27:6 for persons between the ages of one month and five years, the fixed sum shall be five silver shekels for a boy, and three for a girl;

NJB Leviticus 27:6 "between one month and five years, a boy will be valued at five silver shekels, a girl at three silver shekels;

GWN Leviticus 27:6 For a boy from one month to five years old, give 2 ounces of silver and for a girl give about one ounce.

BHT Leviticus 27:6 wū`im miBBen-Hö°deš wū`ad Ben-Häměš šänim wühäyâ `erKükä hazzäkär Hámíššâ šüqälîm Kâ°sep wülannüqëbâ `erKükä šülö°šet šüqälîm Kâ°sep

BBE Leviticus 27:6 And if the person is from one month to five years old, then the value for a male will be five shekels of silver, and for a female three shekels.

- **from:** Nu 3:40-43 18:14-16

CHILDREN OF LOWEST EVALUATION

In America with abortion on demand, obviously many people see no worth at all for an unborn child! This is a tragic legacy for America.

But if they are from a month even up to five years old, then your valuation shall be five shekels of silver for the male, and for the female your valuation shall be three shekels of silver.

Leviticus 27:7 'If they are from sixty years old and upward, if it is a male, then your valuation shall be fifteen shekels, and for the female ten shekels.

Hyatt - And if he is sixty years old and upward, if a male then your evaluation shall be fifteen shekels and for a female ten shekels.

BGT Leviticus 27:7 ν δ π ξηκονταετ ν κα π νω ν μ ν ρσεν σται τιμ πεντεκα δεκα δ δραχμα ργυρ ου ν δ θ λεια δ κα δ δραχμα

NET Leviticus 27:7 If the person is from sixty years old and older, if he is a male the conversion value is fifteen shekels, and for the female ten shekels.

LXE Leviticus 27:7 And if from sixty year old and upward, if it be a male, his valuation shall be fifteen didrachms of silver, and if a female, ten didrachms.

NLT Leviticus 27:7 A man older than sixty is valued at fifteen shekels of silver; a woman of that age is valued at ten shekels of silver.

KJV Leviticus 27:7 And if it be from sixty years old and above; if it be a male, then thy estimation shall be fifteen shekels, and for the female ten shekels.

ESV Leviticus 27:7 And if the person is sixty years old or over, then the valuation for a male shall be fifteen shekels, and for a female ten shekels.

CSB Leviticus 27:7 If the person is 60 years or more, your assessment is 15 shekels for a male and 10 shekels for a female.

NIV Leviticus 27:7 If it is a person sixty years old or more, set the value of a male at fifteen shekels and of a female at ten shekels.

NKJ Leviticus 27:7 `and if from sixty years old and above, if it is a male, then your valuation shall be fifteen shekels, and for a female ten shekels.

NRS Leviticus 27:7 And if the person is sixty years old or over, then the equivalent for a male is fifteen shekels, and for a female ten shekels.

YLT Leviticus 27:7 and if from a son of sixty years and above -- if a male, then hath thy valuation been fifteen shekels, and for a female, ten shekels.

NAB Leviticus 27:7 for persons of sixty or more, the fixed sum shall be fifteen shekels for a man, and ten for a woman.

NJB Leviticus 27:7 "at sixty years and over, a man will be valued at fifteen shekels and a woman at ten shekels.

GWN Leviticus 27:7 For a man 60 years or over, give 6 ounces and for a woman give 4 ounces.

BHT Leviticus 27:7 wū'im miBBen-šiššîm šânâ wâma^olâ 'im-zākâr wühâyâ `erKükâ Hâmiššâ `âSâr šâ^oqel wülannüqêbâ `âSârâ šüqâlim

BBE Leviticus 27:7 And for sixty years old and over, for a male the value will be fifteen shekels, and for a female, ten.

- **from:** Ps 90:10

Grieve - The variation in value could be a reflection of the different degrees of devotion that might be expected from present day believers, according to their spiritual maturity. The Apostle John expresses this same truth in 1 John 2:12-14, where he addresses children, fathers, and young men. It is a sad fact that sometimes believers with many years of experience seem to regress in terms of spiritual maturity, as illustrated in the lower value allocated to the over-60s in the table above. (What the Bible teaches – Leviticus and Deuteronomy)

Rayburn - The monetary value also differed according to the age of the person who was dedicated. Only in recent years have I become sensitive to the fact that this is clearly ageism and should be struck from the Bible! ([Sermon](#))

Leviticus 27:8 'But if he is poorer than your valuation, then he shall be placed before the priest and the priest shall value him; according to the means of the one who vowed, the priest shall value him.

Hyatt - And if he is unable [to pay] your evaluation, then he shall bring him to the face of the priest, and the priest shall evaluate him. The priest shall evaluate him according to what the hand of the one vowing may reach.

NET Leviticus 27:8 If he is too poor to pay the conversion value, he must stand the person before the priest and the priest will establish his conversion value; according to what the man who made the vow can afford, the priest will establish his conversion value.

LXE Leviticus 27:8 And if the man be too poor for the valuation, he shall stand before the priest; and the priest shall value him: according to what the man who has vowed can afford, the priest shall value him.

NLT Leviticus 27:8 If you desire to make such a vow but cannot afford to pay the required amount, take the person to the priest. He will determine the amount for you to pay based on what you can afford.

KJV Leviticus 27:8 But if he be poorer than thy estimation, then he shall present himself before the priest, and the priest shall value him; according to his ability that vowed shall the priest value him.

ESV Leviticus 27:8 And if someone is too poor to pay the valuation, then he shall be made to stand before the priest, and the priest shall value him; the priest shall value him according to what the vower can afford.

CSB Leviticus 27:8 But if one is too poor to pay the assessment, he must present the person before the priest and the priest will set a value for him. The priest will set a value for him according to what the one making the vow can afford.

NIV Leviticus 27:8 If anyone making the vow is too poor to pay the specified amount, he is to present the person to the priest, who will set the value for him according to what the man making the vow can afford.

NKJ Leviticus 27:8 `But if he is too poor to pay your valuation, then he shall present himself before the priest, and the priest shall set a value for him; according to the ability of him who vowed, the priest shall value him.

NRS Leviticus 27:8 If any cannot afford the equivalent, they shall be brought before the priest and the priest shall assess them; the priest shall assess them according to what each one making a vow can afford.

YLT Leviticus 27:8 'And if he is poorer than thy valuation, then he hath presented himself before the priest, and the priest hath valued him; according to that which the hand of him who is vowing doth reach doth the priest value him.

NAB Leviticus 27:8 However, if the one who took the vow is too poor to meet the fixed sum, the person must be set before the priest, who shall determine the sum for his ransom in keeping with the means of the one who made the vow.

NJB Leviticus 27:8 "If the person who made the vow cannot meet this valuation, he will present the person concerned to the priest, and the priest will set a value proportionate to the resources of the person who made the vow.

GWN Leviticus 27:8 But the person who is too poor to pay the required amount must stand in front of the priest. The priest will determine the amount based on what the person can afford.

BHT Leviticus 27:8 wū'im-māk hū' mēj`erKe⁹kā wūhej`émîdô lipnê haKKöhên wūhe`érîk `ötô haKKöhên `al-Pî `âšer TaSSîg yad hannödêr ya`ârîke⁹nnû haKKöhên s

BBE Leviticus 27:8 But if he is poorer than the value which you have put on him, then let him be taken to the priest, and the priest will put a value on him, such as it is possible for him to give.

- **poorer (KJV):** Lev 5:7 12:8 14:21,22 Mk 14:7 Lu 21:1-4 2Co 8:12
- **according (KJV):** Jer 5:7

THE GRACE OF GOD

But if he is poorer than your valuation, then he shall be placed before the priest and the priest shall value him; according to the means of the one who vowed, the priest shall value him - God makes allowance if the person is too poor to meet the cost. Coates has made a comment that might surprise many - "Leviticus is a book of wonderful grace."

Rayburn - Clearly the problem being addressed is that a vow had been made that the person cannot afford to pay. The vow was made recklessly, but it was made. Now what? The law was merciful. The Lord wanted his people to do the right thing but he did not want them oppressed by the requirement to do so. ([Sermon](#))

Ray Stedman - Note that he was not to bring him to Moses, but to the priest. That indicates that there are two kinds of vows. You see, provision was made here in Verse 8 for inability to pay. Moses is always the representative of the throne, the government, the way of God, while the priest is always the representative of the grace and mercy of God, the tender character of his love. If a man were bargaining with God on a legalistic basis: "I'll do this for you, if you'll do that for me," then he had to pay the full price. There was no way that he could get out of it. Moses could not lessen or change the price in any way. God demanded full deliverance of what was promised. On the spiritual level, of course, this applies to us. If we promise God certain things in moments of danger, or if we try to bargain with him, try to get him to work for us, God expects us to pay to the full exactly what we promise. But if a man recognized that he didn't have what it took, that he was too poor to pay the price, he could still offer a promise to God out of thanksgiving and gratitude, but the priest, the representative of God's grace, would enter the picture and, in a sense, intercede on his behalf and establish a valuation he could meet. This is a beautiful picture of those vows and promises we make not to bargain with God but to express to him our thanksgiving for all that he has been to us. When our hearts are melted by grace and we stand awed in his presence and say, "Lord, here I am, take me," or "Here are my children, Lord, take them and use them as you like," these are vows made on a gracious basis, and God promises to meet any attendant need himself. What the people of God cannot gain by the Law they can have by grace and, as the New Testament puts it, "exceeding abundantly above all they could ask or think..." (Ephesians 3:20 KJV). That is the way God always operates in grace. The rest of the chapter is simply detailed instruction as to how these vows could be paid. We will not take time to read it -- you can do so at your leisure. ([Sermon](#))

Leon Hyatt - If the man vowing a person to God was not financially able to pay the redemption price required by the formula, then the priest making the evaluation was authorized to set a value that the man could afford to pay. That provision shows that ordinarily it was the normal procedure for a person who had been vowed to God to be redeemed. Any financial concession that was necessary to make it possible for him to fulfill his vow was to be made. Some have suggested that, if the person vowed was a slave, he could be sold and the money given to Jehovah for his redemption. However, that suggestion is found nowhere in the Scripture. Since the redemption price could be adjusted by the priest to whatever the person making the vow could afford, if a person was not redeemed and actually entered into Jehovah's service as a result of a vow, it was because the person vowed had a definite desire to serve God. He would actually be delivered to God's service only when he deliberately gave up the right of redemption from the

obligation.

