

### **Study 30: Leviticus, Part 3 Leviticus 21-23 Passover**

Last week, we heard God telling His people to be holy because He is holy, and that consulting with the media (plural of *medium*) was to prostitute oneself.

**Leviticus 21** [The Lord gives Moses instructions regarding priests. Think about how these laws picture and relate to Christ:] ‘A priest must not make himself ceremonially unclean for any of his people who die, 2 except for a close relative...and so defile himself.

5 “‘Priests must not shave their heads or shave off the edges of their beards or cut their bodies. [Shaving or pulling out the hair and cutting oneself were all pagan mourning practices. The Israelites were, however, allowed to put dust or ashes on their heads and to wear sackcloth.] ....

7 “‘**They must not marry women defiled by prostitution or divorced from their husbands**, because priests are holy to their God. ....

9 “‘**If a priest’s daughter defiles herself by becoming a prostitute, she disgraces her father; she must be burned in the fire.** [The prostitute “Babylon” in the book of Revelation is dressed in high priestly garments (Rev 17:4a: “The woman was dressed in purple and scarlet, and was glittering with gold, precious stones and pearls.” Cp. Ezek 16), and is a symbol of apostate Jerusalem (capital city of Israel). Her judgment for her harlotry is to be burned with fire, which took place in AD 70 when the temple was destroyed by fire (Matt 22:7; also Josephus’ *Wars of the Jews*).]

10 “‘The high priest, the one among his brothers who has had the anointing oil poured on his head and who has been ordained to wear the priestly garments, must not let his hair become unkempt [or *not uncover his head*] or tear his clothes. 11 He must not enter a place where there is a dead body. He must not make himself unclean, even for his father or mother, 12 nor leave the sanctuary of his God or desecrate it, because he has been dedicated by the anointing oil of his God. I am the Lord.

13 “‘**The woman he marries must be a virgin.** 14 He must not marry a widow, a divorced woman, or a woman defiled by prostitution, but only **a virgin from his own people**, 15 so that he will not defile his offspring among his people. I am the Lord, who makes him holy.” [Eph 5:25-27 says, “Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her 26 to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the Word, 27 and to present her to Himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.” Jesus, our High Priest, presents the Church to Himself as a virgin bride. Rev 19:7 says, “Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready.” And, Rev 21:2 says, “I saw the Holy City, the **new Jerusalem**, coming down out of heaven from God, **prepared as a bride** beautifully dressed for her husband.” (See also: Rev 21:9; 22:17).]

16 The Lord said to Moses, 17 “Say to Aaron: ‘For the generations to come none of your descendants who has a **defect** may come near to offer the food of his God. [The priest had to be “perfect,” that is, “without blemish.” 1 Peter 1:18-19 says, “For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your ancestors, 19 but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.”] .... 22 **He may eat the most holy food of his God, as well as the holy food**; 23 yet because of his defect, he must not go near the curtain or approach the altar, and so desecrate my sanctuary. I am the Lord, who makes them holy.” ....

**Leviticus 22** [More regulations here regarding priests, and who may eat of the sacrificial foods. Verses 17-25 state the rules regarding burnt offerings.] 19 you must present **a male without defect**...in order that it may be accepted on your behalf.

26 The Lord said to Moses, 27 “When a calf, a lamb or a goat is born, it is to remain with its mother for seven days. From the **eighth day** on, it will be acceptable as a food offering presented to the Lord. ....

**Leviticus 23** The Lord said to Moses, ...‘These are my appointed festivals...of the Lord [literally: *fixed times*, i.e. *appointments*], which you are to proclaim as sacred assemblies [Strong’s Concordance notes that this term (*mikra*) comes from the root word *qara*, which means, “something called out, i.e. A public meeting... [or] a **rehearsal**.” Col 2:16-17 says: “...do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. 17 These are a shadow of the things that were to come; **the reality**, however, **is found in Christ**.” There are 7 altogether (of course).]

