

LECTURE 5: LEVITICUS  
**“The God Who Is Holy”**  
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**I. Orienting Data:**

**A. Content:**

1. Various laws having to do with sacrifice and atonement for sins, priestly duties and ritual obligations, cleanness and holiness before God, love of neighbor, feasts and holy days.
2. Punishment for major crimes; blessings and curses

**B. Historical Context:** Instructions revealed during the year at Mount Sinai.

**C. Emphasis:** Getting it right with regard to communal worship and ethics; holiness is important!

## II. Introductory Issues:

### A. The Tribe of Levi and the Priesthood

1. Tribe of Levi
  - a. Unique role of serving the Israelites as cultic personnel—overseers of a symbolic system that emphasized Yahweh’s holy presence
  - b. Mediators between God and people
  - c. Given no tribal allotment of land but certain towns within each of the tribes (Lev. 25:32–34; Num. 35:1–8)
  - d. Sustained through the “tithes” of the people (Num. 18:20–32)
  - e. 2 Groups within the Tribe of Levi:
    - i. Aaronide Priests (Moses’ brother Aaron and his male offspring)
    - ii. Levites (all from the tribe of Levi not connected with Aaron’s line)
2. Levites
  - a. Guardians of proper worship: Aided priests by guarding the tabernacle and its sacred objects from encroachment / mishandling (Num. 3:5–10; 18:1–32; cf. Exod. 32; Lev. 10:1–3; Num. 16; 1 Sam. 2:12–17)
  - b. Laborers: Aided priests loading and transport of the tabernacle and its objects (Num. 4:1–49; esp. v. 47)
  - c. Temple musicians/worship leaders, explicit from the days of David forward (1 Chr. 6:31–32; 15:16–22)
3. Aaronide Priests: “Aaron was set apart to dedicate the most holy things, that he and his sons forever should make offerings before Yahweh and minister to him and pronounce blessings in his name forever” (1 Chr. 23:13).
  - a. Authoritative teachers and interpreters of all God’s instruction (Lev. 10:10–11; Deut. 31:9–13; 33:10; Ezek. 22:26; Mal. 2:7) in order to encourage obedience and sustained life in relation to God (Lev. 26:1–13; Deut. 28:1–14)
  - b. Authoritative agents of righteousness, establishing, maintaining, and restoring the proper creational order of persons and things, land and sanctuary in relation to God. This was accomplished through:
    - i. Oversight of offerings, including the atoning sacrifices (Lev. 4:1–6:7; 16:1–19; 1 Chr. 23:13)
    - ii. Supervision and protection of all sacred space and objects, supervising the Levites (Num. 3:5–4:33; 18:1–7); this included the care the Ark (Num. 3:31–32; Deut. 31:9, 25) and the blowing of trumpets (Num. 10:1–9) in battle (cf. Josh. 6; 1 Sam. 4; 2 Sam. 11:11)
    - iii. Pronouncements of blessing (Num. 6:22; Deut. 10:8; 20:2–4; 1 Chr. 23:13)
    - iv. Prophetic oracles of direction, esp. in relation to war (Num. 27:18–21; Deut. 33:8; Judg. 20:26–28)
    - v. Judicial decisions (Deut. 17:8–13; 19:16–17; 21:1–5)
    - vi. Assessing and collecting tithes (Exod. 23:14–19 with Num. 18:8–32; Deut. 14:28–29; 18:1–8; cf. Lev. 27:1–33; Deut. 26:1–15)
  - c. Representative bearers of Israel’s iniquity, ultimately carried by God’s Messiah (Exod 28:30, 38; Lev. 10:17–18; Num. 18:1, 5; cf. Zech. 3:8–9;)

- d. Priests to/for Yahweh; servants of Yahweh (Exod. 28:1; 1 Chr. 23:13)  
 – “The priestly activities ... taught Israel a healthy fear of being confronted with the presence of the holy God, the Creator of life and order” (Duke, “Priests, Priesthood,” *DOTP*, 654).

“Through the priestly role, Israel saw that Yahweh’s graciousness was not limited to mighty historical acts and the anointed leadership of key individuals. God had provided the means of removing the pollution, of purifying the unclean person and of restoring the divinely intended order. It was through the priesthood that this message of grace was mediated.” (Duke, “Priests, Priesthood,” *DOTP*, 654)

**B. Literary Features** (See John E. Hartley, *Leviticus* [WBC; Dallas: Word, 1992], xxx–xxxv; Nobuyoshi Kiuchi, *Leviticus* [Apollos; Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2007].)

1. The book is made up mostly of speeches from Yahweh to Moses that the prophet was to deliver to Aaron, to Aaron and his sons, or to the whole congregation but that now are found in this public testament called Leviticus, suggesting that the broader audience was to hold the priests accountable for their specific duties (i.e., a type of congregationalism) and that the priests were to be key instructors in holiness for the people (see Lev 10:10–11). Most commonly, new speeches are introduced by the formula, “And Yahweh spoke to Moses saying: Speak to X saying [*or* and you shall say to them]” (e.g., 4:1; 5:14; 6:1[H5:20], 8[H6:1], 19[H6:12], 24[H6:17]; 7:22, 28). The remarkable repetition of the introductory formula highlights the love and lordship of God in disclosing his will to his people and stresses the distinct role of Moses as one who received words from God and was commissioned to proclaim them.
2. The ends of a number of speeches are marked by either summary statements (7:35–36, 37–38; 11:46–47; 13:59; 14:32, 54–57; 15:32–33; 23:37–38; 26:46; 27:34) or compliance reports (8:36; 10:7b; 16:34b; 21:24; 23:44; 24:23b), both of which help provide structuring signals.
3. Apart from the brief introductory formula found at the head of the speeches, the only extended narrative material describes two tragic incidents where God’s holiness was taken lightly: 8:1–10:20 records the failure of Nadab and Abihu and 24:10–23 recounts the punishment of a blasphemer. The instruction on holiness that dominates the book is, therefore, couched within and highlighted by a narrative of God’s zeal against sin and for his holiness (similar to the way the golden calf episode in Exod. 32–34 is couched in the laws regarding the tabernacle in Exod. 25–31 and 35–40).

**C. Literary Makeup**

1. The book begins with the conjunction *waw* “and,” suggesting an intentional connection with what precedes. It picks up directly where Exodus ended (with the glory of Yahweh filling the Tent of Meeting, Exod. 40:34–38), and stands in a block of material that runs from Exodus 25:1 to Numbers 10:10, all of which details Israel’s proper response to the holy presence of God in their midst. Leviticus seeks to answer how Yahweh (“a God merciful and gracious,” Exod. 34:6) will be able to maintain his holy presence in Israel’s midst, even though they are a stubborn, sinful people (33:3, 5, 15–16, 9).

2. Though connected to Exodus, Leviticus appears to stand as a book on its own in light of the heading in Leviticus 1:1 and the summary statements in 26:46 and 27:34.
  - Lev. 1:1. And Yahweh called to Moses and spoke to him from the Tent of Meeting, saying....
  - Lev. 26:46. These are the statutes and the judgments and the laws that Yahweh gave between himself and the people of Israel on Mount Sinai by the hand of Moses.
  - Lev. 27:34. These are the commandment that Yahweh commanded Moses to the sons of Israel on Mount Sinai.
3. Leviticus 26:46 summarizes the content of the entire book as “statutes, judgments, and laws,” whereas 27:34 tags the whole “commandments.” (This section is highly dependent on Kiuchi, *Leviticus*, 23–25).
  - a. The term “commandment” (*mišwâ*) (always in the plural in Leviticus) is the most comprehensive of the “regulation” words in Leviticus, appearing to encompass all others (4:2, 13, 22, 27; 5:17; 22:31; 26:3, 14, 15; 27:34). This is most clear in 26:14–16, which reads: “But if you will not listen to me and will not do all these *commandments*, <sup>15</sup>if you spurn my *statutes*, and if your soul abhors my *rules*, so that you will not do all my *commandments*, but break my covenant, <sup>16</sup>then I will do this to you....”
  - b. The term “law” (*tôrâ*) in singular form occurs in chs. 1–15, but not in chs. 16–26, except in the summary of 26:46 where it stands in the plural (see 6:9[2], 14[7], 25[18]; 7:1, 7, 11, 37; 11:46; 12:7; 13:59; 14:2, 32, 54, 57; 15:32). What is clear is that “laws” address ritual prescriptions like the sacrifices (7:37) and the clean-unclean ritual regulations (11:46; 12:7; 13:59; 14:54, 57; 15:32). These instructions are never termed “judgments” but can be equated with a “statute” (f) (*ḥuqâ*) (3:17; 7:36; cf. 16:29, 31, 34).
  - c. The term “judgment” (*mišpāṭ*) occurs most heavily in chs. 17–26 where it addresses *holy conduct* (24:22; 25:18; 26:15, 43) and may address the application of general principles to life. While at some level overlapping with the laws of ritual purity (see esp. 19:5–8), the focus appears to be predominantly moral. *Mišpāṭ* does occur in 5:10 and 9:16 (both in sections tagged *tôrâ*); however, these instances are only in the form *kammišpāṭ* (“according to the rule”), which may have a distinct meaning.
  - d. The term “statute” (*ḥōq*) is found throughout Leviticus, though the masculine form is more frequent in chs. 1–10 (*sg*: 6:18[11], 22[15]; 7:34; 10:13, 14, 15; 24:9; *pl*: 10:11), whereas the feminine (*ḥuqâ*) is favored in chs. 16–26 (*sg*: 3:17; 7:36; 10:9; 16:29, 31, 34; 17:7; 23:14, 21, 31, 41; 24:3; *pl*: 18:3, 4, 5, 26, 30; 19:19, 37; 20:8, 22, 23; 25:18; 26:3, 15, 43).
    - i. The feminine form is closely aligned with “judgments” (18:4–5, 26; 19:37; 20:22; 25:18; 26:15, 43), but the *ḥuqâ* conjoins with the verb “to walk” (*hlk*), while *mišpāṭm* occurs with verbs like “to do” (*šh*) and “to keep” (*šmr*) but never “to walk.” This suggests that the feminine *ḥuqa* means “principle of conduct.”
    - ii. The masculine plural form occurs in the synthesis of priestly teaching responsibility (10:11) and in the first summary of the book content (26:46). This suggests not only that 26:46 stands as the summary for

the whole book (including chs. 1–10 where the singular form *ḥōq* is most apparent), but also that the masculine form is a broad category that includes *tôrōt*, *mišpāṭîm*, and *ḥuqqōt*.

- e. Synthesis: The distribution of terms throughout the book highlights that chs. 1–15 are devoted to ritual “laws,” whereas chs. 16–26+27 focus principally on moral “judgments” related to holy conduct. The two sections together are also rendered “statues” or “commands,” which synthesize the content of priestly instruction (10:11).

#### **D. An Outline of Leviticus: Living in the Light of Yahweh’s Holy Presence**

1. The Fuel for Living in the Light of Yahweh’s Holy Presence (chs. 1–10)
  - a. The Means for Drawing Near to God: Offerings and Sacrifices (chs. 1–7)
  - b. A Narrative on the Significance of Drawing Near to God (chs. 8–10)
2. The Nature of Living in the Light of Yahweh’s Holy Presence (chs. 11–26)
  - a. Addressing Ritual Purity (chs. 11–15)
  - b. Celebrating the Day of Atonement (ch. 16)
  - c. Nurturing Relational Purity (chs. 17–24)
  - d. Heeding Holy Yahweh’s Kingdom-Building, Sabbath-Establishing Purposes (chs. 25–26)
3. Epilogue (ch. 27)

### **III. The Fuel for Living in the Light of Yahweh’s Holy Presence (chs. 1–10): An Overview**

**A. Leviticus 1–7: The Means for Drawing Near to the Holy God**—namely, humble and worshipful expressions of devotion, gratitude, fellowship, repentance, and restitution through various offerings. The following summary statement in 7:37–38 holds together the unit: “This is the law of the burnt offering, grain offering, sin offering, guilt offering, ordination offering, and peace offering.”