Two examples are found in the Scriptures of persons who were vowed to God's service and who were not redeemed but actually carried out the vow. Those examples throw light on how this commandment was understood by later Israelites. One example is when Jephthah vowed to offer to God as a rededication-offering the first thing that would come out of his house to greet him when he returned from a victorious battle (Jud. 11:30-40). He was surprised and dismayed that his daughter was the first to come out to greet him. Nothing was said on that occasion about the possibility of redeeming her, but she comforted her father and chose to carry through with what her father had vowed. She only asked for time to first mourn her virginity. Usually people have concluded that after Jephthah's daughter completed her mourning, Jephthah killed her and offered her body to God on an altar. That conclusion is most repugnant. Jehovah's laws clearly forbid murder (Ex. 20:13; 21:12-15) and human sacrifice (Deut. 12:29-31) and just as clearly specified that only certain animals were suitable for altar offerings to Him (see comments on Lev. 1:2 in [MESSAGE 1](#)). It is not possible that all of those laws would have been brazenly broken in order to fulfill a promise to God. No priest of Jehovah would have agreed to officiate over such an offering, and offering a rededication offering without an authorized priest would have offended Jehovah, not honored him (Ex. 28:1- 30:30). When the passage about Jephthah's daughter is read carefully, a very different conclusion must be reached. The passage does not say that Jephthah's daughter mourned for her life, but for her virginity (Jud. 11:37-38). It also does not say that, when the vow was fulfilled, she died, but "she did not know a man" (Jud. 11:39). The only statement in the text that is used to conclude that Jephthah killed his daughter is that he said he would offer the first thing that came out to greet him as a "rededication-offering," but a rededication offering in Israel was clearly defined in Leviticus 1:1-17; 6:8-13. Those regulations absolutely eliminate the possibility of a human sacrifice. A much more likely understanding of what happened is that Jephthah's daughter gave herself in some kind of lifetime service to Jehovah that required her not to marry (see Ex. 38:8; 1 Sam. 2:22). A rededication-offering symbolized total surrender of a person's life. Therefore, giving her life to Jehovah's service could rightly be considered to be a type of rededication-offering in fulfillment of Jephthah's vow.

The other example of a person who was vowed to God and who was not redeemed but who carried through on the vow was when Hannah vowed that, if Jehovah would give her a child, she would give the child to Jehovah for his entire life (1 Sam. 1:9-28). God gave her a son, whom she named Samuel. When she fulfilled her vow, she took Samuel to Eli the high priest to become his helper and understudy. When she presented Samuel to Eli, she offered a bull as a rededication-offering, symbolizing both her and Samuel's total dedication to God. Samuel obviously chose to cooperate with the vow, because, when his mother presented him, "he bowed and worshiped Jehovah there" (1 Sam. 1:28). Eli's sons desecrated their places of service at The Tabernacle with selfish and sinful lives, but Samuel "was serving at Jehovah's face, a boy clothed in a linen ephod," which shows his commitment to Jehovah's service (1 Sam. 2:18). Like Jesus did later, "the boy Samuel was growing and gaining favor both with Jehovah and with men (1 Sam. 2:26). In addition, when he became old enough, he became a priest and a prophet and the greatest judge Israel ever had.

Both of those instances show that, if a person was vowed to God and not redeemed, he was to give his life to full time service to God for life. Vowing to give a person to God was a serious matter. It should never have been done rashly as Jephthah did, but always with full awareness of its seriousness and under God's leadership as Hannah did. ([Leviticus 27:1-34](#))

Leviticus 27:9 'Now if it is an animal of the kind which men can present as an offering to the LORD, any such that one gives to the LORD shall be holy.

Hyatt - And if [it is] one from the livestock that one may offer an offering to Jehovah, all of it that he gives will become a holiness to Jehovah.

BGT Leviticus 27:9 ν δ π τ ν κτην ν τ ν προσφερομ νων π α τ ν δ ρον τ κυρ ς ν δ π το τω ν τ κυρ σται γιο ν

NET Leviticus 27:9 "If what is vowed is a kind of animal from which an offering may be presented to the LORD, anything which he gives to the LORD from this kind of animal will be holy.

LXE Leviticus 27:9 And if it be from the cattle that are offered as a gift to the Lord, whoever shall offer one of these to the Lord, it shall be holy.

NLT Leviticus 27:9 "If your vow involves giving an animal that is acceptable as an offering to the LORD, any gift to the LORD will be considered holy.

KJV Leviticus 27:9 And if it be a beast, whereof men bring an offering unto the LORD, all that any man giveth of such unto the LORD shall be holy.

ESV Leviticus 27:9 "If the vow is an animal that may be offered as an offering to the LORD, all of it that he gives to the LORD is holy.

CSB Leviticus 27:9 "If the vow involves one of the animals that may be brought as an offering to the LORD, any of these he gives to the LORD will be holy.

NIV Leviticus 27:9 " 'If what he vowed is an animal that is acceptable as an offering to the LORD, such an animal given to the LORD becomes holy.

NKJ Leviticus 27:9 `If it is an animal that men may bring as an offering to the LORD, all that anyone gives to the LORD shall be holy.

NRS Leviticus 27:9 If it concerns an animal that may be brought as an offering to the LORD, any such that may be given to the LORD shall be holy.

YLT Leviticus 27:9 'And if it is a beast of which they bring near an offering to Jehovah, all that one giveth of it to Jehovah is holy;

NAB Leviticus 27:9 "If the offering vowed to the LORD is an animal that may be sacrificed, every such animal, when vowed to the LORD, becomes sacred.

NJB Leviticus 27:9 "In the case of an animal suitable for offering to Yahweh, any such animal given to Yahweh will be holy.

GWN Leviticus 27:9 "If the vow is to give the kind of animal that people offer to the LORD, it will be considered holy.

BHT Leviticus 27:9 wú´im-Bühēmâ ´ášer yaqrî⁹bû mimme⁹nnâ qorBân lyhwh(la|´dönäy) Köl ´ášer yiTTën mimme⁹nnû lyhwh(la|´dönäy) yilhyè-qqö⁹deš

BBE Leviticus 27:9 And if it is a beast of which men make offerings to the Lord, whatever any man gives of such to the Lord will be holy.

- **all (KJV):** is holy, i.e. separated and devoted; it cannot be redeemed like a human being, a house, or a field, (Young), Lev 27:9

Of animals that could be used as fire-offerings (Lev 27:9-10)

Now if it is an animal of the kind which men can present as an offering to the LORD, any such that one gives to the LORD shall be holy -

Leon Hyatt - This verse refers to vowing to Jehovah a livestock animal that could be used as a fireoffering. Only cattle, sheep, and goats could be used for offerings presented on the altar (see comments on Lev. 1:3 in [MESSAGE 1](#)). If a man vowed an animal from his herd or his flock, it was to be "a holiness," which means it was to be set apart for Jehovah and used for no other purpose. Jehovah assigned such animals to the priests to help support them and their families (see comments on Lev. 2:3 in [MESSAGE 1](#) under the heading And the remainder of the homage-offering [shall be] for Aaron and for his sons; on Lev. 10:14 in [MESSAGE 13](#), and on Lev. 22:10-13 in [MESSAGE 27](#); see also Num. 18:11-13,15-20). The man making the vow did not have the right to change the animal vowed for another one. That provision prevented a man from being tempted to change his mind and substitute a less valuable animal for the one he had vowed. If he attempted to exchange the vowed animal for another one for any reason, both animals were to become Jehovah's and were to be given to the priests and their families for their support. Once a vow had been made, carrying it out was a sacred responsibility. The man making the vow did not have the right to change what he had promised. ([Leviticus 27:1-34](#))

Leviticus 27:10 'He shall not replace it or exchange it, a good for a bad, or a bad for a good; or if he does exchange animal for animal, then both it and its substitute shall become holy.

Hyatt - And if he makes an exchange and changes a good one for a bad one, or if he changes one livestock for another livestock, both that one and the exchanged one will become a holiness.

BGT Leviticus 27:10 ο κ λ λ ξει α τ κα λ ν πονηρ ο δ πονηρ ν κα λ ν δ λ λ σσων λ λ ξ α τ κ τ νος κ τ νει σται α τ κα τ λλαγμα για

NET Leviticus 27:10 He must not replace or exchange it, good for bad or bad for good, and if he does indeed exchange one animal for another animal, then both the original animal and its substitute will be holy.

LXE Leviticus 27:10 He shall not change it, a good for a bad, or a bad for a good; and if he do at all change it, a beast for a beast, it and the substitute shall be holy.

NLT Leviticus 27:10 You may not exchange or substitute it for another animal-- neither a good animal for a bad one nor a bad animal for a good one. But if you do exchange one animal for another, then both the original animal and its substitute will be considered holy.

KJV Leviticus 27:10 He shall not alter it, nor change it, a good for a bad, or a bad for a good: and if he shall at all change beast for beast, then it and the exchange thereof shall be holy.

ESV Leviticus 27:10 He shall not exchange it or make a substitute for it, good for bad, or bad for good; and if he does in fact substitute one animal for another, then both it and the substitute shall be holy.

CSB Leviticus 27:10 He may not replace it or make a substitution for it, either good for bad, or bad for good. But if he does substitute one animal for another, both that animal and its substitute will be holy.

NIV Leviticus 27:10 He must not exchange it or substitute a good one for a bad one, or a bad one for a good one; if he should substitute one animal for another, both it and the substitute become holy.

NKJ Leviticus 27:10 `He shall not substitute it or exchange it, good for bad or bad for good; and if he at all exchanges animal for animal, then both it and the one exchanged for it shall be holy.

NRS Leviticus 27:10 Another shall not be exchanged or substituted for it, either good for bad or bad for good; and if one animal is substituted for another, both that one and its substitute shall be holy.

YLT Leviticus 27:10 he doth not change it nor exchange it, a good for a bad, or a bad for a good; and if he really change beast for beast, -- then it hath been -- it and its exchange is holy.

NAB Leviticus 27:10 The offerer shall not present a substitute for it by exchanging either a better for a worse one or a worse for a better one. If he attempts to offer one animal in place of another, both the original and its substitute shall be treated as sacred.

NJB Leviticus 27:10 It cannot be exchanged or replaced, a good one instead of a bad one, or a bad one instead of a good one. If one animal is substituted for another, both of them will become holy.

GWN Leviticus 27:10 Don't exchange or substitute animals, a good one for a bad one or a bad one for a good one. If you do exchange one animal for another, then both animals will be holy.

