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LEVITICUS 27:1 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying,

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Laws concerning vows, Lev 27:1, Lev 27:2. Of males and females from twenty to sixty years of age, and their valuation, Lev 27:3, Lev 27:4. Of the same from five to twenty years, Lev 27:5. Of the same from a month to five years of age, Lev 27:6. Of males and females from sixty years old and upwards, and their valuation, Lev 27:7. The priest shall value the poor according to his ability, Lev 27:8. Concerning beasts that are vowed, and their valuation, Lev 27:9-13. Concerning the sanctification of a house, Lev 27:14, Lev 27:15. Concerning the field that is sanctified or consecrated to the Lord, to the year of jubilee, Lev 27:16-24. Every estimation shall be made in shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, Lev 27:25. The firstlings of clean beasts, being already the Lord's, cannot be vowed, Lev 27:26. That of an unclean beast may be redeemed, Lev 27:27. Every thing devoted to God shall be unalienable and unredeemable, and continue the Lord's property till death, Lev 27:28, Lev 27:29. All the tithe of the land is the Lord's, Lev 27:30; but it may be redeemed by adding a fifth part, Lev 27:31. The tithe of the herd and the flock is also his, Lev 27:32. The tenth that passes under the rod shall not be changed, Lev 27:33. The conclusion of the book, Lev 27:34.

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LEVITICUS 27:2 "Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them, 'When a man consecrates a person to the LORD in a vow, according to your valuation,

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## Verse 2

When a man shall make a singular vow - The verse is short and obscure, and may be translated thus: A man who shall have separated a vow, according to thy estimation, of souls unto the Lord; which may be paraphrased thus: He who shall have vowed or consecrated a soul, i. e., a living creature, whether man or beast, if he wish to redeem what he has thus vowed or consecrated, he shall ransom or redeem it according to the priest's estimation; for the priest shall judge of the properties, qualifications, and age of the person or beast, and the circumstances of the person who has vowed it, and shall regulate the value accordingly; and the money shall be put into his hands for the service of the sanctuary. A vow (says Mr. Ainsworth) is a religious promise made unto the Lord, and for the most part with prayer, and paid with thanksgiving, Num 21:2, Num 21:3; Psa 66:12, Psa 66:14. Vows were either of abstinence, such as are spoken of Numbers 30, and the vow of the Nazarite, Numbers 6; or they were to give something to the Lord, as sacrifices, Lev 7:16, or the value of persons, beasts, houses, or lands, concerning which the law is here given. A man might vow or devote himself, his children, (Lev 27:5, Lev 27:6), his domestics, his cattle, his goods, etc. And in this chapter rules are laid down for the redemption of all these things. But if, after consecrating these things, he refused to redeem them, then they became the Lord's property for ever. The persons continued all their lives devoted to the service of the sanctuary; the goods were sold for the profit of the temple or the priests; the animals, if clean, were offered in sacrifice; if not proper for sacrifice, were sold, and the price devoted to sacred uses. This is a general view of the different laws relative to vows, mentioned in this chapter.

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LEVITICUS 27:3 your valuation of a male from twenty years old even to sixty years old shall be fifty shekels of silver, after the shekel of the sanctuary.

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Verse 3

From twenty years old even unto sixty-fifty shekels - A man from twenty to sixty years of age, if consecrated to the Lord by a vow, might be redeemed for fifty shekels, which, at 3s. each, amounted to 7. 10s. sterling.

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LEVITICUS 27:4 If she is a female, then your valuation shall be thirty shekels.

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Verse 4

And if it be a female - The woman, at the same age, vowed unto the Lord, might be redeemed for thirty shekels, 4. 10s. sterling, a little more than one half of the value of the man; for this obvious reason, that a woman, if employed, could not be of so much use in the service of the sanctuary as the man, and was therefore of much less value.

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LEVITICUS 27:5 If the person is from five years old even to twenty years old, then your valuation shall be for a male twenty shekels, and for a female ten shekels.

