

Day 142 – MONDAY: May 1st

Leviticus 21 & 22

**Leviticus 21:1-24 NKJV**

And the LORD said to Moses, "Speak to the priests, the sons of Aaron, and say to them: 'None shall defile himself for the dead among his people, except for his relatives who are nearest to him: his mother, his father, his son, his daughter, and his brother; also his virgin sister who is near to him, who has had no husband, for her he may defile himself. Otherwise he shall not defile himself, being a chief man among his people, to profane himself. 'They shall not make any bald place on their heads, nor shall they shave the edges of their beards nor make any cuttings in their flesh. They shall be holy to their God and not profane the name of their God, for they offer the offerings of the LORD made by fire, and the bread of their God; therefore they shall be holy. They shall not take a wife who is a harlot or a defiled woman, nor shall they take a woman divorced from her husband; for the priest is holy to his God. Therefore you shall consecrate him, for he offers the bread of your God. He shall be holy to you, for I the LORD, who sanctify

you, am holy. The daughter of any priest, if she profanes herself by playing the harlot, she profanes her father. She shall be burned with fire. 'He who is the high priest among his brethren, on whose head the anointing oil was poured and who is consecrated to wear the garments, shall not uncover his head nor tear his clothes; nor shall he go near any dead body, nor defile himself for his father or his mother; nor shall he go out of the sanctuary, nor profane the sanctuary of his God; for the consecration of the anointing oil of his God is upon him: I am the LORD. And he shall take a wife in her virginity. A widow or a divorced woman or a defiled woman or a harlot—these he shall not marry; but he shall take a virgin of his own people as wife. Nor shall he profane his posterity among his people, for I the LORD sanctify him.' " And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to Aaron, saying: 'No man of your descendants in succeeding generations, who has any defect, may approach to offer the bread of his God. For any man who has a defect shall not approach: a man blind or lame, who has a marred face or any limb too long, a man who has a broken foot or broken hand, or is a hunchback or a dwarf, or a man who has a defect in his eye, or eczema or scab, or is a eunuch. No man of the descendants of

Aaron the priest, who has a defect, shall come near to offer the offerings made by fire to the LORD. He has a defect; he shall not come near to offer the bread of his God. He may eat the bread of his God, both the most holy and the holy; only he shall not go near the veil or approach the altar, because he has a defect, lest he profane My sanctuaries; for I the LORD sanctify them.' " And Moses told it to Aaron and his sons, and to all the children of Israel.

### **Leviticus 22:1-33 NKJV**

Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to Aaron and his sons, that they separate themselves from the holy things of the children of Israel, and that they do not profane My holy name by what they dedicate to Me: I am the LORD. Say to them: 'Whoever of all your descendants throughout your generations, who goes near the holy things which the children of Israel dedicate to the LORD, while he has uncleanness upon him, that person shall be cut off from My presence: I am the LORD. 'Whatever man of the descendants of Aaron, who is a leper or has a discharge, shall not eat the holy offerings until he is clean. And whoever touches anything made unclean by a corpse,

or a man who has had an emission of semen, or whoever touches any creeping thing by which he would be made unclean, or any person by whom he would become unclean, whatever his uncleanness may be— the person who has touched any such thing shall be unclean until evening, and shall not eat the holy offerings unless he washes his body with water. And when the sun goes down he shall be clean; and afterward he may eat the holy offerings, because it is his food. Whatever dies naturally or is torn by beasts he shall not eat, to defile himself with it: I am the LORD. 'They shall therefore keep My ordinance, lest they bear sin for it and die thereby, if they profane it: I the LORD sanctify them. 'No outsider shall eat the holy offering; one who dwells with the priest, or a hired servant, shall not eat the holy thing. But if the priest buys a person with his money, he may eat it; and one who is born in his house may eat his food. If the priest's daughter is married to an outsider, she may not eat of the holy offerings. But if the priest's daughter is a widow or divorced, and has no child, and has returned to her father's house as in her youth, she may eat her father's food; but no outsider shall eat it. 'And if a man eats the holy offering unintentionally, then he shall restore a holy offering to the priest, and add one-fifth to it. They

shall not profane the holy offerings of the children of Israel, which they offer to the LORD, or allow them to bear the guilt of trespass when they eat their holy offerings; for I the LORD sanctify them.' " And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to Aaron and his sons, and to all the children of Israel, and say to them: 'Whatever man of the house of Israel, or of the strangers in Israel, who offers his sacrifice for any of his vows or for any of his freewill offerings, which they offer to the LORD as a burnt offering— you shall offer of your own free will a male without blemish from the cattle, from the sheep, or from the goats. Whatever has a defect, you shall not offer, for it shall not be acceptable on your behalf. And whoever offers a sacrifice of a peace offering to the LORD, to fulfill his vow, or a freewill offering from the cattle or the sheep, it must be perfect to be accepted; there shall be no defect in it. Those that are blind or broken or maimed, or have an ulcer or eczema or scabs, you shall not offer to the LORD, nor make an offering by fire of them on the altar to the LORD. Either a bull or a lamb that has any limb too long or too short you may offer as a freewill offering, but for a vow it shall not be accepted. 'You shall not offer to the LORD what is bruised or crushed, or torn or cut; nor shall you make any offering of them in your

land. Nor from a foreigner's hand shall you offer any of these as the bread of your God, because their corruption is in them, and defects are in them. They shall not be accepted on your behalf.' " And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: "When a bull or a sheep or a goat is born, it shall be seven days with its mother; and from the eighth day and thereafter it shall be accepted as an offering made by fire to the LORD. Whether it is a cow or ewe, do not kill both her and her young on the same day. And when you offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving to the LORD, offer it of your own free will. On the same day it shall be eaten; you shall leave none of it until morning: I am the LORD. "Therefore you shall keep My commandments, and perform them: I am the LORD. You shall not profane My holy name, but I will be hallowed among the children of Israel. I am the LORD who sanctifies you, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: I am the LORD."

