Connect To God – Be Holy For I Am Holy

Leviticus 19:2 | 23 January 2022 | Rev Dr Aaron Tay

(This sermon is an overview of the sermon series on Leviticus)

The book of Leviticus may seem difficult to understand as it dealt with issues that pertained to an ancient sacrificial ritual and to the culture of old Israel. Yet just as God is the same yesterday, today and forever more, God's Word (even the book of Leviticus) is relevant to Christians today in a Singapore context. The key is to know the intentions and will of God when He gave the Israelites these laws through Moses a few thousand years ago.

Because God is the living God, we must then ask whether and how God's intentions and will could mean to us. Besides what you have heard from the sermon, I also want to leave with you the following written comments regarding the book of Leviticus.

The theme of holiness is repeatedly emphasized in Leviticus – God's holiness and the need therefore for His people to be holy: *"you are to be holy because I AM holy".*

The sacrificial regulations hammer home the message that all approaches to God must be on His terms. That is to say, we do not set standards for our own holiness. Laws about clean and unclean food provide physical illustrations of a spiritual requirement. The annual Day of Atonement provided a powerful illustration of a powerful multi-media visual aid towards appreciating the

incompatibility of sin and the Lord. The fearful events of Leviticus 10 bring home the lesson with penetrating clarity.

At the same time, the ultimate purpose of all these regulations, these events and teachings is **the well-being of the people of God**. God's aim stated in Genesis 17:8, and repeated at a key point in Israel's history in Exodus 6:7 is confirmed in Leviticus 26:12 *"I will walk among you, and will be your God, and you shall be my people."* All the judgments, however strict they may be, look towards the achievement of this goal, **the holy God in fellowship with His holy people.**

Reflection Questions

1. *"Be holy because I am holy"* – Leviticus 11:44-45, 19:2, 20:7, 20:26, 21:8. Look up the various verses listed and discuss the context in which these words were spoken by God. *[Note: sometimes we can know the context better by reading the verses just before and after the specific verse, or we can even read the entire chapter.]* **Are these contexts relevant to Christians today?**

2. The truth that Christians are to be holy just as God is holy is clearly taught in the New Testament as well – such as in 1 Thessalonians 4:7, 2 Timothy 1:9, Hebrews 10:10 and 1 Peter 1:15-16 (in fact, verse 16 quotes Leviticus). **In what ways can we be holy (just as God is holy)?**

Our Vision
To be disciples of Jesus Christ

Our Mission
We exist to make disciples who love God, love one another and love the lost

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3. Some Christians start reading Leviticus and are not able to go beyond Chapter 2, because they feel that the sacrificial rituals are not for us today. What they may not realize is that there are many other verses in Leviticus which clearly is relevant to us today. **Please discuss the following verses and see how you can apply them in our context today**: Leviticus 5:4-6, 17:11-14, 19:3, 9-10, 13, 16, 18, 30-33, 35-36.

4. In Leviticus 26:1-13, the Lord gives a list of rewards that His people will receive for their obedience. Look through the list, see what rewards you desire for your life, and then pray for each other that the Lord will send His blessings especially in those areas you need/want. Encourage one another to be obedient to God, for they will open the way for God's blessings to flow.

5. In the second half of Leviticus 26, there were curses on those who disobeyed. Read those verses to have a sense of God's wrath (it is good to have a healthy fear of God), and thank God for Jesus Christ, who died so that He might become a curse for us. And in thanksgiving, may we not cheapen God's grace by continuing to sin and to be in disobedience.

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