

Lesson 3 – 15 May, 2011

The Holy Laws—Separation

Lesson Scope: [Leviticus 11-22](#)

Lesson Focus

Chapter 11 begins a new section, dealing with the laws of separation. These laws were given with purpose and significance. Verses 24 and 25 of chapter 20 put this into perspective. God had more in mind than physical health. Israel was to make a difference between clean and unclean beasts and fowl because God had separated them "from other people." He knew what was needed to prevent them from gravitating to the sinful practices of their heathen neighbors.

In order for man to maintain access to God, he must separate himself from the unholy. The Levitical Law drew a visible line of separation for and presents principles in type for New Testament separation.

We see the reference to the fact that God had more in mind than physical health when He gave the laws of separation. The inference is that God did have the physical health of Israel in mind. The aim does not call for such a consideration, but it may at least be noted that these laws were based upon sound laws of health. A close look at these laws from this perspective verifies the sanitary wisdom of them all. In regard to leprosy, the whole community was to be safeguarded by the careful handling of each case. This perspective of the text is to be noted, Christians are especially concerned about following good health practices.

This lesson is of vital importance to the maintaining of the faith. Separation is a cardinal doctrine and is the outworking of Biblical principles. Holiness of life is the very essence of being separate from the world.

Lesson Aim: To portray the spiritual significance of the Levitical laws of separation.

Theme Verses: [2 Corinthians 6:17-18](#). Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing: and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

Lesson Text:

"I Am Holy"

Leviticus 11:45

For I *am* the LORD that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: ye shall therefore be holy, for I *am* holy.

"Keep Mine Ordinances"

Leviticus 11:46-47

This *is* the law of the beasts, and of the fowl, and of every living creature that moveth in the waters, and of every creature that creepeth upon the earth: ⁴⁷To make a difference between the unclean and the clean, and between the beast that may be eaten and the beast that may not be eaten.

Leviticus 13:2-3

When a man shall have in the skin of his flesh a rising, a scab, or a bright spot, and it be in the skin of his flesh *like* the plague of leprosy; then he shall be brought unto Aaron the priest, or unto one of his sons the priests: ³And the priest shall look on the plague in the skin of the flesh: and *when* the hair in the plague is turned white, and the plague in sight *be* deeper than the skin of his flesh, it *is* a plague of leprosy: and the priest shall look on him, and pronounce him unclean.

Leviticus 17:10

And whatsoever man *there be* of the house of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, that eateth any manner of blood; I will even set my face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among his people.

Leviticus 18:3-4

After the doings of the land of Egypt, wherein ye dwelt, shall ye not do: and after the doings of the land of Canaan, whither I bring you, shall ye not do: neither shall ye walk in their ordinances. ⁴Ye shall do my judgments, and keep mine ordinances, to walk therein: I *am* the LORD your God.

Leviticus 19:14-18

Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put a stumblingblock before the blind, but shalt fear thy God: I *am* the LORD.

¹⁵Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty: *but* in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour.

¹⁶Thou shalt not go up and down *as* a talebearer among thy people: neither shalt thou stand against the blood of thy neighbour: I *am* the LORD.

¹⁷Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him.

¹⁸Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I *am* the LORD.

[Leviticus 19:31](#)

Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards, to be defiled by them: I *am* the LORD your God.

[Leviticus 20:2-3](#)

Again, thou shalt say to the children of Israel, Whosoever *he be* of the children of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn in Israel, that giveth *any* of his seed unto Molech; he shall surely be put to death: the people of the land shall stone him with stones. ³And I will set my face against that man, and will cut him off from among his people; because he hath given of his seed unto Molech, to defile my sanctuary, and to profane my holy name.

"Be Holy Unto Me"

[Leviticus 20:26](#)

And ye shall be holy unto me: for I the LORD *am* holy, and have severed you from *other* people, that ye should be mine.

Questions for Study

"I Am Holy"

1. Upon what basis can man be holy?

"Keep Mine Ordinances"

2. What spiritual lessons did God communicate to Israel by the division between clean and unclean creatures?

3. What principles of separation are taught by the identification and treatment of leprosy?

4. Why was Israel forbidden to eat blood?

5. Why was it necessary for God to give detailed instruction concerning interpersonal relationships?

6. Why is tampering with the occult so serious?

"Be Holy Unto Me"

7. What are some practical involvements of Scriptural separation from society?

Analyzing the Passage

The underlying premise of this passage is the holiness of God. Therefore, if Israel was to identify with Him, as He had planned, they too must be holy. The "doings of the land of Egypt ... and ... Canaan (Leviticus 18:3) were godless and sensual. Israel was not to follow them. Rather, God called them to a higher and nobler walk. It affected what they ate: the community

was to be safeguarded from the spread of disease, and a high premium was placed upon life.

The verses from chapter 19 relate to holiness in respect to human relationships. The royal law of love shines through these directives. The heathen about them were not living by this law.

In the light of God's law, what could be more hideous than offering one's children to an idol? (Leviticus 20:2) We can understand why this sin was punished so severely.

Principles and Applications

"I Am Holy"

1. God's holiness requires that His people also be holy (Leviticus 11:45). He cannot dwell in the presence of sin. He has provided cleansing from all that is unholy, but it is the responsibility of His people to separate themselves from all that defiles and to walk in holiness.

"Keep Mine Ordinances"

2. God has given careful instruction as to how His people shall live (Leviticus 11:40, 47). The Law spelled out restrictions in detail. In the New Testament, many directives are given in principle form, and the one law is the law of love. We carry the responsibility to avoid the snares of the world. We dare not to follow their proud and sensual practices. James wrote, "Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?" And in Romans we read, "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed."