### **Daily Deep Dive:**

Here is the UCG reading plan summary for both chapter 21 & 22: "Because God is holy, His priests, who serve Him and represent Him to His people, must also be holy.

This chapter details several regulations concerning only the priesthood.

God is eternal and wholly separate from sin. Human death is the product of sin. So, God's priests must be separate from defilement through death. To accomplish this, the priests were forbidden to become defiled with the death of any person who was not a direct and close family member. Proper mourning was appropriate, and hence mourning for a father or mother, brother or sister, son or daughter was permitted. But otherwise, the priest had to be kept far from the defilement of the dead. For the high priest, even defilement for parents was not permitted, nor outward signs of mourning allowed.

Again, tonsures, certain beard trimming and body piercing for the priests are prohibited. Such practices were pagan in origin and God wanted His priesthood to be distinctively non-pagan.

Priestly marriages were also subject to stipulations not bound upon the average Israelite. In the case of the high priest, it very clearly states that he could marry only an Israelite virgin. Moreover, the priests of God had to be physically unblemished to perform certain rites. A blemished or deformed priest could not enter within the

Holy Place, nor could he officiate at the altar. He could, however, engage in the other duties of the priesthood and partake of the offerings. The spiritual parallels with Jesus Christ, our High Priest, should be obvious.

Not only did the priests' conduct and station in life have to be holy before a holy God, but even their momentary circumstances had to be holy. To officiate at the altar, a priest had to have no ritual defilement upon him. If defiled by disease, bodily discharge, a dead body, a discharge of semen (which may have symbolized the unfruitful going forth of life), an unclean animal, an unclean person, or by any other means, the priest could not officiate until he was ritually cleansed. Ritual *uncleanness* was representative of *sin*. And the holy God cannot be defiled by sin—so everything connected with approach to Him must be without its stain.

Furthermore, if defiled, the priest could not partake of the holy offerings. The priests received portions of certain offerings, which they and their immediate families could eat. But those who partook of the offerings had to also be ritually pure. Thus, as we can see, those who serve God and benefit from His service, must all be clean. As Christians, we have cleansing through the blood of Christ (1 John 1:7),



without which we cannot come to the Father, and through Christ we have access to holy things (Hebrews 13:10; compare 1 Corinthians 10:16–18; 1 Peter 2:5). Since the Church is the Israel of God (Galatians 6:16), intended to show forth the praises of God to the world (1 Peter 2:9), it too must be cleansed, without spot, and holy.

The concluding portions of this section deal with sacrificial fitness. The animals sacrificed to God were symbolic of Christ in different ways. Christ was morally and spiritually perfect and unblemished. Thus, the animals that typified Him had to be physically perfect and unblemished. A sacrifice or offering made with a defective animal was rejected, and an insult to the perfect God. Carnal man would prefer to give God the defects and keep the good for himself. But this God will not allow. Moreover, it was required that sacrifices be from the worshiper's own goods—not from a foreigner's goods. Every sacrifice must "cost" the one sacrificing. Finally notice, once again, that the chapter closes with an emphasis on holiness." [END]

Chapter 21:

Verse 1 – The Hebrew word for “defiled” simply means “to be unclean, become unclean, become impure” (BDB).

Verse 5 – This is very similar to the command given in Leviticus 19:27–28 where these practices are connected to pagan worship for the dead, which fits the context here in discussing individuals who have died.

Verse 6 – When it says that the priests offer the “bread of their God”, this seems to be referring to God’s portion of the offerings. Notice first, the word “and” is in italics and isn’t in the Hebrew. So it really reads, “for they offer the offerings of the LORD made by fire, the bread of their God;” The Hebrew word for “bread” is a general term that means “bread, food, grain”. The offerings were offered to God on His table, the bronze altar, as His food (as we saw in the early chapters of Leviticus).

Verse 7 – As the representative of God to God’s people, the priest was held by God to a high standard.

Chapter 22:

Verse 3 – As mentioned before, it was not wrong to be “unclean”. You could become unclean for many reasons having nothing to do with sin. What is wrong, is to interact with something Holy while in an unclean state.

Verse 11 – John Gill’s commentary states: “Now these being his own purchase, and always to abide with him, became part of his family, and so might eat of the provisions of it; and it is from hence the Jews gather, as Jarchi and Gersom, that his wife might eat of the holy things, because bought with his money; but there is a better reason to be given for that, for of whatever family she was before, whether of the priests or not, by marriage she became a part, yea, a principal of his family, being one flesh with him, bearing the same name, and entitled to all the privileges of his house.” [END]

Verse 14 – We saw this concept of restoring the amount, plus an additional 5th part when we examined the “trespass” offering.

Verse 25 – Notice here again, God calls these offerings His bread/food.

Verse 28 – Adam Clarke’s commentary states: “This precept was certainly intended to inculcate mercy and tenderness of heart; and so the Jews understood it. When it is necessary to take away the lives of innocent animals for the support of our own, we should do it in such a way as not to blunt

our moral feelings; and deplore the necessity, while we feel an express gratitude to God for permission, to do it.” [END]