

Leviticus Chapter 26 Second Continued

Leviticus 26:29 "And ye shall eat the flesh of your sons, and the flesh of your daughters shall ye eat."

“Eat the flesh”: There will be widespread famine in the land and thus the people will even resort to cannibalism, which actually came to pass (compare 2 Kings 6:28-29; Jer. 19:9; Lam. 2:20; 4:10).

This would be an unusual thing for a Hebrew to do, because they thought of having children as one of the great blessings. Cannibalism would show the total degradation of their society. In the lesson just before this one, we find that God brought plagues upon His own people to try to get them to repent and follow His statutes. Sin has a way of getting worse and worse with every sin. The person gets callused to sin and ceases to feel guilty of sin.

Leviticus 26:30 "And I will destroy your high places, and cut down your images, and cast your carcasses upon the carcasses of your idols, and my soul shall abhor you."

“High places”: These were natural shrines for the worship of idols. Solomon disobeyed God by worshiping Him on the high places (1 Kings 3:4), and not long afterward, he was serving the gods of his foreign wives (1 Kings 11:1-9).

High places were the favorite places for the worship of false gods. The sun god was just one example of these false god worship practices. In many cases, they practiced human sacrifice. If they will not stop this type of false worship themselves, God will intervene and destroy these places Himself. He will, also, destroy the people involved in this type of worship. The root word that was translated abhor is “gaal” and means contempt or loathing. This means then that, if they will not change, God will detest them.

Verses 31-35: All this occurred in the terrible invasion of the northern kingdom of Israel in 722 B.C. by the Assyrians and the destruction of the southern kingdom of Judah in 605-586 B.C. by the Babylonians. In the case of Judah, it was a 70-year captivity to rest the Land for all the Sabbath years that had been violated (see 2 Chron. 36:17-21).

Leviticus 26:31 "And I will make your cities waste, and bring your sanctuaries unto desolation, and I will not smell the savor of your sweet odors."

By suffering the enemy to besiege them, enter into them, and plunder them, and destroy the houses in them. And reduce them to the most desolate condition, as Jerusalem, their metropolis, was more than once.

"And bring your sanctuaries unto desolation": The temple, so called from the several apartments in it, the court, the Holy Place, and the most holy. Or rather both sanctuaries or temples are

intended. The first built by Solomon, and destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar; the second rebuilt by Zerubbabel, and adorned by Herod, and reduced to ashes by Titus Vespasian. The Jews understand this of their synagogues, which were many both in Jerusalem, and in other parts of their country, but cannot be intended, since it follows.

"And I will not smell the savor of your sweet odors": Of their incense offered on the altar of incense; or the savor of their offerings, as the Targum of Jonathan. Of their burnt offerings, and the fat of their other offerings burnt on the altar of burnt offering. Signifying, that these would not be acceptable to him, or he smelled a savor of rest in them (see Gen. 8:21). Now these were only offered in the temple, not in synagogues.

Even if they do continue to worship the true God along with their evil practices, God will not accept their sweet smelling savor offering to Him. Even their cities shall be destroyed by God. Sodom and Gomorrah was a good example of such a city being destroyed by God.

Leviticus 26:32 "And I will bring the land into desolation: and your enemies which dwell therein shall be astonished at it."

The whole country of Judea, cities, towns, villages, fields, vineyards, etc. Through the ravage and plunder of the enemy; and they being driven out of it, and carried captive from it. And so, the land left untilled, and become barren and unfruitful.

"And your enemies which dwell therein": Having destroyed them, or cast them out, and sent them into other countries. And took possession of their land in their place.

"Shall be astonished at it": At the desolation of the land, that such a fruitful country, a land flowing with milk and honey, should be turned into barrenness, for the wickedness of its inhabitants, and shall be amazed at the judgments of God upon them and that.

Leviticus 26:33 "And I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you: and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste."

As with a fan (Jer. 15:7). So they were at the time of the Assyrian and Babylonish captivities. Some were carried to one place, and some to another, some fled to one place, and some to another. And they are at this day scattered among the several nations of the world.

"And will draw out a sword after you": Draw it out of its scabbard, and with it pursue after them, when fleeing or going whither they should not. As the remainder of the Jews in Judea sought to go to Egypt, contrary to the will of God (Jer. 42:16; see Lev. 26:25).