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Verse 5

From five years old - The boy that was vowed might be redeemed for twenty shekels, 3. sterling; the girl, for ten shekels, just one half, 1. 10s.

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LEVITICUS 27:6 If the person is from a month old even to five years old, then your valuation shall be for a male five shekels of silver, and for a female your valuation shall be three shekels of silver.

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Verse 6

A month old - The male child, five shekels, 15s., the female, three shekels, 9s. Being both in comparative infancy, they were nearly of an equal value. None were vowed under a month old: the first-born being always considered as the Lord's property, could not be vowed, see Lev 27:26.

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LEVITICUS 27:7 If the person is from sixty years old and upward; if he is a male, then your valuation shall be fifteen shekels, and for a female ten shekels.

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Verse 7

Sixty years old - The old man and the old woman, being nearly past labor, were nearly of an equal value; hence the one was estimated at fifteen shekels, 2. 5s., the other at ten shekels, 1. 10s. This was about the same ratio as that of the children, Lev 27:5, and for the same reason.

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LEVITICUS 27:8 But if he is poorer than your valuation, then he shall be set before the priest, and the priest shall assign a value to him. The priest shall assign a value according to his ability to pay.

LEVITICUS 27:9 "If it is an animal, of which men offer an offering to the LORD, all that any man gives of such to the LORD becomes holy.

LEVITICUS 27:10 He shall not alter it, nor change it, a good for a bad, or a bad for a good: and if he shall at all change animal for animal, then both it and that for which it is changed shall be holy.

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#### Verse 10

He shall not alter it, nor change it, a good for a bad, etc. - Whatever was consecrated to God by a vow, or purpose of heart, was considered from that moment as the Lord's property; to change which was impiety; to withhold it, sacrilege. Reader, hast thou ever dedicated thyself, or any part of thy property, to the service of thy Maker? If so, hast thou paid thy vows? Or hast thou altered thy purpose, or changed thy offering? Has he received from thy hands a bad for a good? Wast thou not vowed and consecrated to God in thy baptism? Are his vows still upon thee? Hast thou "renounced the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh?" Dost thou feel thyself bound "to keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of thy life?" Was not this thy baptismal covenant? And hast thou renounced it? Take heed! God is not mocked: that which thou sowest, thou shalt also reap. If thou rob God of thy heart, he will deprive thee of his heaven.

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LEVITICUS 27:11 If it is any unclean animal, of which they do not offer as an offering to the LORD, then he shall set the animal before the priest;

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#### Verse 11

Any unclean beast - See on Lev 27:2 (note).

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LEVITICUS 27:12 and the priest shall value it, whether it is good or bad. As you the priest values it, so shall it be.

LEVITICUS 27:13 But if he will indeed redeem it, then he shall add the fifth part of it to its valuation.

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#### Verse 13

Shall add a fifth part - This was probably intended to prevent rash vows and covetous redemptions. The priest alone was to value the thing; and to whatever his valuation was, a fifth part must be

added by him who wished to redeem the consecrated thing. Thus, if the priest valued it at forty shekels, if the former owner redeemed it he was obliged to give forty-eight.

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LEVITICUS 27:14 “When a man dedicates his house to be holy to the LORD, then the priest shall evaluate it, whether it is good or bad: as the priest shall evaluate it, so shall it stand.

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#### Verse 14

Shall sanctify his house - The yearly rent of which, when thus consecrated, went towards the repairs of the tabernacle, which was the house of the Lord.

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LEVITICUS 27:15 If he who dedicates it will redeem his house, then he shall add the fifth part of the money of your valuation to it, and it shall be his.

LEVITICUS 27:16 “If a man dedicates to the LORD part of the field of his possession, then your valuation shall be according to the seed for it. The sowing of a homer of barley shall be valued at fifty shekels of silver.