1. 1:1–6:7[H5:26] is principally concerned with how the Israelites are to approach Yahweh with offerings (but see the guilt offering instruction for the priests in 5:14; 6:1[5:20]).
2. In contrast, 6:8[H6:1]–7:38 is principally concerned with how the priests are to preserve the holiness of the holy things and thus secure the divine presence (but see the instructions to the Israelites in general regarding the fellowship offering in 7:22–36).

**B. Leviticus 8–10: The Significance of Drawing Near to the Holy God.** These chapters make-up the only major narrative in the book, and the story communicated helps clarify the significance of drawing near the holy God through offerings. Chapter 8 records the ordination of the priests in order to set the stage for the focus on Israel’s encounter with God through substitutionary sacrifice and the ministry of the priests. The narrative of the first tabernacle sacrifice provides a paradigm for understanding all future sacrifices and contrasts the results of meeting the holy God when one takes his holiness seriously vs. when one does not. One’s inner disposition toward Yahweh determines whether one will live or die when one encounters his presence.

#### **C. Interrelationship and Foundational Role**

1. Chs. 1–7 mostly address holy offerings, with the demand of the offerers holiness only addressed in a minor way. Chs. 8–10 address the role of the priests, who are declared holy by calling and who are commissioned to distinguish for the people

- between “the holy and the common, the unclean and the clean” and to teach the people God’s Word.
2. Without chs. 1–7, much of the narrative in chs. 8–10 would be unexplained, so the two groups clearly work together as a unit.
    - a. Chs. 1–7 appear linked to the narrative that follows by the mention of the “ordination offering” in 7:37, which anticipates the ordination of the priests in ch. 8.
    - b. Chs. 8–10 are tied to what precedes by recounting the first time the offerings of chs. 1–7 are practiced in the context of the new sanctuary.
    - c. Chs. 1–10 are tied together by the use of “statute” (*hōq*) in its masculine form almost exclusively in these chapters (see above).
  3. In 10:10–11, Aaron and his sons are commissioned: “You are to distinguish between the holy and the common, and between the unclean and the clean, <sup>11</sup>and you are to teach the people of Israel all the statutes that Yahweh has spoken to them by Moses.” The instruction in v. 10 describes the general content of the rest of the book: Chs. 11–15 address ritual purity and the place of tolerated uncleanness in relation to God’s holiness; chs. 16–24 address areas of prohibited uncleanness and focus intently on Israel’s call to holy, moral conduct in light of God’s holiness.

#### IV. The Means for Drawing Near to God: Offerings and Sacrifices (chs. 1–7)

##### A. The Five Primary OT Offerings

1. Burnt offering (devotion) (Lev. 1:1–17; 6:8–13)
2. Grain offering (gratitude) (2:1–16; 6:14–23)
3. Peace/Fellowship offering (communion via thanksgiving or vow) (3:1–17; 7:11–36)
4. Sin/Purification offering (atoning for contamination of sancta) (4:1–5:13; 6:24–30)
5. Guilt/Reparation offering (atoning for desecration of sancta or the property of others) (5:14–6:7; 7:1–10)

Fig. 5.3. OT Offerings/Sacrifices

	<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Elements</i>	<i>Placement of Blood</i>	<i>Consumer</i>	<i>Procedure or Purpose / Handling, Eating, Disposal</i>
<b>Burnt</b>	Pre-tabernacle this was the only offering to atone for sin; after the tabernacle it is an optional act of worship that atoned for sins in general, accompanied other offerings, and expressed devotion, commitment, and complete surrender to Yahweh; a “pleasing aroma to Yahweh.”	Bull, ram, or male bird (dove or young pigeon for poor); wholly consumed; no defect	Laity: Sides of Bronze Altar	God	Lev. 1:1–17 / 6:8–13; 7:8 (cf. 8:18–21; 16:24)
<b>Grain</b>	As a recognition of God’s goodness and provision, this optional act of worship expressed devotion to God and regularly accompanied other offerings; a “pleasing aroma to Yahweh.”	Grain, fine flour, olive oil, incense, baked bread (cakes or wafers), salt; no yeast; honey; accompanied burnt offering (along with drink offering)		Priests	Lev. 2:1–16 / 6:14–23; 7:9–10

<b>Peace</b> (Fellowship)	This optional act of worship celebrated the offerer's fellowship with Yahweh and was given in the context of thanksgiving, vows, general praise (i.e., "free will"), or ordination; a "pleasing aroma to Yahweh."	Any animal without defect from herd or flock; variety of breads	Laity: Side of Bronze Altar	One who offers (except priestly portions)	Lev. 3:1–17 / 7:11–36
<b>Sin</b> (Purification)	Mandatory atonement for <i>contamination</i> of God's holy places or objects (i.e., causing what is holy to become unclean); the focus was on purification or consecration of individuals or community after specific sins, whether prohibitive ("don't's) or performative ("do's), unintentional (negligence or ignorance) or intentional; a "pleasing aroma to Yahweh."	1. Priest: Young bull without defect 2. Congregation: Young bull or male goat without defect 3. Leader: Male goat without defect 4. Laity: <i>Common</i> —Female goat or lamb without defect; <i>Poor</i> —Dove or pigeon; <i>Very Poor</i> —Tenth of an ephah of fine flour	1. Priest & congregation: In front of Veil of Holy Place; Horns of Altar of Incense; Base of Bronze Altar 2. Leader and common laity: Horns of Bronze Altar; Base of Bronze Altar 3. Day of Atonement: Ark of the Covenant	Priests (unless purification offering is their own; then whole animal burned outside camp)	Lev. 4:1–5:13 / 6:24–30 (cf. 8:14–17; 16:3–22, 29–34)
<b>Guilt</b> (Reparation)	Mandatory atonement for <i>desecration</i> of God's holy things or the property of others (i.e., treating what is holy as if it were common); the focus was on re-consecration of God's sacred things or people with compensation (restitution of what was violated + 1/5) for specific sins against others, whether prohibitive ("don't's) or performative ("do's), unintentional (negligence or ignorance) or intentional.	Ram or lamb without defect plus restitution through monetary equivalent + 20% value (to offended party or, if the not alive, to the priest)	Laity: Sides of the Bronze Altar	Priests	Lev. 5:14–6:7 / 7:1–10 (cf. Num. 5:6–8)
Prepared by Jason S. DeRouchie with some material drawn from Richard E. Averbeck, "Offerings and Sacrifices," in <i>NIDOTTE</i> 4:1020–1021 (ed. Willem A. VanGemeren; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997).					

## B. The Method of Sacrifice

1. Individual Sacrifices:
  - a. Worshipper brings unblemished sacrificial animal to the priest at Tabernacle.
  - b. Worshipper lays hands on the head of animal before Yahweh, expressing its representative status, and the animal is killed.
  - c. The priests perform the blood rites, and the animal is flayed, removing its meat and fat.
  - d. The fat is burned on the Bronze Altar as a pleasing aroma to Yahweh (see Lev. 3:17), resulting in atonement (4:20) (cf. Eph. 5:1–2).
  - e. The meat is boiled for human consumption. (NOTE: People eat roasted meat only at the Passover):
    - i. Peace offerings: Offerer eats the meat (Lev. 7:15–18), except the breast and right thigh, which are the priests (7:31–36).
    - ii. Sin and Guilt offerings: Priests eat all the meat (6:26, 29–30; 7:6–7).
  - f. The animal carcass is burned outside camp, as is any meat not eaten.
2. Order of Multiple Offerings at a Time (as in Num. 6:16–17):
  - a. Sin or guilt offering (purifying contamination and re-consecrating *sancta*—propitiation and expiation)
  - b. Burnt offering and grain offering (worshipper committed himself completely to God—consecration)
  - c. Fellowship offering (celebration of well-being between Yahweh, the priest, and the worshipper—communion).

### C. The Purpose of Sacrifices for Sin: Atonement

1. *Definition of Atonement:* The process by which God purifies and (re-) consecrates his contaminated and desecrated Tabernacle and people by pouring out his wrath on the sinner or onto a substitute, thus restoring relationship and right order.

“Atonement is the saving act of God which according to Scripture makes possible, and in a sense constitutes, his redeeming and restoring work. It is the means by which his righteousness is re-established in a cosmic order marred temporarily by rebellion against its Creator and King.” (Yarbrough, “Atonement,” *NDBT*, 388)

- a. Means of Atonement: The Shedding of Blood (life for life)
  - Lev. 17:11. For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls, for it is the blood that makes atonement by the life.
  - Num. 35:33. You shall not pollute the land in which you live, for blood pollutes the land, and no atonement can be made for the land for the blood that is shed in it, except by the blood of the one who shed it.
  - Isa. 22:14. The LORD of hosts has revealed himself in my ears: “Surely this iniquity will not be atoned for you until you die,” says the Lord GOD of hosts.
  - Isa. 27:9. Therefore by this guilt of Jacob will be atoned for and this will be the full fruit of the removal of his sin: when he makes all the stones of the altars like chalkstones crushed to pieces, no Asherim or incense altars will remain standing.
  - Heb. 9:22. Indeed, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.
- b. Atonement in secular context.
  - 2 Sam. 21:3. And David said to the Gibeonites, “What shall I do for you? And how shall I make atonement, that you may bless the heritage of Yahweh?”
- c. Imagery: Appeasement of divine wrath
  - i. Against Egypt and her attempt to expand her empire into the north
    - Jer. 46:10. That day is the day of Sovereign Yahweh of hosts, a day of vengeance, to avenge himself on his foes. The sword shall devour and be sated and drink its fill of their blood. For the Sovereign Yahweh of hosts *holds a sacrifice* in the north country by the river Euphrates.
  - ii. Against Gog for attempting to destroy Israel
    - Ezek. 39:17, 20–21. Speak to the birds of every sort and to all beasts of the field, “Assemble and come, gather from all around to the *sacrificial feast* that I am preparing for you, a great sacrificial feast on the mountains of Israel, and you shall eat flesh and drink blood....<sup>20</sup> And you shall be filled *at my table* with horses and charioteers, with mighty men and all kinds of warriors,” declares the Sovereign Yahweh. <sup>21</sup>“And I will set my glory among the nations, and all the nations shall see *my judgment that I have executed*, and my hand that I have laid on them.”
  - iii. Against Jerusalem for her sustained iniquity
    - Isa. 22:12–14. In that day the Lord Yahweh of hosts called for weeping and mourning, for baldness and wearing sackcloth; and behold, joy and gladness, killing oxen and slaughtering sheep, eating flesh and drinking wine. “Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.” Yahweh of hosts has revealed himself in my ears: “*Surely this iniquity will not be atoned for you until you die*,” says the Lord Yahweh of hosts.
    - Zeph. 1:7–9. Be silent before the Lord Yahweh! For the day of Yahweh is near; *Yahweh has prepared a sacrifice* and consecrated his guests. <sup>8</sup>And on the day of Yahweh’s sacrifice—“I will punish the officials and the king’s sons and all who array themselves in foreign attire. <sup>9</sup>On that day I will punish everyone who leaps



over the threshold, and those who fill their master's house with violence and fraud.”

iv. Against the nations for their torment of Zion

- Isa. 34:1–2, 5–6, 8. Draw near, O nations, to hear, and give attention, O peoples! ... For Yahweh is enraged against all the nations, and furious against all their hosts; he has *devoted them to complete destruction*, has given them over for slaughter.... For my sword has drunk its fill in the heavens; behold, it descends for judgment upon Edom, upon the people I have *devoted to destruction*. Yahweh has a sword; it is sated with blood; it is gorged with fat, with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams. For *Yahweh has a sacrifice* in Bozrah, a great slaughter in the land of Edom.... For Yahweh has a day of vengeance, a year of recompense for the cause of Zion.

