

Be Holy Because I Am Holy

Leviticus 1 – 7, 11 – 15, 17 – 22, 24:1-9, 25 – 27

Numbers 5:1 – 6:21, 18 – 19, 28:1-15, 30

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The Lord called to Moses from the Tabernacle, the Tent of Meeting, and gave him instructions for the people on how to live a holy life. The laws God established provided lists of clean and unclean foods, clean and unclean activities, clean and unclean attitudes; clean and unclean not in the sense of right and wrong, good and bad, but rather pure and impure.

Being impure was not sinful. But if you were impure, you could not enter the presence of the Lord. To become pure again you had to observe certain rituals, and offer the prescribed sacrifices – sometimes an animal sacrifice, sometimes a grain offering. These sacrifices involved very specific guidelines, which were overseen by the priests, who were mediators between God and the people. Some of the sacrifices provided a means of thanking God; others offered a way to ask forgiveness.

All of God's laws: the civil laws, "When you harvest your crops, leave the gleanings for the poor."; the moral laws, "Don't steal. Don't lie."; and the ceremonial laws, "When a woman gives birth she is to offer a lamb for a burnt offering and a young pigeon or a dove for a sin offering." – all of these laws, all the ritual feasts, all the regulations concerning the various sacrifices as well as the lifestyle of the priests – all of them were in place so the people of Israel could live a holy life, remain pure, enter the presence of the Lord, and be in a right relationship with God, who said, "Be holy because I am holy."