

Leviticus

Lesson 17

XVII. The Law of the Appointed Times and Seasons

A. The Sabbath Day

The LORD addresses the law of the appointed times. He begins with the sabbath day. Chapter 23, verse 1. *'The LORD spoke again to Moses, saying, Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, 'The LORD'S appointed times which you shall proclaim as holy convocations—My appointed times are these: For six days work may be done, but on the seventh day there is a sabbath of complete rest, a holy convocation. You shall not do any work; it is a sabbath to the LORD in all your dwellings. These are the appointed times of the LORD, holy convocations which you shall proclaim at the times appointed for them.'* (23:1-4).

What is a *"holy convocation?"* The term appears exclusively in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers. We understand that the word *holy* means *sacred*. The word *convocation* means *a meeting of people who have been summoned*. Sometime during each of the appointed times, the LORD summoned His people to a sacred gathering. On the seventh day of every week, the LORD summons His people to rest entirely from their work of the other six days as an assembly.

B. The Passover

Each year the LORD calls for the remembrance of the Passover. Verse 5. *"In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at twilight is the LORD'S Passover."* (23:5).

The New American Standard Bible that we are using uses the word *"twilight."* It means the light that we see in the thirty minutes before the sun rises or the thirty minutes after the sun has set. It is an incorrect translation because when the sun sets on the Jewish calendar, the new day begins, and the calendar date changes. It should say, as Wycliff's translation, *"in the evening."* However, the *evening* for the Jews in the eastern world is equal to our *afternoon*. The *day* on the Hebrew calendar begins with the setting of the sun. Night follows as the start of the day. When the sun rises, it is *morning*. When the sun reached its peak at high noon and begins to descend, the *evening* starts. For those of us who live in the western world, we call the *evening, afternoon*.

The original meal of the Passover was prepared through the morning and eaten late in the afternoon. When darkness came after sunset, the day changed, the families waited, behind closed doors, for the Passover to occur.

This law in Leviticus was given before the first anniversary of the Passover came on the calendar. It will soon be celebrated.

C. The Feast of Unleavened Bread

The LORD gives the instruction for the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Verse 4. *"Then on the fifteenth day of the same month there is the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the LORD; for seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. On the first day you shall have a holy convocation; you shall not do any laborious work. But for seven days you shall present an offering by fire to the LORD. On the seventh day is a holy convocation; you shall not do any laborious work."* (23:4-8).

The Passover meal occurred in the afternoon on the fourteenth of the first month. The fifteenth of the month began with the setting of the sun on the fourteenth. The Passover deaths occurred, Pharaoh called for Moses, Moses told the people to spread the word to assemble to depart Egypt. The gathering occurred, and as the sun was about to set on the fifteenth of the month, the Nation of Israel took their first step toward freedom from Egypt under the light of a full moon. Within a few minutes of starting the march out of Egypt, the day turned to the sixteen of the month.

Thirty-nine years after this instruction is given, it will be changed for the Passover celebration when the Nation of Israel enters the Promised Land. We find that in the book of Deuteronomy.

“... you shall sacrifice the Passover in the evening at sunset, at the time that you came out of Egypt. ⁷ You shall cook and eat it in the place which the LORD your God chooses. In the morning you are to return to your tents. ⁸ Six days you shall eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day there shall be a solemn assembly to the LORD your God; you shall do no work on it.” (16:1-8).

In Leviticus, the Passover meal began at the same time as it did in Egypt, in the *evening* before sunset. The camp departed Egypt at sunset on the fifteenth of the month. Then, seven days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread took place. On the seventh day, a holy convocation occurred. But entering the Promised Land, with the instruction in Deuteronomy, the Passover meal was moved to the time of the departure from Egypt on the fifteenth with six days for the Feast of Unleavened Bread followed by a holy convocation on the seventh day. In either formula, the seventh-day assembly occurred on the same day.

