

Leviticus & Hebrews: The Necessity of the Cross

Lesson 14: Christlikeness Through the Cross

Key Verse: *“So you shall keep my commandments and do them: I am the LORD. ³² And you shall not profane my holy name, that I may be sanctified among the people of Israel. I am the LORD who sanctifies you, ³³ who brought you out of the land of Egypt to be your God: I am the LORD.”~Leviticus 22.31-33*

Bumper stickers provide us with a lot of information about the driver in front of us. From quippy and cute to rude and curt, reading the sticker on the car in front of you shapes your opinion of them. Even more, personalized license plates are another external clue that shapes your impression and ideas about the person driving the car in front of you. The Israelite community's lifestyle and decisions were meant to send a message to the other nations surrounding them. Their personalized license plate would have identified them as set apart exclusively for the **LORD!** Through God's process of **sanctification**, He remolded them into being Holy as He is Holy. Their way of life, from marriage to hygiene to their treatment of the disabled to business dealings to worship, was intended to make them an effective bumper sticker providing much information for the people of other nations to ponder about their God.

LORD God, Eternal I AM, Holy are You Alone. We worship You alone, and in full devotion because You are LORD. Sanctify us according to Your promise. Through this lesson have Your Spirit work intimately and personally to root out the sin in our hearts. Make clear where our actions and attitudes are not like Your Son. In Your mercy, change us!

As you read these chapters, highlight every time God identifies Himself as the LORD. Simply highlight the word LORD every time you see it in these chapters.

Leviticus 19.1-22.33 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ²“Speak to all the congregation of the people of Israel and say to them, You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy.

³ Every one of you shall revere his mother and his father, and you shall keep my Sabbaths: I am the LORD your God.

⁴ Do not turn to idols or make for yourselves any gods of cast metal: I am the LORD your God.

⁵ “When you offer a sacrifice of peace offerings to the LORD, you shall offer it so that you may be accepted. ⁶ It shall be eaten the same day you offer it or on the day after, and anything left over until the third day shall be burned up with fire. ⁷ If it is eaten at all on the third day, it is tainted; it will not be accepted, ⁸ and everyone who eats it shall bear his iniquity, because he has profaned what is holy to the LORD, and that person shall be cut off from his people. ⁹ “When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap your field right up to its edge, neither shall you gather the gleanings after your harvest. ¹⁰ And you shall not strip your vineyard bare, neither shall you gather the fallen grapes of your vineyard. You shall leave them for the poor and for the sojourner: I am the LORD your God.

¹¹ “You shall not steal; you shall not deal falsely; you shall not lie to one another. ¹² You shall not swear by my name falsely, and so profane the name of your God: I am the LORD.

¹³ “You shall not oppress your neighbor or rob him. The wages of a hired worker shall not remain with you all night until the morning. ¹⁴ You shall not curse the deaf or put a stumbling block before the blind, but you shall fear your God: I am the LORD.

¹⁵ “You shall do no injustice in court. You shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great, but in righteousness shall you judge your neighbor. ¹⁶ You shall not go around as a slanderer among your people, and you shall not stand up against the life of your neighbor: I am the LORD.

¹⁷ “You shall not hate your brother in your heart, but you shall reason frankly with your neighbor, lest you incur sin because of him. ¹⁸ You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against the sons of your own people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD.

¹⁹ “You shall keep my statutes. You shall not let your cattle breed with a different kind. You shall not sow your field with two kinds of seed, nor shall you wear a garment of cloth made of two kinds of material. ²⁰ “If a man lies sexually with a woman who is a slave, assigned to another man and not yet ransomed or given her freedom, a distinction shall be made. They shall not be put to death, because she was not free; ²¹ but he shall bring his compensation to the LORD, to the entrance of the tent of meeting, a ram for a guilt offering. ²² And the priest shall make atonement for him with the ram of the guilt offering before the LORD for his sin that he has committed, and he shall be forgiven for the sin that he has committed. ²³ “When you come into the land and plant any kind of tree for food, then you shall regard its fruit as forbidden. Three years it shall be forbidden to you; it must not be eaten. ²⁴ And in the fourth year all its fruit shall be holy, an offering of praise to the LORD. ²⁵ But in the fifth year you may eat of its fruit, to increase its yield for you: I am the LORD your God.

