

LEVITICUS

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to Leviticus chapter 10 as we continue our study through the Word of God. As we have seen, God is a holy God and thus, He has laid down the rules you might say, of how we are to approach Him. And like today, some feel they can approach God anyway they want as long as they are sincere and in the end, all who feel that way will find out they are dead wrong, as we will see here tonight. With that said, let's begin reading in Leviticus chapter 10, starting in verse 1 and see what the Lord has for us as we study His Word.

LEVITICUS 10

VERSES 1-3

1. On the heels of the priestly ministry starting, the sacrifices of the people being accepted by God as fire came down from heaven and consumed the sacrifice and ignited the fire on the altar, we see this incident take place. Only a short time, we are not told how long, but I believe it was very shortly after they were placed into the priesthood, the two sons of Aaron, Nadab and Abihu are struck dead as they came to worship God. Talk about throwing water on a fire, it would seem that is what God is doing here, that He is not being fair, they did come to worship Him!

Folk's, God is not unfair and when you look at what they did, I think you will see why God stepped in and removed them. They offered up "profane" or "strange" fire, placing this in their censers. The fire was to be obtained at the brazen altar and not of their own making, it was the fire that was started by God. They also brought it "before the LORD," which seems to indicate that they went into the Holy of Holies before the LORD, which was forbidden for them to do. In doing this they put down the holiness of God, showing the people you can approach God any way that you want, which is not true. They were the priests and they were to lead the people in the right way to worship the Lord. And it would also seem that they wanted the attention, they wanted the glory that was due the LORD, and thus, their motives were also wrong! And if you look at verse 9, it may seem to indicate that they were also drunk and you are not to be drunk, especially when you are worshipping the LORD!

2. Why was God so strict here? I believe it is because of the fact that He was starting a new work and He did not want it polluted as soon as it began. We saw this in Acts chapter 5, as the church got started and Ananias and Sapphira lied to the Holy Spirit about giving all of this possession that they had sold to the Lord, when in reality they had kept a portion for themselves. The real issue here is lying to God, not keeping something back for themselves, and God struck them both dead because of this. Again, the church was just getting started and there was Satan ready to inject his cancer, sin into the church to destroy it. Thus, like cancer, God removed Ananias and Sapphira just as He removed Nadab and Abihu to keep the church and the priesthood pure respectively.

Why doesn't God do that today? Because none of us would be left! I know, that is a little tongue and cheek but it is pretty true. And God does step in at times and He does intervene with sin that has come into the church. Peter tells us in I Peter 4:17, "**For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?**" Thus, we must approach a holy and righteous God according to His ways and not ours!

3. Back in Leviticus 9:24 we saw the fire of God in His glory come down. But make no mistake about it, this was a fire of judgment that came down upon Nadab and Abihu. You see, there is the fire of purification as God works in our lives; a fire of acceptance but there is also the fire of His judgment. We must be careful how we approach God and tragically today, people don't seem to care. They have lost the reverence for the Lord and I believe His judgment is fast approaching! And folks, don't misunderstand what I am saying. We can come to God just as we are, but we can't come before Him in our own way! God has provided a way, like it or not, and that is only through His Son, Jesus Christ! If you approach God any other way, you will be judged!

4. We are also told that, "**Aaron held his peace.**" That must have been difficult. He just saw two of his sons struck dead by God. The excitement of serving the Lord was now in question, but I don't think for Aaron. He understood the holiness of God and how God holds those who represent Him at a higher level of accountability. Thus, God's actions were fair, they were right even though it hurt Aaron deeply!

VERSES 4-5

1. Moses understood what God required here and did not allow the consecrated priests, which were Aaron and his sons, to carry those dead bodies of Nadab and Abihu because they would become defiled. So he gets two of Aaron's relatives to carry these bodies outside the camp.

VERSES 6-7

1. Why couldn't Aaron and his other two sons mourn? Because it would give the impression to the nation that God did something wrong here, and He did not! Nadab and Abihu, by their actions, sinned before God, they did what they knew was wrong to do, even if they just got caught up in the excitement, and God struck them dead!

VERSES 8-11

1. Because of what we just read about Nadab and Abihu, I believe they were also drunk when they came to serve before the Lord as verse 9 seems to indicate to us and God tells them and us that this is wrong. Do we really need the Lord to tell us that? I guess we do or He wouldn't need to say it in the first place! You see, if you are drunk you are being controlled by another spirit you might say, and it is not God! But if the Spirit of God leads you, your life will flow in accordance to His will and that is what God desires. I don't believe pastors should drink, but alcohol is not forbidden in the Scriptures, people can drink but God condemns drunkenness!

