

Sermon #70 — *Discovering Christ in Leviticus*

Title:        **A BLESSING AND A CURSE**

Text:        Leviticus 26:1-46

Subject:     *God's Blessing and God's Curse*

Date:        Sunday Evening — November 3, 2019

Reading:    *Mark Medley and David Burge*  
                  *Joel 2:1-32*

Introduction:

I stand before you this day, as Moses stood before Israel, as a man with a message from God for your soul.

(Deuteronomy 11:26-28) “Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse; (27) A blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you this day: (28) And a curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day.”

*“I set before you this day a blessing and a curse.”* — **A BLESSING AND A CURSE** — That is my subject. My text is the 26<sup>th</sup> chapter of Leviticus. — **A BLESSING AND A CURSE** (Leviticus 26:1-46).

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*Leviticus 26:1-46*

Turn with me to Leviticus 26 and hear the Word of the Lord, all of you, believer and unbeliever. This is God's Word to me and to you. It is a word about obedience and disobedience, about great promises of grace and great threats of wrath.

**Proposition:** This 26<sup>th</sup> chapter of Leviticus is God's own commentary on his holy law. — Here, the Lord God himself tells us the doctrine of all the Levitical Law.

**Divisions:** There are four things in these 46 verses to which I want to direct our hearts.

1. (vv. 1-2) — A Fence of Protection
2. (vv. 3-13) — Promises of Bounteous Grace
3. (vv. 14-39) — Threats of Indescribable Wrath
4. (vv. 40-46) — A Marvelous Call to Repentance

**A FENCE OF PROTECTION**

1<sup>st</sup> — In verses 1-2 the Lord God graciously sets up a fence of protection for our souls, a fence for which

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we can never be sufficiently and thankful. — **The fence he has cast around our souls is the blessed fence of public worship.**

- Our Greatest Earthly Blessing
- Our Greatest Privilege
- Our Most Important Aspect of Life

**The Lord God demands that we worship him, and worship him alone, because he alone is God.**

(Leviticus 26:1) “Ye shall make you no idols nor graven image, neither rear you up a standing image, neither shall ye set up *any* image of stone in your land, to bow down unto it: for I *am* the LORD your God.”

Our God demands our whole heart, our entire soul, our undivided devotion. He will have no rival. Salvation is neither more nor less than knowing and owning the Lord God our Savior as our God. It is bowing to and worshipping him as he is revealed in

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Christ, as “*as a just God and a Savior,*” confessing Christ as Lord.

(Romans 10:1-4) “Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. (2) For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. (3) For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. (4) For Christ *is* the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth.”

(Romans 10:9-13) “If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. (10) For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. (11) For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. (12) For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for

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the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. (13) For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

**If we would worship this holy Lord God, we must worship him in the way he requires.**

- In Spirit and In Truth (John 4:23; Philippians 3:3)
- No Idols
- No Images
- No Icons
- No Relics
- No Crosses
- No Rival to Him — Family — Possession — Ambition!

**In verse 2, the Lord tells us what this worship is.**

(Leviticus 26:2) “Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I *am* the LORD.”

**SABBATH KEEPING**

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This Old Testament requirement of sabbath keeping was a portrayal of faith in Christ. The only way a sinner can know and worship God is by this blessed rest of faith in Christ, by ceasing from his own works and trusting the finished work of Christ, the sinner's Substitute (Matthew 11:28-30; Hebrews 4:9-11). Come to Christ, and rest!

- We must not keep a legal sabbath of any kind (Colossians 2:16-23)
- Our Sabbath is Christ. We rest in him.

**PUBLIC WORSHIP**

*“Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I am the LORD.”* — This commandment to reverence his sanctuary is a great commandment of mercy. The sanctuary in the Old Testament was the place of worship, instruction, and pronounced blessing, the place where God met with men and men met with God, the place of God's dwelling, the house of God. **All spiritual declension, all spiritual decay**

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**begins with the neglect of public worship.** This is the fence the Lord has put around us to keep us from idolatry, to keep us believing, worshipping, and loving him (Hebrews 10:22-27).

(Hebrews 10:22-27) “Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. (23) Let us hold fast the profession of *our* faith without wavering; (for he *is* faithful that promised;) (24) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: (25) Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some *is*; but exhorting *one another*: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching. (26) For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, (27) But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.”

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**This is exactly what John and Jude are referring to in 1 John 5:21 and Jude 21.**

(1 John 5:21) “Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.”

(Jude 1:21) “Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.”

How I give thanks to God for establishing this blessed ordinance of public worship for the honor of his name and the benefit of our souls! — *“Thus will I magnify myself, and sanctify myself; and I will be known in the eyes of many nations, and they shall know that I am the LORD”* (Ezekiel 38:23).

**BLESSING OR CURSE**

In verses 3-13 the Lord God promises bounteous blessings of grace upon all who obey his commandments and threatens indescribable wrath upon all who disobey. Without question, our



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obedience or our disobedience to the revealed will of God are matters of indescribable importance. Let no one imagine otherwise. If we are disobedient to that which the Lord God has revealed in his Word, we bring upon ourselves great trouble. He will manifest his disapproval in chastisement. If we are obedient, we walk in the path of blessing.

