

Leviticus Chapter 21

- Chapters 21 & 22 describe the cost of spiritual leadership.

Galatians 3:28 “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.”

- We’re all equal before God, be we are different in our giftings, our abilities, and our calling before the Lord.
- God holds His servants to a higher standard, which is what we see in these next two chapters.
- There is a price to pay if you want to be a spiritual leader.

V: 1-4 As He is speaking to the priests and to the priesthood, He is speaking to us as well.

1 Peter 2:9 “But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.”

- This pertains to how they would mourn or express grief. They weren’t to be defiled, or to become ceremonially unclean when someone around them passes away.
- They could only mourn for a close relative; meaning mother, father, son, or daughter, brother, or virgin / unmarried sister.
- “being a chief man” – a leader, a role model, called to a higher standard.
- The OT priests weren’t to touch dead bodies because it would defile them. NT priests are called to the same thing. Speaking of those who are dead spiritually we have to be careful.
- As believers we have two options in this world when it comes to being with people:
 1. Fellowship, which can only be had with fellow believers.
 2. Ministry, missionary work with non-believers.
- If we spend time with those who are spiritually dead solely because we enjoy their activities and like their company – we’ll become defiled
- If we hang out with them to share the love of Jesus, to share the truth of the Gospel – then we’re doing what our Great High Priest Jesus did when He was accused of hanging out with sinners, harlots, and tax collectors.

V: 5-6 Shaving one's head, the wearing of sack cloth, tearing one's garments, ashes or dirt upon a person's head were all signs of grief or mourning. In the pagan cultures, they often cut themselves in various ways for the same reason.

- The priests, particularly were not to do what the world does because in doing so they would be leading the people by either their good or their bad example.

1 Corinthians 11:1 "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ."

- The priests are Holy, consecrated, doing the service of the Lord, in the presence of the Lord, and in the presence of the people.

1 Thessalonians 4:13 "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope."

- We're called not to sorrow, or grieve the way the world does because we have a hope that they don't have.

V: 7-8 The priests weren't to take wives that had been involved in whoredom – (temple prostitutes) prostitution, fornication – nor a woman that had been divorced.

- Because he is holy, consecrated to the Lord. The priest is to be holy because God is holy.
- Marriage is foundational to ministry, as the two become one flesh – they are to be in oneness of mind by marrying godly women.
- In the NT in 1st Timothy, Paul lists the qualifications for spiritual leadership, marriage and family are important considerations.

V: 9 If the daughter of a priest plays the whore, is involved in fornication – she has profaned herself and she has profaned her father.

- The priest didn't lose his ministry, but the daughter lost her life.
- The penalty is to be burned with fire.
- She was probably in actuality stoned to death, (Deut. 22:21) then her corpse humiliated by being burned like common trash
- There is a dual responsibility here. The parents are to train their children, their daughters in what is right and what is wrong. The children are to take heed to the word of God.

Speaking of God's statutes:

Deuteronomy 6:7 “And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.”

V: 10-12 The high priest is held to a higher standard when it comes to mourning and grief.

- The one who was anointed with the holy oil, who wears the holy garments, upon who's head is the mitre, “Holiness To The Lord”.
- He shall not uncover his head nor tear his clothes, neither shall he go into any dead body including his parents.
- The reasoning here is how can one who stands in the very presence of God ever mourn?

Psalms 16:11 “... in Thy presence is fullness of joy, at Thy right hand are pleasures forever more.”

- This also speaks to his complete devotion to his ministry, to his God.

Matthew 26:63-65 ⁶³But Jesus held His peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. ⁶⁴Jesus saith unto him, thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. ⁶⁵Then the high priest rent his clothes...”

- By this time, the high priests had probably never stood in the presence of the Lord behind the veil.

Joel 2:13 “And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God: for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.”

- Nor shall he leave the sanctuary, meaning he shall not cease from his duties.

V: 13-15 The High Priest shall marry a virgin from his own people, specifically he may not marry a widow, or divorcee, or any one who has been involved in fornication. This issue is not profaning his seed, descendants.

- An ordinary priest could marry a widow.
- As the bride of Christ we can't say that we are pure or un-blemished, but that is why Jesus died on the cross for us: to purify for Himself a bride.

Ephesians 5:25-27 “²⁵Husbands, love your wives, and even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it; ²⁶that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, ²⁷that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.”

V: 16-21 Additional qualification for the priesthood: No blemishes, no disfigurements, no oddities or matants.

1. No blemishes: speaking of issues the might need to be dealt with as a NT believer.
2. ¹⁸None that are blind: Spiritual leaders must have vision.

Proverbs 29:18 “Where there is no vision, the people perish...”

3. None that are lame: Spiritual leaders must have a good walk, leading by example.

Micah 6:8 “He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doeth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God.”

4. None that have a flat nose: Spiritual leaders must have discernment; if something stinks they need to be able to recognize bad doctrine, smell false teaching.

Ezekiel 44:23 “And they shall teach my people the difference between the holy and profane, and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean.”

5. None that are superfluous: nothing unnatural;

2 Peter 1:20 “Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.”

6. ¹⁹Broken footed, club footed: A spiritual leader must be able to stand, to stand firm for what is right.

Ephesians 6:13 “Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.”