²⁶ “You shall not eat any flesh with the blood in it. You shall not interpret omens or tell fortunes. ²⁷ You shall not round off the hair on your temples or mar the edges of your beard. ²⁸ You shall not make any cuts on your body for the dead or tattoo yourselves: I am the LORD.

²⁹ “Do not profane your daughter by making her a prostitute, lest the land fall into prostitution and the land become full of depravity. ³⁰ You shall keep my Sabbaths and reverence my sanctuary: I am the LORD.

³¹ “Do not turn to mediums or necromancers; do not seek them out, and so make yourselves unclean by them: I am the LORD your God.

³² “You shall stand up before the gray head and honor the face of an old man, and you shall fear your God: I am the LORD.

³³ “When a stranger sojourns with you in your land, you shall not do him wrong. ³⁴ You shall treat the stranger who sojourns with you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.

³⁵ “You shall do no wrong in judgment, in measures of length or weight or quantity. ³⁶ You shall have just balances, just weights, a just ephah, and a just hin: I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt. ³⁷ And you shall observe all my statutes and all my rules, and do them: I am the LORD.”

CH 20 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ² “Say to the people of Israel, Any one of the people of Israel or of the strangers who sojourn in Israel who gives any of his children to Molech shall surely be put to death. The people of the land shall stone him with stones. ³ I myself will set my face against that man and will cut him off from among his people, because he has given one of his children to Molech, to make my sanctuary unclean and to profane my holy name. ⁴ And if the people of the land do at all close their eyes to that man when he gives one of his children to Molech, and do not put him to death, ⁵ then I will set my face against that man and against his clan and will cut them off from among their people, him and all who follow him in whoring after Molech. ⁶ “If a person turns to mediums and necromancers, whoring after them, I will set my face against that person and will cut him off from among his people.

⁷ Consecrate yourselves, therefore, and be holy, for I am the LORD your God. ⁸ Keep my statutes and do them; I am the LORD who sanctifies you.

⁹ For anyone who curses his father or his mother shall surely be put to death; he has cursed his father or his mother; his blood is upon him. ¹⁰ “If a man commits adultery with the wife of his neighbor, both the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death. ¹¹ If a man lies with his father's wife, he has uncovered his father's nakedness; both of them shall surely be put to death; their blood is upon them. ¹² If a man lies with his daughter-in-law, both of them shall surely be put to death; they have committed perversion; their blood is upon them. ¹³ If a man lies with a male as with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination; they shall surely be put to death; their blood is upon them. ¹⁴ If a man takes a woman and her mother also, it is depravity; he and they shall be burned with fire, that there may be no depravity among you. ¹⁵ If a man lies with an animal, he shall surely be put to death, and you shall kill the animal. ¹⁶ If a woman approaches any animal and lies with it, you shall kill the woman and the animal; they shall surely be put to death; their blood is upon them. ¹⁷ “If a man takes his sister, a daughter of his father or a daughter of his mother, and sees her nakedness, and she sees his nakedness, it is a disgrace, and they shall be cut off in the sight of the children of their people. He has uncovered his sister's nakedness, and he shall bear his iniquity. ¹⁸ If a man lies with a woman during her menstrual period and uncovers her nakedness, he has made naked her fountain, and she has uncovered the fountain of her blood. Both of them shall be cut off from among their people. ¹⁹ You shall not uncover the nakedness of your mother's sister or of your father's sister, for that is to make naked one's relative; they shall bear their iniquity. ²⁰ If a man lies with his uncle's wife, he has uncovered his uncle's nakedness; they shall bear their sin; they shall die childless. ²¹ If a man takes his brother's wife, it is impurity. He has uncovered his brother's nakedness; they shall be childless.