[**The Sabbath**] 3 “‘There are six days when you may work, but the seventh day is a day of sabbath rest, a day of sacred assembly. You are not to do any work.... [It may be that the Sabbath is mentioned in this context because it was also a “holy assembly.” It also conforms to the “series of sevens” that is found throughout the Law. Every 7<sup>th</sup> day, the people were to have

their rest. Every 7<sup>th</sup> year, the land was to have its sabbath rest. After 7 x 7 years, there was to be a special sabbath year called a Jubilee, during which all debts were forgiven, and any land that had been sold was returned to its rightful owner.

[**Hebrew Calendar** (note that not all the events listed here are celebrations commanded by the Lord, or even spoken of in Scripture. Tish'a B'av—the 9<sup>th</sup> of Av—is the date of the destruction of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> temple (in 586 BC, and AD 70 respectively), which was predicted in the Bible by Jesus, e.g. Matt 24, etc. The 3 mandatory feasts (see Ex 23:14-17 and 34:18-23) are highlighted in red—Passover (*Pesach*), Pentecost (also called Weeks, *Shavu'ot*), and Booths (or Tabernacles, *Sukkot*):

Spring		Summer			
Nisan 1	Iyyar 2	Sivan 3	Tammuz 4	Av 5	Elul 6
ניסן	אייר	סיון	תמוז	אב	אלול
Mar/Apr	Apr/May	May/Jun	Jun/Jul	Jul/Aug	Aug/Sept
<b>Pesach (15)</b> Matzah (16-22) Bikurim (18) HaShoah (27)	Ha'atsmaut (5) HaZikaron (14) Lag B'Omer (18) Yerushalayim (28)	<b>Shavu'ot (6)</b>	Fast of Tammuz (17)	Three weeks of Sorrow Tish'a B'Av (9) Tu B'Av (15)	Selichot repentance
Fall		Winter			
Tishri 7	Cheshvan 8	Kislev 9	Tevet 10	Shevat 11	Adar 12/13
תשרי	חשוון	כסלו	טבת	שבט	אדר
Sept/Oct	Oct/Nov	Nov/Dec	Dec/Jan	Jan/Feb	Feb/Mar
Rosh Hashanah (1) Fast Gedaliah (3) Yom Kippur (10) <b>Sukkot (15-22)</b> Simchat Torah (22)		Chanukah (25) to Tevet (4)	Asarah B'Tevet (10)	Tu B'Shevat (15)	Fast Ester (13) Purim (14)  Adar II leap year

[**Passover**] 4 “These are the Lord’s appointed festivals, the sacred assemblies you are to proclaim at their appointed times: 5 The Lord’s **Passover** begins at twilight on the fourteenth day of the first month.” [**Symbolism:** Christ is represented throughout. Remember that God calls Israel His “son” (e.g. Ex 4:23, God tells Pharaoh through Moses: “Let my son go, so he may worship me.” Later, the prophet Hosea wrote of the exodus in 11:1 “When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son.” This is quoted in Matt 2:15 as being fulfilled in Christ). Thus, Jesus, being the true Son of God, is the *true* Israel. So, it shouldn’t surprise us that the very history of Israel is a **prophecy** of, and **prefiguring** of Christ. It cannot be emphasized too strongly that *all* the prophecies of the Old Testament find their fulfillment in Jesus Christ, *not* in the nation of Israel. The history of the nation is a mere *shadow*. Paul makes it very clear in the book of Galatians that the blessings and promises were not given to *all* the descendants of Abraham, but to *one only*: Jesus. See: Gal 3, e.g. “...those who have faith are children of Abraham.” (Gal 3:7). “...those who rely on faith are blessed along with Abraham...” (Gal 3:9). “He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit.” (Gal 3:14). “The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. Scripture does not say “and to seeds,” meaning many people, but ‘and to your seed,’ meaning one person, who is Christ.” (Gal 3:16). “So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, 27 for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for **you are all one in Christ Jesus**. 29 If you belong to Christ, then **you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.**” (Gal 3:26-29). This raises the question: Does God have 2 (or more) people? As Paul wrote in Rom 11, Gentile believers in Jesus were “grafted in” to **Israel** (the “olive tree” v. 24). Notice that there are *not* 2 (or more) trees that God is cultivating here. In John 10:16, Jesus said, “I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be **one flock** and one shepherd.” If Christians are not citizens of Israel, what covenant are they part of? Because of a system of thought that demands Israel and the Church must be eternally separate, some deluded men teach that there must be **two** new covenants! Scripture certainly does *not* support this bizarre notion.]

