

“Called Out” (2-9-20)

Introduction: Our reading this past week was Exodus 35-40, Leviticus 1-18

Leviticus in all its detail and ritual is essential about Holiness!

We are going to look at 3 specific issues that are covered in this book:

- 1) God is Holy 2) We are Unclean 3) God provides a Remedy**

1) God is Holy (and we need to be Holy)

Leviticus 19:1-2 (ESV)

(1) 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."

Note: God's Original Plan was for all Humans to stand apart and unique from all Creation

Leviticus 20:26 (ESV)

You shall be holy to me, for I the LORD am holy and have separated you from the peoples, that you should be mine.

Note: Now God wants to reveal Himself and bless the world through this unique group of people who He is once again "Calling Out!"

Now this is relevant to us, because Leviticus is about the establishment of Israel as the called out ones . . .

- **Opening Word of Leviticus - Vayikra** (Hebrew word meaning): "He called" or "Called Out"

And now God through Jesus has called us all out to be his people . . .

- **The Church - Ekklesia** (Greek word meaning): "Called Out" Assembly, Gathering

There is just one big issue that Leviticus makes clear, and Jesus himself reveals as His primary mission . . .

What Leviticus (and the other parts of the Law - Exodus, Numbers, Deuteronomy) are showing us, is that being called out and Holy is far more difficult and a far greater problem than we imagine . . .

Dr. Larry Crabb from 66 "Love Letters" reflecting on Leviticus, writes these words from God's perspective:

"I've written Leviticus to tell you one thing: The toughest part of My plan, the part that's the costliest to Me, is to make you holy. You want me to solve your problems, but you don't know what your worst

problem is, the one responsible for all the others. You don't yet realize that distance from Me is the most lethal problem you have"

2) We are not Holy (we are unclean)

Leviticus (and the Law as a whole) do 2 basic things: **Reveal** our need & provide the **Remedy**

Reveal - the Law reveals that we are not Holy . . .

a) **Morally** (We should keep God's law, when we break it, he makes allowance for purity)

The 10 Commandments are primary, then a lot of specific rules & regulations:

- **Social Justice - high standards for living with each other**
- **Care for the Poor & Foreigner**
- **High Standards for Sexual Purity**
- **Unjust death is a big deal to God - see passages on Molech & child sacrifice**

This is why the culture in Egypt was to be rejected and why the people in Canaan were being driven out . . .

Leviticus 18:24-25 (ESV)

(24) "Do not make yourselves unclean by any of these things, for by all these the nations I am driving out before you have become unclean, (25) and the land became unclean, so that I punished its iniquity, and the land vomited out its inhabitants.

b) **Physically** (Temporary impurity brought on by normal daily life, but it had to be dealt with)

Our bodies become physically unclean. We become unclean in the normal course of human life. It's not directly a moral failure, it's the physical consequences of living in a fallen world.

Biblical Example: Leprosy (a physical condition, you are quarantined, if and when you were healed you had to see the priest to declare you clean and allow you back into society)

My Example: Lice!

c) **Mortality** (Ultimately death is the great separator from God)

We become unclean by being around death. Handling animals and even humans who have died.

My story: Greg Boone

We were never meant to experience death. But we do, it is a reality of this life, and it is the ultimate

separation from God!

- **Bottom Line - Leviticus Reveals: Humans we are unclean because of Sin & Death.**
- **God is holy because He is pure (sinless) & Life. So we need a Remedy . . .**

3) God provides a Remedy

There are all these provisions for people to be made clean, so they could be connected to their Holy God

The only real provision for cleansing: Blood Sacrifice

Leviticus 17:11 (ESV)

For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it for you on the altar to make atonement for your souls, for it is the blood that makes atonement by the life.

3 basic forms of cleansing . . .

The Priest - they needed a representative, but even the priest was unclean

The People - they needed to be cleansed, and they participated with the Priest

The Place - they had a Tabernacle, a defined place to meet with God, but it needed to be cleaned too!

All of this culminated in a yearly sacrifice - The Day of Atonement! Yom Kippur (10th Day of the 7th Month)

The Priest makes atonement for himself, and then 2 goats are brought before the tabernacle . . .

Leviticus 16:8-10 (NKJV)

(8) Then Aaron shall cast lots for the two goats: one lot for the LORD and the other lot for the scapegoat. (9) And Aaron shall bring the goat on which the LORD's lot fell, and offer it as a sin offering. (10) But the goat on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat shall be presented alive before the LORD, to make atonement upon it, and to let it go as the scapegoat into the wilderness.

Jesus is the ultimate fulfillment of this . . .

Isaiah 53:4-5 (NKJV) - The Sacrifice

(4) Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. (5) But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed.

Isaiah 53:6 (NKJV) - The Scapegoat

All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

Isaiah 53:11-12 (NKJV) - The Perfect Priest

(11) He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, For He shall bear their iniquities. (12) Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, And He shall divide the spoil with the strong, Because He poured out His soul unto death, And He was numbered with the transgressors, And He bore the sin of many, And made intercession for the transgressors.

The perfect Priest with the perfect Sacrifice, opened the way forever to the Presence of God . . .

Matthew 27:50-51a (NKJV)

(50) And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit. (51) Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom;

Conclusion: The Remedy has been provided, no temple made by humans hands is needed any longer!

Leviticus is more relevant than you might at first imagine . . .

Leviticus - a letter to the called out ones revealing their need for holiness, and a prescription for how to live that out.

New Testament Letters to the Church - letters to the called out ones, revealing our need for holiness and a prescription for how to live that out!

- **We have a perfect Priest, so let's trust Him & worship Him** (Hebrews)
- **We are the purified people of God, so let's be a light to a world in need** (Romans)
- **We are the temple of God, so let's learn to live in His presence** (Galatians)

Further Study:

For a picture of the sacrifice . . . Psalm 22 (Last Tuesday) & Isaiah 53

For understanding on Jesus and the fulfillment of the Law (Romans, Galatians, Hebrews)