



Thru the Bible in 2012

The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the Word of our God endures forever. Isaiah 40:8

Ladies for Jesus Tuesday Bible Study Ponderings

Readings for February 17, 2012 – February 19, 2012

Emailed: Sunday, February 19, 2012

For our ponderings, consider the questions listed below in regards to what we have read during the days of Friday, February 17th – Sunday, February 19th.

- **(Leviticus 4:1)** Have you ever done something wrong without realizing it until later? Although your sin was unintentional, it was still sin. God's commands served to make the Israelites aware of their sins (even the unintentional ones) so they could be forgiven for them, and to keep the people from repeating those sins. As we continue to read God's Word, especially these laws, keep in mind that God is nurturing our hearts by teaching and guiding us. How are you letting His Word help you to become more aware of sin in your life?
- **(Leviticus 5:4)** Have you ever sworn to do or not do something and then realized how foolish your promise was? God's people are called to keep their word, even if they make promises that are tough to keep. Jesus warned us against swearing – referring to it as making a vow or oath – when He said, “Just say a simple, ‘Yes, I will,’ or ‘No, I won’t.’ Anything beyond this is from the evil one.” (Matthew 5:37). Our word should be enough. If we feel the need to strengthen it with an oath, we need to examine our sincerity. The only promises we ought not to keep are promises that lead to sin. In what ways have you rationalized not keeping a promise that you have made? Was it for godly reasons or was it because you just didn't “feel” liking keeping it? A wise and self-controlled person avoids making rash promises.
- **(Leviticus 5:5)** The entire system of sacrifices could not help a sinner unless he brought his offering with an attitude of repentance and a willingness to confess sin. Today, because of Christ's death on the cross, we do not have to sacrifice animals. It is still vital to confess sin because genuine confession shows realization of sin; awareness of God's holiness, humility before God; and willingness to turn from this sin (Psalm 51:16, 17). Even Jesus' death will be of little value to us if we do not repent and follow Him. Do you have unconfessed sin in your life? It is impossible to repent if we don't first confess our sins. Confess your sins to God and then repent from your ways by allowing Him to show you *how* to avoid such sin again and *strengthen* you to accomplish it.
- **(Leviticus 5:14-19)** The guilt offering was a way of taking care of sin committed unintentionally. It was for those who sinned in some way against “sacred property” – the Tabernacle or the priesthood – as well as for those who unintentionally sinned against someone. In either case, a ram with no defects had to be sacrificed, plus those harmed by the sin had to be compensated for their loss, plus a 20 percent penalty. In what ways have you harmed someone and need to make it right? Even though Christ's death has made guilt offerings unnecessary for us today, we still need to make things right with those we hurt.
- **(Leviticus 7:28-30)** God told the people of Israel to bring their peace offerings personally, with their own hands. They were to take time and effort to express thanks to God. You are the best person to express your thankfulness to God and to others. Do you leave it to others to express thanks to someone who has been helpful? Do you rely on the one leading in prayer to thank God for you? Take time to communicate personally with God and communicate your gratitude towards Him. In addition, express to those who have blessed you how much you are blessed through their efforts. By doing so, you will be encouraging them to continue their work in the Lord.

- **(Leviticus 7:38)** God gave His people many rituals and instructions to follow. All the rituals in Leviticus were meant to teach the people valuable lessons. But over time, the people became indifferent to the meanings of these rituals, and they began to lose touch with God. When your church appears to be conducting dry, meaningless rituals, do you criticize and become discouraged? Instead, try rediscovering the original meaning and purpose behind each. Your worship will be revitalized.
- **(Leviticus 8:36)** Aaron and his sons did “everything the Lord had commanded.” Considering the many detailed lists of Leviticus, that was a remarkable feat. They knew what God wanted, how He wanted it done, and with what attitude it was to be carried out. Do you obey God as carefully as they did? God wants us to be thoroughly holy people, not a rough approximation of the way His followers should be.
- **(Leviticus 9:22-23)** In 9:6, Moses said to the people, “This is what the Lord has commanded you to do so that the glory of the Lord may appear to you.” Moses, Aaron, and the people then got to work and followed God’s instructions. Soon after, the glory of the Lord appeared. Often we look for God’s glorious acts without concern for following His instructions. Do you serve God in the daily routines of life, or do you wait for Him to do a mighty act? If you depend on His glorious acts, you may find yourself sidestepping your everyday duty to obey.
- **(Leviticus 10:1)** What was the “wrong kind of fire” that Nadab and Abihu offered before the Lord? The fire on the altar of burnt offering was never to go out (6:12, 13), implying that it was holy. It is possible that Nadab and Abihu brought coals of fire to the altar from another source, making the sacrifice unholy. It has also been suggested that the two priests gave an offering at the wrong time. Whatever explanation is correct, the point is that Nadab and Abihu abused their office as priests in a deliberate act of disrespect to God, Who had just reviewed with them precisely how they were to conduct worship. As leaders, they had special responsibility to obey God. In their position, they could easily lead many people astray. Has God commissioned you to lead or teach others? If so, do you take the role for granted or abuse it? Stay faithful to God and follow His instructions.

Also consider . . . Nadab and Abihu were careless in their obedience to God. It is easy for us to grow careless about obeying God, to live our way instead of God’s. But if one way were just as good as another, God would not have commanded us to live His way. He always has good reasons for His commands, and we always place ourselves in danger when we consciously or carelessly disobey them.

- **(Leviticus 10:16-20)** The priest who offered the sin offering was supposed to eat a portion of the animal and then burn the rest (6:24-30). Moses was angry because Eleazar and Ithamar burned the sin offering but did not eat any of it. Aaron explained to Moses that his two sons did not feel it appropriate to eat the sacrifice after their two brothers, Nadab and Abihu, had just been killed for sacrificing wrongly. Moses then understood that Eleazar and Ithamar were not trying to disobey God. They were simply afraid and upset over what had just happened to their brothers. It was obvious that God looked at their heart and didn’t hold this act of disobedience against them, because if He did He would have destroyed them just like their brothers. When God sees we have a sincere heart He has compassion for us. We should have compassion as well. Do you show compassion in your life?
- **(Leviticus 11:8)** God had strictly forbidden eating the meat of certain “unclean” animals; to make sure, He forbade even touching them. He wanted the people to be totally separated from those things He had forbidden. So often we flirt with temptation, rationalizing that at least we are technically keeping the commandment not to commit the sin. But God wants us to separate ourselves completely from all sin and tempting situations. Are there areas in your life where you have rationalized that you are “technically” innocent, but you have actually been involved in sin?