D. The First Fruits

The LORD gives the instruction for the First Fruits offering. Verse 9. *“Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, 'When you enter the land which I am going to give to you and reap its harvest, then you shall bring in the sheaf of the first fruits of your harvest to the priest. He shall wave the sheaf before the LORD for you to be accepted; on the day after the sabbath the priest shall wave it. Now on the day when you wave the sheaf, you shall offer a male lamb one year old without defect for a burnt offering to the LORD. Its grain offering shall then be two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil, an offering by fire to the LORD for a soothing aroma, with its drink offering, a fourth of a hin of wine. Until this same day, until you have brought in the offering of your God, you shall eat neither bread nor roasted grain nor new growth. It is to be a perpetual statute throughout your generations in all your dwelling places.”* (23:9-14).

The celebration of First Fruits occurs only on one day of the week, *“the day after the sabbath.”* Saturday is the sabbath, and Sunday is the first day of the week, the day after the sabbath. The names Saturday and Sunday are not found in the Scripture because those were not the name of the days used in that time in history. The days were named by numbers, the first equals our Sunday, the seventh equals our Saturday.

The *sheaf* of grain was not a single stalk; neither was it a bushel basket. It is the number of stalks of grain that a man can carry in the grasp of one hand. It was brought to the Tabernacle complex on the first day of the week at harvest time. The priest offered the sheaf in a wave offering and also processed the lamb burnt offering and the grain and drink offering. The harvested of the grain began on Sunday and could not be used for food until the offering occurred.

Also, notice that there is no set calendar day for the harvest to begin and the first fruit celebration to occur except that the sheaf was brought the on Sunday to the priests when the harvest was ripe. This agrees with Leviticus 16:9, *“You shall count seven weeks for yourself; you shall begin to count seven weeks from the time you begin to put the sickle to the standing grain.”* Except in this direction for the appointed times in chapter 23, the countdown begins on Sunday. Then the two are on the same day.

E. The Day of Pentecost

The countdown begins on the day of First Fruits to set a date for Pentecost. Verse 15. *“You shall also count for yourselves from the day after the sabbath, from the day when you brought in the sheaf of the wave offering; there shall be seven complete sabbaths.”* (23:15).

The Day of Pentecost occurs on the fiftieth day after First Fruits. Seven sabbath days must pass before Pentecost is celebrated on the Sunday following the seventh sabbath. Notice that, like the day of First Fruits, the LORD did not tie Pentecost to a specific calendar day like the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread.

As we discover the offerings for the Day of Pentecost, it is essential to know that the priests present the offerings on this day from the best of the best of the tithes already at the Tabernacle complex. This offering is not for every family to bring to the Tabernacle. If that occurred, the sheer volume of animals coming to the Tabernacle complex would have overrun the facility. On the year this instruction was given, only three priests worked the twenty-four-hour shift at the Tabernacle complex, Aaron and his two sons. If 600,000 men of Israel brought a Pentecost offering to the Tabernacle for the three priests to offer, only a few could have been processed that day.

1. The Offering for Pentecost

a) The Grain

For the offering for Pentecost, a grain offering is required. Verse 16. *"You shall count fifty days to the day after the seventh sabbath; then you shall present a new grain offering to the LORD. You shall bring in from your dwelling places two loaves of bread for a wave offering, made of two-tenths of an ephah; they shall be of a fine flour, baked with leaven as first fruits to the LORD."* (23:16-17)

The verse starts with, *"You shall count fifty days to the day after the seventh sabbath."* It seems to imply that the nation will wait until seven sabbaths pass and then begin to count fifty days until Pentecost. This is not the case nor the meaning. This verse means that from the waving of the sheaf on the first day of the harvest on the first day of the week, forty-nine days are to pass. The forty-ninth day will end on a sabbath. The following day is the fiftieth day, a Sunday, the day of Pentecost.

First, on the fiftieth day, a grain offering is required as a wave offering. It is two loaves of bread made with the ingredients listed in verse 17.

b) The Burnt and Drink

With the bread offering, ten animals were offered as a burnt offering. Verse 18. *"Along with the bread you shall present seven one year old male lambs without defect, and a bull of the herd and two rams; they are to be a burnt offering to the LORD, with their grain offering and their drink offerings, an offering by fire of a soothing aroma to the LORD."* (23:18).