BHT Leviticus 27:10 lö' yaHálípe^onnû wülö|'-yämír 'õtô †ôb Bürä` 'ô-ra` Bū†ôb wū'im-hämër yämír Bühëmâ Bibhëmâ wühä|yâ-hû' ütümûrätô y|hyè-qqö^odeš

BBE Leviticus 27:10 It may not be changed in any way, a good given for a bad, or a bad for a good; if one beast is changed for another, the two will be holy.

- Lev 27:15-33 Jas 1:8

Leviticus 27:11 'If, however, it is any unclean animal of the kind which men do not present as an offering to the LORD, then he shall place the animal before the priest.

Hyatt - And if any animal is unclean, from which one may not offer an offering to Jehovah, then he shall bring the animal to the face of the priest,

- Dt 23:18 Mal 1:14

Of unclean animals (Lev 27:11-13)

Rayburn - Once the vow was made the maker could regret having made it. In the enthusiasm of the moment, he may have promised more than, in the clear light of day, he wanted to pay. "It is a human tendency to promise God much when we need him, but to thank him little when he meets our needs." [Sklar, 328] But having made his vow, he was obliged. There was no getting out of it. If he offered a substitute in the place of the animal he promised, both the original and the substitute had to be given to the Lord. To keep for oneself an animal that had, by dedication to God, been made holy was, in effect, to steal from the Lord; a very serious crime! ([Sermon](#))

Leviticus 27:12 'The priest shall value it as either good or bad; as you, the priest, value it, so it shall be.

Hyatt - And the priest shall evaluate it either good or bad. According to the evaluation of the priest, thus it must be.

- **as thou valuest it, who art the priest (KJV):** Heb. according to thy estimation, O priest, etc. Lev 27:14

Leviticus 27:13 'But if he should ever wish to redeem it, then he shall add one-fifth of it to your valuation.

Hyatt - And if he would kinsman-redeem it, he shall add a fifth to your evaluation.

- Lev 27:10,15,19 5:16 6:4,5 22:14

Leviticus 6:5 or anything about which he swore falsely; he shall make restitution for it in full and add to it one-fifth more. He shall give it to the one to whom it belongs on the day [he presents] his guilt offering.

Leviticus 22:14 'But if a man eats a holy [gift] unintentionally, then he shall add to it a fifth of it and shall give the holy [gift] to the priest.

Ryrie - Unclean animals could be redeemed (and thus kept by the owner) if the value plus 20 percent was paid.

Rayburn - Unclean animals (think, for example, of a donkey) could be used in other ways than as sacrifice in the tabernacle: they could be used by the priests at home or sold for the proceeds. But if the man who dedicated the animals wanted them back he must add a fifth to the market price of the animals and pay that to the tabernacle. Again, the addition of that premium was meant to discourage someone from making a vow he would later wish to take back. The point in all of this material is that it is a serious thing to make promises to God. Once made such promises had to be kept in one way or another. ([Sermon](#))

Hyatt - The vow of an unclean animal was to be handled in a different way. An unclean animal could not be used for either a fire-offering or for food by an Israelite (see comments on Lev. 11:4-8 in [MESSAGE 14](#)). A priest had no use for an unclean animal, so possessing one would have been a burden to him rather than a help. Therefore, instead of its being given to the priests, it was to be evaluated by the priest serving at the altar when it was presented, and the person making the vow was to redeem it for the price set by the priest. The value set on the animal by the priest was to be final, regardless of whether the person making the vow thought the evaluation was good and reasonable or whether he thought it was bad and unreasonable. No provision was made for the person to challenge the price set by the priest. The clause "If he would kinsman-redeem it" uses the special word for redemption provided by a near kinsman (see comments on Lev. 25:25-34,47- 55 in [MESSAGE 37](#)). The use of that word in this verse should not be understood as an accidental use of the wrong term. It should be understood as a deliberate use of the verb for redemption by a kinsman to indicate that it might be necessary for a kinsman to fulfill a vow for a relative who could not keep his own vow. The sentence means that, if a near kinsman wished to pay for the animal in place of the man making the vow, he was to increase the payment by one-fifth. This requirement would discourage people from making vows they could not fulfill, causing someone else to have to pay the price for them. ([Leviticus 27:1-34](#))

Leviticus 27:14 'Now if a man consecrates his house as holy to the LORD, then the priest shall value it as either good or bad; as the priest values it, so it shall stand.

Hyatt - And when a man hallows his house [as] a holiness to Jehovah, then the priest shall evaluate it, whether bad or good. However the priest evaluates it, thus it must stand.

- **sanctify (KJV):** Lev 27:21 25:29-31 Nu 18:14 Ps 101:2-7
- **as the priest (KJV):** Lev 27:12

Rayburn - Remember, homes located in walled cities could be sold permanently, they were not returned at the Jubilee. ([Sermon](#))

Hyatt - Another example of vowing was for a person to vow to give his house to Jehovah. In these verses, vowing to give a house to Jehovah is called "hallowing" the house. It means that, when a man fulfilled a vow to give his house to God, the house belonged to God for the benefit of the priests. However, the house was not to be transferred to the priests, because it would be unlikely that

the house would be located in a place where a priest needed to live. The vow was to be fulfilled by giving to the priests the value of the house. The value was to be determined by the priest, and whatever value the priest set on it was to be the amount paid. No means of appealing the priest's decision was provided. That provision would discourage people from making insincere vows for some ulterior motive. Vowing houses to Jehovah must have referred to houses in walled cities, because a house in a town or village that did not have a wall around it was considered to be a part of the person's farm property (see comments on Lev. 25:29-31 in MESSAGE 37). A house in a small town would have been handled under the rules for vowing land. ([Leviticus 27:1-34](#))

Leviticus 27:15 'Yet if the one who consecrates it should wish to redeem his house, then he shall add one-fifth of your valuation price to it, so that it may be his.

Hyatt - And if the one vowing would kinsmanredeem his house, then he shall add a fifth of the silver evaluation to it and it shall be his.

- **then he shall add (KJV):** Lev 27:13

Rayburn - It is amazing how little things have changed. Today as well people give real estate to the church or to a Christian organization, perhaps for a variety of reasons. They avoid the trouble of having to sell it themselves, they gain a tax advantage, and they benefit a ministry they believe in and want to support. But, today as in those days, no one knows the actual value of such a gift until it has been appraised. ([Sermon](#))

Hyatt - If a person was unable to pay the value of the house he had vowed, a kinsman could redeem it for him by paying the value of the house plus a fifth more. That provision would discourage a person from making a vow insincerely or for show when he could not fulfill the vow he made. When the kinsman paid to the priests the value of the house plus one-fifth more, the man who had vowed the house could continue to own it and live in it, so he and his family would not be left homeless. ([Leviticus 27:1-34](#))

Leviticus 27:16 'Again, if a man consecrates to the LORD part of the fields of his own property, then your valuation shall be proportionate to the seed needed for it: a homer of barley seed at fifty shekels of silver.

Hyatt - And if a man should hallow to Jehovah some of his inherited field then your evaluation shall be according to its seed. Seed in a homer of barley [shall be evaluated] at fifty silver shekels.

- **homer (KJV):** or, the land of an homer, etc. i.e. as much land as required a homer of barley to sow it, The {homer} was very different from the {omer;} the latter held about three quarts, the former seventy-five gallons three pints. Isa 5:10 Eze 45:11-14 Ho 3:2

Of land Lev 27:16-25

Hyatt - If a man wanted to redeem land that was a part of the property he inherited from Jehovah the amount of redemption was to be figured by the amount of barley seed the land could be expected to produce from the time the vow was made up until the next freedom-blast (see comments on Lev. 25:8-22 in [MESSAGE 37](#)).. The value of the barley seed was to be calculated at fifty silver shekels per homer. Ezekiel 45:11 says a homer was equal to ten ephahs, which makes it equal to either about nine bushels or about four and one-half bushels, depending on which authority is followed (concerning the weight and value of a shekel, see comments on Lev. 5:15 in [MESSAGE 3](#) under the heading [worth] by your evaluation [at least three] silver shekels, in the shekel of The Holy [Place]; concerning the amount of an ephah, see comments on Lev. 5:11 in [MESSAGE 2](#) under the heading But if his hand does not extend to two turtledoves, or two young pigeons, then he shall bring [for] his offering for that which he sinned the tenth of an ephah of fine flour as a sin-offering).

Some have understood that the evaluation of the land was to be calculated according to the amount of seed that would be required to plant the field. They take that position because the verse says the evaluation was to be made "according to its seed." They assume that statement refers to seed used for planting. That view is most unlikely, because it would decrease the price of redeeming the land unreasonably. The "seed" should be understood to mean the grain produced by the field after it had been harvested and threshed. The clean grain that results from a harvest can be planted as seed or it can be eaten as food. Therefore, it is much more reasonable to understand "according to its seed" to mean the amount of clean grain that the land could be expected to

produce by the land between the time he gave it and the time it would return to him at the next freedom-blast. If he wished to redeem his land right after the year of the freedom-blast, he was to pay the expected value of the harvest for the full fifty years that remained before the next freedom-blast. If he redeemed it when only a portion of the fifty years remained, the priest was to reduce his evaluation according to the value of the harvests that had already passed. ([Leviticus 27:1-34](#))

Leviticus 27:17 'If he consecrates his field as of the year of jubilee, according to your valuation it shall stand.

Hyatt - If he hallows his field right after the year of the freedom-blast, then it must stand according to your arrangement.

Leviticus 27:18 'If he consecrates his field after the jubilee, however, then the priest shall calculate the price for him proportionate to the years that are left until the year of jubilee; and it shall be deducted from your valuation.

Hyatt - And if he hallows his field after the freedom-blast, the priest shall count the years remaining until the freedom-blast, and he shall decrease your evaluation accordingly.

- Lev 25:15,16,27,51,52

Leviticus 27:19 'If the one who consecrates it should ever wish to redeem the field, then he shall add one-fifth of your valuation price to it, so that it may pass to him.

Hyatt - And if the one hallowing it would kinsman-redeem the field, then he shall add to it a fifth of the silver evaluation, and it shall stand firm to him.

Lev 27:13 'But if he should ever [wish to] redeem it, then he shall add one-fifth of it to your valuation.