"And your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste": For want of men to till the one, and inhabit the other.

This very thing happened to the Jews when God scattered them all over the world. The Jews are beginning now to go back to their homeland. That was prophesied also in the Word.

Leviticus 26:34 "Then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths, as long as it lieth desolate, and ye [be] in your enemies' land; [even] then shall the land rest, and enjoy her sabbaths."

The sabbatical years, or seventh year sabbaths. When, according to the law in the preceding chapter, it was to rest from tillage (Lev. 25:2).

"As long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemies' land": So long it should lie uncultivated. At least in part, there not being a sufficient number left to till it in general, or as it should be. This was the case during the seventy years' captivity in Babylon.

"Even then shall the land rest, and enjoy her sabbaths": Or complete them, as Aben Ezra, which is a bitter sarcasm upon them for their neglect of observance of the law concerning the sabbatical years. But now the land should have its sabbaths of rest whether they would or not. And it seems as if it was on account of this sin, as well as others, that they were carried captive. And it is remarkable, if what Maimonides says is right, that it was at the going out or end of a sabbatical year, that the first temple was destroyed, and the Jews carried captive, and endured a seventy year captivity. Which some say was because they had neglected seventy sabbatical years (see 2 Chron. 36:21).

We have studied in the lessons prior to this one, how important it was to God for the land to rest. One of the excuses that the people used for not celebrating the Sabbaths of the land was because they did not know where to begin. I would say that is a flimsy excuse. God will rest the land and have His Sabbaths, even if He has to do it with the land being desolate.

Leviticus 26:35 "As long as it lieth desolate it shall rest; because it did not rest in your sabbaths, when ye dwelt upon it."

"Because it did not rest in your Sabbaths": By implication, because they had violated the Sabbath repeatedly. This violation became the basis of the later 70 year Babylonian captivity (compare 2 Chron. 36:20-21).

For each 50 years that they did not practice sabbath and jubilee, God would let it lie desolate 8 years.

Leviticus 26:36 "And upon them that are left [alive] of you I will send a faintness into their hearts in the lands of their enemies; and the sound of a shaken leaf shall chase them; and they shall flee, as fleeing from a sword; and they shall fall when none pursueth."

In the land of Judea, or rather scattered about among the nations. Suggesting that these would be comparatively few.

"I will send a faintness into their hearts in the lands of their enemies": Or "a softness"; so that they should be effeminate, pusillanimous, and cowardly, have nothing of a manly spirit and courage in them. But be mean spirited and faint hearted, as the Jews are noted to be at this day, as Bishop Patrick observes. Who also adds, "it being scarce ever heard, that a Jew listed himself for a soldier, or engaged in the defense of his country where he lives."

"And the sound of a shaken leaf shall chase them": Either the sound of a leaf that falls from the tree, as the Targum of Jonathan, or which the wind beats one against another, as Jarchi, which makes some little noise. Even this should terrify them, taking it to be the noise of some enemy near at hand, just ready to fall on them. Such poor faint hearted creatures should they be.

"And they shall flee as fleeing from the sword": As if there were an army of soldiers with their swords drawn pursuing them.

"And they shall fall when none pursueth": Fall upon the ground, and into a fit, and drop down as if dead, as if they had been really wounded with a sword and slain (see Prov. 28:1).

In most of the countries where the Israelite has fled to, they have been oppressed. They have been shunned and looked down on by many. In world war 2, about one sixth of the Jews alive were killed by orders from Hitler. Surely (verse 36 above), is describing just such a holocaust.

Leviticus 26:37 "And they shall fall one upon another, as it were before a sword, when none pursueth: and ye shall have no power to stand before your enemies."

In their hurry and confusion, everyone making all the haste he can to escape the imaginary danger. Or "a man upon his brother"; his friend, as Aben Ezra interprets it. Having no regard to relation and friendship, every one endeavoring to save himself. There is another sense which some Jewish writers give of this phrase, and is observed by Jarchi. Which is, that everyone shall fall for the iniquities of his brother. For all the Israelites say, they are sureties for one another; but the former sense is best.

