

## A. The Motto of Leviticus - Be Holy for I Am Holy

### 1. Holiness / Sanctification

- a. The central theme of the book is **holiness**. The book intends to show how Israel was to fulfill its covenant responsibility to be 'a kingdom of priests and a **holy** nation. Read Ex 19:6  
Now read 1 Pet 2:9. How similar is the language?
- b. **Command** to Be Holy. Read Lev 11:44-45. Read Lev 19:2. Read Lev 20:7-8. Read Lev 20:26.  
Now read 1 Pet 1:15-16. **Are the OT and NT in agreement** about holiness?
- c. **God is Holy**. When speaking of God being holy the root idea is of someone totally other, separate, distinct, and **unique** from anything created... **a category all to itself, unlike any other**. Included in this idea is a **perfection of character** and a purity devoid of any moral imperfection.  
Read Ex 15:11. Who is like the LORD? **Majestic** in holiness.  
Read Isaiah 40:25. What name does the LORD give himself? The **Holy One**. Who can compare?  
Read Isaiah 57:15. Notice that separateness **does not mean remoteness**.
- d. **The People of God are Holy**. A key component of holiness for the people of God is the idea of a 2-fold **SEPARATION** of those people: a separation **From** the common and the impure, followed by a separation **Unto** God for his use only... reserved for him, owned by him, brought near to him, and expected to walk in the likeness and character of him.

**Holy People of God** = Separation **From** the World + Separation **Unto** the LORD

God separating from the world those whom he chooses to be devoted unto himself, so that they may dwell near him, serve him, and reflect him to creation.

How do we see God separating the Israelites after he rescued them from Egyptian slavery?

Note the types of separation in the texts below:

Read Lev 20:24-26. Separation from: **peoples** and **unclean animals** Separation to: **Me**

Read Lev 15:31. Separation from: **uncleanness**

Within the people of Israel there were separations/consecrations that God made:

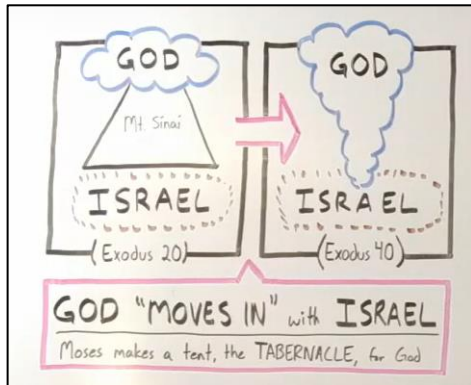
Read Ex 34:19 and Num 3:13. God claimed all the **firstborn** males (man and beast)

Read Num 8:14-18. God claimed the whole **tribe of Levi** as substitutes for the firstborn males.

- e. Allen P. Ross - "**Holiness** is its (Leviticus) **goal**. **Holiness** is its **character**: the LORD is holy; his sanctuary is holy; its vessels are holy; the garments of the priests are holy; the sacrifices are most holy to the LORD; and all who approach him whose name is 'Holy'... must themselves be holy."
- f. Holiness in the Bible can apply to:
  - a. **God**: His Being, His Spirit, His Name, His Arm, His Ways, His Promises
  - b. **People**: High Priest, Priests, Levites, Firstborn males, the Nazarite, Israelite nation
  - c. **Things**: Offerings, Sanctuary Furniture, Priestly Clothing, Oil, Incense, Water Real Estate
  - d. **Places**: Tabernacle, Temple, Places of Theophanies, Mountains, Land of Israel, Heaven
  - e. **Time**: Sabbath, Holy Days (Feasts/Festivals), Sabbatical Year, Jubilee Year
- g. **Strive** for **Holiness**. What do you think Heb 12:14 means?
- h. **Sanctification**, not Justification. Leviticus deals with the **progressive sanctification** of the Israelites, not their justification. The laws in Leviticus were God's revealed will for how His already "redeemed" people should live, not for their salvation. Likewise, they help us New Testament believers understand what is necessary for our sanctification, not our justification.

## 2. Dwelling With a Holy God in our Midst

- a. After Israel constructed the Tabernacle and furnishings, the glory cloud of the LORD covered it and filled the tabernacle such that even Moses was not able to enter in it (Ex 40:34-35).



Picture from "Leviticus - A Quick Overview" by OverviewBible

[https://youtu.be/1\\_2gX9GhSms](https://youtu.be/1_2gX9GhSms)

- b. **Protocol for Approach to God.** Leviticus describes how a sinful people can come near and approach the holy God and great King Yahweh who now lived in their midst. The LORD gave certain rules for approaching royalty... rules of etiquette. He agreed to meet with them in front of the "tent of meeting" (Ex 29:42-43) and they were instructed how to bring offerings and even how to eat a meal in his presence (Deut 12:5-7).

Yahweh was very **protective** of the holiness and cleanliness of his palace tent... who could come near and who could not, and the ritual purity of people and things that were near him and his dwelling. He had to teach the people (Lev 12-15) how not to defile his holy tabernacle (Lev 15:31). This was serious business. The people could physically die if they were not careful to follow His instruction.

- c. **God's Presence.** Do a search of the phrase "**before the LORD**" in the book of Leviticus and notice how many places it mentions this phrase. In the ESV it is mentioned **63** times in 60 verses. God is pre-eminently present during the assembly and worship of his people.
- d. **God Walking Among Us.** Read Lev 26:11-12. Does the LORD still "walk among us" as his church today? See Rev 2:1,5. What does "removing the lampstand" mean? Note also that Paul quoted Lev 26:12 in 2 Cor 6:16 speaking of us as the "temple of the living God."
- e. **The Fear of the LORD.** Read Lev 10:1-3 about the death of Aaron's two sons, Nadab and Abihu. God's holy presence among the people was dangerous under certain conditions. Both priests and laymen (see Lev 15:31) could physically die if they defiled God's tabernacle.
- The NT has equally strong language... read 1 Cor 3:16-17
  - The last day revival will be a mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit and will restore the fear of the LORD and the spirit of holiness to the church. We must learn to judge ourselves and walk holy and pure before the LORD, so that He does not judge us. 1 Cor 11:30-31.

### B. Our Challenge

Read 2 Cor 7:1. Are you "perfecting holiness in the fear of God?"

Read Heb 12:10. Will you receive the Lord's discipline so you can share in his holiness, and not take offense when he corrects you?

Read Mat 5:48. Will you aim high?