



# FEED MY SHEEP

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## Are You Blind or Lame?

Our studies in overcomership, as found in the life of David, now continue. Last month we saw how David took the city which was later called Jerusalem from the Jebusites in a most unusual way—coming up through the sewer! We now return to that passage to expound another of God's gemstones.

**2 Samuel 5:6** And the king and his men went to Jerusalem unto the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land: which spake unto David, saying, Except thou take away the blind and the lame, thou shalt not come in hither: thinking, David cannot come in hither. ...

**8** And David said on that day, Whosoever getteth up to the gutter, and smiteth the Jebusites, and the lame and the blind, *that are hated of* [marg.: who hate] David's soul, *he shall be chief and captain*. Wherefore they said, The blind and the lame shall not come into the house.

We want to examine the typical significance of the lame and the blind. As Paul says concerning our bodies: first, the natural and then the spiritual. So we shall discuss natural blindness and lameness as well as spiritual blindness and lameness. In the Old Testament, natural blindness was addressed in the Mosaic law in several places and concerned several aspects. However, we can also see the law as prophetic or typical as well. We can generalize to say that the first aspect concerns treatment of the handicapped in everyday life in Israel. God says in...

**Leviticus 19:14** Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put a stumblingblock before the blind, but shalt fear thy God: *I am YHWH*

In other words, the principle here is to be kind and considerate towards those afflicted with a handicap. This is part of the overall law to "love thy neighbor." This is not confined to only those who are deaf or blind. I feel certain that God intended for us to apply the general principle to the lame, the maimed, the crippled, the dumb, those with Downs Syndrome and any other type of mental or physical handicap you can name. We are to love them.

This would even extend to such things as not giving our approval when someone tells a joke where a person's handicap is central to the joke. It violates the principle of this statute here in verse 14. That's the physical level of this statute, of physical and mental handicaps. But there are also spiritual handicaps, and the law is just as applicable. How could we apply this law spiritually? Well, spiritual deafness and spiritual blindness refers to people who cannot sense spiritual things, spiritual realities. Of course, there are levels of deafness and blindness. You and I are deaf and blind to spiritual truths which God has not revealed to us yet. Deafness and blindness are metaphors for understanding.

We understand certain spiritual truths and to the extent that we understand them, we say that we "see" this truth or that truth. We say that we "hear" God's voice speaking to us through His word or in other ways. These "other ways," incidentally, must always line up with the written Word, never contradict it. Because Christians are on different levels of spiritual growth, one Christian who sees truth in a certain area can observe his fellow Christian who does not understand the truth in that certain area and he will say that

his fellow Christian is blind in that area. So in applying this law very simplistically, it means that when we are trying to explain some truth to our fellow Christian and he simply does not get it, we should not get angry or frustrated with him. Perhaps we are saying in our heart: "You stupid idiot, it's as clear as the nose on your face, and yet you can't see it!"

That is, in essence, cursing the deaf. Shame on us, if we do that. And you know what?... anyone who understands the sovereignty of God will never curse the deaf because he understands Who causes the deafness and blindness and lameness. It is God who does it. Yes, *God* blinds us. Moses understood this. During the 40 years of wilderness wanderings, the Holy Writ records on several occasions where Moses "lost it." He got frustrated and angry at the people because they disobeyed Yahweh. But this was Moses' training in the sovereignty of God, because by the end of the forty years he had learned the lesson... because he knew he could no longer get frustrated and angry with the people. They were blind and deaf and Moses knew that God did it. Moses says to them:

**Deuteronomy 29:3 The great temptations which thine eyes have seen, the signs, and those great miracles:**

**4 Yet YHWH hath not given you an heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day.**

This should be our *modus operandi* as well. When we are given to see new truths, we naturally want to share them with our fellow Christians. But we have to learn that when they don't get it, we should drop it. Don't burn bridges, keep them your friends, just agree to disagree. Of course, there is always the possibility that we might be mistaken in our understanding, too. I can't count the people that I tried to get to see the doctrine of the any-day-now pretribulation rapture of the Christians. Some years later, I learned that I was the one who was in error.

Now to the part of the statute (Lev. 19:14) dealing with putting a stumblingblock in front of the blind. That has as many applications as there are potential situations. For example, if I have an acquaintance who simply cannot see the truth that I think I see, and then I treat him with coldness and disdain and start telling everybody that he's an idiot and so forth. Well, he will sense the cold shoulder and the disdainful attitude we display and maybe he hears through the grapevine that

we think he's an idiot. Now how much chance is there that he is going to want to hear us explain some Scriptural truth to him? Zilch! We have put a stumblingblock in front of him. Here's another statute that fits very well in this discussion.