Second, the priest offers seven lambs without defect. The second is a bull. The third is two rams. The burnt offering is prescribed in chapter 1. Included with this offering is the drink offering. The drink offering amount is not mentioned here, but if it was the same as with the first fruit offering in verse 13 of this chapter, the drink offering was a fourth of a hin of wine.

c) The Sacrifice of Peace

Third, for the sacrifice of peace offering on the Day of Pentecost, three animals are sacrificed. Verse 20. *"You shall also offer one male goat for a sin offering and two male lambs one year old for a sacrifice of peace offerings. The priest shall then wave them with the bread of the first fruits for a wave offering with two lambs before the LORD; they are to be holy to the LORD for the priest."* (23:20).

One male goat and two male lambs are offered for this Sacrifice of Peace Offering. The order of this ceremony was given in chapter 3.

We must not miss an important detail in this verse. The LORD says, *"The priest shall then wave them with the bread of the first fruits for a wave offering."* On the Sunday of First Fruits, each farmer brought a sheaf, a handful of stalks of grain, to the Tabernacle complex. These sheaves were waved above the Brazen Altar but not placed on the Altar. After the sheaves were waved, they were then stored to make bread for the priests. That is where the grain for the bread of the wave offerings came. The grain came from the First Fruit offerings.

d) The Rest

The Day of Pentecost included rest from all labor on that day as well as a holy convocation. Verse 21. *"On this same day you shall make a proclamation as well; you are to have a holy convocation. You shall*

do no laborious work. It is to be a perpetual statute in all your dwelling places throughout your generations.” (23:21).

Some English commentaries call the Day of Pentecost a sabbath. It is as a day of rest, but it is not the seventh day of the week. The Day of Pentecost occurs on the first day of the week – Sunday. The reason for calling this a sabbath is because of the words “*You shall do no laborious work.*” However, the Hebrew word for sabbath is not found in this verse. Therefore, on Sunday, the Day of Pentecost, a service was held, and anyone except the priest did no regular work.

e) The Gift

The Day of Pentecost is tied to the spring harvest of the grain. It is connected to the season, not a calendar day. Concluding the instruction for the harvest and Pentecost, the requires the gift for the needy. Verse 22. “*When you reap the harvest of your land, moreover, you shall not reap to the very corners of your field nor gather the gleaning of your harvest; you are to leave them for the needy and the alien. I am the LORD your God.*” (23:22).

Naturally, roads or paths surrounded the fields. At each of the four corners of each field, the LORD instructed the owners to leave the corners for the poor and needy and those traveling through the country with no home of their own in the land.

F. The Day of the New Year

Returning to a day on the calendar, the LORD gives instructions for the day of the New Year. Verse 23. “*Again the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, Speak to the sons of Israel, saying, 'In the seventh month on the first of the month you shall have a rest, a reminder by blowing of trumpets, a holy convocation. 'You shall not do any laborious work, but you shall present an offering by fire to the LORD.*” (23:23-25).

The first day of the seventh month is the day of the civil New Year for the Jews. It is the first month on the Egyptian calendar and many other nations worldwide. Earlier in the year, the laws of this book were given to Moses, the LORD changed the Jewish calendar. The Jews left Egypt on the fifteenth of the seventh month of the Egyptian calendar. The LORD made the seventh month of the Egyptian calendar the first month on the Jewish religious calendar. However, the Jew celebrate a new year on the religious calendar and the new year on the civil calendar. This day, in this verse, is the celebration of the civil calendar. In Jewish life, the day is called Rosh Hashanah, which means *the head of the year*. Two more special events will occur in this seventh month.

The passage uses the word *rest*, and it is the Hebrew word *sabbath*. The day is not a sabbath day, meaning *the seventh day of the week*; it is a day of rest in the sense of suspending “*any laborious work*.” The priest is required to present an offering on that day as a holy convocation. But the kind of offering is not specified here.