2. *Key Elements of Atonement*

a. Purification (shift from unclean to clean = negative imputation)

i. Sins of the offender not credited/accounted/imputed toward him but toward the substitute (Lev 17:4; 2 Sam 19:19; Ps 32:2; 2 Cor 5:19; cf. 1 Pet 2:24).

- Lev. 17:3–4. If any one of the house of Israel kills an ox or a lamb or a goat in the camp, or kills it outside the camp, <sup>4</sup> and does not bring it to the entrance of the tent of meeting to offer it as a gift to Yahweh in front of the tabernacle of Yahweh, bloodguilt shall be imputed (*yēhāšēb*) to that man. He has shed blood, and that man shall be cut off from among his people.
- 2 Sam. 19:19. And said to the king, “Let not my lord hold (*yaḥ<sup>a</sup>šāb*) me guilty or remember how your servant did wrong on the day my lord the king left Jerusalem. Do not let the king take it to heart.”
- Ps. 32:1–2. Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. <sup>2</sup> Blessed is the man against whom Yahweh counts (*yaḥšōb*) no iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit. [Cited in Rom 4:8 below.]
- 2 Cor. 5:19, 21. In Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting (*logizomenos*) their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. . . . <sup>21</sup> For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.
- 1 Pet. 2:24. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.

ii. Two elements:

(1) *Propitiation*: Satisfying God's wrath through payment/ransom for sin (Lev. 9:23–24 vs. 10:1–3)

- Lev. 9:3–6, 23–10:3. <sup>9:3</sup> And say to the people of Israel, ‘Take a male goat for a sin offering, and a calf and a lamb, both a year old without blemish, for a burnt offering, <sup>4</sup> and an ox and a ram for peace offerings, to sacrifice before Yahweh, and a grain offering mixed with oil, for today Yahweh will appear to you.’” <sup>5</sup> And they brought what Moses commanded in front of the tent of meeting, and all the congregation drew near and stood before Yahweh. <sup>6</sup> And Moses said, “This is the thing that Yahweh commanded you to do, that the glory of Yahweh may appear to you.” . . . <sup>23</sup> And Moses and Aaron went into the tent of meeting, and when they came out they blessed the people, and the glory of Yahweh appeared to all the people. <sup>24</sup> And fire came out from before Yahweh and consumed the burnt offering and the pieces of fat on the altar, and when all the people saw it, they shouted and fell on their faces. <sup>10:1</sup> Now Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer and put fire in it and laid incense on it and offered unauthorized fire before Yahweh, which he had not commanded them. <sup>2</sup> And fire came out from before Yahweh and consumed them, and

they died before Yahweh. <sup>3</sup> Then Moses said to Aaron, “This is what Yahweh has said: ‘Among those who are near me I will be sanctified, and before all the people I will be glorified.’” And Aaron held his peace.

(2) *Expiation: Purging from defilement/cleansing from sin = forgiveness* (Lev. 4:20, 26, 31; 19:22; Num. 15:25)

- Lev. 4:20, 26, 31. Thus shall he do with the bull. As he did with the bull of the sin offering, so shall he do with this. And the priest shall make atonement for them, and they shall be forgiven. . . . <sup>26</sup> And all its fat he shall burn on the altar, like the fat of the sacrifice of peace offerings. So the priest shall make atonement for him for his sin, and he shall be forgiven. . . . <sup>31</sup> And all its fat he shall remove, as the fat is removed from the peace offerings, and the priest shall burn it on the altar for a pleasing aroma to Yahweh. And the priest shall make atonement for him, and he shall be forgiven.
- Lev. 19:22. And the priest shall make atonement for him with the ram of the guilt offering before Yahweh for his sin that he has committed, and he shall be forgiven for the sin that he has committed.
- Num. 15:25. And the priest shall make atonement for all the congregation of the people of Israel, and they shall be forgiven, because it was a mistake, and they have brought their offering, a food offering to Yahweh, and their sin offering before Yahweh for their mistake.

b. Consecration (shift from common to holy = positive imputation)

i. The righteousness/purity of the substitute credited/accounted/imputed to the trusting sinner (Lev 7:18; cf. Rom 5:18–19; 2 Cor 5:21; Phil 3:9; for more on positive crediting language, see Num 18:26–27, 30).

- Lev. 7:18. If any of the flesh of the sacrifice of his peace offering is eaten on the third day, he who offers it shall not be accepted, neither shall it be credited (*yēḥāšēb*) to him. It is tainted, and he who eats of it shall bear his iniquity.
- Isa 53:11. Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities.
- Rom. 5:18–19. Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification of life for all men. <sup>19</sup> For as by the one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man’s obedience the many will be made righteous.
- 2 Cor. 5:21. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.
- Phil. 3:8–9. Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ <sup>9</sup> and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith.

ii. Faith apart from works accounted as righteousness.

- Gen. 15:6. And he believed Yahweh, and he counted it (*wayyahš<sup>er</sup>behā*) to him as righteousness.
- Rom. 4:1–12. What then shall we say was gained by Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh? <sup>2</sup> For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. <sup>3</sup> For what does the Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was counted (*elogisthē*) to him as righteousness.” <sup>4</sup> Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted (*logizetai*) as a gift but as his due. <sup>5</sup> And to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness, <sup>6</sup>

just as David also speaks of the blessing of the one to whom God counts (*logizetai*) righteousness apart from works: <sup>7</sup> “Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; <sup>8</sup> blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not count (*logisetai*) his sin.” <sup>9</sup> Is this blessing then only for the circumcised, or also for the uncircumcised? For we say that faith was counted to Abraham as righteousness. <sup>10</sup> How then was it counted (*elogisthē*) to him? Was it before or after he had been circumcised? It was not after, but before he was circumcised. <sup>11</sup> He received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. The purpose was to make him the father of all who believe without being circumcised, so that righteousness would be counted (*logisthēnai*) to them as well, <sup>12</sup> and to make him the father of the circumcised who are not merely circumcised but who also walk in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had before he was circumcised.

- Rom. 9:30–32; 10:3. What shall we say, then? That Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness have attained it, that is, a righteousness that is by faith; <sup>31</sup> but that Israel who pursued a law that would lead to righteousness did not succeed in reaching that law. <sup>32</sup> Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as if it were based on works. They have stumbled over the stumbling stone. . . . <sup>10:3</sup> For, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God’s righteousness.
- iii. Actual obedience growing out of faith accounted as righteousness.
  - Psa. 106:30–31. Then Phinehas stood up and intervened, and the plague was stayed. <sup>31</sup> And that was counted (*wattēhāšēb*) to him as righteousness from generation to generation forever.
  - Deut. 6:25. And it will be righteousness for us, if we are careful to do all this commandment before the LORD our God, as he has commanded us.
  - Deut. 24:13. You shall restore to him the pledge as the sun sets, that he may sleep in his cloak and bless you. And it shall be righteousness for you before the LORD your God.
  - Deut. 33:21. He chose the best of the land for himself, for there a commander’s portion was reserved; and he came with the heads of the people, with Israel he executed the justice of the LORD, and his judgments for Israel.
  - 1 John 3:7. Little children, let no one deceive you. Whoever practices righteousness is righteous, as he is righteous.

2 Cor. 5:21. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin [our purification], so that in him we might become the righteousness of God [our consecration].

1 Cor. 6:9–11. Or do you not know that the *unrighteous* will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, <sup>10</sup>nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. <sup>11</sup>Such were some of you. But you were *washed* [purification], you were *sanctified* [consecration], you were *justified* [atonement] in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God. [purification + consecration = atonement]

### 3. *The Qualifications for Atonement through Sacrifice to Be Effective*

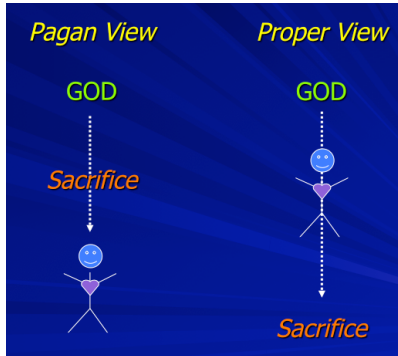
#### a. Qualifications for the offerer

- Lev. 5:5–6. When he *realizes his guilt* in any of these and *confesses the sin* he has committed, <sup>6</sup> he shall bring to the LORD as his compensation for the sin that he has committed, a female from the flock, a lamb or a goat, for a sin offering. And the priest shall make atonement for him for his sin.
- Num. 5:6–7. Speak to the people of Israel, When a man or woman commits any of the sins that people commit by breaking faith with the LORD, and that person *realizes his guilt*, <sup>7</sup> he shall *confess his sin* that he has committed. And he shall make full

restitution for his wrong, adding a fifth to it and giving it to him to whom he did the wrong.

- i. *Realization of Guilt*: Lev. 4:13, 22, 27; 5:2, 3, 4, 5 (Sin Offering); Lev. 5:17; 6:4, 5; Num. 5:7 (Guilt Offering)
  - Ps. 24:3–5. Who shall ascend the hill of Yahweh? And who shall stand in his holy place? <sup>4</sup>He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully. <sup>5</sup>He will receive blessing from Yahweh and righteousness from the God of his salvation. (cf. Ps. 15)
  - Ps. 51:16–17. For you will not delight in sacrifice, or I would give it; you will not be pleased with a burnt offering. <sup>17</sup>The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise. (cf. Ps. 40:6; Mic. 6:6–8; 1 Sam. 15:22)
  - Prov. 21:3, 27. To do righteousness and justice is more acceptable to Yahweh than sacrifice... <sup>27</sup>The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination; how much more when he brings it with evil intent.
- ii. *Confession of sins*: Lev. 5:5 (sin offering); 16:21 (scapegoat); 26:40 (covenant curses); Num. 5:6 (guilt offering)
  - Prov. 28:13. Whoever conceals his transgression will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy.
  - 1 John 1:9. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (Cf. Jas 5:16)
- b. Qualifications for the priest
  - i. Failure to sacrifice rightly (e.g., in an unclean condition) will result in the offerer still bearing his/her guilt (Lev 22:15–16; cf. 22:2–3)
    - Lev. 22:15–16. They shall not profane the holy things of the people of Israel, which they contribute to the LORD, and so cause them to bear iniquity and guilt, by eating their holy things: for I am the LORD who sanctifies them.
  - ii. Failure to sacrifice rightly (e.g., not dressing properly or not offering the best parts but keeping them himself) will profane the people's holy offerings and result in the priest's death (Exod 28:42–43; Num 18:31–32).
    - Exod. 28:42–43. You shall make for them linen undergarments to cover their naked flesh. They shall reach from the hips to the thighs; and they shall be on Aaron and on his sons when they go into the tent of meeting or when they come near the altar to minister in the Holy Place, lest they bear guilt and die. This shall be a statute forever for him and for his offspring after him.
    - Num. 18:31–32. And you may eat it in any place, you and your households, for it is your reward in return for your service in the tent of meeting. And you shall bear no sin by reason of it, when you have contributed the best of it. But you shall not profane the holy things of the people of Israel, lest you die.
  - iii. Such qualifications highlight the absolute necessity for a faithful priest (1 Sam 2:35; Heb 2:17)
    - 1 Sam. 2:35. And I will raise up for myself a faithful priest, who shall do according to what is in my heart and in my mind. And I will build him a sure house, and he shall go in and out before my anointed forever.
    - Heb. 2:17. Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.