[So, what do we see here in the Passover ceremonies that speak of Jesus? In John 1:29, J the B (John the Baptist), when he saw Jesus, said: “Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.” (He calls Him the “lamb of God” again in v 36, and there are many other references to Jesus as a “lamb,” e.g. 1 Cor 5:7: “Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.” Other references: Acts 8:32; 1 Pet 1:19; Rev 5:6-13; 6:1-16; 7:9-17; 12:11; 13:8-11; 14:1-10; 15:3; 17:14; 19:7-9; 21:9-23 and 22:1-3). The lamb that was to be sacrificed was to be brought into the house 4 days prior to the event, reminding us of the 3 ½ year ministry of Jesus (rounding 3 ½ up, it yields 4). According to Ex 12:46 (see also Num 9:12 and Ps 34:20), no bones were to be

broken, which was fulfilled in Jn 19:31-36. We remember from Ex 12:22 that the blood on the top and sides of the doorframe would form a cross.]

[Four (or possibly five) cups of wine are used in this ceremony (vs. the usual *one* for other festivals). This is because in Ex 6:6-7, God said, "...I will **bring** you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. I will **free** you from being slaves to them, and I will **redeem** you with an outstretched arm and with mighty acts of judgment. 7 I will **take** you as my own people, and I will be your God." The 3<sup>rd</sup> cup, called the *cup of blessing* (cp. 1 Cor 10:16: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Messiah?"), which is drunk after the supper, is the one Jesus used to proclaim, "This cup is the new covenant, in my blood, which is poured out for you" (Luke 22:20). This is a clear allusion to Jer 31:31 "'The days are coming,' declares the Lord, 'when I will make a **new covenant** with the people of Israel and with the people of Judah.'" Notice with whom this "new covenant" is made. The mention of Israel and Judah brings to mind the time in their history when they became a nation divided. Because this prophecy of Jeremiah speaks of both "houses" (Israel *and* Judah), it is referring to the complete and undivided nation.]

[The 4<sup>th</sup> cup is the cup of acceptance ("I will take you as my own people", cp. Jer 31:33 "I will be their God, and they will be my people"), and represents the "gathering" of God's people (Matt 24:31 "And he will send his angels with a loud **trumpet** call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other"), and the "marriage supper of the Lamb" (cf. Matt 22:2-14; Rev 19:9). We might say that the 3<sup>rd</sup> cup is the cup of betrothal, and this the cup of marriage. Jesus, perhaps referring to this cup, said, "I will not drink from this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." (Matt 26:29). By not drinking this last cup, He extended this Passover celebration to include His own suffering and death. Could it be that this was also the cup to which Jesus referred during His agony in the Garden of Gethsemane, when He cried out, "if it is possible, let this cup be taken from me." (Matt 26:39). In this case, it would be the cup of the wrath of God, which would later be poured out on Jerusalem, the city outside of which He was crucified (cp Rev 14:10; 16:19). This was fulfilled when the Old Covenant was fully ended (signaled by the destruction of the temple in AD 70), which fully inaugurated the New Covenant.]

[There was a dispute between the rabbis (surprise, surprise) regarding whether there should be 4 or 5 cups used in the Passover Seder. A 5<sup>th</sup> cup was used by some (based on God's statement in Ex 6:8, "...I will bring you to the land..."), and called the cup for Elijah, because it was thought that when he came (preceding the 1<sup>st</sup> coming of the Messiah—they don't believe Jesus was He), he would decide whether they should be using 4 or 5 cups. The 5<sup>th</sup> cup is supposed to represent the "final redemption" (as if we haven't yet been redeemed!)]