2. Listen to what Solomon tells us about drunkenness in Proverbs 23:29-35, **“Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has contentions? Who has complaints? Who has wounds without cause? Who has redness of eyes? Those who linger long at the wine, Those who go in search of mixed wine. Do not look on the wine when it is red, When it sparkles in the cup, When it swirls around smoothly; At the last it bites like a serpent, And stings like a viper. Your eyes will see strange things, And your heart will utter perverse things. Yes, you will be like one who lies down in the midst of the sea, Or like one who lies at the top of the mast, saying: ‘They have struck me, but I was not hurt; They have beaten me, but I did not feel it. When shall I awake, that I may seek another drink?’”**

That does sum up what drunkenness does to you. Maybe you saw the picture on Google Maps that shows a picture of a guy passed out drunk on his lawn and he is mad because this was all over the Internet. You know what, maybe it is a wake up call not to get drunk if you can't even make it into your own house! He should thank God that He has given him this wake up call and hopefully he will listen! Is there a problem with alcohol in this country? Absolutely, and thus, may we be wise. There are so many other non-alcoholic drinks that we can partake of and may we not go down that path so that we might cause another to stumble!

Paul made these interesting comments in Ephesians 5:18-21, “**And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another in the fear of God.**” Wise words. Who do you want controlling your life? And think about it, alcohol is a depressant and it causes us to do things we would not normally do, which is not usually good. On the other hand, a Spirit-filled life is one that is stimulated by the Holy Spirit and He prevents us from doing things that we might normally do that are wrong. Thus, that is a good thing as we allow the Spirit of God to guide us and we can bring glory to God through it!

VERSES 12-15

1. The left over from the grain offering was to be eaten beside the altar while the wave offering and the heave offering, which are the breast and the thigh respectively, could be eaten by the entire household of the priest in any clean place.

VERSES 16-20

1. Aaron and his sons couldn't mourn over what happened to their son and brother but their hearts were heavy and thus, they did not eat the sin offering. And when Moses found out, Aaron explained to him the reason for this, and Moses accepted it, he understood that if Aaron and his sons did eat the meat, their hearts would not be in it. That truly is our God; He is a God of compassion and love!

2. One more point before we move on, and that is how this relates to us. And I believe it does. You see, we have no problem to burn the sin offering. In other words, we have no problem condemning people for their sin, be it a brother or sister in the Lord or an unsaved person. It is easy to judge another, what is difficult for us many times is to partake of the sin offering. In other words, realize that we too are sinners and are capable of doing what they have done!

In the Nuremberg trials or the war crimes trials regarding the atrocities done in World War II, when the Nazi's were on trial, everyone wanted to see what kind of monsters would torture and kill 6 million Jews besides millions of other people. To their shock, they found out that these people were no different then they were. They had families, wives and children, they had and did many of the same things they did and yet, they were able to murder without a problem and then go home to their families like nothing happened. You see folks, apart from Christ we are capable of doing anything and even if we are saved, if we are not walking in the Spirit, we **WILL** fulfill the lust of the flesh! And truly, it is having a heart that knows this that will allow you to minister to others who are hurting in sin because you can then have compassion on them knowing that it is only by the grace of God that you and I stand!

LEVITICUS 11**VERSES 1-8**

1. Now we are getting into the dietary laws for the Jews and they are very rigid. Why was God so strict in what they could and couldn't eat? Because of the many diseases some of these animals and creatures carried, they could not only make you sick, they could kill you! Thus, God was protecting them. Keep in mind that they did not have refrigeration to keep the meat cold and prevent any bacteria from growing on it. And when meat goes bad, look out! And as we will see, God will deal with the land animals, the sea creatures, the birds, the insects and I bet you can't wait!

2. The rule is simple regarding the land animals. Those that had a cloven or divided hoof and chewed the cud were clean, they could be eaten and the rest could not! Now we are not under these dietary laws any longer. How do I know that? Because at the first church council meeting in Jerusalem, when they were discussing the issue of gentiles keeping the Law, Peter tells us that the Jews could not even keep it and salvation is not based on the Law but on Jesus and His finished work.

And this is the letter that James sent to the gentile churches to encourage them and this is found in Acts 15:22-29, **“Then it pleased the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas, namely, Judas who was also named Barsabas, and Silas, leading men among the brethren. They wrote this, letter by them: The apostles, the elders, and the brethren, To the brethren who are of the Gentiles in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia: Greetings. Since we have heard that some who went out from us have troubled you with words, unsettling your souls, saying, ‘You must be circumcised and keep the law’ — to whom we gave no such commandment — it seemed good to us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have therefore sent Judas and Silas, who will also report the same things by word of mouth. For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things: that you abstain from things offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well. Farewell.”**

And Paul makes this interesting point in I Corinthians 8:8, **“But food does not commend us to God; for neither if we eat are we the better, nor if we do not eat are we the worse.”** The Amplified Bible puts it like this, **“Now food [itself] will not cause our acceptance by God nor commend us to Him. Eating [food offered to idols] gives us no advantage; neither do we come short or become any worse if we do not eat [it].”** Now granted, as we read some of the things they could not eat and could eat, I am thankful we have the freedom to choose!