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#### Verse 16

Some part of a field - Though the preceding words are not in the text, yet it is generally allowed they should be supplied here, as it was not lawful for a man to vow his whole estate, and thus make his family beggars, in order to enrich the Lord's sanctuary: this God would not permit. The rabbins teach that the land or field, whether good or bad, was valued at forty-eight shekels, for all the years of the jubilee, provided the field was large enough to sow a homer of barley. The חמר chomer was different from the עמר omer: the latter held about three quarts, the former, seventy-five gallons three pints; See the note on Exo 16:16. Some suppose that the land was rated, not at fifty shekels for the whole of the years of the jubilee, for this would be but about 3s. per annum; but that it was rated according to its produce, fifty shekels for every homer of barley it produced.

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LEVITICUS 27:17 If he dedicates his field from the Year of Jubilee, according to your valuation it shall stand.

LEVITICUS 27:18 But if he dedicates his field after the Jubilee, then the priest shall reckon to him the money according to the years that remain to the Year of Jubilee; and an abatement shall be made from your valuation.

LEVITICUS 27:19 If he who dedicated the field will indeed redeem it, then he shall add the fifth part of the money of your valuation to it, and it shall remain his.

LEVITICUS 27:20 If he will not redeem the field, or if he has sold the field to another man, it shall not be redeemed any more;

LEVITICUS 27:21 but the field, when it goes out in the Jubilee, shall be holy to the LORD, as a devoted field. It shall be owned by the priests.

Verse 21

As a field devoted - It is **חֶרֶם** *cherem*, a thing so devoted to God as never more to be capable of being redeemed. See on Lev 27:29 (note).

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LEVITICUS 27:22 “If he dedicates a field to the LORD which he has bought, which is not of the field of his possession,

LEVITICUS 27:23 then the priest shall reckon to him the worth of your valuation up to the Year of Jubilee; and he shall give your valuation on that day, as a holy thing to the LORD.

LEVITICUS 27:24 In the Year of Jubilee the field shall return to him from whom it was bought, even to him to whom the possession of the land belongs.

LEVITICUS 27:25 All your valuations shall be according to the shekel of the sanctuary: twenty gerahs to the shekel.

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Verse 25

Shekel of the sanctuary - A standard shekel; the standard being kept in the sanctuary to try and regulate all the weights in the land by. See Gen 20:16; Gen 23:15.

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LEVITICUS 27:26 “Only the firstborn among animals, which is made a firstborn to the LORD, no man may dedicate it; whether an ox or sheep. It is the LORD’s.

LEVITICUS 27:27 If it is an unclean animal, then he shall buy it back according to your valuation, and shall add to it the fifth part of it; or if it isn’t redeemed, then it shall be sold according to your valuation.

LEVITICUS 27:28 “Notwithstanding, no devoted thing, that a man shall devote to the LORD of all that he has, whether of man or animal, or of the field of his possession, shall be sold or redeemed: every devoted thing is most holy to the LORD.

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Verse 28

No devoted thing - shall be sold or redeemed - This is the **חֶרֶם** *cherem*, which always meant an absolute unredeemable grant to God.

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LEVITICUS 27:29 “No one devoted, who shall be devoted from among men, shall be ransomed; he shall surely be put to death.