**Fig. 5.4. Pagan & Proper Understandings of God’s View of Sacrifice**



**Pagan View:** God looks through the sacrifice (i.e., the good work) to determine whether he accepts the person.  
**Proper View:** God looks through the person’s heart to determine whether he accepts the sacrifice.

4. *The Process for Atonement through Sacrifice:*
  - a. Normal pattern (Lev. 6:2–7; Num. 5:6–8):

	<i>Lev. 6:2–7</i>	<i>Num. 5:6–8</i>
1. Sin against God or neighbor	<sup>2</sup> If anyone sins and commits a breach of faith against Yahweh by deceiving his neighbor in a matter of deposit or security, or through robbery, or if he has oppressed his neighbor <sup>3</sup> or has found something lost and lied about it, swearing falsely—in any of all the things that people do and sin thereby—	<sup>6</sup> Speak to the people of Israel, When a man or woman commits any of the sins that people commit by breaking faith with Yahweh,
2. Realize guilt (true repentance)	<sup>4</sup> if he has sinned and has realized his guilt and will restore what he took by robbery or what he got by oppression or the deposit that was committed to him or the lost thing that he found <sup>5</sup> or anything about which he has sworn falsely,	and that person realizes his guilt,
3. Confess sin (cf. Lev. 5:5; 1 John 1:9)		<sup>7</sup> he shall confess his sin that he has committed.
4. Make restitution or reconciliation when necessary (cf. Matt. 5:23–24; 6:14–15)	he shall restore it in full and shall add a fifth to it, and give it to him to whom it belongs on the day he realizes his guilt.	And he shall make full restitution for his wrong, adding a fifth to it and giving it to him to whom he did the wrong.
5. Offer sacrifice (for this process, see above)	<sup>6</sup> And he shall bring to the priest as his compensation to Yahweh a ram without blemish out of the flock, or its equivalent for a guilt offering. <sup>7</sup> And the priest shall make atonement for him before Yahweh, and he shall be forgiven for any of the things that one may do and thereby become guilty.”	<sup>8</sup> But if the man has no next of kin to whom restitution may be made for the wrong, the restitution for wrong shall go to Yahweh for the priest, in addition to the ram of atonement with which atonement is made for him.

- b. In light of the Day of Atonement and the ultimate work of Christ, God could effect atonement for his people at any time (apart from animal sacrifice), and people could call upon him to do so.
      - i. *Foundational verse:* Exod. 34:6–7. Yahweh, Yahweh God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth; who keeps lovingkindness for thousands,

- who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin; yet he will by no means leave the guilty unpunished.
- ii. God himself will “make atonement for” his land and people (Deut. 32:43; Ezek. 16:63).
  - iii. He “forgives” Zion’s transgressions (Ps. 65:3–4) and the iniquities of his unfaithful people (Ps. 78:38).
  - iv. He is called upon to “forgive” the sins of his people (Ps. 79:9; cf. Ps. 51), as when Moses pleaded with God (rather than making a sacrifice) after the sin of the golden calf (cf. Exod. 32:11–14, 31–32).
  - v. At times, communal sin is atoned without any sacrifice and even without any sign of communal repentance but always in light of mediation (i.e., someone “standing in the breach”) and perhaps directly linked to what is secured at the Day of Atonement (Exod. 32:11–14, 30–33; Num. 14:17–20; 16:46–49; Deut. 10:26–27; Ps. 106:23; cf. Ezek. 22:30).
  - vi. NOTE: It is very possible that God’s “forgiveness” in many of the text, which is associated with enduring “mercy” by later writers (e.g., Neh 9:19, 27–28, 31), was not salvific forgiveness but only temporary, communal pardon.
- c. The reason God could justly be merciful was only because Christ would one-day come to prove that God was both just and the justifier of all who believe.
- Rom. 3:23–26. For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, <sup>24</sup>and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, <sup>25</sup>whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God’s righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. <sup>26</sup>It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.
5. *Two Types of Sins: Sins of Error vs. Sins of a High-Hand*
- a. Seeking Proper Categorization
    - i. Numbers 15:29–30 identifies only two types of sins—“unintentional” and “high-handed,” the former of which can be forgiven by means of a sacrificial substitute whereas the latter must result in the sinner being removed from the community, usually through death.
      - Num 15:27–31 (ESV). If one person sins *unintentionally*, he shall offer a female goat a year old for a sin offering. <sup>28</sup>And the priest shall make atonement before Yahweh for the person who *makes a mistake*, when he *sins unintentionally*, to make atonement for him, and he shall be forgiven. <sup>29</sup>You shall have one law for him who *does anything unintentionally*, for him who is native among the people of Israel and for the stranger who sojourns among them. <sup>30</sup>But the person who *does anything with a high hand*, whether he is native or a sojourner, reviles Yahweh, and that person shall be cut off from among his people. <sup>31</sup>Because he has despised the word of Yahweh and has broken his commandment, that person shall be utterly cut off; his iniquity shall be on him.
    - ii. If the two categories of sin in Num 15:29–30 (unintentional and high-handed) are all there are, and if the ESV and other modern translations have rendered the Hebrew noun *š’gāgâ* (and its verbal by-forms) correctly as “mistake” or “unintentional act” (lit., “sins of error or haste”), then all “intentional” sins like lying, covetousness, stealing,

and lust were “high-handed,” thus having no means of substitutionary atonement under the Mosaic economy, save potentially God’s mercy apart from sacrifice.

**THINK!**

When David committed adultery with [or raped] Bathsheba and murdered Uriah, and when Manasseh committed grave idolatry and performed child-sacrifice, the death penalty was *not* carried out. Instead, in time both repented and were restored into right relationship with God (2 Sam. 12:13; 2 Chr. 33:13). Was the lack of the death penalty due to sinful negligence on the people’s part, to the royal status of the kings, or to the fact that grievous sins like those above were still only considered high-handed if repentance did not follow?

- iii. Leviticus scholar Jay Sklar (*Leviticus*, ZECOT, intro) proposes that, while a third category is unnamed, Exodus through Numbers does identify three main categories of sins:
- (1) Mistakes or “unintentional sins” (for which there is atonement)
  - (2) Intentional sins (for which there is atonement)
  - (3) Sins of a high-hand (for which there is no atonement).

Category of sin	Example	How to atone
Unintentional sin (Lev 4:2, 13; 5:2–4; Num 15:22; etc.)	Perhaps not realizing you were ritually impure and failing to deal with it properly	Repentance, confession, sacrifice (Lev 5:5–6, 10; Num 15:25)
Intentional but not (necessarily) apostate sin (Lev 5:1; 5:20–26 [6:1–7])	Failing to testify about a crime (Lev 5:1)	Repentance, confession, sacrifice (Lev 5:5–6; 5:25–26 [6:6–7])
Apostate sin (Num 15:30–31)	Refusing to enter the Promised Land (Num 14:1–35)	Sacrificial atonement not possible (cf. Num 15:22–28 with 15:30–31), but a mediator could intercede on the repentant sinner’s behalf (Num 14:13–20)

- iv. In seeming contrast to Sklar, Heb 9:7 states that at the Day of Atonement the priest would offer blood “for himself and for the *unintentional sins* of the people” (ESV), as if, in contrast to Christ’s new covenant work, the old Mosaic system could not address any intentional sins. Conservative Hebrews scholar Paul Ellingworth identifies what appears to be a dual contrast in Heb 9:7 (*Hebrews*, NIGNT, 435): (1) Whereas the OT high priest sacrificed on the Day of Atonement first for his own sins (Lev 16:11) and then for the people (16:15), Christ does not need to offer sacrifice for himself, seeing as he is “without sin” (Heb 4:15) and “without blemish” (9:14). (2) Whereas the OT sacrifices cover only inadvertent sins or sins of ignorance, Christ’s sacrifice covers both accidental and deliberate sins. He notes the similarity of this teaching to Num 15:29–30 (i.e., only two types of sacrifice: “unintentional” and “high-handed”), but he also highlights

how the OT clearly allowed for deliberate sins to be purged by sacrifice following restitution (Lev 5:1; 6:1–7 [5:20–26]). Liberal Hebrews scholar Harold Attridge claims that the portrait of the Day of Atonement in Hebrews “differs from scripture” at just this point: “While Leviticus had indicated that all of the people’s sins are expiated by the atonement ritual (Lev 16:30), our author limits the atonement to ‘inadvertent sins’” (*Hebrews*, Hermeneia, 239). Similarly, Craig Koester, also a liberal Hebrews scholar, asserts that most sacrifices atoned only for unintentional sins, whereas the sacrifices on the day of atonement were “for all their sins” (Lev 16:16; cf. 16:5, 9) (*Hebrews*, AB, 397).<sup>1</sup>

- v. Building off our conviction in the unity of Scripture, how should we reconcile the distinction of only two types of sins (“unintentional” vs high-handed) in both Num 15 and Heb 9? Sklar proposes that the absence of the middle category in Num 15 may be simply to highlight the contrast between the two outer categories and to push one to recognize that if they move into the realm of intentional sinning, they are in grave danger (Sklar, *Leviticus*, intro). While possible, this does not address why Hebrews assumes God would forgive only “sins of error” (ESV = “unintentional”) in the OT.
  - vi. In alignment with Sklar, I will argue that there were intentional sins for which forgiveness *was* available, but in contrast to Sklar, I will propose that “sins of error” could include *both* intentional and unintentional acts (and, therefore, should not be translated “unintentional”) and that the difference between sins for which there is saving atonement (whether intentional or unintentional) and those for which there was no saving atonement (high-handed) were distinguished *not* by the nature of the act but by whether repentance followed (Lev 5:5; Num 5:7).
- b. Sins of a High-Hand
- i. Numbers 15:30 is the only place the OT mentions “sins of a high hand,” it is of these sins alone that we are told there is no atonement.
  - ii. Only other example of the phrase “high-handed” in the OT:
    - Exod. 14:8. And Yahweh hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he pursued the people of Israel while the people of Israel were going out *defiantly*.
    - Num. 33:3. On the day after the Passover, the people of Israel went out *triumphantly* in the sight of all the Egyptians.
  - iii. Note also Scripture portrays Jeroboam’s rebellion as a sin of a high hand:
    - 1 Kgs 11:26–27. Jeroboam the son of Nebat ... also lifted up his hand against the king.<sup>27</sup> And this was the reason why he lifted up his hand against the king. Solomon built the Millo, and closed up the breach of the city of David his father.
  - iv. In light of these parallels, “high-handed sins” appear to be those done boldly and brazenly without repentance. To these there is no means for

<sup>1</sup> The commentaries by Bruce (*Hebrews*, NICNT, 207), Lane (*Hebrews*, WBC, 222–23), and O’Brien (*Hebrews*, Pillar, 311) do not even address the issue.



substitutionary atonement, and the offender must be cut off from the community, which at least usually meant death!