"As it were before a sword, when none pursueth": As if a sword was drawn and brandished at them, just ready to be thrust in them. Filling them with the utmost dread and terror, and yet at the same time none in pursuit of them.

"And ye shall have no power to stand before your enemies": No heart to resist them. No strength nor spirit to oppose them, and defend themselves but be obliged to surrender their cities, themselves, their families and goods, into the hand of the enemy.

Leviticus 26:38 "And ye shall perish among the heathen, and the land of your enemies shall eat you up."

The 10 tribes of the northern kingdom of Israel never returned directly from captivity (see 2 Kings 17:7-23; see note on Acts 26:7).

Leviticus 26:39 "And they that are left of you shall pine away in their iniquity in your enemies' lands; and also in the iniquities of their fathers shall they pine away with them."

Such as were not taken off by any public calamity, as the sword or pestilence should gradually diminish and melt away like wax before the fire. And die in and for their iniquities in an enemy's country (see Ezek. 24:23).

"And also in the iniquities of their fathers shall they pine away with them": Or for the iniquities of their evil fathers, as the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan. They treading in their steps, and doing the same evil deeds. Whereby they filled up the measure of their fathers' sins, and brought upon them deserved punishment (Matt. 23:32).

All of this came about, because they did not follow God's statutes and commands. They were an idolatrous nation. God had warned them, but they did not heed the warning. I am concerned about God's people today. Many are following more and more the ways of the world, and forgetting God. God never changes. His ways are beyond our finding out. The people of the U.S. and the world must repent and come back to true worship of God, or we too, will face the wrath of God. We know that with these Hebrews they did die in a foreign land by the millions in Germany and other parts of the world. People of God, we better wake up. Read the Bible every day and find out what the will of God for your life is. After you have found out what His will is, do His will. With God you can repent, and he will hear. Time is running out, repent today and turn back to God.

Verses 40-46: The promise of punishment is given as "discipline" and its goal is restoration. Judgment does not prove that God has rejected His people. Rather He punishes them because they are His own (Amos 3:2). Thus, "if they shall confess their iniquity ...if then their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity", God promises to "remember my covenant with Jacob ... Isaac ... and ... Abraham". What this remembering will mean in practice is not spelled out here, but (Deuteronomy chapter 30), explains that it will mean restoration to the Land of Promise and prosperity. The land and the covenant were all a vital part of the covenant (in Exodus 6:8). "And I will bring you in unto the land, concerning the which I did swear to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and I will give it you for a heritage" (a possession or inheritance).

Verses 40-42: "They shall confess ... then will I remember my covenant": God's covenant was rooted in the relationship He had initiated with His people. True repentance would be honored by Him.

Even in these punishments, the Lord who is rich in mercy promised to restore the nation if its people would "confess their iniquity". God always responds to true repentance with forgiveness. He would also save a remnant of His chosen people.

Leviticus 26:40 "If they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, with their trespass which they trespassed against me, and that also they have walked contrary unto me;"

The Targum of Jonathan adds, "in the time of their distress;" which might serve to bring their sins to remembrance, and them to a confession of them. Not only of their own sins, but of their fathers' also. Acknowledging thereby that they had been guilty of sinning against God for a long course of years past. And that God had been long suffering towards them, and bore much with them before he brought his judgments on them, which were just, and what they righteously

deserved. And such a confession Daniel made (Dan. 9:4). And the words may as well be rendered absolute as conditional, or better. And as a prediction of what would be done by them when in captivity and distress, "and they shall confess their iniquity". With shame and sorrow, with repentance for it, and abhorrence of it. Or otherwise, if the confession was only verbal and hypocritical, it would not be acceptable.

"With their trespass which they trespassed against me": Along with their own iniquities, and those of their fathers, they should confess. Their trespass against the Lord would be acknowledged by them; which seems to design some particular and grievous sin committed by them. By which perhaps is meant their idolatry, a capital sin, directly against God. And what those people were prone unto. "And that also they have walked contrary unto me". To his mind and will, to his laws, commands, statutes, and ordinances, disregarding him and them, as if enemies to him. Or "by chance" (see notes on Lev. 26:21).