Hyatt - If the person vowing the field to Jehovah wanted to redeem his field but was unable to pay the price, a near kinsman could kinsman-redeem it for him (see comments on v. 13 above). In that case, a fifth more was to be added to the evaluation. When the kinsman had paid the amount of the evaluation plus a fifth more, the field would remain in the possession of the person who had vowed it. The payment of an additional fifth would cause a person to be cautious about vowing property unwisely and then calling on a relative to rescue him from his decision.

If no kinsman was willing or able to pay the amount required to kinsman-redeem the property at the time the vow was to be fulfilled, the person who vowed to give it to Jehovah could not secure a kinsman-redeemer later and go back and claim the land. The property was to remain the possession of the priests. Also, if the person making the vow sold the land before the time when he promised to give it, he would not be allowed to obtain a kinsmanredeemer to secure it for him at a later date. It would not return to the original owner at the freedom-blast. The property would continue to belong to the priests. It would be like another case where land was not to return to the original owner at the freedom-blast. That case was condemned property. Condemned property had not been mentioned previously in any of Jehovah's MESSAGES at Sinai; however, Jehovah was about to discuss it in Lev 27:28-29 in this same MESSAGE (see comments on those verses below). In any one of the three cases mentioned in Lev 27:20-21, if property that was vowed could have been reclaimed by the original owner, it would have amounted to allowing him to go back on his solemn vow. The Israelites were not ever to treat a vow to God so lightly. ([Leviticus 27:1-34](#))

Leviticus 27:20 'Yet if he will not redeem the field, but has sold the field to another man, it may no longer be redeemed;

Hyatt - And if he does not kinsman-redeem the field or if he has sold the field to another man, it may not be kinsman-redeemed later.

Leviticus 27:21 and when it reverts in the jubilee, the field shall be holy to the LORD, like a field set apart; it shall be for the priest as his property.

Hyatt - And at its release at the freedom-blast, the field shall be a holiness to Jehovah like a condemned field. It shall be a possession of the priest.

- **when (KJV):** Lev 25:10,28,31
- **devoted (KJV):** It is {cherem,} a thing so devoted to God, as never more to be capable of being redeemed. Lev 27:28,29 De 13:17 Jos 6:17 Ezr 10:8 Eze 44:29 *marg:
- **priest's (KJV):** Nu 18:14 Eze 44:29

Set apart ([02764](#))(**cherem** from **charam** = to ban, devote, exterminate) is a masculine noun which means a thing devoted or dedicated, including something totally devoted to destruction.

Merrill Unger on "**devoted**" —This Hebrew verb is used here and in Lev. 27:28, 29 to designate anything that is irrevocably given to the LORD. "Surrendering something to God meant devoting it to the service of God or putting it under a ban for utter destruction" (L. Wood, TWOT, 1:324). Josh. 6:24 shows these two aspects, both this dedication to service and total destruction, in that the silver, gold, bronze, and iron were put into the treasury of the LORD'S house while the remainder of the goods and the city of Jericho itself were destroyed completely by fire. In Lev. 27:21 a field is dedicated to God while in Lev 27:28 it is used of anything "whether man or animal or family land." **God's people must be careful in what they declare dedicated to God since God himself holds them responsible for their vow. They must never use it for their self advancement or benefit. It is now wholly devoted to God.** (The Bible Knowledge Key Word Study)

Rayburn - There are various opinions about what precisely is being described here, but the gist seems to be that failure to redeem the land before the Jubilee was penalized. The land was lost and remained in the possession of the priests in perpetuity. Dedicating the land to the Lord and then leasing it to another was apparently a form of "sharp" business practice in which the man wanted both to dedicate the land and, at the same time, to continue to profit from it. Think of the Pharisees of Jesus' day and their use of dedication (*corban*) to preserve assets from the claims of even their loved ones. [Sermon](#)

Leviticus 27:22 'Or if he consecrates to the LORD a field which he has bought, which is not a part of the field of his own property,

Hyatt - And if he hallows to Jehovah a purchased field that [is] not from his inherited field,

- **his possession (KJV):** Lev 25:10,25

Hyatt - If the person vowed to Jehovah a piece of land he had purchased, his vow could not override the rights of the family to whom the land would originally have been given as an inheritance from Jehovah. The purchaser did not actually own the land, because the inheritance rights belonged to the family to whom it originally would have been given by Jehovah. He could only vow the land for the period of time he would continue to be in possession of it until the next freedom-blast. Instead of transferring the property, he was to fulfill his vow by giving to Jehovah the amount of the priest's evaluation of it until the next freedom-blast. Then, in the year of the freedom-blast the land would return to the family to whom it originally belonged. This provision protected a piece of property from becoming so involved in a sequence of sales or leases that it would be difficult or impossible to identify the family to whom it should be returned at the freedom-blast. This provision preserved the right to property ownership and the knowledge of who was the true inheritor of the property (see comments on Lev. 25:8-22 in [MESSAGE 37](#)). ([Leviticus 27:1-34](#))

Leviticus 27:23 then the priest shall calculate for him the amount of your valuation up to the year of jubilee; and he shall on that day give your valuation as holy to the LORD.

Hyatt - Then the priest shall calculate the amount of his evaluation up to the year of the freedom-blast, and he shall give the evaluation on that day [as] a holiness to Jehovah.

- Lev 27:12,18

Leviticus 27:24 'In the year of jubilee the field shall return to the one from whom he bought it, to whom the possession of the land belongs.

Hyatt - In the year of the freedom-blast, the field must return to the one from whom he acquired it, to whom the land [is] a possession.

- Lev 27:20 25:28

Leviticus 27:25 'Every valuation of yours, moreover, shall be after the shekel of the sanctuary. The shekel shall be twenty gerahs.

Hyatt - And every evaluation shall be in the shekel of The Holy [Place]. The shekel will be twenty gerahs.

- **And all (KJV):** Lev 27:3
- **to the shekel (KJV):** A standard shekel; the standard being kept in the sanctuary, to try and regulate all the weights in the land by.
- **twenty (KJV):** Ex 30:13 Nu 3:47 18:16 Eze 45:12

Hyatt - In order for evaluations to be made as fairly and as uniformly as possible, they were all to be figured in silver shekels and measured by the shekel standard that was to be kept in The Holy [Place], that is, in the courtyard of The Tabernacle (see comments on Lev. 4:6 in [MESSAGE 2](#) under the heading of the Holy [Place] and on Lev. 5:15 in [MESSAGE 3](#) under the heading [worth] by your evaluation [at least three] silver shekels, in the shekel of The Holy [Place]). To further protect the fairness of payments for property, Jehovah standardized the shekel even more exactly by specifying that it was to consist of twenty gerahs. That standard is given also in Exodus 30:15; and in Numbers 3:47; 18:16. ([Leviticus 27:1-34](#))

Leviticus 27:26 'However, a firstborn among animals, which as a firstborn belongs to the LORD, no man may consecrate it; whether ox or sheep, it is the LORD'S.

- **Hyatt** - For sure, a firstling of a livestock that is first-born for Jehovah, a man may not hallow it, whether a head of cattle or [one from the] flock. It is Jehovah's.

Firstlings (Lev 27:26-27)

Hyatt - A second financial obligation Israelites owned to Jehovah involved firstlings or first-born males. They could not be made holy by vowing them to Jehovah, because they already were His. They were His by virtue of being first-born males. Jehovah had made first-born males of people and livestock His when He spared Israel's first-born males from death at the time he laid the plague of death on the Egyptians' first-born to get them to let the Israelites go free (Ex. 12:1-14,21-28). From that day onward, every first-born male in Israel had been set apart to belong to Jehovah in a special way.

The special status of first-born males is mentioned here for the first time in the Book of Leviticus; however, it had already been fully explained in the Book of Exodus. They are mentioned here not to explain the significance of firstlings but to clarify that using them for God was an important part of the Israelites' financial obligations to Jehovah.

Instructions concerning firstlings that are given in other passages will be reviewed here because they are necessary for understanding the instructions that are given in this passage. The word "firstling" referred to the first male offspring to be born to any female animal or person in Israel. A firstling was always male, (Ex. 13, 2,12-15; Num. 3:13,40-43) because Jehovah killed the first-born males of Egypt and spared the first-born males of Israel (Ex. 12:27,29) and because the oldest male son of a family received the birthright, even if he had an older sister (Gen. 43:33). To commemorate His sparing Israel's first-born males, Jehovah took all the first-born males in Israel to belong to Him (Ex. 13:1-2). Gradually Jehovah explained to the Israelites how those firstlings were to be used for Him. Those instructions varied according to whether the firstling was a male that could be offered on the altar, a male unclean animal, or a male person. The instructions concerning each group are as follows:

(1) **First-born male animals that were suitable for use as fire-offerings.** At Succoth, Israel's first stop on their journey out of Egypt, Jehovah commanded that, if the first-born male animal was a calf, a sheep, or a goat, it was to be offered on the altar as a slaughter-offering (Ex. 13: 11-12,15a). When Moses was on the mountain after Israel was restored from their rebellion over the Golden Calf, Jehovah confirmed those same instructions (Ex. 34:19). Later when Jehovah listed in one place all the provisions He made for the support of the priests, He reconfirmed His instructions about firstlings that could be offered as fire-offering (Num. 18:17-

19), and Moses repeated them again on the plains of Moab before his death (Deut. 12:17; 14:23; 15:19-23).

(2) **First-born male animals that were not suitable for use as fire-offerings.** At Succoth, Jehovah commanded that first-born donkeys were to be redeemed with a money payment or killed (Ex. 13:13a). Presumably that same instruction was to apply to other domestic animals that could not be offered on the altar, such as, camels or horses. Jehovah mentioned only donkeys at Succoth, because the Israelites did not own any of those other kinds of animals when they left Egypt. After Israel sinned with the Golden Calf and was restored, Jehovah confirmed those instructions with the added information that the way a donkey was to be redeemed was by offering in its place an animal from the flock, which means a sheep or a goat (Ex. 34:19-20a). Later when Jehovah summarized all the provisions He had made for the support of the priests, He clarified even more His instructions concerning redeeming a first-born animal that was not suitable for use as a fire-offering by adding instructions that are given in the next verse of this MESSAGE concerning redeeming an animal that ordinarily could be offered as a fire-offering but that was unfit because it was unclean. He said that animal was to be redeemed by payment of a money substitute. Then when He listed all of the provisions He had made for the support of the priests, he set the redemption price for a month old male animal from the flock at five silver shekels, with each shekel equal to 20 gerahs. Evidently that price was to be a standard in relation to which animals of other ages could be calculated (Num. 18:15b-16).