- (1) Death to the Sabbath-breaker (Num. 15:32–41) (\*This is the most immediate example of high-handed sins, for it follows directly after the instruction in Num. 15:30–31).
  - (2) Death for sorcery and divination (Exod. 22:18; Lev. 20:6), bestiality (Exod. 22:19; Lev. 20:15–16), sacrificing to idols (22:20), child sacrifice (Lev. 20:2, 4), cursing parents (20:9), adultery (20:10; Deut. 22:20–24), incest (Lev. 20:11–12), homosexuality (20:13), cursing God (24:10–16), murder (Num. 35:31–34; Deut. 19:11–13), false teaching (Deut. 13:5), seduction of others to idolatry (13:6–9), worship of foreign gods (17:2–5), presumption in not heeding priestly guidance (17:12), rape (22:25), the enslavement of a fellow-Israelite through deception (24:7).
  - (3) Curse to all who spurn their covenant obligations (Lev. 26:14–46; Deut. 27:9–26; 28:15–68).
- v. New Testament witness to sins of a high hand:
- (1) Matt. 12:31–32. Therefore I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven people, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. <sup>32</sup>And whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.
  - (2) Mark 3:29. Whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin.
  - (3) Luke 12:10. And everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but the one who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven.
  - (4) Heb. 6:4–6. For it is impossible to restore again to repentance those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, and have shared in the Holy Spirit, <sup>5</sup>and have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the age to come, <sup>6</sup>if they then fall away, since they are crucifying once again the Son of God to their own harm and holding him up to contempt.
  - (5) **Heb. 10:26–27. For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, <sup>27</sup>but a fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of a fire that will consume the adversaries.**
  - (6) 1 John 5:16. If anyone sees his brother committing a sin not leading to death, he shall ask, and God will give him life—to those who commit sins that do not lead to death. There is sin that leads to death; I do not say that one should pray for that.
- vi. Lessons:
- (1) God takes sin seriously and will not accept high-handed behavior.
  - (2) Israel must take uncleanness and sin seriously, so as to fulfill their purpose of being a kingdom of priests and a holy nation (cf. Exod. 19:4–6 with 24:3–8).

- c. Introduction to Sins of Error (ESV = “Unintentional” Sins”)
- i. A Survey of the Word-Group:
- (1) *šgg* – Qal: make a mistake (Lev. 5:18; Num. 15:28, 30; Ps. 119:67; Job 12:16); go astray (Ps. 119:67; Job 12:16).
  - (2) *š<sup>e</sup>gāgā* – An offense due to oversight, inadvertent mistake (Lev. 4:2, 22, 27; 5:15, 18; 22:14; Num. 15:24, 25, 27, 28, 29); an accidental offense (Num. 35:11, 15; 20:3, 9); an error due to haste (Qoh. 5:5); an intolerable action (Qoh. 10:5).
  - (3) *šgh* – Qal: stray (Ezek. 34:6; Prov. 5:23), stagger (Isa. 28:7; Prov. 5:19, 20; 20:1); do wrong, make a mistake (Lev. 4:13; Num. 15:22; 1 Sam. 26:21; Ezek. 45:20; Pss. 119:21, 118; Job 6:24; 19:4; Prov. 19:27); Hiphil: lead astray (Ps. 119:10); mislead (Deut. 27:18; Job 12:16; Prov. 28:10).
- ii. Support for viewing certain sins as “unintentional”:
- (1) There are frequent qualifiers that specify the sin as “unintentional” or “unknown”
    - (a) Sins not recognized by the congregation:
      - (i) Lev. 4:13–14 (ESV). If the whole congregation of Israel *sins unintentionally* and *the thing is hidden from the eyes of the assembly*, and they do any one of the things that by Yahweh’s commandments ought not to be done, and they realize their guilt, <sup>14</sup>*when the sin which they have committed becomes known*, the assembly shall offer a bull from the herd for a sin offering and bring it in front of the tent of meeting.
      - (ii) Num. 15:22, 24–25 (ESV). But if you *sin unintentionally*, and do not observe all these commandments... <sup>24</sup>*then if it was done unintentionally without the knowledge of the congregation*, all the congregation shall offer one bull from the herd for a burnt offering, a pleasing aroma to Yahweh, with its grain offering and its drink offering, according to the rule, and one male goat for a sin offering. <sup>25</sup>And the priest shall make atonement for all the congregation of the people of Israel, and they shall be forgiven, because it was a mistake, and they have brought their offering, a food offering to Yahweh, and their sin offering before Yahweh for their mistake.
    - (b) Sins not recognized by the perpetrator(s):
      - (i) Lev. 4:13–14 (ESV). If the whole congregation of Israel *sins unintentionally* and *the thing is hidden from the eyes of the assembly*, and they do any one of the things that by Yahweh’s commandments ought not to be done, and they realize their guilt, <sup>14</sup>*when the sin which they have committed becomes known*, the assembly shall offer a bull from the herd for a sin offering and bring it in front of the tent of meeting.
      - (ii) Lev. 4:22–23 (ESV). When a leader sins, doing *unintentionally* any one of all the things that by the commandments of Yahweh his God ought not to be done, and realizes his guilt, <sup>23</sup>*or the sin which he has committed is made known to him*, he shall bring as his offering a goat, a male without blemish.
      - (iii) Lev. 4:27–28 (ESV). If anyone of the common people sins *unintentionally* in doing any one of the things that by Yahweh’s commandments ought not to be done, and realizes his guilt, <sup>28</sup>*or*

*the sin which he has committed is made known to him*, he shall bring for his offering a goat, a female without blemish, for his sin which he has committed.

- (iv) Lev. 5:14–16, 17–19. Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying, <sup>15</sup>“If anyone commits a breach of faith and sins *in error* in any of the holy things of Yahweh [because of no qualifier, the offense could be known or unknown], he shall bring to Yahweh as his compensation, a ram without blemish out of the flock, valued in silver shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, for a guilt offering... <sup>16</sup>And the priest shall make atonement for him with the ram of the guilt offering, and he shall be forgiven. <sup>17</sup>If anyone sins, doing any of the things that by Yahweh’s commandments ought not to be done, *though he did not know it*, then realizes his guilt [the presence of a qualifier marks the sin of error as unintentional], he shall bear his iniquity... <sup>18</sup>and the priest shall make atonement for him for the *mistake* that he made *in error*, and he shall be forgiven. <sup>19</sup>It is a guilt offering; he has indeed incurred guilt before Yahweh.
- (c) Unpremeditated, accidental acts without malicious intent:
- (i) Num. 35:11, 15. Then you shall select cities to be cities of refuge for you, that the manslayer who kills any person without intent may flee there. <sup>15</sup> These six cities shall be for refuge for the people of Israel, and for the stranger and for the sojourner among them, that anyone who kills any person without intent may flee there.
- (ii) Josh. 20:2–3 (ESV). Appoint the cities of refuge, of which I spoke to you through Moses, <sup>3</sup>that the manslayer who strikes any person *without intent* or *unknowingly* may flee there. They shall be for you a refuge from the avenger of blood. (cf. v. 9)
- (d) Failures done foolishly or in error, though perhaps without malicious intent.
- (i) 1 Sam. 26:21 (ESV). Then Saul said, “I have sinned. Return, my son David, for I will no more do you harm, because my life was precious in your eyes this day. Behold, I have acted foolishly, and have made a great *mistake*.”
- (ii) Eccl. 5:5–7 (ESV). It is better that you should not vow than that you should vow and not pay. <sup>6</sup>Let not your mouth lead you into sin, and do not say before the messenger that it *was a mistake*. Why should God be angry at your voice and destroy the work of your hands? <sup>7</sup>For when dreams increase and words grow many, there is vanity; but God is the one you must fear.
- (e) Sins not done “with a high hand” or defiantly:
- (i) Num. 15:30–31 (ESV). But the person who does anything with a *high hand*, whether he is native or a sojourner, reviles Yahweh, and that person shall be cut off from among his people. <sup>31</sup>Because he has despised the word of Yahweh and has broken his commandment, that person shall be utterly cut off; his iniquity shall be on him.
- (ii) Cf. Lev. 4:2; 5:15; 22:14; Num. 15:25–29; Eccl. 10:5
- (f) Ezekiel may distinguish sins of error vs. sins of ignorance:
- Ezek. 45:20. You shall do the same on the seventh day of the month from the man erring (*šgh*) and from an ignorant one; so you shall make atonement for the temple.

- (2) Possible examples of “unintentional” sins:
- (a) “Sins” of negligence demanding sacrifice for atonement:
    - (i) Failing to serve as a witness in a trial (Lev 5:1)
    - (ii) Absent-mindedly failing to purify during time limits (Lev. 5:2–3)
    - (iii) Forgetting to fulfill an oath (Lev. 5:4)
  - (b) “Sins” of haste aroused by mental disorientation that still demand sacrifice for atonement:
    - (i) Eating uncooked food (1 Sam. 14:32–34)
  - (c) “Sins” of ignorance, likely demanding sacrifice for atonement.
    - (i) Accidental touching a gonorrhoeic or menstruant or anything he or she sits on (Lev. 15:4–10, 19–24, 26–27)
    - (ii) Accidental touching of corpse or accidental entrance into a room with a corpse (Num. 19:14–22, esp. v. 20)
  - (d) When one *accidentally* causes another’s death, he does not “deserve to die” (Deut 19:6), and so the act is likely not regarded as an unintentional *sin*. This may not be the case, however, for the manslayer still needed to remain until the death of the high priest, who symbolically carries upon himself the sins of the people.
    - (i) Exod. 21:12–14. Whoever strikes a man so that he dies shall be put to death.<sup>13</sup> But if he did not lie in wait for him, but God let him fall into his hand, then I will appoint for you a place to which he may flee.<sup>14</sup> But if a man willfully attacks another to kill him by cunning, you shall take him from my altar, that he may die.
    - (ii) Num. 35:20–24. And if he pushed him out of hatred or hurled something at him, lying in wait, so that he died,<sup>21</sup> or in enmity struck him down with his hand, so that he died, then he who struck the blow shall be put to death. He is a murderer. The avenger of blood shall put the murderer to death when he meets him.<sup>22</sup> But if he pushed him suddenly without enmity, or hurled anything on him without lying in wait<sup>23</sup> or used a stone that could cause death, and without seeing him dropped it on him, so that he died, though he was not his enemy and did not seek his harm,<sup>24</sup> then the congregation shall judge between the manslayer and the avenger of blood, in accordance with these rules.
    - (iii) Deut. 19:4–6. This is the provision for the manslayer, who by fleeing there may save his life. If anyone kills his neighbor unintentionally without having hated him in the past—<sup>5</sup> as when someone goes into the forest with his neighbor to cut wood, and his hand swings the axe to cut down a tree, and the head slips from the handle and strikes his neighbor so that he dies—he may flee to one of these cities and live,<sup>6</sup> lest the avenger of blood in hot anger pursue the manslayer and overtake him, because the way is long, and strike him fatally, though the man did not deserve to die, since he had not hated his neighbor in the past.
    - (iv) Josh. 20:2–6. Say to the people of Israel, “Appoint the cities of refuge, of which I spoke to you through Moses,<sup>3</sup> that the manslayer who strikes any person without intent or unknowingly

may flee there. They shall be for you a refuge from the avenger of blood. <sup>4</sup> He shall flee to one of these cities and shall stand at the entrance of the gate of the city and explain his case to the elders of that city. Then they shall take him into the city and give him a place, and he shall remain with them. <sup>5</sup> And if the avenger of blood pursues him, they shall not give up the manslayer into his hand, because he struck his neighbor unknowingly, and did not hate him in the past. <sup>6</sup> And he shall remain in that city until he has stood before the congregation for judgment, until the death of him who is high priest at the time. Then the manslayer may return to his own town and his own home, to the town from which he fled.”