Leviticus 26:41 "And [that] I also have walked contrary unto them, and have brought them into the land of their enemies; if then their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity:"

Showed no regard unto them, as if he took no care of them. Or in a providential way concerned himself for them, but let what would befall them. Yea, came out in the way of his judgments against them, as if he was an enemy to them (see notes on Lev. 26:24).

"And have brought them into the land of their enemies": Should acknowledge the hand of God in it, that he himself brought them out of their own country into an enemy's land, as Assyria, Babylon, and other nations. And that this was not the chance of war, or owing to the superior power or skill of their enemies. But to the just judgment of God upon them for their sins, who on that account delivered them up into the hands of their enemies.

"If then their uncircumcised heart be humbled": Their foolish proud heart, as the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan. It signifies a sinful, wicked, hard, and impenitent heart, brought to a sense of sin, to repentance and humiliation for it. Jarchi interprets it, "or if their uncircumcised heart", etc. (as in Exodus 2:23). And observes another sense of the word, "perhaps their uncircumcised heart", etc. Not only would in words confess their sins, but be truly humbled at heart for them.

"And they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity": Take it well at the hand of God. Bear it patiently without murmuring, or thinking themselves hardly dealt by, but freely owning it is less than their iniquities deserve. Or complete and finish the punishment of their sins, as Aben Ezra, which upon their humiliation should be put an end to, and cease. Jarchi takes the word in the sense of atonement and pacification, as if by their chastisement their sins were expiated, and God was pacified toward them. But rather it denotes the free and full pardon of their sins, manifested to them upon their repentance and humiliation for sin.

Leviticus 26:42 "Then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land."

“Jacob ... Isaac ... Abraham”: The reverse order is a look in retrospect as opposed to the actual historical sequence.

God wants to forgive and restore His people to right standing with Him. He sent His precious Son Jesus Christ to save them and us. Notice in the verse above, that He mentions Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This in itself, shows that as long as they were following in His ways, the covenant was in effect. We Christians are part of the Abrahamic covenant with God. We are heirs with him of the covenant.

Galatians 3:29 "And if ye [be] Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

Our covenant relationship is made perfect in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Leviticus 26:43 "The land also shall be left of them, and shall enjoy her sabbaths, while she lieth desolate without them: and they shall accept of the punishment of their iniquity: because, even because they despised my judgments, and because their soul abhorred my statutes."

This seems to refer to a second time, when this should be the case of the land of Judea again, as it was when subdued by the Romans. And the Jews were carried captive from it, and so it was left by them, as it has been ever since.

"And shall enjoy her sabbaths, while lieth desolate without them": Shall be as in the sabbatical years, uncultivated, neither ploughed nor sown, nor reaped. And thus the land of Canaan, though once so very fruitful, is now desolate and barren, being without its former inhabitants. And so it is like to be until it is restored to them again.

"And they shall accept of the punishment of their iniquity": That is, when made sensible of their sins, and particularly of their iniquity of rejecting the Messiah. They will not think it hard that they have been punished in so severe a manner, but own the righteous hand of God in it, and be humble under it. And confessing their sins with true sorrow and repentance for them, looking at him whom they have pierced, and mourn, shall have the free and full remission of their sins applied unto them.

"Because, even, because they despised my judgments, and because their soul abhorred my statutes": Despised and abhorred Christ, his doctrines and ordinances. Which was the reason of their being carried captive out of their land, when it was forsaken by them, and lay desolate as to this day. Especially with respect to any benefit of it enjoyed by them. And which, when they are sensible of, will be a reason of their accepting the punishment of their iniquity so readily. And not murmur at the hand of God upon them, or reflect on his dealings with them. But freely and fully confess their sins, that he may be justified in all that he has done.

Leviticus 26:44 "And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them: for I [am] the LORD their God."

I will have on them, in or through my Word, as the Targum of Jonathan. Notwithstanding their many and great sins and transgressions, and the sad and miserable condition they were brought into by them. The Lord would have mercy on them and be gracious to them, through Christ and for his sake, and convert and save them (see Rom. 11:26). The Jews, as Fagius tells us, wonderfully delight themselves with this passage, and read it with the greatest joy and pleasure, and with an elevated voice. Concluding from hence that they shall certainly return to their own land. And because the first word in this verse is in sound the same as the Germans use for an "ape". They call this paragraph "the golden ape", and say, when this shall be fulfilled the golden age will take place with them. A very learned man has written a dissertation upon it. When;

"They shall be in the land of their enemies": Of the Romans and other nations, among whom they have been disposed ever since the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus.