G. The Day of Atonement

The second special event of the seventh month is the Day of Atonement. Verse 26. “*The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, On exactly the tenth day of this seventh month is the day of atonement; it shall be a holy convocation for you, and you shall humble your souls and present an offering by fire to the LORD. 'You shall not do any work on this same day, for it is a day of atonement, to make atonement on your behalf before the LORD your God.*” (23:26-28).

What is special about the Day of Atonement? You may have heard it called Yom Kippur. It is a day on which Israel cleansed the sanctuary of impurity and dealt with their sin through blood rituals and sending a goat into the wilderness.

The full order from the LORD concerning the activities was given in detail in chapter 16 for the Day of Atonement. In that chapter, we discovered that the LORD put a restriction in place limiting

the entrance into the Holy of Holies to one day a year, and only by the High Priest. It was the day when the priest offered offerings for his sins, his family's sins, and the sins of the nation. The bull of the sin offering is presented first. Second, a goat for a sin offering is presented. Finally, a goat is loosed into the wild as a scapegoat.

1. The Restriction

a) The Unfaithful

Here in chapter 23, the LORD places restrictions on the events of the Day of Atonement. First, the LORD addresses the unfaithful. Verse 29. *'If there is any person who will not humble himself on this same day, he shall be cut off from his people. As for any person who does any work on this same day, that person I will destroy from among his people. You shall do no work at all. It is to be a perpetual statute throughout your generations in all your dwelling places.'* (23:29-31).

For the first time, we see the word *humble* attached to the day. What does that mean? It means to be respectful of the requirements of the day. Even though the day's events are the priest's responsibility, the whole nation must observe the day with reverence. Failing to do so means ex-communication. Working on the day garners the death penalty.

b) The Ninth Day

When does the work and humility start for the Day of Atonement? On the ninth day. Verse 32. *'It is to be a sabbath of complete rest to you, and you shall humble your souls; on the ninth of the month at evening, from evening until evening you shall keep your sabbath.'* (23:32).

Remember, the word *sabbath* means *rest*; it does not automatically mean the seventh day. The seventh day is called the sabbath because it is the weekly day of rest for the nation. For the Day of Atonement, the complete rest begins on the evening of the ninth day and continues through the evening of the tenth day. Remember, the Old Testament's word *evening* meant the time of day from high noon until the sun's setting. Therefore, at high noon on the ninth day of the month until the end of the evening at sunset on the tenth, complete rest and respect are required by the LORD.

H. The Feast of Booths

The third special event in the seventh month of every year is the Feast of Booths, also called the Feast of Tabernacles. Verse 33. *'Again, the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to the sons of Israel, saying, 'On the fifteenth of this seventh month is the Feast of Booths for seven days to the LORD.'* (23:33-24).

The Feast of Booths began on the fifteenth day, which is always a full moon, and continued for seven days until the twenty-second of the month. For the next thirty-nine years, the Feast of Booths will be tied to the calendar. The instruction for this Feast of Booths will change when the nation enters the Promised Land. Here we will follow the instruction given in this Leviticus passage.

1. The First of the Seven Days

Special instructions were given for the first of the seven days. Verse 35. *'On the first day is a holy convocation; you shall do no laborious work of any kind.'* (23:35).

While in the wilderness, regardless of the day of the week on which the fifteenth fell in the week, the nation was to observe the holy convocation, and no *laborious work* was done. It is the same for all the appointed times and seasons requiring a holy convocation.

2. The Days of the Seven Days

On each of the days of the seven days, the priest presents offering to the LORD. Verse 36. *'For seven days you shall present an offering by fire to the LORD.'* (23:36).

We are not told the requirements for this daily offering here. It will come in the following verses.