3. Let me give you one example of how God was protecting His people. Harrison tells us, “It is now known that the pig is the intermediate host for several parasitic organisms, some of which can result in tapeworm infestation. One of these worms, the Taenia Solium, grows to about 2.5 m in length, and is found in poorly cooked pork.” That means that these tapeworms can be 8.2 feet long and it is in your intestines! But don’t worry, we cook those tapeworms real good before we eat pork! Sorry!

4. How does that relate to us today, not the tapeworms but the divided or cloven hoof and chewing the cud? As Christians we are to have a divided walk or cloven hoof you might say. What I mean is this. Our life should be separated from this world, we are in this world but not of this world, we are separated unto God! Paul, in quoting out of Isaiah 52:11 and Jeremiah 31:1, 9 tells us the following in II Corinthians 6:17-18, **“Therefore ‘Come out from among them And be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, And I will receive you.’ ‘I will be a Father to you, And you shall be My sons and daughters, Says the Lord Almighty.’”**

Not only are we to be divided or separated unto the Lord, but we are to meditate on the Word of God or chew the cud you might say. We are to extract all the nutrients we can from God’s Word to strengthen us, keep us spiritually strong. The Lord told Joshua in Joshua 1:8, **“This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.”** If you don’t meditate upon God’s Word, if you don’t extract the nutrients that God has for you, you will be spiritually malnourished!

VERSES 9-12

1. In regards to the creatures that swim in the waters, you could eat anything that had both fins and scales, all the others were not clean, you could not eat them. Most fish would be clean except like the catfish, it has no scales and of course the shellfish would not be kosher because they don't have fins or scales. Praise the Lord we are not under these dietary laws because I love lobster and shrimp. You can keep the snails, clams and oysters!

2. Again, how does this relate to us as Christians? The scales, in a sense, are like our armor, the armor of God. Paul put it like this in Ephesians 6:10-18, **“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints.”**

We need to put on the whole armor of God!

The fins may be speaking of how we are to navigate through this world, not by our own direction, but by His leading, by His Divine power. Paul put it like this in Colossians 2:6-10, **“As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving. Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ. For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.”**

VERSES 13-19

1. Here we see God instruct them on what birds or flying creatures they could not eat. Darn, bats are out, sorry guys! Now we are not told specifically what makes a bird clean or unclean but the common thread with these birds that are unclean is that they were predators or scavengers and God considers them unclean! For us as Christians, maybe God is speaking of His Word or His truth, the Bible and thus, all other words of doctrine that blow in will devour you or destroy you!

VERSES 20-23

1. Now we come to the insects, and ants are out but locusts are in. Isn't that good news? I am not a big bug eater, maybe you are and if so, now you can have chocolate covered ants!

VERSES 24-28

1. If you touched an unclean animal that was dead you would have to wash yourself and you were unclean until evening, the start of the new day. This was not a sin but it was dealing with ceremonial uncleanness and thus, no sacrifice was needed.

2. The Black Death or Bubonic plague that killed about one-quarter of Europe's population back in the 1350's but for the Jewish home, they were protected, why? Because if they found a dead rat, they would dispose of it and then wash themselves and were quarantined you might say for a brief period of time, until evening. They followed the instructions of God on cleanliness and it saved their lives! God knows what He is talking about folks!

VERSES 29-30

1. Here God tells them what are unclean reptiles and other creeping things. How many people want to eat a gecko, you know, that green lizard that does the Geico commercials? That is not for me!

VERSES 31-38

1. These laws were very important from a hygienic standpoint. If your clothes touched a dead animal they needed to be washed, and that just makes sense. If a dead rat or whatever is found in an earthen vessel, it is to be destroyed, not to be used anymore, and that makes sense to me also. If any food or water comes in contact with a dead creature in a bowl or container, you cannot eat it or drink it, and again, who would want to? If you find a dead rat in your oven, the oven is to be destroyed, it is unclean. But, if you see a dead animal in a pond or cistern, a large body of water, it is okay to drink, although, if I see a dead animal floating by, I am not drinking the water! And lastly, if a dead thing falls upon a seed it is okay unless water is placed upon the seed because that would cause it to germinate, to grow, and that made it unclean. God is pretty smart, right? You bet He is and thus, we need to listen to what His Word has for our lives!

VERSES 39-40

1. This is not speaking of the butchering of an animal but I guess we might call it “road kill.” Animals that have died and are found are unclean.