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Verse 29

Which shall be devoted of men - Every man who is devoted shall surely be put to death; or, as some understand it, be the Lord's property, or be employed in his service, till death. The law mentioned in these two verses has been appealed to by the enemies of Divine revelation as a proof, that under the Mosaic dispensation human sacrifices were offered to God; but this can never be conceded. Had there been such a law, it certainly would have been more explicitly revealed, and not left in the compass of a few words only, where the meaning is very difficult to be ascertained; and the words themselves differently translated by most interpreters. That there were persons, devoted to destruction under the Mosaic dispensation, is sufficiently evident, for the whole Canaanitish nations were thus devoted by the Supreme Being himself, because the cup of their iniquity was full; but that they were not sacrificed to God, the whole history sufficiently declares. Houbigant understands the passage as speaking of these alone; and says, *Non alios licebat anathemate voveri, quam Chananaeos, quos jusserat Deus ad internecionem deleri.* "It was not lawful to devote any persons to death but the Canaanites, whom God had commanded to be entirely extirpated." This is perfectly correct; but he might have added that it was because they were the most impure idolaters, and because the cup of their iniquity was full. These God commanded to be put to death; and who can doubt his right to do so, who is the Maker of man, and the Fountain of justice? But what has this to do with human sacrifices? Just nothing. No more than the execution of an ordinary criminal, or a traitor, in the common course of justice, has to do with a sacrifice to God. In the destruction of such idolaters, no religious formality whatever was observed; nor any thing that could give the transaction even the most distant semblance of a sacrifice. In this way Jericho was commanded to be destroyed, Jos 6:17, and the Amalekites, Deu 25:19; 1Sam 15:3 : but in all these cases the people commanded to be destroyed were such sinners as God's justice did not think proper to spare longer. And has not every system of law the same power? And do we not concede such power to the civil magistrate, for the welfare of the state? God, who is the sovereign arbiter of life and death, acts here in his juridical and legislative capacity; but these are victims to justice, not religious sacrifices. It may be necessary just farther to note that two kinds of vows are mentioned in this chapter: -

1. The נֶדֶר *neder*, (see on Leviticus 7 (note)), which comprehends all those things which, when once devoted, might be redeemed at a certain price, according to the valuation of the priest.
2. The חֵרֶם *cherem*, those things vowed to God of which there remained no power of redemption; they were most holy, i. e., so absolutely devoted to God that they could neither be changed, alienated, nor redeemed: probably because no mental reservation had been made, as in the above case may be supposed. On this ground the word was afterward applied to the most solemn and awful kind of excommunication, meaning a person so entirely devoted to the stroke of vindictive justice, as never to be capable of receiving pardon; and hence the word may be well applied in this sense to the Canaanites, the cup of whose iniquity was full, and who were consigned, without reprieve, to final extermination.

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LEVITICUS 27:30 "All the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land or of the fruit of the trees, is the LORD's. It is holy to the LORD.

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#### Verse 30

All the tithe of the land - This God claims as his own; and it is spoken of here as being a point perfectly settled, and concerning which there was neither doubt nor difficulty. See my view of this subject Gen 28:22 (note), to which I do not see the necessity of adding any thing.

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LEVITICUS 27:31 If a man redeems anything of his tithe, he shall add a fifth part to it.

LEVITICUS 27:32 All the tithe of the herds or the flocks, whatever passes under the rod, the tenth shall be holy to the LORD.

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Verse 32

Whatsoever passeth under the rod - The signification of this verse is well given by the rabbins: "When a man was to give the tithe of his sheep or calves to God, he was to shut up the whole flock in one fold, in which there was one narrow door capable of letting out one at a time. The owner, about to give the tenth to the Lord, stood by the door with a rod in his hand, the end of which was dipped in vermilion or red ochre. The mothers of those lambs or calves stood without: the door being opened, the young ones ran out to join themselves to their dams; and as they passed out the owner stood with his rod over them, and counted one, two, three, four, five, etc., and when the tenth came, he touched it with the coloured rod, by which it was distinguished to be the tithe calf, sheep, etc., and whether poor or lean, perfect or blemished, that was received as the legitimate tithe." It seems to be in reference to this custom that the Prophet Ezekiel, speaking to Israel, says: I will cause you to pass under the rod, and will bring you into the bond of the covenant - you shall be once more claimed as the Lord's property, and be in all things devoted to his service, being marked or ascertained, by especial providences and manifestations of his kindness, to be his peculiar people.

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LEVITICUS 27:33 He shall not search whether it is good or bad, neither shall he change it. If he changes it at all, then both it and that for which it is changed shall be holy. It shall not be redeemed."

