

INTRODUCTION: LEVITICUS 20

- This week we looked at the Holiness Laws in Leviticus 19-20
- This section begins with the statement... you shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy

Leviticus 19:2 (NKJV)

²“Speak to all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say to them: ‘You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God *am* holy.’

Before we get into what it means to be holy

- I want us to understand how we become holy
- The LORD says... you shall be holy... the word in Hebrew suggests that holiness is actively at work in you and will be completed in the future
- On one hand you are declared holy by God when you are born again
- You are set apart for His exclusive use
- On the other hand, holiness is a process by which you are transformed from the inside out by the power of God
- It’s not something you choose, it’s not something you strive for... it is something that God does in you by His Spirit
- Thus, when God says you will be holy for I am holy there are several layers of meaning

The first layer is simply that our holiness comes from God

Leviticus 20:8 (NKJV)

⁸And you shall keep My statutes, and perform them: I *am* the LORD who sanctifies you (who makes you holy).

- God is holy and because He is holy and we are One with Him in Christ, His holiness becomes our holiness

Isaiah prophesied...

Isaiah 43:7 (NKJV)

⁷ Everyone who is called by My name, Whom I have created for My glory; I have formed him, yes, I have made him.”

- God makes you physically... God makes you spiritually
- He is the ONE who makes you holy... it is the work of His Spirit in you
- It’s not something you can do for yourself...

- You can't make yourself holy through your actions
- God does it in you by giving us opportunities to grow through obedience
- This brings us to the second layer of meaning

The second layer of meaning is...

- Holiness is a process that we participate in
- God gives us opportunities to grow through supernatural grace encounters that elevate us, raise us up to life above the norm
- 90 times in 53 verses (Leviticus 19-20) the word "shall" is used and each time it is used is an opportunity for you and I to say YES to God
- When I say YES to God through my actions... God adds His YES to my YES and His power is released in my life and I am raised up, elevated, resurrected to new life supernaturally
- One of the definitions for holiness is "above and beyond" ("to infinity and beyond")
- The life we've been given by God is a life that is above the norm
- It is above the norms of culture, above the norms of our upbringing, above the norms of our traditions, above the norms of our beliefs, above the norms of our experiences... it is a supernatural life
- It is separate, it is different from the way the world operates
- Instead of being governed by logic or by justice or by rules and regulation... a holy life is a life that is governed by the love of God

Leviticus 19:18 (NKJV)

18 You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD.

- The basis of the holiness laws is loving one another

Paul wrote to the Galatians...

Galatians 5:13–15 (NKJV)

13 For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. 14 For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." 15 But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another!

- Love is the evidence holiness AND Galatians 5:22 says the evidence of the Spirit's work in our lives is love (agape love)

The third layer of meaning is...

- Our holiness is rooted in our identity and our identity is simply this... we belong to God... God says you are mine

Leviticus 20:26 (NKJV)

26 (I) have separated you from the peoples, that you should be Mine (I AM).

- The word "MINE" is the word "ani" and it's better translated "I AM"
- It is the same word that is used when God says my name is "I AM"
- In other words, once I am born again by the Spirit of God my identity changes... I become ONE with God...
- Eve was ONE with Adam and both of them together were called Adam
- That is how it is with you and I... when we are born again, in Christ God sees us as ONE with Jesus and everything given to Jesus is given to us
- The tense of the verb suggests this is without limitations
- Anyone, any person, any age, male or female, in any number can become ONE with God

There are 3 words that define our identity in the Old Testament

- First we are children of God (bene Yisrael)

Leviticus 1 reads...

Leviticus 1:1–2 (NKJV)

1 Now the LORD called to Moses, and spoke to him from the tabernacle of meeting, saying, **2** "Speak to the children of Israel

Like a good Father, God cares for His children

Isaiah 43:1–3 (NKJV)

43 But now, thus says the LORD, who created you, O Jacob, And He who formed you, O Israel: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called *you* by your name; You *are* Mine. **2** When you pass through the waters, I *will be* with you; And through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned, Nor shall the flame scorch you. **3** For I *am* the LORD your God, The Holy One of Israel, your Savior;

- God says... He never leaves you or forsakes you but He is with you
- When you're going through the storms, when the waters are rising all around you, when the floods look like they're going to overtake you or the fire is about to burn you and you're crying out God where are you?
- God says... I am there with you and I am the ONE saving you
- When 9-11 happened people said... where is God?
- God was in every first responder who ran into danger to save the people from destruction
- God was in every pastor, every person praying for and grieving with those who lost loved ones because of this terrorist attack

And as God's children you have never had a moment in your life where you were not loved

Jeremiah 31:2–3 (NKJV)

² Thus says the LORD: "The people who survived the sword Found grace in the wilderness— Israel, when I went to give him rest." ³ The LORD has appeared of old to me, *saying*: "Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love; Therefore with lovingkindness I have drawn you.