²² “You shall therefore keep all my statutes and all my rules and do them, that the land where I am bringing you to live may not vomit you out. ²³ And you shall not walk in the customs of the nation that I am driving out before you, for they did all these things, and therefore I detested them.

²⁴ But I have said to you, ‘You shall inherit their land, and I will give it to you to possess, a land flowing with milk and honey.’ I am the LORD your God, who has separated you from the peoples. ²⁵ You shall therefore separate the clean beast from the unclean, and the unclean bird from the clean. You shall not make yourselves detestable by beast or by bird or by anything with which the ground crawls, which I have set apart for you to hold unclean.

²⁶ You shall be holy to me, for I the LORD am holy and have separated you from the peoples, that you should be mine. ²⁷ “A man or a woman who is a medium or a necromancer shall surely be put to death. They shall be stoned with stones; their blood shall be upon them.”

CH 21 And the LORD said to Moses, “Speak to the priests, the sons of Aaron, and say to them, No one shall make himself unclean for the dead among his people, ² except for his closest relatives, his mother, his father, his son, his daughter, his brother, ³ or his virgin sister (who is near to him because she has had no husband; for her he may make himself unclean). ⁴ He shall not make himself unclean as a husband among his people and so profane himself. ⁵ They shall not make bald patches on their heads, nor shave off the edges of their beards, nor make any cuts on their body.

⁶ They shall be holy to their God and not profane the name of their God. For they offer the LORD's food offerings, the bread of their God; therefore they shall be holy. ⁷ They shall not marry a prostitute or a woman who has been defiled, neither shall they marry a woman divorced from her husband, for the priest is holy to his God.

⁸ You shall sanctify him, for he offers the bread of your God. He shall be holy to you, for I, the LORD, who sanctify you, am holy. ⁹ And the daughter of any priest, if she profanes herself by whoring, profanes her father; she shall be burned with fire.

¹⁰ “The priest who is chief among his brothers, on whose head the anointing oil is poured and who has been consecrated to wear the garments, shall not let the hair of his head hang loose nor tear his clothes. ¹¹ He shall not go in to any dead bodies nor make himself unclean, even for his father or for his mother. ¹² He shall not go out of the sanctuary, lest he profane the sanctuary of his God, for the consecration of the anointing oil of his God is on him: I am the LORD. ¹³ And he shall take a wife in her virginity. ¹⁴ A widow, or a divorced woman, or a woman who has been defiled, or a prostitute, these he shall not marry. But he shall take as his wife a virgin of his own people, ¹⁵ that he may not profane his offspring among his people, for I am the LORD who sanctifies him.”

¹⁶ And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ¹⁷ “Speak to Aaron, saying, None of your offspring throughout their generations who has a blemish may approach to offer the bread of his God. ¹⁸ For no one who has a blemish shall draw near, a man blind or lame, or one who has a mutilated face or a limb too long, ¹⁹ or a man who has an injured foot or an injured hand, ²⁰ or a hunchback or a dwarf or a man with a defect in his sight or an itching disease or scabs or crushed testicles. ²¹ No man of the offspring of Aaron the priest who has a blemish shall come near to offer the LORD’s food offerings; since he has a blemish, he shall not come near to offer the bread of his God. ²² He may eat the bread of his God, both of the most holy and of the holy things, ²³ but he shall not go through the veil or approach the altar, because he has a blemish, that he may not profane my sanctuaries, for I am the LORD who sanctifies them.”

²⁴ So Moses spoke to Aaron and to his sons and to all the people of Israel.

CH 22 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ² “Speak to Aaron and his sons so that they abstain from the holy things of the people of Israel, which they dedicate to me, so that they do not profane my holy name: I am the LORD. ³ Say to them, ‘If any one of all your offspring throughout your generations approaches the holy things that the people of Israel dedicate to the LORD, while he has an uncleanness, that person shall be cut off from my presence: I am the LORD.