**Deuteronomy 27:18 Cursed *be* he that maketh the blind to wander out of the way. And all the people shall say, Amen.**

Are we violating this law? Perhaps we should ask ourselves: Does our attitude drive the spiritually blind in another direction, away from the truth? Are we so self-righteous or arrogant or condescending that we drive people away from us and the message we have? I have to confess that I was that way for far too long...and I hope that Father keeps working on me to give me an attitude towards others that will *attract* the blind to the truth and not cause them to wander out of the way.

Thus, we understand what spiritual blindness is. Spiritual deafness is the inability to hear what God is saying. It is very closely related to blindness. Being spiritually *dumb* would refer to an inability to speak forth God's truth. But what is spiritual *lameness*? It has to do with walking or running. We use the phrase "our Christian walk." Or "he talks the talk but he doesn't walk the walk." Paul talks about running the race for overcomership. So being lame means we have some serious difficulty with behaving like a Christian ought to behave. How is our walk, Christian brothers and sisters? It's about obedience to God's laws, isn't it? When someone falls into serious sin, we say that he *stumbled* and fell, don't we?

**1 Peter 2:8 And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.**

Notice that Peter says they were *appointed* to stumbling and being disobedient. That means they were *predestinated* to that outcome. How did Peter know they were predestinated to that? Well, it's arguable, I suppose, but I think he simply observed the situation over a period of time and drew that conclusion. He saw that they would not show forth fruits of repentance, therefore, they must be predestinated to judgment. More accurately, perhaps, in Peter's case, he was certainly inspired by the Holy Spirit as this Scripture came forth. We realize this raises some

questions for some readers. We will not take space to elaborate here, since that topic has been dealt with thoroughly in our audio album, *The Sovereignty of God*. (Ten tapes. Order A-102, \$33 ppd.)

**Galatians 6:1 Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault** [lapse or deviation from uprightness; “caught in a sin”], **ye which are spiritual, lead the parade to stone him or her.**

That’s not really what the verse says, of course; but that is what some of us want to do when we sometimes act out of our carnality, isn’t it? Condemn the sinner! Execute him! Let him get what he deserves! Is that what Jesus did in John, chapter 8, with the woman overtaken in a fault, the woman caught in adultery? Did Jesus condemn this woman? No, Jesus used the law itself to apply mercy to her! Jesus knew the law said stone her to death, but what did He do?

He did something which caused all of her accusers to slink away one by one. So without the necessary witnesses, Jesus said He could not condemn her either. He used the law to show her mercy. Did she deserve to be stoned to death? It seems there was no question about her guilt. But let us not overlook the fact that *after* Jesus showed her mercy, he went on to say: go, and sin no more. This is the same attitude we find in Paul’s instructions to the brethren.

**Galatians 6:1 Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.**

Restore in mercy, don’t condemn in harshness and carnality. Now then, just as physical lameness can range from slight to severe to total inability to walk, so it is with spiritual lameness. Whenever we sin, whenever we are disobedient, we are manifesting some degree of spiritual lameness, from very minor sins—which is like stubbing our toe—to more serious offenses, which is like twisting our ankle, to breaking a leg and walking on crutches, or to a totally backslidden Christian who has gone lame in both feet. Now let’s look at the blindness and lameness from yet another perspective; that of the priesthood. In the physical realm in the Old Testament, the law said this...

**Leviticus 21: 18 For whatsoever man *he be* that hath a blemish, he shall not approach: a blind man, or a lame, or he that hath a flat nose, or any**

**thing superfluous,**

**19 Or a man that is brokenfooted, or brokenhanded,**

**20 Or crookbackt, or a dwarf, or that hath a blemish in his eye, or be scurvy, or scabbed, or hath his stones broken;**

**21 No man that hath a blemish of the seed of Aaron the priest shall come nigh to offer the offerings of YHWH made by fire: he hath a blemish; he shall not come nigh to offer the bread of his God.**

**22 He shall eat the bread of his God, both of the most holy, and of the holy.**

**23 Only he shall not go in unto the vail, nor come nigh unto the altar, because he hath a blemish; that he profane not my sanctuaries: for I YHWH do sanctify them.**

We have done a 30-part series, spread over four albums of tapes/CDs on the Tabernacle in the Wilderness, so we should understand what it is talking about here in verse 23 concerning the veil and the altar. (See FMS #14 or #15 for the floor plan of the Tabernacle. Now available at [www.stonekingdom.org](http://www.stonekingdom.org). See A-105 through A-108 on our Resources List for the series on the Tabernacle.) There are three parts: the Outer Court, Holy Place and the Most Holy Place. When in verse 23 it says that the blemished—and for our purposes today we can say, the lame or blind—the blemished priest shall not go in unto the veil, which of the three veils is it talking about? We can know that by process of elimination.

