**The Power of Repentance (Leviticus 26:40-46)**

 Every genuine revival begins with a contrite heart and the confession of sins. Greetings to you dear brothers and sisters in the Lord, as we enjoy the Word of God (this week) from the book of Leviticus. Today we’re not only going to speak about confession, but also about the general topic of repentance. In Armenian, we often use the word “*abashkharoutiun*” for repentance. However, keeping in mind that the word itself can mean only the limited meaning of the act of coming to faith in Christ for some, we will speak about repentance with the words in Armenian that mean “to turn back”, which begins with the confession of sins.

 The book of Leviticus presents the details of the Law of Moses to us. The goal of the book is to teach or give information. It is to school the people of God in the ways of the Lord. The laws within the book are ordered in such a way as to bring the people to a place of mercy, holiness, and respect both towards God and each other as human beings. At end of the book, we see that God wants to stir the people up to move forward with their newfound emancipated life with positive words (which are expressed in blessings and rewards). These are the verses that come to us today that are connected to the commands to repent and to confess sin. Therefore, today we will address the results of repentance which God reveals at the end of Leviticus. Truly, when we see all the positive and encouraging promises from the Lord in these verses, we also, as the emancipated people of God, will want to examine our lives and reap the benefits of confession. Every genuine revival begins with a contrite heart and the confession of sins.

 When the people of God repent and confess, God’s blessings begin to pour out from the heavens both on them and on their land. Now, the people of God had been freed from the Egyptians. They had seen with their own eyes their captors’ annihilation and they were already on their way to the Promised Land. When they arrived at Mt. Sinai, God cut an important covenant with the people. He gave them helpful and sanctifying laws for the ordering and the health of their lifestyles, both spiritually and physically. The laws had been recorded and travelled with them. However, the hearts of the people of God suffered from a lack of trust in God and idolatry. In other words, no matter how many good things God had done for them, they still did not trust His laws completely. No matter how holy God revealed Himself to be or how much he admonished them not to take their focus off of Him, they were still tempted to consider themselves or their own ideas as more valid or true than Him or His commandments. Either that, or they chiseled literal statues out of stone or wood which they worshipped. This show of disobedience hurt God greatly, because He was the One who had cared for them as His baby beginning from the days of Abraham. No matter that God had given ten punishments to the Egyptians and even when He split the Red Sea for His people, the Israelites had forgotten the meaning and the Author of those great miracles. No matter how much light would shine from Moses’ face when he would come down from the top of the mountain, once again, forgetting the awe and reverence of the moment, the people would return to their lawless life.

 Christian writer Morley writes that the church's integrity problem is in they believe "that we can add Christ to our lives, but not subtract sin. It is a change in belief without a change in behavior." He goes on to say, "It is revival without reformation, without repentance."

What of us, then? Do we desire to have revival in this church? If yes, then we need to bring our sins, both individual and corporate before the Lord. We are called to declare that we have sinned before Him as a body, and that we desire to enjoy His blessings once again, just as Israel enjoyed His blessings for a season when King David was obeying God or when King Josiah repented alongside the people for their sins. If we desire to see the Glory of God, it is up to us to repent and to beseech God that He pour out His blessings upon this place. It is true that sometimes we will bear the consequences of our past sins for a while, but in the end, God restores us and makes us flourish because of our repentance, our turning back to Him.

Therefore, let us, dear people of God, begin to examine our own selves and bring before the Lord our personal and corporate sins. Come and let us decide that we will delve even deeper into the holiness of the Lord; and so, God promises that the answer to the person who repents will be blessings, stability, and protection from the enemy. Come and let us use the key to our growth, so that we may mature both in spirit and number as the congregation of God, as the church of Christ.

When the people of God repent and confess, God’s blessings begin to pour out from the heavens both on them and on their land. Every genuine revival begins with a contrite heart and the confession of sins. May the Lord pour out that spirit upon us, that we may move into the next stage of our spiritual growth as His people. Amen.