7. Broken handed: Spiritual leaders must be able to reach out to the lost, the hurt, and the needy.
8. ²⁰Crookbacked, hunchbacked: Spiritual leaders have to show back bone.

- Jelly fish need not apply.... 😊

1 Kings 2:2-3 “²... be thou strong therefore, and shew thyself a man; ³and keep the charge of the Lord thy God, to walk in His ways, to keep His statutes, and His commandments, and His judgments, and His testimonies, as it is written in the law of Moses, that thou mayest prosper in all that thou doest, and whithersoever thou turnest thyself.”

9. No dwarves: Spiritual leaders must continue to grow, they cannot be spiritual midgets.

10. No disfigurements in his eyes: Spiritual leaders must be able to see clearly.

Psalms 119:18 “Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.”

11. No scurvy, scabs, or opens sores. A spiritual leader can't have thin skin, he has to be able to deal with difficult issues.

12. No broken stones / eunuchs: Spiritual leaders must be able to re-produce, they must be able to share their faith.

V: 21 No man with any of these defects may serve as a priest.

V: 22-24 Men with defects can be partakers of the offerings, but they cannot serve or minister unto the Lord in the capacity of a priest.

- As we consider the qualifications of a priest, a spiritual leader; we see that our Great High Priest Jesus Christ – embodied all the best of what was described.

Leviticus Chapter 22

V: 1-3 Again, instruction to the priests regarding holiness, being, remaining holy and not profaning His holy name.

Psalms 138:2 “I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.”

- There is that constant need to fear the Lord, to have a high regard or respect for holy things.
- For a priest to serve the Lord acceptably it wasn't enough merely that he qualify as a son of Aaron without any physical defects.
- He also had to carry on his ministry in such a way that the Lord was pleased with him.
- There were many things that could potentially cause a man, a priest to be unclean. If this happened he was to complete the process for cleansing and after being declared clean re-engage in his priestly duties.

- To engage in his priestly duties while ceremonially unclean was to profane the Holy Place
- If he ignored this command, he was to be cut off from the presence of the Lord.
- As priests in the NT dispensation we too have to be careful not to defile ourselves, not to disqualify ourselves:

1 Corinthians 9:27 “But I discipline my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be cast away / disqualified.”

- It's not just about doing the right things, but about doing the right things with the right heart.

Matthew 23:25-28

V: 4-7 Specifically listing some of the things that would defile a priest and prevent him from engaging in service to the Lord in the Holy Place:

- Leprosy, running sores, anyone unclean from intimate relations.
 - Any one who has touched an unclean animal, or who has become unclean in any of the other things previously listed.
 - Being unclean until the evening / next day, washing his flesh with water – then he may partake of the things offered because it is his food.
1. The first thing listed is leprosy, which is a type or analogous to sin in general. What we see is that sin separates from ministry and service. Unless it is dealt with, it will destroy us.
 2. The priest couldn't eat his portion of the bread or sacrifices unless he dealt with it properly.
 3. We too cannot receive our portion from God's word unless we deal with our sin. If we allow sin in our lives, we can go to God's word, but it will seem dry and tasteless, we won't be nourished, eventually we'll turn away from it.

Matthew 4:4 “Man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.”

4. There is no balance, strength, or stamina in the life of the one who doesn't eat of the holy things of the Word of God, we must be fed.

V: 6-7 The remedy for uncleanness is first waiting, then washing.

- The unclean person had to wait until even – which in the Jewish culture was the beginning of a new day.

Lamentations 3:22-23 ²²It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. ²³They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness."

- After the waiting came the washing: They received a physical cleansing in water, symbolic of the spiritual cleansing that we get.

John 15:3 "Now you are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you."

V: 8-9 Priests aren't to eat animals that die themselves or are torn by predators, this is defiling to them.

- They shall keep this ordinance, lest they bear this sin and die for profaning the name of the Lord.

Romans 6:23 "For the wages of sin is death..."

V: 10-13 Normally the priest's household, which included slaves or servants would partake of their portion of the offerings. A visitor passing through or a hired servant wasn't to do so – they weren't part of the priestly family.

- A servant born in the household, actual members of the household could partake. Daughters married off to a stranger came out from under her father's covering and was no longer allowed to partake of the holy things.
- If the daughter came back into the household through widowhood or divorce, not having children then she could partake, otherwise she couldn't.
- We see that there are times when a priest must be able to say no to himself and to others for the sake of being right with God.

V: 14-16 If some one mistakenly ate that which was holy when he was either unclean or not qualified, he had to take responsibility for it and make restitution.

V: 17-25 Speaking now not only to the priests, but to the whole nation.

- Whenever they made a free will offering, a burnt offering of consecration:
 1. It was to be completely voluntary.
 2. It was to be without blemish.
- Or if it's a peace offering, it has to be perfect.

- No defects, no blind, broken, maimed, having sores etc. God is to get the very best.

V: 26-33 When we offer thanksgiving unto the Lord, it's to be of our own free will, from our hearts.

1. It's to be consumed all at one time.
 2. Again, a call to obedience – to doing God's word.
 3. We're to hallow our God, who brought us out of Egypt.
- These 2 chapters speak of the perfect priest and the perfect sacrifice – Jesus is both!
 - He is our deliverer. Is He yours? Have you been delivered? Are you still in bondage? Are you still in the world?