3. The corrupting nature of sin demands that we be identifying and dealing with it (Leviticus 13:2-3). Sin is deceptive: it can grow and spread rapidly in a person's life. It is contagious and, if unchecked, will influence others to sin. We must closely guard our lives and jealously guard the brotherhood against its defiling influences.

4. The prohibition against eating blood pointed to its sacred role in redemption (Leviticus 17:10). Christ gave His life: He shed His blood. And beyond human life is sacred because man is created in the image of God. What God holds sacred, we also must hold sacred. We may not make light of the Scriptures, the ordinances, the church, or other sacred matters. We are called to live "soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world" (Titus 2:12).

5. To walk according to God's laws is to choose life (Leviticus 18:3-5). True pleasure and fulfillment are found in serving the Lord. God's laws raise life to God's original intention. The plan of redemption makes possi-

ble eternal life. What was lost in the Fall is restored in redemption, either presently or in the future.

6. Godly social relationships rest on the principle of loving one's neighbour as oneself (Leviticus 19:14-18). The Levitical Law shows us how to love, but only God's grace makes it possible. Christian brotherhood is love on display. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another (John 13:35). It is godly to be courteous and kind. Love does not hold a grudge or seek revenge, but neither does it overlook sin.

7. Spiritual adultery merits divine wrath and destruction. (Leviticus 19:31, 20:21-3). The disciples of Christ may not flirt with the world. Much less may they follow occult practices and sacrifice their children to the world. Satan is flooding the world with occult influence. This will increase as the end of time approaches. Protestant influences are always knocking at our door with a faith that does not require discipleship.

"Be Holy Unto Me"

8. The Lord desires a holy people to call His own (Leviticus 20:26). God's love is true; His desire is holy, and He is able to accomplish His purposes. But He created man with powers of reason, allowing him to choose. Therefore, We must choose Him and obey His law to be one of His. We must love Him with our whole heart and serve Him in all sincerity.

Important Teachings

1. God's holiness requires that His people also be holy (Leviticus 11:45).
2. God has given careful instruction as to how His people shall live (Leviticus 11:46-47).
3. The corrupting nature of sin demands that we be diligent in identifying and dealing with it (Leviticus 13:2-3).
4. The prohibition against eating blood pointed to its sacred role in redemption (Leviticus 17:10).
5. To walk according to God's laws is to choose life (Leviticus 18:3-5).
6. Godly social relationships rest on the principle of loving one's neighbor as oneself (Leviticus 19:14-18).
7. Spiritual adultery merits divine wrath and destruction (Leviticus 19:31; 20:2-3)
8. The Lord desires a holy people to call His own (Leviticus 20:26).

Answers to Questions

1. Upon what basis can man be holy?

It was the work of God that delivered Israel from Egypt, and it is the

grace of God that delivers us from sin. Like Israel, we are called to the obedience of faith. Righteous living is a choice to walk in accordance with God's will. The practice of sin is a denial of faith. Holiness is a matter of forgiveness, cleansing, and victorious Christian living.

2. What spiritual lessons did God communicate to Israel by the division between clean and unclean creatures?

Through this division Israel was reminded that they belonged to God. They were receiving their directives from God rather than from the nations around them. Israel was also made aware of their responsibility to choose in God's favor. Their obedience or disobedience to these dietary laws helped them to evaluate their loyalty to God. God's laws reminded them that He makes a difference between right and wrong.

3. What principles of separation are taught by the identification and treatment of leprosy?

First, sin is contagious and it spreads. "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump" (Galatians 5:9). "Evil communications corrupt good manners" (1 Corinthians 15:33). Second, caution must be used in passing judgment upon another person's life. Time is needed for evaluation. Third, restoration is possible. The goal of discipline is repentance and reinstatement.

4. Why was Israel forbidden to eat blood?

This law follows the instructions for the observance of the great Day of Atonement and the instructions concerning sacrifices in general. Blood was to be held sacred because it is the seat of life, and God has set it apart as the medium of redemption. This law also reminded Israel that human life was sacred. The blood of sacrifices pointed forward to the precious blood of Christ that was shed on Calvary. This law served as a constant reminder of these truths.

5. Why was it necessary for God to give detailed instruction concerning interpersonal relationships?

Human nature is depraved, sensual, and selfish. Israel needed to be taught how to live righteously. Their natural tendency was to live like their heathen neighbors, but God was calling them to holiness. His laws elevate life to a platform of holiness that puts meaning and purpose into life. The society about us may not be our guide; we need divine illumination to live righteously.

6. Why is tampering with the occult so serious?

The occult brings a person into direct contact with the influence of Satan, God's enemy. To meddle with such power is to accept direction from the

devil. The world is in the clutches of Satan; therefore the Christian can have no fellowship with the works of darkness. "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate."

7. What are some practical involvements of Scriptural separation from society?

We may not yoke with the world in business involvements. We refuse to follow the fads and fashions of the world. We practice temperance and sobriety (Peter 4:3-4). We reject the philosophies of the world in favor of Scriptural directives.

Summarizing the Lesson

The lesson begins with the truth that redemption is the work of God. He wants to be our God! It closes with God's desire that we be His children. Between those two declarations lies the need for us to make a choice. The way is plain; a separation is required; and the only law is God's law. "And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve" (Joshua 24:15).

Research Guide

Read the chapter titled "Nonconformity to the World" in *Doctrines of the Bible*. (Daniel Kauffman) This chapter gives detail and breadth to the subject of this lesson.