(3) **First born sons.** This passage does not deal with hallowing first-born sons because it deals with financial obligations, not human service; however, giving firstborn sons to God was an important part of giving firstlings to Jehovah. Ordinarily setting apart first-born sons would mean they were to be set apart for service at The Tabernacle as assistants to the priests; however, at Succoth Jehovah provided for them to be redeemed from that responsibility by a money payment (Ex. 13:13b,15b; 34:20b). Later when Jehovah instructed the Israelites to take a census of all Israelite men before leaving Sinai, Jehovah set apart the men and livestock of the tribe of Levi to be His special servants in the place of first-born men and male animals. He accepted one Levite man as a redemption for one first-born man. The census showed that first-born men outnumbered Levite men by 273, so Jehovah instructed the first-born men to pay 5 silver shekels to redeem each excess first-born man. Moses collected the money, and it amounted to 1,365 shekels. He gave the redemption money to Aaron and his sons as Jehovah had commanded (Num. 3:40-51). Soon afterward Moses and the whole congregation formally set apart the Levites to serve at The Tabernacle (Lev 8:14- 19).

Another practice that was closely related to firstlings was first-fruits. The word translated "firstlings" was very similar to the word translated "first-fruits." First-fruits referred to the first portion of a crop to ripen, and they also belonged to Jehovah in recognition of His ownership of the land. Like first-born animals, Jehovah assigned first-fruits to His priests for their support. They were the first and best of every crop, like first-born males were the first and best of a man's children and animals. A man was to give first-fruits from every one of his harvests. He was to give his first-born son once in his lifetime, and he was to give first-born animals once in the lifetime of everyone of his female animals. Giving both firstlings and first-fruits to Jehovah recognized that He gave life and the ability to reproduce to humans, plants, and animals (see comments on Lev. 2:14 in [MESSAGE 1](#), and on Lev. 23:10-14,16b-18 in [MESSAGE 31](#); see also Deut. 26:1-11). In this MESSAGE Jehovah assumed the Israelites already understood that firstlings belonged to Him and informed them they could not hallow them by vowing them, because they already belonged to Him. ([Leviticus 27:1-34](#))

Leviticus 27:27 'But if it is among the unclean animals, then he shall redeem it according to your valuation and add to it one-fifth of it; and if it is not redeemed, then it shall be sold according to your valuation.

Hyatt - And if the livestock [is] unclean, then he shall redeem [it] at your evaluation, and he shall add its fifth to it; and if it is not kinsman-redeemed, then it may be sold at your evaluation.

- Lev 27:11-13

The Treasury of Scripture Knowledge note suggests "This was probably intended to prevent rash vows and covetous redemptions. The priest alone was to value the thing; and to whatever his valuation was, a fifth part must be added by him who wished to redeem it.

Redeem ([padah](#)) means "buy it back."

Redeemed ([goel/ga'al](#) see Lev. 25:25-note) is used in a synonymous manner (with [padah](#)), although these two verbs are normally differentiated by the fact that for the latter verb there is always an emphasis on the redemption being the duty or privilege of a near relative.

Rayburn - The firstborn animal already belonged to the Lord and so could not be dedicated as if it were the worshipper's free gift.

Unclean animals could be redeemed, or bought back, with the usual 20% premium paid. ([Sermon](#))

Hyatt - And if the livestock [is] unclean, then he shall redeem [it] at your evaluation, and he shall add its fifth to it. This verse gives instructions concerning what to do with a firstling that ordinarily could be offered as a slaughter-offering but that was unsuitable because it was unclean. It says such an animal was to be redeemed by a money payment according to an evaluation of its worth plus one-fifth more. Comparing this verse with Lev 27:14-15 above indicates the evaluation was to be made by a priest. It has already been noted above that later Jehovah gave the Israelites a standard by which the priest could calculate the value of the firstling. and if it is not kinsman-redeemed, then it may be sold at your evaluation. This statement assumes that an unclean firstling could be redeemed by a kinsman, if the person owning the firstling could not pay the redemption price himself. However, if a near kinsman could not or would not redeem it, the owner of the unclean firstling could sell it for whatever he thought it was worth and give the money to the priests for their support. ([Leviticus 27:1-34](#))

Leviticus 27:28 'Nevertheless, anything which a man sets apart to the LORD out of all that he has, of man or animal or of the fields of his own property, shall not be sold or redeemed. Anything devoted to destruction is most holy to the LORD.

Hyatt - For sure, every condemned thing that a man must condemn to Jehovah of all that he has, of a man or livestock or of his inherited field may not be sold, and it may not be kinsman-redeemed. It [is] a holiness of holinesses to Jehovah.

- **no devoted (KJV):** This is the {cherem,} the absolute, irredeemable grant to God. Lev 27:21 Ex 22:20 Nu 21:2,3 De 7:1,2 13:15,16 20:16,17 25:19 Jos 6:17-19,26 7:1,11-13,25 Jud 11:30,31 21:5,11,18 1Sa 14:24-28,38-45 15:3,18,32,33 Mt 25:41 Ac 23:12-14 Ro 9:3 1Co 16:22 Ga 3:10,13

Condemnations

Lev 27:28-29

NEVERTHELESS ANYTHING WHICH A MAN SETS APART TO THE LORD (devotes = cherem) : In certain instances, a person could be placed under a ban, in which case he was to be put to death (an example is found in Jos7, where the word translated "devoted" here in Leviticus is translated "accursed"). No redemption was possible in such cases.

NET Note - "Surely, any permanently dedicated [thing] which a man shall permanently dedicate to the LORD." The Hebrew term כֶּרֶם (kherem) refers to things that are devoted permanently to the LORD

Sets apart (curse devoted, destruction, utterly destroy) ([02764](#))([herem](#)) is something devoted unto divine service, and is under a ban.

Herem "conveys the "basic meaning is the exclusion of an object from the use or abuse of man and its irrevocable surrender to God. The word is related to an Arabic root meaning "to prohibit, especially to ordinary use." The word "harem," meaning the special quarters for Muslim wives, comes from it. Usually āram means a ban for utter destruction, the compulsory dedication of something which impedes or resists God's work, which is considered to be accursed before God. The idea first appears in Nu 21:2-3, where the Israelites vowed that, if God would enable them to defeat a southern Canaanite king, they would "utterly destroy" (i.e. consider as devoted and accordingly utterly destroy) his cities. This word is used regarding almost all the cities which Joshua's troops destroyed (e.g. Jericho, Josh 6:21; Ai, Josh 8:26; Makkedah, Josh 10:28; Hazor, Josh 11:11), thus indicating the rationale for their destruction. In Dt 7:2-6, the command for this manner of destruction is given, with the explanation following that, otherwise, these cities would lure the Israelites away from the Lord (cf. Dt 20:17-18). Any Israelite city that harbored idolators was to be "utterly destroyed" (Deut 13:12-15; cf. Ex 22:19). A man who was the object devoted to God came under the same ban." (Leon Wood - TWOT)

The [Septuagint \(Lxx\)](#) translates **herem** with the noun [anathema](#) (from anathemi = to place, lay up) means strictly speaking something set up or placed so as to be kept, such as a votive [free will] offering which is "set up" in the temple (eg, see Lk 21:5). **BDAG** notes that **anathema** in the [Septuagint \(Lxx\)](#) as a rule (signifies) what is 'devoted to the divinity' (which) can be either consecrated or accursed.

Rayburn - "Devoted" is not the same thing as "dedicated." This term (*herem*) describes the perpetual consecration of something to the Lord, often but not always for destruction, usually in the case of war or crime. Jericho, you remember, was devoted to destruction in this way; so was Achan for his crime at Jericho. In this way the Lord's judgment, as it were, "broke into human history, and Israel was the instrument of delivering his justice." [Sklar, 331] But this act of supreme, permanent dedication could also be used

of gifts given to the Lord. But when it was, the gift could not be redeemed under any circumstances; there could be no change of mind. If you remember, this is one explanation of Jephthah's vow regarding his daughter. Instead of promising to kill her, as the text is usually taken to read, he had promised that she would be irrevocably dedicated to service in the tabernacle and could never marry as a result. ([Sermon](#))

Ray Stedman - This verse also helps to explain a puzzle in the book of Judges which many have wondered about. Remember the story of Jephthah, who made a rash vow. He went out to battle against the enemies of Israel and said to God, "If you'll give me victory, then whoever comes out of the doors of my house to meet me when I return I will offer as a burnt offering..." (Judges 11:30-31). To his horror, his only child, his daughter, came out to meet him. His heart sank, for he knew that he would be called upon to fulfill that vow. He explained it to her and she very bravely said, "Well, father, if you've made a vow to God then you can't break it. And I am willing that you fulfill your vow. Only let me spend two months with my friends first..." (Judges 11:36-37). The account tells us that she did spend the time with her friends, going up and down the mountains of Israel. At the end of that period, the account says, "she returned to her father, who did to her according to the vow," (Judges 11:39 RSV). Many have recoiled at that, understandably, and asked themselves, "Did he actually offer her as a living sacrifice, as a burnt offering on the altar?" Some have tried to escape the reality of that by saying that he paid redemption money for her. But you notice that Verse 28 of Leviticus 27 says, "No devoted thing ... shall be sold or redeemed." It must be given to God. My personal opinion is that Jephthah did offer his daughter as a burnt offering. His was a very foolish vow, one that he had no business making in the first place. This represented a time of moral decline in the nation of Israel. The whole period of the Judges was such. But this illustrates the rigidity with which the law of vows was fulfilled within Israel and indicates how seriously they took the matter of devotion to God. ([Sermon](#))

Hyatt translation - 28 For sure, every condemned thing that a man must condemn to Jehovah of all that he has, of a man or livestock or of his inherited field may not be sold, and it may not be kinsman-redeemed. It [is] a holiness of holinesses to Jehovah. 29 Every condemned thing among men that must be condemned may not be redeemed. It must be put to death.