3. The Eighth Day after the Seven Days

On the eighth day after the seven days are completed, the LORD prescribes the events. Verse 37. *“On the eighth day, you shall have a holy convocation and present an offering by fire to the LORD; it is an assembly. You shall do no laborious work. These are the appointed times of the LORD which you shall proclaim as holy convocations, to present offerings by fire to the LORD—burnt offerings and grain offerings, sacrifices and drink offerings, each day's matter on its own day—besides those of the sabbaths of the LORD, and besides your gifts and besides all your votive and freewill offerings, which you give to the LORD.”* (23:37-38).

The offerings for each day are given as “*burnt offerings and grain offerings, sacrifices and drink offerings, each day's matter on its own day.*” The LORD makes no changes from the original instructions for these offerings as found in chapters 1 through 7. These are presented by the priests from animals, grains, and juices brought as tithes from the nation's people.

The LORD continues to say concerning these daily offerings, “*besides those of the sabbaths of the LORD, and besides your gifts and besides all your votive and freewill offerings.*” This means that all the regular daily offerings continue at their appointed times, and the Feast of Booths' offerings are in addition to the regular daily offerings.

4. The Events of the Seven Days

The LORD now turns to the events of the seven days giving instruction for the people and what they are to do each day. Verse 23. *“On exactly the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the crops of the land, you shall celebrate the feast of the LORD for seven days, with a rest on the first day and a rest on the eighth day.”* (23:39).

The feast is tied to the gathering of the crop. Then, on the fifteenth of the seventh month, the celebration begins with a rest and ends eight days later with a rest. Here is an interesting phenomenon. Deuteronomy 16 says the following about these feasts.

“Three times in a year all your males shall appear before the LORD your God in the place which He chooses, at the Feast of Unleavened Bread and at the Feast of Weeks and at the Feast of Booths, and they shall not appear before the LORD empty-handed. ¹⁷ Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the LORD your God which He has given you.” (16:16-17).

All three are associated with a seasonal harvest. Because the calendar of the Jews was lunar, based on twelve months that start with a new moon, and consists of three-hundred and fifty-four days each year, every year, New Year's Day falls eleven days ahead of the solar year. Therefore, New Year's Day moves backward through all the seasons and arrives back at the same time and season thirty-two years later. Because of the month's movement through all the seasons of the year, the LORD gives specific instructions for the seven days. However, where were the people going to harvest the grains for the three seasons while living in the wilderness? The people could not feed themselves. They were being fed by the LORD with manna each day. Where were the fields around Mount Sinai to plant grains for over 600,000 men and their families? In addition, this instruction was given for the remembrance of living in booths while at Mount Sinai. Why would the people need to remember their time in the booths while they were still living in the booths at Mount Sinai? These instructions are for after the Jews enter the Promised Land. That will be thirty-nine years away.

a) On the First Day of the Celebration

On the first day of the celebration, the fifteenth of the month, the LORD says in verse 40, *“Now on the first day you shall take for yourselves the foliage of beautiful trees, palm branches and boughs of leafy trees and willows of the brook, and you shall rejoice before the LORD your God for seven days.”* (23:40).

All the supplies listed in this verse are used to build a temporary living quarter outside of the regular home in the Promised Land.

b) For Seven Days of the Celebration

For seven days of the celebration of booths, the LORD says in verse 41, “*You shall thus celebrate it as a feast to the LORD for seven days in the year. It shall be a perpetual statute throughout your generations; you shall celebrate it in the seventh month.*” (23:41).

The booths celebration is locked into the seventh month by the LORD, regardless of the season it falls in. Because three crops are harvested each year, the seventh month will fall after one of the three harvests.

c) The Living Quarters for the Celebration

The supplies listed in verse 40 will be used to create the living quarters for the celebration. Verse 42. “*You shall live in booths for seven days; all the native-born in Israel shall live in booths, so that your generations may know that I had the sons of Israel live in booths when I brought them out from the land of Egypt. I am the LORD your God.*” So Moses declared to the sons of Israel the appointed times of the LORD.” (23:42-44).

