

GOD is With Those Who Honor HIM

Focal Verses • Leviticus 26:1–6, 11–13

Aim For Change

By the end of the lesson, we will: **KNOW** the blessings God offers to those who honor Him, **FEEL** confident that God is with us to help us follow His Law, and **CONSIDER** how Christians are supposed to interact with Jewish laws.

In Focus

Felicia struggled to get her children to follow the rules in their home when they were little. It had become even more difficult since her husband, Marcus, was promoted to a position that required him to be on the road frequently. When Marcus returned home later that week, the couple sat down to discuss the importance of their children showing respect for their belongings and their home. After all, they both worked hard to provide a nurturing environment for their family. They decided to establish a reward system that would allow the children to earn benefits and privileges for following house rules. “We also need to make sure they understand that there are consequences for not obeying the rules,” Marcus said.

“I know that’s true,” Felicia replied. “But it’s just so hard to keep everything under control these days.”

Marcus acknowledged that he had been away too much to support Felicia effectively. “Hopefully, I can talk to my boss at my performance review soon,” he said, “I can ask not to travel as much. That way, we can both ensure that our system of rewards and consequences benefits our children.”

What are some reasons we struggle to obey God? How can we improve in areas where we struggle to follow His guidance?

KJV

Leviticus 26:1–6, 11–13

- 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.
- 2 Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I am the LORD.
- 3 If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them;
- 4 Then 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.
- 5 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 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.
- 11 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.

NLT

Leviticus 26:1–6, 11–13

- 1 “Do not make idols or set up carved images, or sacred pillars, or sculptured stones in your land so you may worship them. I am the LORD your God.
- 2 You must keep my Sabbath days of rest and show reverence for my sanctuary. I am the LORD.

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3 If you follow my decrees and are careful to obey my commands, 4 I will send you the seasonal rains. The land will then yield its crops, and the trees of the field will produce their fruit.

5 Your threshing season will overlap with the grape harvest, and your grape harvest will overlap with the season of planting grain. You will eat your fill and live securely in your own land.

6 I will give you peace in the land, and you will be able to sleep with no cause for fear. I will rid the land of wild animals and keep your enemies out of your land.

11 I will live among you, and I will not despise you. 12 I will walk among you; I will be your God, and you will be my people.

13 I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt so you would no longer be their slaves. I broke the yoke of slavery from your neck so you can walk with your heads held high.”

The People, Places, and Times

The Tent of Meeting. This tent is different from the Tabernacle, which was a sacred tent that served as a portable sanctuary where God met His people. Before God gave the Israelites instructions on how to build the Tabernacle, Moses would meet with God individually in the Tent of Meeting. Unlike the future Tabernacle, the Tent of Meeting was outside the Israelite camp. All the Israelites would watch as Moses went to the tent and God’s pillar of cloud descended upon its entrance (Exodus 33:7-11).

The Ark of the Testimony, also called the Ark of the Covenant, symbolizes God’s presence among the Israelites. During times of war, the Israelites would carry the Ark ahead of their army, signifying that God was with them and would fight on their behalf. God instructed Moses to place several important items inside the Ark, including the tablets of the Ten Commandments, Aaron’s budding rod, and a jar of manna. Each of these items served as a reminder of the Israelites’ covenant relationship with God.

Background

Leviticus 17–26 contain laws regarding right living, also referred to as holy conduct. This section of Leviticus is known as the Holiness Code; it serves as a table of laws for those in covenant with God. The end of the code is similar to other ancient covenants during the time between kings and their subjects, which had a list of blessings and curses for keeping or breaking the covenant. This established the Lord as the true king of Israel and their rewards for following Him. Unfortunately, Israel eventually fell into a cycle of rebellion and disobedience, which led to punishment from God.

At-A-Glance

1. Rewards for Obedience (Leviticus 26:1–6)
2. Assurance of God’s Presence (vv. 11–13)

In Depth

1. Rewards for Obedience (Leviticus 26:1–6)

Leviticus 26 outlines blessings for loyalty to God and curses for rejecting Him. This chapter emphasizes that human beings can influence their own fate through their obedience or disobedience to God. Some of the blessings mentioned include God’s enduring presence with His people, the fulfillment of the promises made to Abraham, and an abundance of crops, as well as deliverance in times of war. Each blessing was vital for a prosperous life. For instance, a fruitful harvest meant that families would have enough food to sustain themselves, which was essential for life, longevity, and stability. Without sufficient food production, Israel would become dependent on other nations for sustenance. The assurance of protection during war indicated that the Israelites could live peacefully, knowing God was on their side. Moreover, Israel was to have a

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secure place to dwell. Other nations would undoubtedly look upon Israel and seek ways to take what God had provided.

2. Assurance of God's Presence (vv. 11-13)

Throughout Israel's history, peace ruled whenever they remained obedient to Yahweh and refrained from worshiping other gods. However, when they allowed themselves to be influenced by their neighbors, Israel often faced military aggression and lost in battle. Hence, it was in Israel's best interest to obey God.