No one except the High Priest could ever go into the Most Holy Place and he could only enter in once a year. Furthermore, we know that the average Israelite could come in the through the first veil and bring his animal in to slaughter it. Therefore, this verse means that the blind or lame priest could not come in through the second veil. He could not come in to the Holy Place.

Continuing in verse 23, it says that neither could he come near the altar. This was strictly a matter of law. No man who was deformed, blind, crippled, or blemished in any way could perform any of the work of the offerings. Why? Because a priest was a mediator between God and the Israel people. The priests were a type and shadow of Jesus the Christ as the ultimate Mediator. The Savior had to be a perfect, unblemished sacrifice as well as a perfect and unblemished-by-sin priest to perform the offering of Himself. Let’s back up one verse.

**22 He shall eat the bread of his God, both of the most holy, and of the holy.**

So the lame priest could not offer the bread of sacrifice but he *could* partake of it; he could eat it. The reference there to the most holy and the holy is not referring to the two inner compartments of the tabernacle, but to two different kinds of offerings. The lame priest could eat them both. Moreover, not only was a blemished priest forbidden by law to minister the sacrifices, but the sacrifices themselves were to be perfect and unblemished. In fact, in the book of Malachi we read of God's condemnation of the priests who had terribly corrupted the whole sacrificial system. Talking about the animal sacrifices, God says to the priests:

**Malachi 1:8 And if ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick, is it not evil? offer it now unto thy governor; will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person? saith YHWH of hosts.**

Then in the next chapter, verse 8 again, God charges the priests with causing the people to be disobedient to God's law as we come across this word *stumble* again.

**Malachi 2:8 But ye [priests] are departed out of the way; ye have caused many to stumble at the law; ye have corrupted the covenant of Levi, saith YHWH of hosts.**

In the New Testament the Levitical priesthood has been replaced by the priesthood of Melchizedek. And Jesus is the High Priest forever. Those who are overcomers are the priests after the order of Melchizedek. But not all Christians are in this order of Melchizedek. Let us show that from the Scriptures.

**Hebrews 7: 11 If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need *was there* that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron?**

**12 For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law.**

Therefore, Christ is the one and only and forever High Priest of the order of Melchizedek, but just as in the OT, there are ranks of sub-priests below the

High Priest who assist in various functions of ministry. And who are they?

**Revelation 20:6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.**

Those in the first resurrection are the priests who will reign in the millennial kingdom. We have shown in other studies that *only* the overcomers are raised in the first resurrection. The kingdom in which they reign is on earth, according to Revelation 5:10.

**Revelation 5:10 And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.**

Well, who are they going to reign over then? Simple, the priests, the immortals, will then be ruling over the mortals. The mortals will include all the non-overcomer Christians as well as all the non-Christians. Going back to the floor plan of the Tabernacle again, we recall that the Holy Place corresponds to the feast of Pentecost, to second-stage Christianity. It is where we work out the salvation of our soul by learning to *hear* God's voice and be obedient.

A priest who is deaf cannot hear God's voice, so he is essentially useless to try to teach and minister to others if he himself cannot discern God's voice. Therefore, just as the law in Leviticus showed us in type form, the blemished priest is not permitted to enter in beyond the second veil to minister.

But he *may eat of the bread* of the sacrifices. Who is the bread of the sacrifice in the NT? Jesus is the bread of life. Any priest, even a blemished priest, may eat the Bread of Life. It is not a reference to cannibalism but to eating the Word of God, assimilating the Holy Scriptures into the heart, mind, soul and spirit. Keep these facts in mind, because we will show them in another connection in the next FMS.

*Feed My Sheep is a part of the teaching ministry of James W. Bruggeman and is sent out freely upon request. The tithes and gifts of those who are fed by it make it possible for us to continue in ministry. Gifts may be sent to P.O. Box 6388, Asheville, NC 28816.*