Hyatt Note on "condemned thing" - Though the word occurs only 25 times in the whole Old Testament, KJV translates it in 9 different ways: "devoted thing," "devoted," "cursed thing," "accursed thing," "curse," "dedicated thing," "thing which should have been utterly destroyed," and "were accursed." ASV translates it in 5 different ways; SGV, NWV, JB in 8; RSV 11; NASB 12; LV 15; MV 16; ABV, DV 17; NEV 18. Examples of the dizzying array of translations used, in addition to those used by KJV, are: "thing devoted to destruction," "thing doomed to destruction," "thing for destruction," "thing to be utterly destroyed," "destruction," "thing under doom," "thing doomed for judgment," "thing doomed for destruction," "doomed thing," "doomed spoil," "doom," "thing banned," "thing under the ban," "thing forbidden under the ban," "thing on which the ban is laid," "goods subject to the ban," "sacred ban," "solemn ban," "ban," "forbidden thing," "proscribed thing," "defiled thing," "one guilty of wickedness," "one sentenced by the courts to die," "disaster," "anathema," "sin," "lost," "booty," "dedicated thing," "thing dedicated by a solemn vow," "thing given by vow," "vowed thing," "consecrated thing," "thing set apart," "thing which a man devotes to the LORD irredeemably."

Hyatt - For sure, every condemned thing that a man must condemn to Jehovah. The financial obligation described in these verses is strongly emphasized by beginning the instructions with a Hebrew word that means "For sure." The Israelites were to give special attention to these instructions and to carry them out strictly. The commandment concerned persons or objects that were condemned in that Jehovah claimed them because they were unfit for human use. They were to be killed or destroyed or in some instances used by Jehovah by being placed in His storehouse (see comments below). The offense that would cause a person or an object to be condemned was that it was committed to a false god or was being used in the service of a false god. No sin could be more grievous or more deserving of bringing destruction on itself.

The principle involved is described by the Hebrew word that is translated "condemned" in this writing. The principle could be much more easily understood by English readers if translators had found a way to translate the Hebrew word more consistently, or if even one translation had found a way to translate the term consistently in its own version. The array of various terms that have been used by translators is actually breathtaking.² Oddly enough, none of the translations uses even once the one rendering that best expresses the idea of the word and that can be used consistently in translating all of its occurrence. That translation is, "condemned thing." "Condemned thing" can apply equally to a person condemned to death and to property confiscated for use by Jehovah, like property can be condemned by law today and seized for non-payment of debt or for gross neglect by its owner.

The principle involved in "condemned things" was that, when a man rejected Jehovah by worshiping other gods, he lost his right to everything that Jehovah had given him and even his right to continue living. That principle was first stated in Exodus 22:20, (22:19 in the Hebrew text), when Moses was on the mountain soon after God had spoken the Ten Commandment and was then speaking to Moses His first list of civil laws that were to govern Israel's life. That verse says, "When someone offers a slaughter-offering to a god other than Jehovah only, he must be condemned." Afterward, Jehovah developed and explained that principle as follows: (1) The Canaanites were condemned because they had adopted a way of life that was totally devoted to false and depraved gods. All seven

Canaanite nations were condemned because of their repulsive religions. Therefore, all of the Canaanite people and their animals were to be killed and their possessions destroyed, except that their silver and gold treasures were to be given to Jehovah and placed in His storehouse (Deut. 7:1- 5; 20:16-18; Josh. 6:17-19). The only exception was that, if a person or group among them would repent and turn to Jehovah in faith and obedience, they could be spared and even accepted among the Israelites as one of them (Josh. 6:17b; Matt. 1:5a). (2) Other foreign nations were condemned when they fought against Israel. The men among them were to be killed with the sword, while their women, children, animals, and inanimate possessions were to be given to the Israelite people (Deut. 20:10-15). (3) An Israelite city was condemned when it turned to the worship of other gods. All of its people and animals were to be killed with the sword, and all of their possessions were to be burned. The city was not to be rebuilt (Deut. 13:12-18). (4) An individual Israelite was condemned when he committed a “sin of high hand,” which was a sin caused not by weakness but by rejecting Jehovah’s authority (see Introduction [MESSAGE 24](#) and comments on Lev. 20:1-17 in MESSAGE 24). By rebelling against Jehovah, he committed the same sin as the Canaanites, and he deserved the same punishment. He was to be executed by stoning and his body burned. His animals were to be killed and all his possessions destroyed (Lev. 27:28-29; Deut. 13:5-11; Josh. 7:1,10-26). ([Leviticus 27:1-34](#))

of all that he has - A man was responsible to condemn and destroy anything for which he was responsible if it became contaminated by being used for a false god. That responsibility included a slave, an animal, or even a field he had inherited. ([Leviticus 27:1-34](#))

shall not be sold or redeemed - He could not save the person or property from condemnation by any means. He could not sell it to someone who did not believe in Jehovah and thus try to salvage some value from it. Also, neither he nor a kinsman could redeem it. No redemption was available for a person or his possessions if He rejected Jehovah and served another god. ([Leviticus 27:1-34](#))

Anything devoted to destruction is most holy to the LORD. - It [is] a holiness of holinesses to Jehovah. “A holiness of holinesses” can also be translated “a most holy thing.” It means a person or object that belonged to Jehovah in the most absolute way (see comments on Lev. 2:3 in [MESSAGE 1](#) under the heading [It is] a holiness of holinesses). A condemned person or object was to become a possession of Jehovah, so Jehovah could deal with Him according to His justice. Usually a holy person or object belonged to Jehovah to be used in His service. Condemned persons and objects were to belong to Jehovah to be destroyed. They were not holy because they were set apart to Jehovah to honor Him. They were set apart to Jehovah to be destroyed. ([Leviticus 27:1-34](#))

Leviticus 27:29 'No one who may have been set apart among men shall be ransomed; he shall surely be put to death.

Hyatt - Every condemned thing among men that must be condemned may not be redeemed. It must be put to death.

- **None (KJV):** Nu 21:2,3 1Sa 15:18-23
- **which shall be devoted (KJV):** That is, either that every person devoted to the service of God shall not be redeemed, but die in that devoted state, or, that such as were devoted to death by appointment and law of God, as the Canaanites were, shall be put to death.

NO ONE (DEVOTED) WHO MAY HAVE BEEN SET APART AMONG MEN SHALL BE RANSOMED (devoted = cherem = not the usual word for a VOW)

Nothing that was under sentence of death or destruction could be redeemed. This is what was meant by a devoted thing. Thus a son who cursed his parents could not be redeemed but must be put to death. Like Achan in Jos7. Jericho was devoted to God for destruction. Because Achan took of that which God had told them they should utterly destroy, Achan was destroyed.

Exceptions to the redeeming or buying back of dedicated things occurred when God proclaimed special items or individuals as “dedicated,” as with Jericho (Jos6:17-19, “accursed” means under the ban, or devoted to God), Amalek (1Sa15:3).

It should be noted that there is an important distinction in this chapter between what is consecrated (NASB) or sanctified (KJV) and what is proscribed (NASB) or devoted (NKJV, KJV). Things sanctified by vow—that is, set apart for divine use—could be redeemed. Devoted things were given completely and finally, and could not be redeemed.

No one who may have been set apart among men shall be ransomed (Every condemned thing among men that must be condemned may not be redeemed) - It must be put to death, Jehovah emphasized again that any person or object that was committed to a false god could not be redeemed. That person was to be killed and his possessions destroyed. Other Scriptures show that exceptions to that rule were possible. All the Israelites worshiped a Golden Calf while still at Sinai and were condemned to

death and destruction. Moses agonized in an effort to find a way to restore them to God. Everything he tried failed until God revealed to Him that they could be restored by only one way, which was through His grace (Ex. 34:5-6). Hobab, Caleb, Rahab, Ruth, and the Gittites who followed David all were examples of people who had been followers of false gods but who accepted Jehovah and were accepted among the Israelites. They received spiritual redemption, not by any offering, form, or ceremony but by the grace of God. This verse means no redemption was possible through the forms and ceremonies of Israel, but redemption is always available to any person who will accept the grace of God. ([Leviticus 27:1-34](#))

Leviticus 27:30 'Thus all the tithe of the land, of the seed of the land or of the fruit of the tree, is the LORD'S; it is holy to the LORD.

Hyatt - And all the tithe of the land, from the seed of the land or from the fruit of the trees is Jehovah's. It is a holiness to Jehovah.

- Ge 14:20 28:22 Nu 18:21-24 De 12:5,6 14:22,23 2Ch 31:5,6,12 Ne 10:37,38 12:44 13:5,12 Mal 3:8-10 Mt 23:23 Lu 11:42 18:12 Heb 7:5-9

Tithes Lev 27:30-33

Morris: Although tithing was not made a part of the ten commandments, it had been practiced as an implicit responsibility toward God since the time of Abraham (Ge 14:20; Nu 18:21-32; Dt 12:5-18; 14:22-29; 26:12-15). More than one tithe was evidently expected of the ancient Israelites at certain times. At that time the theocratic government was also the civil government so the tithes probably also included taxes. The practice of tithing is never commanded in the New Testament church although the principle of proportionate giving is strongly suggested (1 Co 16:1,2) and generosity is strongly commended (2 Co 9:5-15). In general, most Christians can and should give substantially more than a tithe for the Lord's work, but circumstances vary. God is probably less concerned with how much we give as a measure of our love for Him and His work than with what we keep and spend on ourselves.

Hyatt - And all the tithe of the land, from the seed of the land or from the fruit of the trees is Jehovah's- A fourth economic responsibility that the Israelites owed to Jehovah was the payment of tithes. This passage contains the first mention of tithing in the MESSAGES given at Sinai, but both Abraham (Gen. 14:20) and Jacob (Gen. 28:22) paid tithes long before the Israelites went to Egypt. Obviously tithing was an ancient practice among Jehovah worshipers. The word translated "tithe" means "a tenth." It was not the word regularly used for the fraction "one tenth," but it was built on the same root as that fraction. It is a special word that means the tenth part of a person's increase that belongs to Jehovah. In Scripture, it is used only twice to refer to a tenth other than the tithe that belongs to Jehovah (Exe. 45:11,14). The English word "tithe" has exactly the same meaning. **The principle involved in tithing** was that the Israelites owed Jehovah a tenth of all their increase for the privilege of using Jehovah's land to gain that increase. In a later MESSAGE recorded in Num. 18:21-32, Jehovah clarified the practice of that principle in Israel by specifying that the tithe was to be given for the support of the Levites, while a tithe of the tithe was to go to the priests for their support. In Deut. 12:5-6,11,17-19; 14:22-29; 26:12-15 further instructions were given concerning the method to be followed in practicing tithing when the Israelites would be settled in the Land and would live far away from The Tabernacle. This verse states that tithing applied to everything that grew in the field, whether it came from seeds planted year by year or from trees that produced for many years. ([Leviticus 27:1-34](#))

is the LORD'S - It is a holiness to Jehovah. A "holiness" was a person or object that was set apart to belong to Jehovah to be used according to His directions (see comments on v. 28 above). In Israel, tithes were set apart to be used for the support of the Levites and the priests. ([Leviticus 27:1-34](#))

W A Criswell - The fundamental principle of the tithe (ma`aser, Heb.), the practice of dedicating to God a tenth of the increase of the produce of the ground or cattle, was the recognition on the part of the people that ALL their possessions actually belonged to the Lord. This acknowledgment of God's ownership was accomplished through the tithe in that the surrender of the tenth, like the firstfruits, symbolized the consecration of the whole. Mosaic legislation regarding the tithe is found primarily in three places:

(1) According to Lev 27:30-33, a tithe of the crops, of the fruit of the trees, and of the herd or flock had to be given. The tithe of the grain or fruit could be redeemed, i.e., bought back, by the owner at one-fifth above the market value (Lev 27:31). Regarding the flock or herd, however, the tithe was determined by passing the increase of the cattle under the rod, with every tenth animal, whether perfect or defective, being reckoned as the tithe.