- You might say... I don't feel loved by God... I feel judged by God
- And yet, you are here... you are listening online... something or should I say someone has drawn you
- God Himself draws you by His grace to have the opportunity to receive His everlasting love

Second we are witnesses of God's power

Leviticus 19:2 (NKJV)

² "Speak to all the congregation of the children of Israel

- The word congregation is the Hebrew word "adat" and it is translated witnesses
- As studied in Exodus the first time Israel is referred to as a congregation is Exodus 12 with Passover
- Passover is when Israel experienced God's power to save and they were delivered from bondage to Egypt
- From that moment on, they were no longer simply children of God, but witnesses of His power

Isaiah 43:10–12 (NKJV)

¹⁰ “You *are* My witnesses,” says the LORD, “And My servant whom I have chosen, That you may know and believe Me, And understand that I *am* He. Before Me there was no God formed, Nor shall there be after Me. ¹¹ I, *even* I, *am* the LORD, And besides Me *there is* no savior. ¹² I have declared and saved, I have proclaimed, And *there was* no foreign *god* among you; Therefore you *are* My witnesses,” Says the LORD, “that I *am* God.

- Now this is something God comes back to over and over again
- Israel saw the power of God and once you’ve experienced God’s power you are changed
- You cannot live as if God doesn’t exist
- You cannot go on living however you want to live... you have to take into consideration what God has done... if not in your own life, then in the life of those you know
- I can’t look at the nation of Israel, a nation that didn’t exist in modern times before 1948 and in one day became a nation according to prophecy and ignore God
- I cannot say I believe in God and ignore His Word, ignore worship, believe what I want about Him
- I cannot claim ignorance... I’m a witness of His power
- Through His Word and His actions, God reveals Himself to man
- He reveals there is no other God, there is no other Savior... but more than all that... He reveals Himself to us that we may know and believe Him... not in Him... but believe Him
- Because He is the God who keeps His Word you can believe Him
- Because He is the God who remains faithful to Israel even when Israel is unfaithful to Him... you can trust Him
- His past faithfulness demands our present trust

Third we are called out ones

- The first time the children of Israel is referred to as “called out ones” is in Exodus 12:6 in reference to Passover
- It is the Hebrew word “kehal” and it’s translated assembly
- But in the Septuagint it is translated “ekklesia” or “church”
- After Passover, Israel’s identity was forever linked to their redemption

They were known as those who were called out of Egypt

Leviticus 19:36 (NKJV)

³⁶ You shall have honest scales, honest weights, an honest ephah, and an honest hin: I *am* the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt.

- Egypt is always a type of bondage to sin and death and the world
- And because God has called us out of bondage we are not to live according to the old ways of living... we are to live as new creations
- The old is past, behold all things have become and are becoming NEW!

Isaiah 43:16–19 (NKJV)

¹⁶ Thus says the LORD, who makes a way in the sea And a path through the mighty waters, ¹⁷ Who brings forth the chariot and horse, The army and the power (They shall lie down together, they shall not rise; They are extinguished, they are quenched like a wick): ¹⁸ “Do not remember the former things, Nor consider the things of old. ¹⁹ Behold, I will do a new thing, Now it shall spring forth; Shall you not know it? I will even make a road in the wilderness *And* rivers in the desert.

- Think about it... Israel was in bondage 400 years
- How do you unsee that? How do you unlive that? Through forgiveness
- Bitterness keeps you locked in the past
- It never lets you forget the former things
- It keeps you thinking about the things of old
- The biggest sign of bitterness is when you see yourself or others through past sins and transgressions
- Forgiveness let's you see the new
- Forgiveness let's you leave the past behind

Jesus said...

Luke 6:37–38 (NKJV)

³⁷ “Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. ³⁸ Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.”

- Some of you struggle with condemnation because you haven't forgiven