- (3) A significant contrast: unpremeditated acts that arise out of anger versus unpremeditated acts that are accidental. The former deserve the death penalty (and are therefore counted as true sins), whereas the latter demand a provision for sustained life, even though great loss (even loss of life) may have resulted.
- (a) Num 35:20–24. And if he pushed him out of hatred or hurled something at him, lying in wait, so that he died, <sup>21</sup> or in enmity struck him down with his hand, so that he died, then he who struck the blow shall be put to death. He is a murderer. The avenger of blood shall put the murderer to death when he meets him. <sup>22</sup> But if he pushed him suddenly without enmity, or hurled anything on him without lying in wait <sup>23</sup> or used a stone that could cause death, and without seeing him dropped it on him, so that he died, though he was not his enemy and did not seek his harm, <sup>24</sup> then the congregation shall judge between the manslayer and the avenger of blood, in accordance with these rules.
- (b) Deut 19:4–6. If anyone kills his neighbor unintentionally without having hated him in the past—<sup>5</sup> as when someone goes into the forest with his neighbor to cut wood, and his hand swings the axe to cut down a tree, and the head slips from the handle and strikes his neighbor so that he dies—he may flee to one of these cities and live, <sup>6</sup> lest the avenger of blood in hot anger pursue the manslayer and overtake him, because the way is long, and strike him fatally, though the man did not deserve to die, since he had not hated his neighbor in the past.
- (4) The significance of sacrifice for “unintentional” sins: Any offense, whether known or unknown, against an infinitely glorious God demands an equally infinite punishment!
- (a) No offense against God is minor; to think so is to misunderstand the nature of sin.
- (b) The littlest lie demands death as much as murder demands death.

“Ignorance of the law does not constitute an excuse for violating it” (R. K. Harrison, *Numbers*, 225).

d. Intentional, but not High-Handed Sins—Sacrifice is allowed for some intentional, thoughtless acts:

i. *A sin offering for unjust silence or a rash oath:*

- Lev. 5:1, 4–6 (ESV). If anyone sins in that he hears a public adjuration to testify, and though he is a witness, whether he has seen or come to know the matter, yet does not speak, he shall bear his iniquity... <sup>4</sup> or if anyone utters with his lips a rash oath to do evil or to do good, any sort of rash oath that people swear, and it is hidden from him, when he comes to know it, and he realizes his guilt in any of

these; <sup>5</sup>when he realizes his guilt in any of these and confesses the sin he has committed, <sup>6</sup>he shall bring to Yahweh as his compensation for the sin that he has committed, a female from the flock, a lamb or a goat, for a sin offering. And the priest shall make atonement for him for his sin.

ii. *A guilt offering for deceit, theft, lying, false witness, or any other violation against another:*

- Lev. 6:1–5 (ESV). Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying, <sup>2</sup>“If anyone sins and commits a breach of faith against Yahweh by deceiving his neighbor in a matter of deposit or security, or through robbery, or if he has oppressed his neighbor <sup>3</sup>or has found something lost and lied about it, swearing falsely—in any of all the things that people do and sin thereby— <sup>4</sup>if he has sinned and has realized his guilt and will restore what he took by robbery or what he got by oppression or the deposit that was committed to him or the lost thing that he found <sup>5</sup>or anything about which he has sworn falsely, he shall restore it in full and shall add a fifth to it, and give it to him to whom it belongs on the day he realizes his guilt. <sup>6</sup>And he shall bring to the priest as his compensation to Yahweh a ram without blemish out of the flock, or its equivalent for a guilt offering. <sup>7</sup>And the priest shall make atonement for him before Yahweh, and he shall be forgiven for any of the things that one may do and thereby become guilty.

iii. *A guilt offering for any failure before the Lord:*

- Num. 5:6–8 (ESV). When a man or woman commits *any of the sins that people commit* by breaking faith with Yahweh, and that person realizes his guilt, <sup>7</sup>he shall confess his sin that he has committed. And he shall make full restitution for his wrong, adding a fifth to it and giving it to him to whom he did the wrong. <sup>8</sup>But if the man has no next of kin to whom restitution may be made for the wrong, the restitution for wrong shall go to Yahweh for the priest, in addition to the ram of atonement with which atonement is made for him.

iv. *A guilt offering for adultery with a betrothed slave-girl:*

- Lev. 19:20–22 (ESV). If a man lies sexually with a woman who is a slave, assigned to another man and not yet ransomed or given her freedom, a distinction shall be made. They shall not be put to death, because she was not free; <sup>21</sup>but he shall bring his compensation to Yahweh, to the entrance of the tent of meeting, a ram for a guilt offering. <sup>22</sup>And the priest shall make atonement for him with the ram of the guilt offering before Yahweh for his sin that he has committed, and he shall be forgiven for the sin that he has committed.

e. **Conclusions and Questions:**

- The distinction between sins of error and sins of a high hand is *not* between unintentional vs. intentional sins and likely has nothing to do with the nature of the offense itself, for both unintentional and intentional sins *can* receive substitutionary atonement under both the old and new covenant economies.
- Rather, the distinction appears to be related to the sinner’s *response* to his sin—whether he is grieved over his sin or not. Sins of a “high hand” are those that do not result in remorse leading to repentance; for these there is no substitutionary atonement, which means the atonement will be carried out on the sinner himself.

“Sacrificial atonement is barred to the wanton sinner, to the one who ‘acts flauntingly’ . . . , [who] ‘reviles the Lord’ (Num. 15:30), but not to the deliberate sinner who . . . is seized by remorse.” (Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 369–70)

- iii. As noted above, using the same language as found throughout Leviticus, Hebrews 9:6–10 speaks of sins of “error/ignorance” as if they were the only type of sin for which the sacrifices in the OT were effective.
- (1) Heb. 9:6–7, 9–10. The priests go regularly into the first section [of the tabernacle], performing their ritual duties, <sup>7</sup>but into the second only the high priest goes, and he but once a year, and not without taking blood, which he offers for himself and for the *unintentional sins* (so ESV; lit. = errors) of the people... <sup>9</sup>According to this arrangement, gifts and sacrifices are offered that cannot perfect the conscience of the worshipper, <sup>10</sup>but *deal only with food and drink and various washings*, regulations for the body imposed until the time of reformation. (Cf. 5:1–3; 10:26)
  - (2) In Sirah 23:2–2, the terms *ἀγνόημα* (“error”) and *ἁμαρτία* (“sin”) are used synonymously and in parallel, and we see similar patterns in Tob 3:3; Judith 5:20; and 1 Macc 13:39. Polybius 38:1, 5 also uses *ἀγνόημα* and *ἀγνοέω* for moral offences. Jubilees 5:17–18 stress that God will pardon all sins if people turn to him in righteousness. The Talmud (*T. Yoma* 5:6) notes that “transgressions of error” can be atoned, and the Mishna (*m. Yoma* 8:9) asserts that repentance opens the door for *any* major and minor transgression to be atoned on the Day of Atonement, whereas those who sin, presuming on future grace, will not be atoned. Philo, too, notes that both voluntary and involuntary sins are addressed on the Day of Atonement (*Poster. C.* 48; *Spec. leg.* 2.196).
    - (a) Sir. 23:2–3. Who will set whips upon my thought and discipline of wisdom upon my heart so that they might not spare my faults of ignorance and he shall not let their sins go?— <sup>3</sup> that my acts of ignorance may not be multiplied, and my sins may increase, and I will fall before my adversaries, and my enemy will rejoice over me. [*Far from them is the hope of your mercy.*]
    - (b) Tob. 3:3. And now, O Lord, remember me and look favorably upon me. Do not punish me for my sins and *for my unwitting offenses* and those that my ancestors committed before you. They sinned against you, <sup>4</sup>and *disobeyed your commandments*. So you gave us over to plunder, exile, and death, to become the talk, the byword, and an object of reproach among all the nations among whom you have dispersed us.
    - (c) Judith 5:20–21. And now, O lord and master, if there is in fact negligence amongst this people, and they are sinning against their God, we will also mark this offense which is amongst them, and we will go up and make war on them. <sup>21</sup> But if there is no lawlessness in their nation, then let my lord pass them by, rather than have their Lord and their God shield them. And we shall be disgraced before all the earth!”
    - (d) 1 Macc. 13:39. We pardon *any errors* and offenses committed to this day, and cancel the crown tax that you owe; and whatever other tax has been collected in Jerusalem shall be collected no longer.
    - (e) 1QS 9.1–2 (*The Rule of the Community*). Because for [...] one *sin of oversight* he will be punished two years; but whoever acts impertinently shall not return again. Only someone who *sins through oversight* <sup>2</sup> shall be tested for two full years with respect to the perfectness of his behavior and of his counsel according to the authority of the Many, and

- shall then be enrolled according to his rank in the Community of holiness.
- (f) Joseph and Asenath 13:12–13. And with you I have taken refuge, O Lord my God. Yet you, rescue me from my many *deeds of ignorance* and pardon me, because I have *sinned against you in ignorance*, being a virgin, and have fallen in error unwittingly, and spoken blasphemous (words) against my lord Joseph, because I did not know, the miserable (one that I am), that he is your son, as people told me that Joseph is the shepherd's son from the land of Canaan. And I, the miserable one, have come to believe them and fall into *error*. And I have despised him and spoken wicked (words) about him, and did not know that he is your son.
- (g) Jub 5:17–18. [And of the children of Israel it has been written and ordained: If they turn to him in righteousness He will forgive all their transgressions and pardon all their sins. Jub. 5:18 It is written and ordained that He will show mercy to all who turn from all their guilt once each year.]
- (h) m. Yoma 8:8–9. <sup>A</sup> A sin offering and an unconditional guilt offering atone. <sup>B</sup> Death and the Day of Atonement atone when joined with repentance. <sup>C</sup> Repentance atones for minor transgressions of positive and negative commandments. <sup>D</sup> And as to serious transgressions, [repentance] suspends the punishment until the Day of Atonement comes along and atones. <sup>9</sup> <sup>A</sup> He who says, “I shall sin and repent, sin and repent”—<sup>B</sup> they give him no chance to do repentance. <sup>C</sup> ... “I will sin and the Day of Atonement will atone,”—the Day of Atonement does not atone. <sup>D</sup> For transgressions done between man and the Omnipresent, the Day of Atonement atones. <sup>E</sup> For transgressions between man and man, the Day of Atonement atones, only if the man will regain the good will of his friend. <sup>F</sup> This exegesis did R. Eleazar b. Azariah state: “From all your sins shall you be clean before the Lord (Lev. 16:30)—for transgressions between man and the Omnipresent does the Day of Atonement atone. For transgressions between man and his fellow, the Day of Atonement atones, only if the man will regain the good will of his friend.” <sup>G</sup> Said R. Aqiba, “Happy are you, O Israel. Before whom are you made clean, and who makes you clean? It is your Father who is in heaven, <sup>H</sup> “as it says, And I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean (Ez. 36:25). <sup>I</sup> “And it says, O Lord, the hope [*miqweh* = immersion pool] of Israel (Jer. 17:13)—Just as the immersion pool cleans the unclean, so the Holy One, blessed be he, clean Israel.”
- (i) t. Yoma 5:6.1.1.D. Said R. Nehemiah, “Since we find in the case of the bullock that is presented on account of all transgressions of error in respect to ‘any one of the commandments’ (Lev. 4:1) that the priest stands outside the altar and, when he sprinkles, sprinkles toward the curtain, one might have supposed that also in this case the rule is the same.”
- (j) Philo Posteritate C.47–48. Now the former kind of humiliation arises out of weakness, being a species of that multiform disease of many changes, leprosy. “For when his appearance seems more humble,” being broken as to its level and fresh face, than the lawgiver says that that humble disease leprosy exists. <sup>48</sup> But the second kind of humiliation arises from the strength of perseverance, which is followed by propitiation, according to the perfect number of the decade; for the people are enjoined to humble their souls on the tenth day of the month, and this means to put away all high boasting, the putting away of which works the rejection of all offences, both voluntary and involuntary. Accordingly, the Lamech who is humbled in this sense, is the



descendant of Seth, and the father of the just Noah; but he who is humbled in the former manner is the descendant of Cain.

(k) Philo, *Spec. leg.* 2:196. The second reason [for the day of Atonement] is, that every one is at this time occupied in prayers and supplications, and since they all devote their entire leisure to nothing else from morning till evening, except to most acceptable prayers by which they endeavour to gain the favour of God, entreating pardon for their sins and hoping for his mercy, not for their own merits but through the compassionate nature of that Being who will have forgiveness rather than punishment.