We must make an interesting point as we conclude the end of the instructions for this feast. The Jews did not leave Egypt in the seventh month on the religious calendar; the Jews left Egypt in the first month. Therefore, the Feast of Booths is celebrated six months out of sync with the actual time the Jews left Egypt. The feast is a yearly reminder of the temporary structures the Nation of Israel's people lived in during their time in the wilderness.

XVIII. The Law for the Tabernacle Objects

A. The Menorah

Now we come to the law for the Tabernacle objects, and we start with Menorah. Chapter 24, verse 1. “*Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, Command the sons of Israel that they bring to you clear oil from beaten olives for the light, to make a lamp burn continually. Outside the veil of testimony in the tent of meeting, Aaron shall keep it in order from evening to morning before the LORD continually; it shall be a perpetual statute throughout your generations. He shall keep the lamps in order on the pure gold lampstand before the LORD continually.*” (24:1-4).

The duties in the Tabernacle complex ran twenty-four hours a day. From evening until morning, the priest kept the Tabernacle in order and tended the golden lampstand. Today, we call the golden lampstand the Menorah. As we have mentioned several times in this study, the evening of the Jewish day began at high noon and lasted until sunset, when the new day started with the dark of the night. Morning, as spoken here, started at the break of day, and ended at high noon. When the LORD says, “*Aaron shall keep it in order from evening to morning before the LORD continually...*” it means twenty-four hours a day. We find this exact wording in the first verse in the book of Genesis. “*And there was evening, and there was morning, one day.*” (Genesis 1:5). It means the same in Genesis, twenty-four hours. The light of the Menorah was never to go dim.

The Menorah was to be fed with clear olive oil. A clear oil is pressed from the olives at the beginning of the harvest season. The oil is not clear like water. It still has a green tint, but it is completely see-through because no olive particles are in the oil. If particles are found in the new oil, the producer will strain the oil through a rag to remove all impurities. However, if the oil is pressed at the end of the production season with older olives, the oil will be thicker and cloudy. Therefore, the clear oil must be taken of the freshest new olives. The people of the nation were instructed to bring this oil as an offering every olive season. The same instruction is given in Exodus 27:20.

B. The Table of Showbread

Next, the LORD instructs the details for the Table of Showbread. Verse 5. “*Then you shall take fine flour and bake twelve cakes with it; two-tenths of an ephah shall be in each cake. You shall set them in two rows, six to a row, on the pure gold table before the LORD. You shall put pure frankincense on each row that it may be a*

memorial portion for the bread, even an offering by fire to the LORD. Every sabbath day he shall set it in order before the LORD continually; it is an everlasting covenant for the sons of Israel. "It shall be for Aaron and his sons, and they shall eat it in a holy place; for it is most holy to him from the LORD'S offerings by fire, his portion forever." (24:5-9).

We often see pictures of the Table of Showbread with the bread stacked in columns, not rows. The tables in the photos are not to scale, and the only way to space the twelve loaves of bread on the table is to stack them. However, the table is larger than normally pictured. It is about three feet long and eighteen inches wide, standing twenty-seven inches high. Each of the loaves was made from two-tenths of an ephah of flour, or 88% of a gallon of flour. Today, a gallon of flour is used to make a pound loaf of bread. When yeast is used, a pound loaf is a good size loaf, but these loaves are made without yeast, causing them to be extremely dense and small. The loaves made for the table were about 12% smaller than a one-pound loaf. Twelve loaves of bread could easily be placed on the table in two rows of six loaves with room to spare.

These loaves were seasoned with *pure frankincense*, which is a spice. All incenses used in that day were simply spices or herbs used in cooking. Can you eat frankincense? We find it in the supplement sections of our drug stores under the name Boswellia, and it is consumed to help with osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, asthma, and inflammatory bowel disease. It is called *frank* because of the freeness with which the odor goes forth from the substance. It is a resin from a tree, and it is eatable.