"I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly": For though they have been cast away by the Lord out of their land, and from being his people, and enjoying either the civil or religious privileges they formerly did. And though they have been cast off with abhorrence, and had in great detestation by him, for their sin of rejecting the Messiah, as appears by the punishment inflicted on them. Yet not so as to make an utter end of them as a body of people. For, notwithstanding their dispersion everywhere, and their long captivity, they remain a distinct people from all others, which seems to forebode something favorable to them.

"And to break my covenant with them": Which he will not do, even his promise of the future call and conversion of them, and of their return to their own land.

"For I am the Lord their God": Their covenant God, and a covenant keeping God (Rom. 11:27).

God does not have to explain to you and me why He forgives them and restores them. He is God.

Jeremiah 31:34 "And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."

We see similar Scriptures in Hebrews.

Hebrews 8:10-12 "For this [is] the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:" "And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest." "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."

Leviticus 26:45 "But I will for their sakes remember the covenant of their ancestors, whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the heathen, that I might be their God: I [am] the LORD."

Or rather, "remember to them". To their good and benefit, for their profit and advantage, not for their desert and merit or for any worth or worthiness in them. This covenant respects not the covenant made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (as in Lev. 26:42); but with their fathers. Either at Sinai, or rather in the plains of Moab (Deut. 29:1). For it follows:

"Whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the Heathen, that I might be their God": Whom he brought out of great bondage and distress in Egypt, with a high hand and outstretched arm, and in the sight of the Egyptians. Who were not able to oppose it, yea, because of their plagues, were urgent for it. And in the sight of all the nations round about, who heard of the wonderful power of God in the deliverance of his people. And this he did that he might appear to be their covenant God, who had taken them into covenant with him, and had taken them under his care and protection". And would be still their King and their God. And who also, in like manner, it may be here suggested, would deliver the people of the Jews out of their present exiled and captive state and condition in the sight of the whole world. And declare himself their covenant God and Father.

"I am the Lord": Whose will is sovereign; whose power is uncontrollable. Who is a covenant keeping God, faithful to his promises, and able to perform them.

This is a beautiful example of the grace of God toward His people. The last few verses have been speaking prophetically of the grace through Jesus Christ that fulfills the law for the people. This grace is for physical Israel (Hebrews), and spiritual Israel (all believers in Christ). Praise God! What we could not do in our weakness, Jesus did for us on the cross. All He ever wanted to be, was their God.

Leviticus 26:46 "These [are] the statutes and judgments and laws, which the LORD made between him and the children of Israel in mount Sinai by the hand of Moses."

Much of the content of Leviticus came during Moses' two "forty day and night" visits to Sinai (compare Exodus 24:16 – 32:6; 34:2-28; Lev. 7:37-38; 25:1; 27:34).

This is a summation to let them and us know where these laws came from, who was ordained to bring them, and where they were given.

Leviticus Chapter 26 Second Continued Questions

1. Why would it be such an unusual thing for a Hebrew to practice cannibalism?
2. Why would God destroy their high places?
3. What does the word abhor mean?
4. What was one of the terrible practices of worship they did in the high places?
5. What would God do to their cities?

6. Where did God say He would scatter them to?
7. When would the land enjoy its sabbath of rest?
8. For each 50 years that they had not practiced Sabbath, how many years would it lie desolate?
9. In what war was nearly 1/6 of all the Jews killed?
10. What ruler ordered their death?
11. Why did all of these terrible things happen to these Hebrews?
12. Find out what the _____ is in your life.
13. What must these Israelites do to get back into good standing with God?
14. What covenant will God remember and forgive them?
15. Where do we find the Scripture that says we Christians are part of the covenant that God made with Abraham?
16. What does Jeremiah 31:34 say that God will do for them?
17. What two places will God put His laws for them?
18. He will be to them a _____.
19. They will be to Him a _____.
20. Their sins and iniquities will I remember _____.
21. Who did God give these laws and statutes to?
22. Where were these laws and statutes given?