God reminds the children of Israel that He is their deliverer, the one who freed them from slavery in Egypt. The same God who had freed them was able to sustain them in the Promised Land if they were faithful to Him. Moreover, the Lord promises to one day walk among His people as He did in the Garden of Eden. Believers can see the fulfillment of this promise through Jesus Christ as God who dwelt among us and will come again. Let us remember that just as God has saved us, He is also able to provide for us if we faithfully follow Him.

Search The Scriptures

1. What did God command the people to do regarding the Sabbath and the sanctuary? (Leviticus 26:2)
2. What did the people have to do to be fruitful in the land (vv. 3-4)?
3. How does God fulfill His promise to be with His people (vv. 11-12)?

Discuss The Meaning

1. Do God's promises regarding blessings for obedience still apply today? Does God automatically punish people for disobeying His laws in the present time?
2. Everyone who has been obedient and faithful to the Lord faces challenges. How can we cope with these difficulties in light of God's promises?

Liberating Lesson

God's laws provide guidance for living a healthy and fulfilling life. Additionally, they help individuals maintain a proper reverence in their relationship with God and with those called to serve God. They are not just a set of rules intended to enforce submission. The laws reveal who God is and distinguish the Israelites from other nations. While some of these laws may seem irrelevant today because advances in medicine and technology may have rendered certain restrictions unnecessary, it is the only way the Israelites would have known if they were obedient or disobedient to God. How can we remain faithful to God without falling into legalism or becoming judgmental toward believers and non-believers?

Application For Activation

While some of the laws in Leviticus 17-26 may not be directly relevant today due to the work of Jesus Christ on the Cross, these laws still emphasize the importance of obedience to God and just treatment of one another. Believers should not dismiss the laws of the Old Testament; instead, we should view them as reminders to prioritize God and live in a way that honors Him. Leviticus clearly emphasizes the importance of God's people to be holy, that is set apart from the rest of the world by their actions.

More Light On The Text

Leviticus 26:1-6, 11-13

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. 2 Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I am the LORD.

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Leviticus 26 records the Lord affirming the second and fourth commandment of the Ten Commandments. The people are told to both avoid idols and instructed to keep the Sabbath. (Exodus 20:8). The Sabbath is a day of rest from one's daily responsibilities to worship and honor God. The Sabbath signifies the Israelites' covenant relationship with God, and keeping this law serves here as a condition to receiving the blessings of the Lord in the land. All the Israelites, man, woman, or child, rich or poor, were commanded to observe the Sabbath.

3 If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them; 4 Then 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. 5 And your threshing shall reach unto the vintage, and the vintage shall reach unto the sowingtime: and ye shall eat your bread to the full, and dwell in your land safely. 6 And I will give peace in the land, and ye shall lie down, and none shall make you afraid.

Verses 4–6 detail the blessings God will give the Israelites if they keep the commandments. The first blessing was that of the rain, which is the lifeline of the people, since their main occupation was farming. Unlike the Nile River in Egypt, there was no major river in Canaan that supplied much of the water for irrigation; therefore, rain was essential for agricultural purposes. Without rain, the land of Canaan would be hard to cultivate (1 Kings 17:1, 7). The Lord not only promises the rain, but promises to send it at the proper time—“in its season.” The downfall of rain can indicate a blessing from God. The granting of rain at the proper time will allow the land to produce to its capacity, and there will be an abundant harvest.

If Israel would obey the Lord's commands, the grain would yield to its maximum and fruit trees would yield their fruit. The harvest would be so plentiful that the threshing would run into the period of the vintage, the clipping of the grape, and the vintage of the grape would continue until the next sowing season. The laborer would be busy year-round, and there would be enough food throughout the year.

Verses 7-10 give further details of God's promises of protection and prosperity. He assures them of complete victory against any invaders to their land.

11 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.

“I will set my tabernacle among you,” means the Lord would make a dwelling place in their midst, and He would live among the people. The Lord would walk among them just as in the Garden of Eden, and restore the relationship that was broken in the Garden. The Lord would have no reason to “abhor” (Heb. *ga'al*, *gaw-AL*), which means to hate or reject. To assure them of this promise, and that He is the one speaking to them, the Lord identifies Himself once more, “I am the LORD your God,” the very one who performed those remarkable things during your bondage in Egypt and brought them out of Egypt and set them free so that they should no longer be slaves.

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Daily Bible Readings

MONDAY

Genesis 43–45

Psalm 12

TUESDAY

Genesis 46–47

Psalm 13

WEDNESDAY

Genesis 48–50

Psalm 14

THURSDAY

Exodus 1–3

Psalm 15

FRIDAY

Exodus 4–6

Psalm 16

SATURDAY

Exodus 7–9

Psalm 17:1-5

SUNDAY

Exodus 10–12

Psalm 17:6-15