(3) Note: Due to the way the blood of a murdered victim defiles God's land, one can atone for the blood of murder only with the blood of the murderer himself; no animal sacrifice will suffice (Num 35:33; cf. Gen 9:5–6).

## 6. *Excursus on Bearing Guilt*

- a. Bearing one's iniquity/sin (אָשָׁם + חַטָּאת/אֲשָׁמָה):
  - i. Sin results in one's "bearing iniquity/sin," which, when left unaddressed, will result in death (e.g., Lev 20:20; 22:9; Num 18:22).
    - (1) Bearing one's "iniquity, wrong" (חַטָּאת): Lev 5:1, 17; 17:16; 20:17, 19; Num 5:31; 18:23
    - (2) Bearing one's "sin" (אֲשָׁמָה): Lev 19:17; 20:20; 22:9; 24:15; Num 9:13; 14:34; 18:22 (cf. Deut 15:9; 23:22–23; 24:15)
    - (3) Bearing one's "faithlessness": Num 14:33
    - (4) The opposite is to "be free from iniquity": Num 5:31
  - ii. If the offerer fails to offer his sacrifice correctly, God will not accept it (cf. Lev 19:5, 7; 22:10), the beast's perfections will not be counted to him, and he will "bear his iniquity" (7:18; 19:8), resulting in his being cut off from the community (19:8; cf. 20:17; Num 19:13).
  - iii. If the priest fails to offer the sacrifice properly, the offerer will still bear his/her iniquity (Lev 22:16; cf. 22:2), and the priest in turn would also bear iniquity and die (Exod 28:43; Num 18:32).
- b. A request for "forgiveness" is a request that another human (e.g., Exod 10:17) or, more commonly, God "lift/bear" the "iniquity" (חַטָּאת), "transgression" (עֲוֹנוֹת), or "sin" (אֲשָׁמָה) (Exod 32:32; 34:7; Num 24:18–19).
- c. Yahweh called his representative priests/Levities:
  - i. To "bear" (אָשָׁם) the names of Israel before YHWH (Exod 28:12, 29).
  - ii. To "bear" the people's judgment (28:30)
  - iii. To "bear" the iniquity of the holy things the Israelites consecrated (28:38).
  - iv. To "bear" the people's iniquity by bring a sin offering (Lev 17:10).
  - v. To "bear" iniquity connected with the sanctuary and priesthood (Num 18:1) and to "bear" the people's iniquity (18:23).
- d. At the Day of Atonement, the iniquities of the people bore by the priests would then be declared over the scape goat who would then "bear" the iniquities of the people into the wilderness (Lev 16:21–22).

## V. A Narrative on the Significance of Drawing Near to God (chs. 8–10)

### A. Introduction:

1. Leviticus provides the foundation for the NT teaching that progressive sanctification (as growth in holy living) is grounded in justification (as forensic imputed righteousness). The book's teaching suggests that growth in holy conduct would be accomplished only when one is properly situated between past and future grace. This is highlighted in the book's structure by the placing of ethical instruction (chs. 17–25) *after* the guidelines for substitutionary sacrifice (chs. 1–7, 16) but *before* the promises of blessing, curse, and restoration blessing (ch. 26).
2. In echo of the ordination/consecration of all Israel as a kingdom of priests in Exodus 24:4–8, Leviticus 8 records the ordination/consecration of the priests for their sacred role. The goal of priestly consecration was to provide representatives for the people before God, so that the community could enjoy fellowship with Yahweh. (The Hebrew *way'hi* in 9:1 signals that chs. 9–10 are the climax or ultimate goal of mentioning the ordination.)
3. Chs. 9–10 overview the first communal sacrifices offered at the Tabernacle, and they thus provide a paradigm for understanding the role of sacrifice in relation to Yahweh's holiness and Israel's mission. A key purpose of this unit is to contrast the different results of encountering Yahweh's holy presence, dependent on whether one takes God's passion for his holiness and zeal against sin seriously. It is in this context that a clue is given as to how growth in holy conduct is enabled.

### B. The Basic Pattern or Paradigm:

1. Substitutionary sacrifice (9:4, 6) is the God-given means for encountering Yahweh's glory-presence in a way that results in life, not death.
2. The act of "drawing near" (9:5, 7) flows out of a recognition of personal sin and flows toward substitutionary sacrifice (9:2–4) that generates worship (9:24).
3. The encounter with God's glory presence renders two possibilities (9:23–10:3):
  - a. Atonement gained through the death of a substitute that leads to life and spontaneous praise (9:24).
  - b. Atonement realized through one's own death due to failing to take Yahweh's holiness seriously (10:2)

### C. Exposition

1. All the priestly preparations in ch. 8 find their purpose in chs. 9–10, for the priests need to offer the sacrifices on behalf of themselves and the people "because today Yahweh will appear to you" (9:4) and "that the glory of Yahweh may appear to you" (9:6). *These two texts suggest that substitutionary atonement provides the means for encountering God's glory in a way that will result in life, not death.*
2. Atonement was usually secured for the worshipper through the sacrifice of a substitute beast. Furthermore, the priests themselves stood as representatives of the people, drawing near to God on the people's behalf (see 10:17). In anticipation of God's statement that "among those who are *near me* I will show myself holy" (10:3), the congregation "*drew near* and stood before Yahweh" (9:5), and Aaron, representing the people, "*drew near*" the altar "to make atonement" for himself and for the people (9:7–8).

3. Following the offering (lit., “causing to *draw near*”) of the sacrifice, we read (9:23–24): “The glory of Yahweh appeared to all the people. And the fire came out from before Yahweh and consumed the burnt offering and the pieces of fat on the altar, and when all the people saw it, they shouted and fell on their faces.” *The manifestation of God’s presence consuming the offered sacrifice showed God’s holiness against sin and proved that his wrath was appeased, and this generated spontaneous praise among the worshippers. Yahweh’s holy manifestation through judgment and justification sparked a display of his holy worth from the people.*
4. Under the old covenant, encountering the gospel of salvation through penal substitution was a key means by which God displayed his holy presence (called God’s “Spirit” in both Isa. 63:10–11 and Hos. 2:5) resulting in a lifestyle change within the people. That is, *the bridge between God’s sanctifying people (Lev. 20:7–8; 22:31–33) and people living holy lives (11:44; 19:2; 20:7, 26) is drawing near to God by faith in his provision of a penal substitute (10:3 with 9:5–8, 23–24). The fact that God will be shone holy among all who are near him suggests that an encounter with the saving presence of God alters the human will (i.e., a blood-bought will) resulting in new desires for holiness.*

“But oh how jealous they [John Newton, Charles Simeon, and William Wilberforce] were—as I am jealous—that we embrace the cross of Christ first and decisively as the ground of our acceptance with God, through faith, *before* we experience the cross as the price and inspiration of our own labors to endure in the battle for justice in the world. That is, they were careful to savor the cross first as the basis of justification before they experienced its purchased power for sanctification. *Before* the power of endurance came the pardon of guilt. *Before* the blood-bought enabling of righteous living came the free gift of perfect righteousness credited to our account because of Christ alone through faith alone.” (John Piper, *The Roots of Endurance*, 29–30)

5. The narrative continues in chapter 10 by recording the sinful act of Aaron’s sons Nadab and Abihu in offering “strange fire” before Yahweh (10:2). The result was their incineration by the fires of God. This teaches that God’s holiness demands that humans come to him empty handed, dependent, and humble. We must draw near to him as sinners, bringing nothing but our brokenness and faith and receiving everything by grace. God does not take pleasure in a “Christ as my substitute plus something else” attitude. Adding anything of our own doing is sinful.
6. The record of the priests’ incineration uses the exact same language of God’s consuming the substitute sacrifice in 9:24. That these verses are only separated by a single verse shows that we are intended to read them together.
  - Lev. 9:24. *And fire came out from before Yahweh and consumed the burnt offering and the pieces of fat on the altar, and when all the people saw it, they shouted and fell on their faces.*
  - Lev. 10:2. *And fire came out from before Yahweh and consumed them, and they died before Yahweh.*

The point is clear: *God takes sin seriously and will either consume the violator or the substitute; the only way for a sinner to experience God’s fire as saving and not incinerating is through substitutionary atonement, and such provision is only applied to those who take God’s holiness seriously.*
7. In the end, God declares, “Among those who are near me *I will show myself holy*, and before all the people I will be glorified” (10:3).

- a. In Leviticus, the adjective *qārôb* (“near, close”) in 10:3 occurs elsewhere 3x, all in relation to immediate family members (21:2–3) or a near kinsman (25:25). Thus, those who are “near” to God are those with an intimate relationship with him. Within the immediate context, these would include those in the congregation but especially the priests who represent them. We see this in the fact that the Hebrew root *qrb* stands in association with these two groups in verbs meaning either “to draw near” (Qal, *qārab*, 9:5, 7–8; 10:4–5) or “to cause to draw near, present, offer” (Hiphil, *haqrēb*, 9:2, 9, 15–17; 10:1, 19). The congregation “drew near” and stood before Yahweh at the tabernacle, but then Aaron the high priest and his sons “drew near” to God’s altar in accordance with Yahweh’s command (9:7–8) and there “offered” (i.e., “caused to draw near”) the substitutionary sacrifice. When the priests Nadab and Abihu failed to respect God’s holiness, the Lord killed them, declaring that “among those who are near me [i.e., the priests] I will be shown holy, and before all the people I will be honored” (10:3). Nadab and Abihu failed to do this, so God killed them.
- b. The reflexive “I will show myself holy” (Niphal of *qdš*) occurs only 11x in the OT, once in relation to the Tabernacle’s displaying its holiness by God’s glory presence (Exod. 29:43) and all others in reference to God himself displaying his holiness, whether through saving his remnant, through the obedience of his followers, through his punishing rebels for wickedness, or through his working justice in the world. When the priests properly follow God’s procedures for substitutionary sacrifice, Yahweh uses it to display the reverence he deserves, the goodness of his justice, the seriousness of sin, and the mercy that can only come through substitutionary sacrifice. He also uses it to spark worship of his greatness and obedience from among his followers (Lev 9:24; cf. 22:32). Where failure exists among those near God, he would show his holiness through punishment (10:2).
- i. In saving remnant Israel:
    - Yahweh shows himself holy through powerfully saving a remnant of Israel before the eyes of the nations, among whom Israel once profaned God’s name (Ezek. 20:41; 28:25; 36:23; 39:27).<sup>2</sup>
  - ii. In the obedience of his followers:
    - Yahweh shows himself holy among the Israelites who heed God’s instructions on sacrifice, not profaning his name (Lev. 22:32).
  - iii. In punishing rebels:
    - Yahweh shows himself holy through bearing a judgment Israel deserved (Num. 20:13).
    - Yahweh shows himself holy and glorious in judging Sidon (Ezek. 28:22).
    - Yahweh shows himself holy in judging Gog (Ezek. 38:16 with 23).
  - iv. In working righteousness and justice:
    - Yahweh shows himself holy through righteousness and acts of justice (Isa. 5:16).

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<sup>2</sup> It’s possible that all of these examples are actually instances of #ii.