LEVITICUS 27:34 These are the commandments which the LORD commanded Moses for the children of Israel on Mount Sinai.

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Verse 34

These are the commandments - This conclusion is very similar to that at the end of the preceding chapter. I have already supposed that this chapter should have followed the 25th, and that the 26th originally terminated the book. Mr. Ainsworth, the whole of whose writings are animated with the spirit of piety, concludes this book with the following excellent remarks: - "The tithes in Israel being thus sanctified by the commandment of God to his honor, the maintenance of his ministers, and the relief of the poor, it taught them and teaches us to honor the Lord with our substance, (Pro 3:9), acknowledging him to be the author of all our increase and store; (Deu 8:13-18; Hos 2:8); to honor his Ministers, and to communicate unto them in all good things, (1Tim 5:17, 1Tim 5:18; Gal 6:6), that they who sow unto us spiritual things should reap our carnal things, (1Cor 9:11), and to give Alms of such things as we have, that all things may be clear unto us, (Luk 11:41), yea, even to sell that we have, and give alms; to provide ourselves bags that wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not. Luk 12:33." They who forget their Maker, his ministers, and the poor, are never likely to hear that blessed word in the great day: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you; for I was hungry, and ye gave me meat; thirsty, and ye gave me drink; naked, and ye clothed me; sick and in prison, and ye came unto me."

Reader, thou hast now gone through the whole of this most interesting book; a book whose subject is too little regarded by Christians in general. Here thou mayest discover the rigid requisitions of Divine justice, the sinfulness of sin, the exceeding breadth of the commandment, and the end of all human perfection. And now what thinkest thou of that word, "Whatsoever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law?" Rom 3:19. But who are under the law - the condemning power of the pure, rigid, moral law of God? Not the Jews only, but every soul of man: all to whom it is sent, and who acknowledge it as a Divine revelation, and have not been redeemed from the guilt of sin by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ; for "cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them." By this law then is the knowledge, but not the cure, of sin. Here then what God saith unto thee: "If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law), what farther need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron? For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law; Heb 7:11, Heb 7:12. Now of the things which we have spoken, this is the sum: We have such a high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man; Heb 8:1, Heb 8:2. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins; Heb 10:4. But Christ being come a high priest of good things to come, - neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. And for this cause he is the Mediator of the New Testament, that, by means of death, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. And without shedding of blood is no remission. So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation;" Heb 9:11, Heb 9:12, Heb 9:15, Heb 9:22, Heb 9:28. We see then that Christ was the End of the law for righteousness (for justification) to every one that believeth. "Unto him, therefore, who hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." Rev 1:5, Rev 1:6.

Sections in the Book of Leviticus, carried on from Exodus, which ends with the Twenty-Third.

The Twenty-Fourth, called ויקרא valyikra, begins Lev 1:6, and ends Lev 6:7.

The Twenty-Fifth, called צו tsav, begins Lev 6:8, and ends Lev 8:36.

The Twenty-Sixth, called שמיני shemini, begins Lev 9:1, and ends Lev 11:47.

The Twenty-Seventh, called תזריע tazria, begins Lev 12:1, and ends Lev 13:59.

The Twenty-Eighth, called מצרע metsora, begins Lev 14:1, and ends Lev 15:33.

The Twenty-Ninth, called אחרי מות acharey moth, begins Lev 16:1, and ends Lev 18:30.

The Thirtieth, called קדשים kedoshim, begins Lev 19:1, and ends Lev 20:27.

The Thirty-First, called אמר emor, begins Lev 21:1, and ends Lev 24:23.

The Thirty-Second, called בהר סיני behar Sinai, begins Lev 25:1, and ends Lev 26:2.

The Thirty-Third, called בחקתי bechukkothai, begins Lev 26:3, and ends Lev 27:34.

These sections, as was observed on Exodus, have their technical names from some remarkable word, either in the first or second verse of their commencement.