(2) Nu 18:21-32 specifies that the tithe of the produce of the ground and of the cattle be assigned to the

Levites in return for their service in the tabernacle (Nu 18:21-24; cf. Heb 7:5). The Levites, in turn, were to give a tenth of their receipts, i.e., a tithe of the tithe, to Aaron, who, as the head of the priests, represented the whole priesthood (Nu 18:26-28).

(3) Dt 12:5-18 further specifies that a tithe (in all probability a "second" tithe) was to be brought to an appointed sanctuary, which was later Jerusalem, each year for a festival celebration -- a sacred meal to be shared by the family, the household servants, and the Levites. If the distance to the sanctuary was too great, the tithe could be exchanged for money, with the offerer using the money to purchase whatever was needed for the festive meal upon arrival (Dt. 14:22-27). Every third year this special tithe was to be stored in one's respective hometown, with the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, as well as the Levites, sharing in the goods as needed (Deut. 14:28, 29). After bringing his tithes, the offerer was to go to the sanctuary, make a declaration of honesty, and ask the Lord's blessings upon his tithes (Deut. 26:12-15; cf. Mal. 3:8).

Ryrie Lev 27:30-33 - 1/10 of the increase of the land, trees, herds, and flocks had to be given to the Lord as His tithe. Part of the tithe could be substituted for with money (plus the usual 20% additional), except in the case of animals. For a discussion of the various tithes, see notes on Mal 3:8 and Ge 14:20; 28:22. *passes under the (shepherd's) rod* refers to the custom of making the animals pass by in single file and marking each tenth one with a rod dipped in a colored substance.

Merrill Unger - Tithe (ma'gar)—The Hebrew word for tithe has the literal meaning of one-tenth. The concept of a tithe occurs in Leviticus only in this paragraph (Lev. 27:30-33), a seemingly incidental setting (see Lev. 27:1). Here in Lev. 27 the range of what is to be tithed is given in the broadest possible terms, especially as it relates to a nation whose focus is on the promise of a land. The tithe would include all plant and domesticated animal life without exception. This tithe is not to be confused with an offering of firstborns and firstfruits (Exod. 22:29-30), which, for animals, was given on the eighth day and therefore would not be part of the yearly tithe. Tithing predated the law as is evidenced by Abram paying a tithe of recovered goods to Melchizedek after being blessed by him (Gen. 14:20; see Heb. 7:1-10) and Jacob vowing a tithe at Bethel, though here a slightly different form of the word is used (Gen. 28:22). The idea of tithing was not unique to Israel in the ancient Near East as proof exists for this practice in both Egyptian and Mesopotamian documents. Tithing is further developed in the Pentateuch in Num. 18:21, 24, 26, 28; Deut. 12:6, 11, 17; 14:23, 28; 26:12. Tithing is dealt with in the historical books in 2 Chron. 31:5, 6, 12; and Neh. 10:37, 38; 12:44; 13:5, 12. In the Prophets tithing is noted in Ezek. 45:11, 14; Amos 4:4; and the famous passage of Mal. 3:8, 10 (Bible Knowledge Word Study)

Leviticus 27:31 'If, therefore, a man wishes to redeem part of his tithe, he shall add to it one-fifth of it.

Hyatt - And if a man would kinsman redeem some of his tithe, he must add to it its fifth.

- Lev 27:13

Hyatt - If a man should fail to pay his tithe and a kinsman wanted to redeem it by paying it for him, the kinsman was to add one-fifth more than its value. That provision would discourage a man from using his tithe for himself and then having to [THIRTY-EIGHTH MESSAGE](#), Lev. 27:1-34 Page 12 depend on a kinsman to fulfill the obligation for him. It also provided a penalty for failing to pay tithes, because the tithe was a debt to God more sacred than a debt owed to any man. On the plains of Moab shortly before Moses' death, he gave the Israelites further instructions about tithing when they would come into their Land and would live far away from The Tabernacle (Deut. 14:22-29). They were to set aside their tithe until they attended a Feast at The Tabernacle, and then they were to eat a portion of it in the courtyard of The Tabernacle. All of it that they were not able to eat was to be given to the Levites and the priests for their support. If they were not able to transport all the tithe of their crops and animals to The Tabernacle, they were to sell it and buy food for their family to enjoy in the courtyard when they went to a Feast time. Any money left over was to go to the Levites and the priests. However, every third year, instead of taking the tithe to The Tabernacle, it was to be set apart in a storage place in their village and used to feed sojourners, orphans, and widows as they had need. Many have interpreted Moses' instructions to mean that the Israelites were to hallow to Jehovah three different tithes, totaling 30% of their incomes. That conclusion is unnecessary. It is better to understand that Moses was giving details of how the Israelites were to handle giving their one tithe to Jehovah. ([Leviticus 27:1-34](#))

Leviticus 27:32 'For every tenth part of herd or flock, whatever passes under the rod, the tenth one shall be holy to the LORD.

Hyatt - And every tithe of a herd or a flock—the tithe of every one that passes under the rod—must be holy to

Passes under the rod - The Rabbins say, that when a man gave the tithe of his sheep or calves, he shut them in one fold, in which was a narrow door, to let out but one at a time. He then stood by the door, with a rod dipped in vermilion in his hand, and as they passed he counted them with the rod; and when the tenth came he touched it, by which it was distinguished as the tithe calf, sheep, etc. Jer 33:13 Eze 20:37 Mic 7:14

Hyatt - Tithing applied to livestock as well as to crops. "Every one that passes under the rod" seems to refer to a method by which a shepherd determined how many new calves or sheep or goats had been born into his herd or flock at foaling time (see Jer. 33:13). The young animals would be made to pass through a shute or a confined space, and the shepherd would touch them with his rod or hand and count each one. As he did so, he was to mark every tenth one, and those animals were to be holy to Jehovah, which means it was to be set apart to belong to Jehovah. Those marked were to be his tithe from his new-born livestock. The herdsman was not to question whether one of the marked animals was healthy, strong, or large or whether it was sickly, weak, or scrawny, lest he be tempted to give the weak animals to Jehovah and keep the strong ones for himself. He was to set aside every tenth animal just as they passed through. He also was not to try to exchange a valuable animal for a less valuable one. If he made such an attempt, both animals were to be holy and a part of his tithe. Also no kinsman was to have the right to buy one of the tithed animals and thus redeem it from being included in the herdsman's tithe. ([Leviticus 27:1-34](#))

Leviticus 27:33 'He is not to be concerned whether it is good or bad, nor shall he exchange it; or if he does exchange it, then both it and its substitute shall become holy. It shall not be redeemed.'"

Hyatt - He must not examine whether [it is] good or bad, and he must not exchange it. And if he tries to exchange it, then it and the exchanged [animal] must be holy. It must not be kinsman redeemed.

- Lev 27:10 'He shall not replace it or exchange it, a good for a bad, or a bad for a good; or if he does exchange animal for animal, then both it and its substitute shall become holy.

Rayburn - This is the first time we read that Israel was commanded to tithe, or give a tenth, though it is not the first time the practice is mentioned in the Bible. Remember, Abraham paid a tithe of his captured booty to Melchizedek in Genesis 14. It certainly appears here that the practice was already accepted in Israel, as it was among other peoples of the time. We are given the explanation in Numbers 18. The tithe that Israel paid was to sustain the work of the tabernacle and the lives of those who worked there, the priests and Levites. It appears that the tithe was carefully structured both adequately to support the sanctuary and its priests and not to impoverish the less well off in Israel. Presumably the tithe is not of inventory – all the animals a farmer owned – but of that year's offspring, as a tithe was calculated on that year's crop. The procedure described in v. 30 suggests that if a farmer were poorer and didn't have ten animals, he would not pay the tithe. ([Sermon](#))

Ray Stedman applies the principles of Leviticus 27 to our lives...

All the detail of this chapter, of course, is speaking to us. And we must ask the question, What do vows mean to us? What is the function of vows in our lives? For it is impossible not to make vows. Every time we deal with God we tend, in some sense, to make a vow or a promise. On one hand, the flesh within us wants to bargain with God. We have all felt this way. We have all wanted to say to God, whether we've actually said it or not, "Lord, I want this so badly. If you'll just do this for me, I'll do something for you." We tend to come to God on that legalistic, bargaining basis. And when we come on that basis God says, "All right, whatever you say. But remember, you are going to have to fulfill it!"

A few years ago a young man came up to me after a service. He was rather nervous and very disturbed, and he said, "I want to tell you a story." So I sat down with him and he told me, "Two years ago I was in Vietnam. Our company was pinned down under an enemy barrage. I was in an exposed position, bullets were whistling over my head, shrapnel was exploding all around me, and I was scared stiff. I was sure I would not get out of there alive. I prayed and cried out to God [the young man was already a Christian], 'Lord, I know what you want: you want me to enter the ministry. If you'll get me back safely, I'll go to school and start training for it.' And God answered that prayer and brought me back safely."

Then he said that the minute he got out of the Army he went into business and started making money. He put the vow in the back of his mind. "But," he said, "you know, an amazing thing has happened. At first I made lots of money. I was a success. I almost forgot this promise I had made, and I thought God had forgotten it. But

strange things have been happening recently. Despite the general success of my type of business, despite the favorable conditions for business, despite everything I can do, I've been gradually losing money. In very odd ways my business has been falling apart, and, just yesterday, I lost the whole thing. I know what God is saying to me. He has taken me at my word. He has taken my business away, and I know what I've got to do. I just wanted you to hear the story. I don't need any advice; I know what God wants me to do."

