

## Reflections for Holy Trinity Sunday, May 30, 2021

**NOTE: This is the last week that the worship packet will be mailed in advance of Sunday's service. Future mailings will be sent out on Mondays. If you wish to continue receiving the packets, please contact Rose.**

*Holy God, let your word be a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path (Psalm 119:105). Let me hide it in my heart so that I might not sin against you. Amen.*

We're back to focusing on *sin* now: what is it, why is it, how is it? I always used to think of sin as "thou shalt not's." Don't do this, or that, or those—or else! But we also need to consider what it means when we *fail to do* what God commands. Is that also a sin? These examples, like last week's, come from the Holiness Code, Leviticus 18-26.

23:1-3 (the Sabbath) The Lord said to Moses, Speak to the Israelites and say to them: **"These are my appointed feasts, the appointed feasts of the Lord, which you are to proclaim as sacred assemblies. There are six days when you may work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of rest, a day of sacred assembly. You are not to do any work; wherever you live, it is a Sabbath to the Lord."** -- How does this rank on your list of "sins"? When was the last time you actually kept "the Sabbath"?

23:5-6 (the Passover) **The Lord's Passover begins at twilight on the fourteenth day of the first month. On the fifteenth day of that month the Lord's Feast of Unleavened Bread begins; for seven days you must eat bread made without yeast.** – A week without "normal" bread? Remember, the Passover was the Last Supper of Jesus. It had been commanded by God as an annual remembrance when Moses and the Hebrew people were delivered from death in Egypt. In the tenth plague, the "angel of death" *passed over* the houses of the Jews, because they had already sacrificed a spotless lamb, whose blood was painted on the doorposts.

23:10-13 (First Fruits; celebrated on the Sabbath after the Passover) **When you enter the land I am going to give you and you reap its harvest, bring to the priest a sheaf of the first grain you harvest. . . . You must sacrifice as a burnt offering to the Lord a lamb a year old without defect, together with its grain offering. . . .** – Can't say I've ever sacrificed a lamb, defective or not. . . .

23:15-19 (Feast of Weeks, or Pentecost) **From the day after the Sabbath, the day you brought the sheaf of grain, count off seven full weeks. Count off fifty days up to the day after the seventh Sabbath, and then present an offering of new grain to the Lord. . . . From wherever you live, bring two loaves . . . Present with this bread seven male lambs. . . . Then sacrifice one male goat for a sin offering, and two lambs, each a year old, for a fellowship offering.** – Hmm

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23:24-25 (Feast of Trumpets) **On the first day of the seventh month you are to have a day of rest, a sacred assembly commemorated with trumpet blasts. Do no regular work, but present an offering made to the Lord by fire.** –Seventh month? That would be July. How about a brass ensemble on Thursday, July 1<sup>st</sup>?

23:34-36 (Feast of Tabernacles, or Booths; Hebrew *Sukkot*) **On the fifteenth day of the seventh month the Lord's Feast of Tabernacles begins, and it lasts for seven days. . . . For seven days present offerings made to the Lord by fire, and on the eighth day hold a sacred assembly and present an offering made to the Lord by fire. It is the closing assembly; do no regular work.** – During these seven days the Israelites were to live in booths, or shelters, to remind them that when God delivered them from Egypt they had no permanent dwelling places.

How are you feeling now about taking the Mosaic Law (the Law of Moses) seriously? We haven't gotten to the "difficult" *thou shalt not*s yet. I hope these Reflections help you consider how important *context* is! What did these *thou shalt*s mean to the Hebrew people 3500 years ago? What do they mean to us now? I'm wondering how those who claim the Bible is literally true, every word of it, deal with all these appointed and commanded festivals!

Come back next week for some very important consequences to familiar sins.