- Moses in the Inn
- David and Uriah

But this passage is not, I repeat, is not teaching conditional grace. **Leviticus 26 is God's explanation of his law. He is here declaring how he always deals with sinners in absolute, strict, unbending justice.** The text clearly reaches far beyond temporal, earthly blessedness and temporal, earthly wrath.

**PROMISES OF BOUNTEOUS GRACE**

2<sup>nd</sup> — In verses 3-13, the Lord God promises bounteous, indescribably bounteous grace to all who obey his commandments. As we read these verses,

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note that **the blessings here promised are seven**, the number of perfection and completion, the number of grace and the number of perfection and completion. These are “*the precious things of heaven*” (Deuteronomy 33:13-14) promised to all the sons of Joseph. Understand them spiritually, as referring to gospel blessedness, and you understand them correctly.

(Leviticus 26:3-13) “If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them; (4) Then (1.) **LAND BLESSINGS** — I will give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit.

Since our Savior ascended his throne, having obtained eternal redemption for us, by the sweet, irresistible grace and power of his Spirit, there has been and continues to be a constant ingathering of his redeemed from the four corners of the earth.

(5) (2.) **SATISFACTION AND SAFETY** —

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And your threshing shall reach unto the vintage, and the vintage shall reach unto the sowing time: and ye shall eat your bread to the full, and dwell in your land safely. (6) (3.) **PEACE** — And I will give peace in the land, and ye shall lie down, and none shall make *you* afraid: and I will rid evil beasts out of the land, neither shall the sword go through your land.

Where sin abounded grace much more abounds! And God not only promises plenteous redemption and plenteous grace, he promises peace with it!

(7) And (4.) **TRIUMPH** — ye shall chase your enemies, and they shall fall before you by the sword. (8) And five of you shall chase an hundred, and an hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight: and your enemies shall fall before you by the sword.

- More than conquerors!
- “*Greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world!*”

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- *“No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is of me, saith the LORD.” (Isaiah 54:17)*

(9) **(5.) DIVINE FAVOR** — For I will have respect unto you, and make you fruitful, and multiply you, and establish my covenant with you. (10) **(6.) BLESSINGS UPON THE OLD AND THE NEW** — And ye shall eat old store, and bring forth the old because of the new. (11) **(7.) DIVINE PRESENCE** — And I will set my tabernacle among you: and my soul shall not abhor you. (12) And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people. (13) *I am the LORD your God, which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, that ye should not be their bondmen; and I have broken the bands of your yoke, and made you go upright.”*

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That is God's promise of salvation to his covenant people. — "*Remember me, O LORD, with the favour that thou bearest unto thy people: O visit me with thy salvation!*" (Psalm 106:4)

**What is it that all the commandments of God require?** All the law requires that we love God with all our hearts and our neighbors (our most implacable enemies — Remember the Good Samaritan.) as ourselves. There is only one way that we can keep God's commandments; and he tells us exactly what that way is (1 John 3:23; Romans 3:31; 10:4).

(1 John 3:23) "And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment."

(Romans 3:31) "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law."

(Romans 10:4) "For Christ *is* the end of the law

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for righteousness to everyone that believeth.”

**ETERNAL BLESSINGS**

These blessings of grace, promised to all who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, speak of the perfect, full inheritance of grace in salvation, the blessedness of heaven’s eternal glory, the blessedness of eternal life (Ephesians 1:3). They speak of that grace and glory God promises to give his people.

**There is a day coming when we shall enjoy the rain of heaven, the former and the latter rain, perfectly** (James 1:17).

(James 1:17) “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.”

**In that day, there will be no barrenness in the earth. — The earth shall yield her fruit to the full satisfaction of our souls** (Amos 9:13).

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(Amos 9:13) “Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt.”

In that day when our God makes all things new, there shall be nothing to cause us pain or tear, sorrow or sighing. The former things shall be passed away forever, never to rise again!

- No Foes!
- No Strife (Civil or Domestic)!
- No Robbers!
- No Fear!
- No Evil Beasts!
- No Sword!
- Uninterrupted Divine Favor!
- Uninterrupted Divine Presence!

(Zechariah 12:8) “In that day shall the LORD defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that

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is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David *shall be* as God, as the angel of the LORD before them.”

(Revelation 20:6) “Blessed and holy *is* he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.”

(Revelation 21:3-5) “And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, *and be* their God. (4) And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. (5) And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.”



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Back here in Leviticus 26, there is a statement in verse 12 that almost seems out of place. As the Lord comes to the end of these promises, he says, “**My soul shall not abhor you.**” What is the meaning of that statement? It is just this. — The Lord would have us remember, and we shall forever remember it, that all the blessedness that we shall enjoy forever in heaven is a matter of free grace, established to us and given to us by covenant love. We deserve his wrath; but he has given us his grace for Christ’s sake, because he loved us with an everlasting love.