⁴ None of the offspring of Aaron who has a leprous disease or a discharge may eat of the holy things until he is clean. Whoever touches anything that is unclean through contact with the dead or a man who has had an emission of semen, ⁵ and whoever touches a swarming thing by which he may be made unclean or a person from whom he may take uncleanness, whatever his uncleanness may be— ⁶ the person who touches such a thing shall be unclean until the evening and shall not eat of the holy things unless he has bathed his body in water. ⁷ When the sun goes down he shall be clean, and afterward he may eat of the holy things, because they are his food.

⁸ He shall not eat what dies of itself or is torn by beasts, and so make himself unclean by it: I am the LORD.’ ⁹ They shall therefore keep my charge, lest they bear sin for it and die thereby when they profane it: I am the LORD who sanctifies them.

¹⁰ “A lay person shall not eat of a holy thing; no foreign guest of the priest or hired worker shall eat of a holy thing, ¹¹ but if a priest buys a slave as his property for money, the slave may eat of it, and anyone born in his house may eat of his food. ¹² If a priest’s daughter marries a layman, she shall not eat of the contribution of the holy things. ¹³ But if a priest’s daughter is widowed or divorced and has no child and returns to her father’s house, as in her youth, she may eat of her father’s food; yet no lay person shall eat of it. ¹⁴ And if anyone eats of a holy thing unintentionally, he shall add the fifth of its value to it and give the holy thing to the priest.

¹⁵ They shall not profane the holy things of the people of Israel, which they contribute to the LORD, ¹⁶ and so cause them to bear iniquity and guilt, by eating their holy things: for I am the LORD who sanctifies them.”

¹⁷ And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ¹⁸ “Speak to Aaron and his sons and all the people of Israel and say to them, When any one of the house of Israel or of the sojourners in Israel presents a burnt offering as his offering, for any of their vows or freewill offerings that they offer to the LORD, ¹⁹ if it is to be accepted for you it shall be a male without blemish, of the bulls or the sheep or the goats. ²⁰ You shall not offer anything that has a blemish, for it will not be acceptable for you.

²¹ And when anyone offers a sacrifice of peace offerings to the LORD to fulfill a vow or as a freewill offering from the herd or from the flock, to be accepted it must be perfect; there shall be no blemish in it. ²² Animals blind or disabled or mutilated or having a discharge or an itch or scabs you shall not offer to the LORD or give them to the LORD as a food offering on the altar. ²³ You may present a bull or a lamb that has a part too long or too short for a freewill offering, but for a vow offering it cannot be accepted. ²⁴ Any animal that has its testicles bruised or crushed or torn or cut you shall not offer to the LORD; you shall not do it within your land, ²⁵ neither shall you offer as the bread of your God any such animals gotten from a foreigner. Since there is a blemish in them, because of their mutilation, they will not be accepted for you.”

²⁶ And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ²⁷ “When an ox or sheep or goat is born, it shall remain seven days with its mother, and from the eighth day on it shall be acceptable as a food offering to the LORD. ²⁸ But you shall not kill an ox or a sheep and her young in one day.

²⁹ And when you sacrifice a sacrifice of thanksgiving to the LORD, you shall sacrifice it so that you may be accepted. ³⁰ It shall be eaten on the same day; you shall leave none of it until morning: I am the LORD. ³¹ “So you shall keep my commandments and do them: I am the LORD.

³² And you shall not profane my holy name, that I may be sanctified among the people of Israel. I am the LORD who sanctifies you, ³³ who brought you out of the land of Egypt to be your God: I am the LORD.”

Diamonds: The Ten Commandments (Exodus 20) are an overlay to the commands God provides His people in these four chapters. Consider what God saw in His redeemed people at this time in history. God’s instructions and commandments in Exodus 20 and these four chapters illuminate just how soiled His people’s hearts had become.

1. Read the Ten Commandments in Exodus 20.1-17. This isn’t a list of God’s praises for His people’s clean hearts overflowing with good behaviors towards one another! What do God’s ten commandments teach us about the condition of our hearts? What is found in the heart of a member of God’s covenant community?