VERSES 41-43

1. Not a problem for me, creeping things are creepy to me, and I don't want to eat them!

VERSES 44-47

1. “Who gives God the right to tell me what to eat, what to do?” Folks, God tells us right here, He is Yahweh, He is Almighty God and that gives Him the right to tell us these things. And please understand that He is not trying to ruin our fun, but to keep us healthy and to be His holy people, set apart for His purpose, His will, His plan!

2. I like the way that Harris put it. He wrote, “In general it can be said that the laws protected Israel from bad diet, dangerous vermin, and communicable disease.” Think about the things God said they could not eat. There were the **PREDATORS** because they ate both the flesh and the blood of the animal. There were the **SCAVENGERS** because they were carriers of disease; they came in contact with dead things. And there were the **POTENTIALLY POISONOUS OR DANGEROUS FOODS** like shellfish. Again, this was for the health of the nation, the health of the people.

3. How can we sum this up for us today as Christians? I like what Paul had to say, and we have spoken of some of these verses already in II Corinthians 6:14-18, as he wrote, **“Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: ‘I will dwell in them And walk among them. I will be their God, And they shall be My people.’ Therefore ‘Come out from among them And be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, And I will receive you.’ ‘I will be a Father to you, And you shall be My sons and daughters, Says the Lord Almighty.”**

Like back then, God wants us, His people to be holy people, set apart for his purpose, His will. He does not want us contaminated with the things of this world, they are unclean. Thus, we are not to have close contact with the world, intimate fellowship with the world. I have used this illustration before but it fits perfectly to what God is saying. A boat does not function out of the water, but once it is in the water it works beautifully, unless water gets into the boat and then it is sunk. The same is true for us as Christians. We are to be in the world sharing our faith, but once the world gets in us, we too are sunk! Our witness for the Lord has been submerged, the light of God will not shine through!

LEVITICUS 12**VERSES 1-4**

1. When a woman gives birth to a male child she is unclean for seven days and then on the eighth day the child is to be circumcised and she is impure for another thirty-three days or forty days in total before she can go into the sanctuary and worship the Lord.

2. Now please don't think that God hates children or thinks childbirth is wrong. In fact God tells us to be fruitful and multiply, Genesis 1:28. He tells us that children are a gift of God, Psalm 127:3. And children are a blessing, Psalm 128:3. Then why this? I believe it has to deal with original sin and every time a child is born, a sinner is brought into the world and in a symbolic sense, she is responsible for bringing this sinner into the world. Thus, we see here the days of her impurity.

3. Also, why circumcision on the eighth day? Because God knows what He is doing. On the eighth day the clotting factors in the blood, vitamin K has reached its peak and thus, it is the safest time to do it. Only God could have known this, it was not the normal practice with the pagan cultures! Today, I believe they give the child a vitamin K shot because they do circumcision before the child leaves the hospital, one or two days after he is born.

VERSE 5

1. Can we just skip over this verse? I guess not, but don't shoot me, I am just the messenger! So why does the mother who gives birth to a girl have to be unclean for 2 weeks and then another sixty-six days before she can go and worship God, eighty days in all, twice as much as the mother who gave birth to a boy? Because boys are better than girls! No, sorry, I had to do that!

Interestingly enough we are not given the reason, but let me give you a couple of suggestions that might explain it. Maybe it has to do with the boys being circumcised on the eighth day, the cutting away of the flesh and symbolically they were clean, that is possible. The other possibility is that the birth of a girl would ensure that one day she too would bring another sinner into the world. And please understand that this is not really a penalty against them, but symbolically it is giving us a picture of sin and what needed to be done to be clean before they could come before God. In either case it did give them time alone with their newborn and that was important and is important today.

VERSES 6-8

1. It did not matter if she brought forth a male or female child, the sacrifice for atonement was the same and depending on what they could afford, a lamb, two young pigeons or two turtledoves could be brought into the priest to make atonement for the woman.

2. Today we have all these televangelists, these health, wealth and prosperity teachers that try to tell us that Jesus was rich, he had a money bag and someone to care for the money, he wore designer clothes and all that other garbage. That is just plain foolishness, not because I say so, but because the Scriptures say so! In Luke 2:21-24 we are told, **“And when eight days were completed for the circumcision of the Child, His name was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before He was conceived in the womb. Now when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were completed, they brought Him to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, ‘Every male who opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord’), and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the law of the Lord, ‘A pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.’”**

You see, His parents, Joseph and Mary were poor and could only offer a bird, nothing else to the Lord for this offering. The great thing about our God is He makes Himself accessible to all, the only requirement, which all can do, is that to approach God the Father you must come through Jesus Christ! What an awesome God we do have, that we can approach Him; we can fellowship with Him, not by the Law, but through the blood of the sacrifice!