(Psalms 47:1-9) “O clap your hands, all ye people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph. (2) For the LORD most high *is* terrible; *he is* a great King over all the earth. (3) He shall subdue the people under us, and the nations under our feet. (4) He shall choose our inheritance for us, the excellency of Jacob whom he loved. Selah. (5) God is gone up with a shout, the LORD with the sound of a trumpet. (6) Sing praises to God, sing praises: sing praises unto our King, sing praises. (7) For God *is* the King of

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all the earth: sing ye praises with understanding. (8) God reigneth over the heathen: God sitteth upon the throne of his holiness. (9) The princes of the people are gathered together, *even* the people of the God of Abraham: for the shields of the earth *belong* unto God: he is greatly exalted.”

**THREATS OF INDESCRIBABLE WRATH**

3<sup>rd</sup> — **But some of you will not all enjoy such blessedness.** These infinite bounties of everlasting mercy are reserved for sinners who obey God, who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. **To you who believe not the Lord God promises the all the horrid terror of his indescribable wrath and justice** (vv. 14-39).

(Leviticus 26:14-17) “But if ye will not hearken unto me, and will not do all these commandments; (15) And if ye shall despise my statutes, or if your soul abhor my judgments, so that ye will not do all my commandments, *but* that ye break my covenant: (16) I also will do

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this unto you; I will even appoint over you terror, consumption, and the burning ague, that shall consume the eyes, and cause sorrow of heart: and ye shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it. (17) And I will set my face against you, and ye shall be slain before your enemies: they that hate you shall reign over you; and ye shall flee when none pursueth you.”

I try to pray for you, all of you. Some of you are yet without Christ, without faith, without God, without hope. And I never think of you without keen awareness of that fact. Without question, your rebellion and unbelief have brought misery of heart and soul to you already. Your life is a wreck. You are constantly terrified. But your present misery and terror are only forerunners of hell’s everlasting woe! That is what these verses describe. **Look at verse 18, and learn this.** — **In hell you shall reap exactly what you have sown. You shall eat the fruit of your own way and be filled with your own devices.**

(Leviticus 26:18) “And if ye will not yet for all

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this hearken unto me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins.”

Notice that the Lord promises seven more plagues to all who despise his Word. In verse 21 he promises seven more. In verse 24 he promises seven more. In verse 28 he promises seven more. Yet, if you count them, there is not a single time when the number seven is succeeded by seven plagues. There are six, then four, then ten, but never seven. Why? These plagues are symbolic of the complete, perfect justice of God in punishing men according to their deserts. In other words, the greater the light you despise, the greater shall be your condemnation.

**Would you like to have some idea of what awaits you?** This is what God says he will do to you.

- (v. 16) — *“I will appoint over you terror”* (2 Corinthians 5:10-11)

(2 Corinthians 5:10-11) “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that everyone

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may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad. (11) Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.”

- Consumption — Soul Consumption!
- Burning Ague — Burning Fever that Shall Consume Your Eyes, that shall Consume Your Hope!
- Cause Sorrow of Heart!
- (V. 17) — “*Set my face against you*”
- Slain before your enemies!
- Those who hate you shall reign over you!
- (vv. 19-20) — All that you have sought, labored for, and spent your life to gain will prove vanity and vexation!
- (vv. 21-39) — Wild Beasts — Famine in Your Soul — Pestilence in Your Body — Unsatisfied Lusts — Divine Fury — Mockery By Your Idols (v. 30).

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(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.”

- The Lord God will rid the earth of you and of all evil and cause all his creation to rest. — “*Then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths*” (vv. 34-36).
- You shall fall upon, trample upon, and devour one another.
- You shall perish among the heathen.
- Now, look at verse 29. Maybe, you will begin to see what awaits you. — **Behold the wrath of the Lamb!**

(Leviticus 26:29) “And ye shall eat the flesh of your sons, and the flesh of your daughters shall ye eat.”

Such is the death you have chosen. Such is the wrath you deserve. Such is the end to which you run. But this does not have to be your end! In verses 40-46 the Lord God himself, the God whose honor you trample

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under your feet, whose character you attempt to rape, whose very being you despise opens to you a door of hope!

**A MARVELOUS CALL TO REPENTANCE**

4<sup>th</sup> — **Here the Lord God himself calls hell bent, hell deserving sinners to repentance, and promises eternal salvation to all who turn to him, confessing their sin, trusting his Son.**

(Leviticus 26:40-46) “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; (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**: (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

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remember the land. (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.** (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.**

There is yet a remnant according to the election of grace who must and shall be saved!

“Of this we may be very confident, that wherever a soul is made a partaker of the riches of his grace, most heartily and fully will that soul subscribe to the rights of God’s justice. This is accepting the punishment of our iniquity.” — *Robert Hawker*

(45) But I will for their sakes remember the



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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. (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.”

(Micah 7:18-20) “Who *is* a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? He retaineth not his anger forever, because he delighteth *in* mercy. (19) He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea. (20) Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, *and* the mercy to Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old.”

**This is the message of God in the commandments of the law he gave by the hand of Moses a Sinai.**

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(John 3:36) “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.”

(Acts 16:31) “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.”

(1 John 1:9) “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

Amen!