Leviticus 19 deals with worship and social causes within the Israelite community. The tie between these two broad themes reveals God’s compassionate understanding of how broken society has become, leaving a marginalized population within

His own community. Thus, He demands that His children love one another as they love themselves (Leviticus 19.18). Prioritizing others in the same light in which they prioritized themselves was especially crucial in this time period. The worship and prayers of fellow community members with disabling conditions and/or circumstances was at risk. God's people needed to actively care for those in need. In addition, God's command to prioritize love of others is tied to one's heart (19.17-18).

2. Read about Jesus' interactions with the religious lawyers and scholars of His day in both Mark 12.28-34 and Luke 10.25-37. How does Jesus tie the command in Leviticus 19.18 to both the technical detail of the Law as well as the condition of the heart?

In Leviticus 20, God is direct and firm in His demands that His people not engage in *any* of the practices of pagan nations, focusing on sorcery, pursuing mediums to know "God's will", and common pagan sexual practices. This is a matter of actual life and death for His people. Additionally, God's reminder that they are entering and living in a land "flowing with milk and honey" was set against their current dry, dusty, and landfill-like living conditions (20.24).

3. What does God say is His motivation and intention for His people as they live in the land He has provided for them (see Leviticus 20.26)?
4. How does Paul argue and exhort God's same intention and motivation in Hebrews 3 and 4?

The instructions in Leviticus 21 and 22 remind all the priests of the necessity of their personal devotion to the holy things of God as well as in holding God's people to His commands of perfection within the sacrificial system. Embedded in the instructions for the Levitical priests in chapter 21 is the higher bar for the high priest (21.10-14). Recall that the people's obedience to these sacrificial requirements were more than an exercise of their livestock practices. Rather, their obedience revealed their attitude toward God Himself. As Dr. Morales states, "One's approach to God is the surest dissection and deepest revelation of the heart."¹

5. From Leviticus 22, what were the consequences for priests who disobeyed God in their own personal lifestyle choices?
6. From Leviticus 22, what were the consequences to God's people for the priest's disobedience of God's commands?
7. What do you imagine it would feel like to live under the consequences of this system and accountability of priesthood? (Read Malachi 1.6-8, where we see the fruit of Israel's disobedience in worship.)

Deity: LORD~ (Leviticus 19.1-2; 22.21-33) "The most common name for God in the Old Testament is Yahweh (more than 6,800 times)...derived from the tetragrammaton (the four Hebrew consonants transliterated into English as 'YHWH'). God revealed this name as 'His name' and 'My name forever' at the burning bush (Exodus 3.13-15). It speaks of God's eternal and unchanging nature...the name indicates that God 'is' and 'wills to be'. The name implies that He has no beginning, will have no ending, and is ever present. This name also implies that His being is derived from His own self-determination to be and to be what He is, so He is eternally who and what he is."²

8. Using your highlights of God's name LORD, what pattern(s) do you notice about God, and/or His instructions from these four chapters?

¹ Morales, p.126

² MacArthur & Mayhue, pp. 155-156

12. Notice the contrast between the adjectives describing our hearts without the Holy Spirit (part A) to those adjectives that best describe sanctified hearts (part B). Which contrast is best described as God “work in progress” in your heart? Which contrast most reminds you of His work in your heart and encourages your faith?

Your Scripture-Soaked Prayer:

Lecture Outline:

Aim: Sacred living is God’s plan for His people.

- I. Sacred People (Leviticus 19-20) TR1: Sacred living proclaims God’s holy name to a watching world.
 - a. What does “sacred living” look like in your life? If you carefully examined the way you live and the decisions you make, what would your bumper sticker or license plate say?
 - b. How confident are you that your life would line up to God’s command to be holy?
 - c. What does your behavior reveal to the watching world?
- II. Sacred Priests (Leviticus 21-22) TR2: Sacred living guards against profaning God’s holy name.
 - a. In what ways might you be profaning God’s holy name?
 - b. How might you sanctify your choices to guard against profaning God’s holy name?
 - c. How will you proclaim His holy character among the people in your sphere of influence?

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Morales, L. Michael, *Who Shall Ascend the Mountain of the Lord?*, (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2015) pp.15-107, 185-220
Sklar, Jay, *Leviticus*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2014) pp. 241-276