He enrolled in seminary the next day and today he is in the ministry. God holds us to that kind of legalistic bargaining.

But, on the other hand, if we come to God, and say, "Lord, you have done so tremendously much for me! My heart is so moved that I just want to promise you this, and this, out of my life. But I don't know how to pay it. I know that I won't be able to do that myself, and so I look to you, Lord, to help me fulfill it." That kind of promise God loves, and he will pick us up and make the performance of that vow richer and fuller than we could ever have dreamed, fulfilling it "exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think..." (Ephesians 3:20 KJV). You see, God uses our vows to stretch us, to bring us out.

Have you ever noticed how often our hymns reflect promises or vows we make as the people of God? Yesterday I was in Oakland listening to a talk by Dr. Charles Allen, pastor of the huge, 10,000-member First Methodist Church of Houston, Texas. He told of an experience he had recently, when he was conducting a morning worship service, and, right in the middle of singing a hymn, he broke into loud laughter. His wife rebuked him afterward. She said, "I was embarrassed that you would break out in laughter like that right in the middle of a song, for no reason at all." "Well," he said, "I couldn't help it. We were singing 'Take my life and let it be consecrated, Lord, to Thee,' and I noticed the words of the third verse: 'Take my silver and my gold, Not a mite would I withhold.' It suddenly struck me, with all the millionaires sitting in the congregation, what if God would answer that prayer right then? Some of them would be very upset and angry with him. I've been encouraging them to give their silver and gold for a long time, but they've not been willing. But now they're singing, 'Take my silver and my gold, not a mite would I withhold.'"

I often think, as we sing hymns, of Jesus' admonition that we will have to give an account for every idle word that we utter. We ought not to sing hymns without meaning what we say. I don't know if you watch me, but sometimes when we are singing a hymn and I see what the words are, I shut up! Because I'm not ready to say that yet, and I know that God is listening. Hymns are not just to fill in the time, nor to give you a chance to stand after you have been sitting awhile. They are a way of saying something to God.

So what are vows? They are a way God has of drawing us along toward maturity and of claiming his rightful ownership of us.

If you read this passage through carefully you will see that in every case, whether it is persons or animals or houses or lands or whatever being pledged, ultimate title, absolute right, belongs to God. Ownership was vested in God. It is all his. We sing it sometimes in our offertory hymn:

We give Thee but Thine own,
Whate'er the gift may be:
All that we have is Thine alone,
A trust, O Lord, from Thee.

That is true. That is the meaning of the words carved in the wall behind this platform: "You are not your own; You are bought with a price," 1 Corinthians 6:19-20). If you belong to God then you are already his. And vows and promises are ways he has of fulfilling that fact and leading us into its realization. Sometimes we make rash promises, as Jephthah did, and give God things that we wouldn't ordinarily, because we want something from him. And then he holds us to it, and leads us along. The young man I mentioned probably would never have gone to seminary if he had not made that vow in the heat of conflict in Vietnam. God used that vow to fulfill his purpose in that man's life.

God also uses the promises we make when our hearts are moved and stirred to thanksgiving. We offer ourselves to him and he takes us at our word and claims us and thus establishes his right in our life.

A woman said to me the other day, "I know I don't have too many years left (she had had cancer, and an operation had given her a reprieve for awhile), but I promised the Lord that I would give the remaining years of my life to him in a way I never have before. I'll be available for whatever he wants me to do." God was using that vow to fulfill her life and to bring her along to the place where he could claim his rightful inheritance in her. This is the way God deals with us.

Last night I was listening to a talk by Howard Butt, Jr., an articulate layman from Corpus Christi, Texas. He said that God deals with so many people as if they were apples. He seems to take them like eating a whole apple with one bite. But he felt that he was more like an onion -- God kept taking him layer by layer. I identify with that. I think that this is way God has dealt with me. And he uses these promises, these moment of intense gratitude, these feelings of deep devotion, when we offer God our lives. Remember the plaque that you sometimes see hanging on a wall:

Only one life
T'll soon be past
Only what's done
For Christ will last.

God uses these promises to remind us of that fact. I like to change that last line and say, "Only what Christ does in me will last." Only that part of my life which I give back to him will I have throughout eternity. That which I keep for myself will never make it beyond the grave. But that which I give back to him, whatever it is, I will have throughout all the ages of eternity.

I'm tempted to close this service with a time of giving ourselves to God. And yet I'm not impressed with public demonstrations like that. I think God is not much impressed with them either, because we tend to think that was the moment we gave ourselves to him, and then we forget it. What impresses God is when we give ourselves to him in the daily course of events. The book of Leviticus is closing at exactly the point to which Paul brings us in Romans 12:

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind... (Romans 12:1-2a KJV).

That is reasonable for you as a human -- to present your body. And the word means "keep on presenting." The presentation God is impressed with is: perhaps this afternoon at home, when your children irritate you or your wife does something you don't like, or your husband is a grouch, and you are tempted to say something sharp and caustic but instead you stop and you yield yourself not as an instrument of unrighteousness unto sin but of righteousness unto God. Instead of saying something sharp and cutting you say something encouraging and helpful, something which changes the situation. "Soft words drive away wrath, but sharpness produces strife." That is the kind of presentation God is talking about.

In the closing pages of the book we are brought face to face with those moments when we want to say to God, "Lord, here is my life. Here I am; I give it to you. And here are my children; I give them to you. My friendships -- whatever -- Lord, here they are. I want you to have them, to possess them. And even though I struggle with you, please take them anyway, and help me to fulfill my promises to you in the day to day, moment by moment living of my life." In such a moment you can simply stand quietly before God and say whatever you want to say to him about your life. He already owns it! What a joy it is to take that which is his inheritance in the saints -- your life and mine -- and return it to him and say, "Lord here is your inheritance: claim it for yourself." You can read again those verses from Romans 12 while you say to him whatever he lays upon your heart:

I appeal to you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may prove what is the will of God, what is good, and acceptable, and perfect. (Romans 12:1-2 RSV) ([Sermon](#))

Leviticus 27:34 These are the commandments which the LORD commanded Moses for the sons of Israel at Mount Sinai.

Hyatt - These are the commandments that Jehovah commanded Moses for the sons of Israel at Mount Sinai.

- **commandments (KJV):** Lev 26:46 De 4:45 Joh 1:17
- **in mount (KJV):** Nu 1:1 Ga 4:24,25 Heb 12:18-25

Summary Note

Leviticus 27:34

Hyatt - This verse is a note that Moses added when he recorded what Jehovah had spoken to him. It summarized the MESSAGE recorded in Leviticus 27, just as Leviticus 26:46 summarized the MESSAGE recorded in Leviticus 25-26. The note does not mean that these commandments were the only commandments Jehovah gave at Sinai but that they were the very commandments He gave. The statement is a flat contradiction of the theories that hold that the teachings of this MESSAGE and others in the Book of Leviticus were produced by a long process of development over many years and even centuries. It is a declaration that Jehovah actually spoke those commandments to Moses for the Israelites to live by (see comments on Lev. 26:46 in [MESSAGE 37](#)). Concerning Moses' statement that these commandments were spoken to him "at mount Sinai," see comments on Leviticus 7:37-38 in SUMMARY NOTE ON FIRE-OFFERINGS under the heading Critical Note and on Leviticus 25:1; 26:46 in [MESSAGE 37](#). ([Leviticus 27:1-34](#))

APPLICATION

Leon Hyatt

Vows and tithes were ancient practices, anti-dating Sinai by many years. They also post-date Sinai and continue in effect today. They remain valid principles for servants of Jehovah, even since the coming of Christ. Vows are voluntary pledges of what a person commits to give to God out of love and gratitude. Tithes are sacred obligations or debts owed to God for His generous watch care and provisions over us. Some Christians object to making pledges of what they plan to give to God through their church, but the Scriptures do not justify those objections. God puts His approval on making vows and firmly insists that once they are made they are sacred obligations to be faithfully carried out, unless unforeseen circumstances make it impossible. Gratitude to God for His gifts and blessings will lead a Christian to give to Him both the tithes he owes and the voluntary pledges he makes out of love.

First-fruits and firstlings were practices begun at Sinai and were special requirements Jehovah made of the Israelites because of His liberating them from Egypt and giving them some of His land to live on. Though the practice of setting aside for God the first gathering of every harvest or the first offspring of every herd or flock is not required of Christians, the principle of first-fruits is still a valid one. God deserves the first and best of everything that belongs to a Christian, because all that we are and have comes from Him. As Lord of our lives, He desires to be first and foremost in our lives. Also we should learn from first-fruits that the first tithe of our incomes belongs to God. We should not pay our tithes after we have taken care of our other bills and needs. God's tithe should come first, and then He will help us meet all our other bills and needs.

Condemnation of a person's life and property for rejecting Jehovah is not a practice to be carried out by a nation, a church, or an individual today. In Europe during the Middle Ages, some nations and churches sought to condemn people to torture and death for rejecting their concept of Christianity. It was a monstrous violation of the principle of freedom of conscience and of the voluntary nature of genuine faith. It also was a miserable failure. Some other religions today seek to visit violent death on those they consider to be infidels. Their doctrine is false, and their practices criminal. Only ancient Israel was ever authorized to observe condemnations, because they held a special relationship to God by virtue of being a nation pledged to a covenant to be God's special chosen people from all the people of the earth. However, condemnation for rejecting Jehovah is a basic principle of the kingdom of God. It is commanded and executed by God Himself and by Him alone. All people receive our lives and possessions from Jehovah. When we reject Jehovah, the one true God, we eventually will lose our lives and our possessions in hell, which is the second death. Also condemnation of those who reject Jehovah God does have a counterpart in the Christian church, in that those who reject Christ or His way of life should be excluded from the church fellowship and delivered "unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus" (1 Cor. 5:5). Failure to practice church discipline has caused and is causing great grief in churches and denominations today.

The lives and possessions of all people are gifts from God. Therefore, we owe Him our lives and should give them to Him in faith and love. We also owe Him a tithe of our incomes and should be glad to give Him freewill offerings out of our abundance in gratitude for His gifts. The payment to God of a tithe of our incomes should be considered to be a debt more important than any debt we owe to any human person. Giving additional freewill gifts to God's work as we are able should be considered to be an honor and a privilege. To fail to give tithes and offerings to the Lord is a greater dishonesty than failing to pay our debts to people and businesses. ([Leviticus 27:1-34](#))