The twelve loaves represent a “*memorial portion for the bread*.” The English word *memorial* is our attempt to translate the Hebrew word that means *to remember*. The smell of the bread with the frankincense is a reminder of the LORD’s goodness to His people. The twelve loaves of bread sat on the table for seven days. They were replaced every seventh day. After that, the priests would be allowed to eat the bread with the meats they were required to eat from some of the offerings.

XIX. The Law for Those Who Fight

A. The Example of the Israelite Who Blasphemes

Now the LORD delivers the law for those who fight. He gives the example of the Israelite who blasphemes. Verse 10. “*Now the son of an Israelite woman, whose father was an Egyptian, went out among the sons of Israel; and the Israelite woman's son and a man of Israel struggled with each other in the camp. The son of the Israelite woman blasphemed the Name and cursed. So they brought him to Moses. (Now his mother's name was Shelemith, the daughter of Dibri, of the tribe of Dan.) They put him in custody so that the command of the LORD might be made clear to them.*” (24:10-12).

During the giving of this law, a quarrel broke out in the camp. The son had an Egyptian father and an Israelite mother. He “*blasphemed the Name and cursed*.” By telling us that the son had an Egyptian father tells us that the Egyptian culture still influenced the son. In Egyptian culture, it was common to curse their idols when petitions were not answered. For this son, he thought he could inflict the greatest insult by blaspheming the LORD – a grave sin brought to the camp from the Egyptian culture.

1. The Consequence

The sin of the son brings us to the consequence. Verse 13. “*Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, Bring the one who has cursed outside the camp, and let all who heard him lay their hands on his head; then let all the congregation stone him.*” (24:13).

In the Nation of Israel, no one is to curse the Name of the LORD. Those who do are to be stoned.

2. The Communication

After giving the penalty for cursing the LORD, He provides the communication with the reason for the stoning. Verse 16. *"You shall speak to the sons of Israel, saying, 'If anyone curses his God, then he will bear his sin. Moreover, the one who blasphemes the name of the LORD shall surely be put to death; all the congregation shall certainly stone him. The alien as well as the native, when he blasphemes the Name, shall be put to death.'"* (24:16).

No one, Israelite or alien, will ever get away with cursing the LORD. He will have them put to death by stoning.

B. The Example of the Difference between Man and Beast

1. The Story

When the fight between men and an animal is involved, the LORD gives the example of the difference between man and beast. He starts with a story. Verse 17. *"If a man takes the life of any human being, he shall surely be put to death. The one who takes the life of an animal shall make it good, life for life. If a man injures his neighbor, just as he has done, so it shall be done to him: fracture for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth; just as he has injured a man, so it shall be inflicted on him. Thus the one who kills an animal shall make it good, but the one who kills a man shall be put to death."* (24:17-21).

It is clear that the LORD places a different value on a man's life and the life of an animal. For killing a man, the penalty is death. For injuring a man, the penalty is to have done unto him what he did to the man. For killing an animal, a substitute animal was given to replace it.

2. The Standard

From the story, we come to the standard. Verse 22. *"There shall be one standard for you; it shall be for the stranger as well as the native, for I am the LORD your God."* (24:22).

The Nation of Israel consisted primarily of descendants of Jacob. However, others married into the Jewish families, and foreigners would come to live with the camp. This law for those who fight is the same for all living in the Nation of Israel regardless of the nationality of the blood in their veins. If a man kills a man, the death penalty is required. If a man kills an animal, a replacement animal is required. If a man injures a man, that same injury is to be inflicted on the man. The standard applies to everyone in the Nation of Israel and living with the Nation of Israel.

3. The Stoning

From the story to the standard, we now come to the stoning. Verse 23. *"Then Moses spoke to the sons of Israel, and they brought the one who had cursed outside the camp and stoned him with stones. Thus the sons of Israel did, just as the LORD had commanded Moses."* (24:23).

The son of the Egyptian man and the Israelite woman was stoned, not inside the camp, but outside the camp. No doubt, the carrying out of the death penalty on this son was a terrific example to all the people so that no one should ever curse the Name of the LORD.

We now turn to the law of the years of rest.