

Session #20: “REGULATIONS FOR CONDUCT OF PRIESTS” — Leviticus 21:1-24

Monday 7:30pm, H 206 (2nd floor, High School--top of stairs, behind the gym, by doughnut/vending machine area),
Tuesday 7:00am, Family, Room, CCCM – Phil Twente, cell # 714 425 9221; email - philtwente@att.net
For past studies, audio plus notes, go to: <http://www.missioncalvary.com/index.html?sender=sermons>

Note: Reference has been made in the following notes and outline to commentaries on Leviticus by David Hocking, also to comments/notes from Pastor Chuck Smith, J. Vernon McGee and Jon Courson.

- **Questions:** Several questions will be asked at the beginning of the study relating to how the regulations for the conduct of priest--personal defilement, special demands & physical defects-- are applicable to us.
- **Is the touching of a dead body a sin?**
- **Is there anything in your life, though it is not a sin, that is dragging you down?**
- **If God does not need our “best animal, without blemish”, why should we give it to Him?**
- **Does being “holy”, simply mean that we are to live a life without sin?**

The theme of the book is a “CALL TO HOLINESS” and the book divided into two parts: chapters 1-16 show us that the WAY TO GOD IS BY SACRIFICE, and chapters 17-27 reveal that our WALK WITH GOD IS BY SANCTIFICATION or “holiness.”

In chapter 17 we dealt with the issue of the “CLEANSING OF BLOOD”- in chapter 18 we dealt with the “COVERING OF OUR SEXUALITY”.

In chapter 19 we examined the “CONDUCT OF GOD’S PEOPLE,” and in chapter 20 we saw the “THE NEED FOR HOLINESS.”(Set apart!)

The key verses of the book deal with the command to be “holy” - mentioned in Leviticus 11:44-45; 20:7, 26; 21:8 as well as in chapter 19, verse 2 - “You shall be holy; for I the LORD your God am holy.”

The primary reason for the command to be “holy” is rooted in the character of God Himself - He says, “for I the LORD your God am holy.”

That principle and command for holiness among God’s people especially applied to the selection of priests. In chapter 21, verse 6, we read, “They shall be holy unto their God, and not profane the name of their God”.

Verse 8 reads, “He shall be holy unto thee for I the LORD, which sanctify you, am holy.” Verse 12 adds, “I am the LORD” and verse 15 says, “for I the LORD do sanctify him” which is repeated again in verse 23 – “for I the LORD do sanctify them”.

The phrases “I am the LORD your God” or “I am the LORD” are repeated over 40 times in the book of Leviticus, chapters 18-27!

We can’t help remembering the unholiness in the lives of Aaron’s sons, Nadab and Abihu referred to in Lev. 10:1-3.

Hosea 5:1 - “Hear this, O priests! Take heed, O house of Israel” Malachi 2:1 - “And now, O priests, this commandment is for you” (read Malachi 2:1-17)

The selection process for the priests involved three main issues as it relates to their holiness:

❖ 1A. PERSONAL DEFILEMENT AS IT RELATES TO REGULAR PRIESTS – 1-9

➤ 1B. The RESTRICTIONS concerning the dead – 1-4

Numbers 19:14 - “This is the law, when a man dies in a tent. All who come into the tent, and all are in the tent, shall be unclean seven days”. v. 16 - “And whoever in the open field touches one who is slain by a sword or who has died, or a bone of a man, or a grave, shall be unclean seven days.” – cf. Mt. 23:27

Ezekiel 44:25 - (to the priests) - “They shall not defile themselves by coming near a dead person. Only for father or mother, for son or daughter, for brother or unmarried sister may the defile themselves.”

➤ 2B. The REQUIREMENT concerning physical appearance - 5

Lev. 19:27-28 (for all people) - “You shall not shave around the sides of your head, nor shall you disfigure the edges of your beard. You shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor tattoo any marks on you: I am the LORD.” (Be balanced! Dress before the LORD because it’s special to come before Him!)

- 3B. The **REASONS** behind these limitations - 6 & 8 (The overall theme of Leviticus!)
 - 1C. The **holiness of God Himself** - 8b
“for I the LORD, who sanctify you, am holy”
“and not profane the name of their God” - cf. *Lev. 19:12* - *“And you shall not swear by my name falsely, nor shall you profane the name of your God: I am the LORD”*. (Don’t use the name of the LORD in a common manner.—I swear by the name of my God that.... Is there anything in your life that is dragging you down?)
 - 2C. The **holiness of the offerings and the bread** - 6
v. 8a It is the *“offerings of the LORD”* and the *“bread of their God”*.
cf. *Malachi 1:6-8, 11-14* (Does God need our best? NO, but we need to know the point of giving Him our best, always! Do all to the glory of God!)
- 4B. The **RELATIONSHIP** of a priest’s family to the issue of holiness - 7 & 9
 - 1C. The **Impact** of his wife’s background - 7
 (both immorality & divorce are forbidden)
cf. *Ezekiel 44:22* – *“They shall not take as wife a widow or a divorced woman, but take virgins of the descendants of the house of Israel, or widows of priests.”* - Cf. *I Tim. 3:11*
 - 2C. The **Importance** of his daughter’s behavior - 9
cf. *I Samuel 2:12, 17, 22-25; 3:13-14*

❖ 2A. SPECIAL **DEMANDS** AS IT RELATES TO THE HIGH PRIEST - 10-15

- 1B. As to his **COVERING** - 10
- 2B. As to his **CARING** for the dead - 11 (no one else can be do the high priest duties)
- 3B. As to the **CONSECRATION** of the anointing oil - 12
- 4B. As to his marital **COMPANION** - 13-15

❖ 3A. PHYSICAL **DEFECTS OR DISABILITIES** FOR ALL PRIESTS - 16-24

- 1B. The **DEMAND** was clear
“No man...may approach to offer the bread of his God.” - *v. 17*
v. 18 - *“...shall not approach”* *v. 21* - *“he shall not come near to offer the bread of his God”*
- 2B. The **DESCRIPTIONS** of a “blemish” were quite extensive - 18-20
- 3B. The **DENIAL** of access did not restrict him for eating the bread - 22
- 4B. The **DESIGN** of God’s worship center **was to picture the need for holiness & purity** - 23
- 5B. The **DETAILS** of these restrictions came from the LORD through Moses, not only to the priests, but **to all the people** – 24 **He is so merciful to those who are honest before Him! Ex. 34: 6; 1 Thess. 4:1-8**