- c. Lev 10:3 supplies a warning that cast a shadow on what the priests Nadab and Abihu had failed to do. Their failure to display God's holiness and honor God before the people resulted in God's manifesting his holiness through judgment, similar to what we see elsewhere in Scripture. God will display his holiness and glory, whether by judgment or by salvation through judgment.
- i. God said of Moses, "You did not believe in me, to uphold me as holy in the eyes of the people of Israel" (Num 20:12). Therefore, God did not allow him to lead the people into the Promised Land.
  - ii. Achan's theft of some of the devoted things in Jericho was a failure to recognize Yahweh's holiness (Josh 5:15), and it fueled Yahweh's anger resulting in his letting the relatively small city of Ai route the Israelite army and kill 36 warriors (Josh 7:1, 4-5). Joshua declared that because Achan brought trouble on Israel, "The LORD brings trouble on you today," and "all Israel stoned him with stones" (7:25).
  - iii. Yahweh struck 70 men of Beth-shemesh "because they looked upon the ark of the LORD" (1 Sam 6:19). Thus those remaining declared, "Who is able to stand before the LORD, this holy God?" (6:20).
  - iv. When Uzzah grabbed the ark of the covenant so as to stabilize it, "the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzzah, and God struck him down there before of his error, and he died there beside the ark of God" (2 Sam 6:7).
  - v. When Ananias and Sapphirah lied to God before the apostles, testing the Spirit of the Lord, they both fell down and died (Acts 5:4-5, 9-10), so that "great fear came upon the whole church and upon all who heard of these things" (5:11).

#### D. Synthesis and Significance:

1. In love, God provided a means for people to encounter his glorious presence and still live. Sacrificial, substitutionary atonement displays God's holiness through wrath and mercy, and it also allows the recipients of salvation to enjoy more of him and to display his holiness through their lives. The substitutionary sacrifice is the only means by which God's sanctifying presence is revealed (Lev. 9:6-7; 10:3).
  - Eph. 2:13. Now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought *near* by the blood of Christ.
2. The fire of atonement is a manifestation of God's consuming zeal against sin and his passion for his holiness. Leviticus 10:3 teaches that an encounter with the fire has two possible results:
  - a. In unsaved sinners (i.e., those who fail to take Yahweh's holiness seriously and encounter his presence in this state), Yahweh's blazing nature destroys, resulting in a display of God's holiness and glory through punishment alone.
  - b. In saved sinners (i.e., those who through faith have been brought near to God through priestly mediation and sacrificial atonement), God's holiness and glory are manifest in salvation through punishment (on the substitute), which reconciles the saved sinner with God and ignites a capacity in the saved sinner to display God's holiness through a life of praise. Purification

and consecration open the door for an encounter with God's Holy Spirit presence that engages and enlivens our (blood-bought) will, empowering us to a holiness that displays the unique glory of God. The NT pattern portrays sanctification as the *fruit* of justification (Rom 6:6–7, 22): “We know that our old man was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. <sup>7</sup>For one who has died has been justified free from sin.... <sup>22</sup>But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life.” Every individual will exhibit God's holiness, whether through the blood-bought igniting of holy conduct or through the divine-wrath-satisfying destruction of one's soul.

In his book *A Practical View of Christianity*, William Wilberforce wrote (p. 166, as cited in Piper, *The Roots of Endurance*, 159): “The grand distinction which subsists between the true Christian and all other Religionists (the class of persons in particular whom it is our object to address) is concerning the *nature* of holiness, and the *way in which it is to be obtained*. . . . The true Christian...knows therefore that this holiness is not to PRECEDE his reconciliation to God, and be its CAUSE; but to FOLLOW it, and be its EFFECT. That, in short, it is by FAITH IN CHRIST only that he is to be justified in the sight of God.... [In this way alone does a person become] entitled to all the privileges which belong to this high relation... [including in this earthly life] partial renewal after the image of his Creator... [and in the life to come] the more perfect possession of Divine likeness.”

3. The atonement as a display of God's holiness through righteousness.
  - a. Isaiah wrote, “The LORD of hosts is exalted in justice, and the Holy God shows himself holy in righteousness” (Isa 5:16).
  - b. Christ's cross-work is the means by which “the righteousness of God is revealed.”
    - Rom. 1:16–17. For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation, to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. <sup>17</sup> For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, “The righteous shall live by faith.”
    - Rom. 3:21–26. Now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bears witness to it—<sup>22</sup>the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: <sup>23</sup>for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, <sup>24</sup>and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, <sup>25</sup>whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. <sup>26</sup>It was to show God's righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.
4. The atonement as fuel for progressive holiness, just as the believing congregation's encounter with Yahweh's saving presence gave rise to praise:
  - a. *Knowledge*: Growth in holiness happens to those who recognize their sinfulness and turn to God in Christ, the priest and substitute.
    - i. We cannot say, “I want greater spiritual fervor, I want to walk closer to God,” and yet attempt to do so in any way other than through recognizing our own sinfulness and need of a Savior.
    - ii. Arrogance, self-determination, selfishness, bitterness, lust and the like by nature cut us off from encountering the sanctifying presence of God. Until we are ready to deal with our sin and see the “old man” dead, we will not meet God and enjoy victory over our sin.

- b. *Hope*: Growth in progressive holiness happens to those who are confident that God is already 100% for them in Christ and that every promise is “Yes!” in Christ.
- i. No failure or success will make God more or less on our side. He loves us fully, and this can help us battle depression, discouragement, or fear of failure in our fight of faith.
  - ii. In Christ, our entire future is secure; he purchased every power, provision, and protection that we need for life in the present and in the age to come.
    - Rom. 8:32. He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?
    - 2 Cor. 1:20. For all the promises of God find their Yes in him. That is why it is through him that we utter our Amen to God for his glory.
    - Eph. 1:3, 13–14. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places....<sup>13</sup>In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, <sup>14</sup>who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.
- c. *Power*: Growth in holiness happens to those in whom God, by his Spirit working through Christ, ignites new, blood-bought desires for what he is passionate about.
- i. Remembering the cross (brought about because of our sin) kills pride and all forms of self-reliance and generates Christ-exalting humility.
  - ii. Remembering the cross (by which God showed his love for us while we were still sinners) conquers despondency and motivates us to love the sinful, the broken, and the rejected.
  - iii. Remembering the cross (which identifies God’s just wrath against all beastly rebellion and acts) reminds us how serious sin and its punishment are, thus curbing lust, malice, laziness, bitterness, covetousness and other forms of idolatry, rudeness, gossip, and all other forms of evil.
- d. Implications:
- i. “People can’t conquer what hasn’t been cancelled”; “The only sin we can conquer is forgiven sin”; “Growth in holiness is only possible through blood-bought power!” (John Piper, a sermon titled “I Act the Miracle,” given at BCS on February 24, 2011)
  - ii. “God’s grace does not make my work unnecessary; it makes it possible” (John Piper, *When I Don’t Desire God*).
    - 1 Cor. 15:10. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me.
    - Phil. 2:12–13. Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, <sup>13</sup>for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.
    - Col. 1:28–29. Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. <sup>29</sup>For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.

**E. The Pattern in the Old Testament Prophets:** The OT Prophets testify to the same dual realities: (1) God’s act of saving power displays his holiness and (2) God’s deliverance generates further displays of his holiness in the lives of those who enjoy it. These realities are fused eschatologically in the new covenant.

1. In Jeremiah, a true knowledge of Yahweh, wherein his law is written on the heart, is grounded in forgiveness of sin (Jer. 31:33–34; cf. 9:24–26).
  - Jer. 31:33–34. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares Yahweh: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. <sup>34</sup>And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, “Know Yahweh,” for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares Yahweh. *For* I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.
2. In Ezekiel, God promises to powerfully to deliver and transform his people before the eyes of the nations, thus manifesting his holiness (Ezek 36:23), and out of the overflow of such hope, he promises to grant to these who are washed new hearts and the [Holy] Spirit’s indwelling presence that will generate their obedience (Ezek. 36:23–27). [NOTE: God’s statement “in those near me *I will show myself holy* (*ʿeqqādēš*, Niphal *yiqtol* 1cs *qdš*)” in Leviticus 10:3 is a similar construction to what is found in Ezekiel 36:23: “*when I show myself holy* (*b<sup>e</sup>hiqqodšî*, Niphal InfC, 1csx *qdš* with *b<sup>e</sup>* preposition) among you before their eyes.”]
  - Ezek. 36:23–27. And I will vindicate the holiness of my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, and which you have profaned among them. And the nations will know that I am Yahweh, declares Yahweh God, when through you I am sanctified before their eyes. <sup>24</sup>And I will take you from the nations and gather you from all the countries and bring you into your own land. <sup>25</sup>And I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. <sup>26</sup>And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. <sup>27</sup>And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.

**F. The Pattern in the New Testament:** The NT addresses this issue in direct relation to the climactic saving work of Christ. Through atonement we receive his Spirit, who imparts new, blood-bought wills resulting in a desire for the ways of God over ways of the world. Sanctification, therefore, is both a gift and something we do, all with blood-bought, Spirit-enabled obedience. (Some of what follows is adapted from a John Piper sermon titled, “I Act the Miracle,” given at BCS on February 24, 2011; his message was focused solely on NT texts.)

1. *We draw near* to God only by faith and through the blood of Christ (Eph. 2:13; Heb. 10:22; 11:6).<sup>3</sup>
  - Eph. 2:4, 8, 13. But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ.... <sup>8</sup>For by grace you have been saved through faith.... <sup>13</sup>But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought *near* [*eggys*, cf. Lev. 10:3] by the blood of Christ.

<sup>3</sup> Terminology: In Leviticus 9–10, the LXX renders the Hebrew root *qrb* in various ways, which together help clarify the different usages in the NT. Verbs using the Qal *qārab*, “to draw near” (9:5, 7–8; 10:4–5) are rendered with the Greek *proserchomai*, whereas the Hiphil verb *haqrēb*, “to cause to draw near, present, offer” (9:2, 9, 15–17; 10:1, 19) is translated with the Greek *prospherō*, except in 10:19 where the LXX has *prosaγō*; the adjective *qārōb* (“near, close”) in 10:3 is translated with the Greek present participle form of *eggizō*.



- Heb. 4:16. Let us then with confidence *draw near* (*proserchometha*; cf. Lev. 9:2, 9, 15–17; 10:1) to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.
  - Heb. 7:19. (for the law made nothing perfect); but on the other hand, a better hope is introduced, through which we *draw near* (*eggizomen*) to God.
  - Heb. 10:1, 12, 19, 21–22. For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who *draw near* [*proserchomenous*]...  
<sup>12</sup>But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he...has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified....<sup>19</sup>Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus,...<sup>21</sup>and since we have a great priest over the house of God,<sup>22</sup>*let us draw near* [*proserchōmetha*] with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with out hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.
  - Heb. 11:6. And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would *draw near* [*proserchomenon*] to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.
  - Jas. 4:8. *Draw near* [*eggisate*, cf. Lev. 10:3] to God, and he will *draw near* [*eggiei*] to you.
2. Not only do we *draw near*, but Christ brings us to God through his substitutionary sacrifice, wherein the righteous died for the unrighteous.
    - 1 Pet. 3:18. For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might *bring us* [*prosagagē*] to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit,
  3. Through the gospel-event, God’s holiness is put on display through the display of his zeal against sin and his justness to forgive in light of Christ’s sacrifice.
    - Rom. 1:16–17. For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation, to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.<sup>17</sup> For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, “The righteous shall live by faith.”
    - Rom. 3:21–26. Now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bears witness to it—<sup>22</sup>the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction:<sup>23</sup>for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,<sup>24</sup>and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,<sup>25</sup>whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith.<sup>26</sup>It was to show God’s righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.
    - Rom 8:33–34. Who shall bring any charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies.  
<sup>34</sup>Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.
    - 1 John 1:9; 2:1–2. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness....<sup>2:1</sup>If anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.<sup>2</sup>He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.
  4. We receive the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit *through* Jesus Christ our Savior, the end being eternal life (Tit. 3:3–7).
    - Tit. 3:3–7. For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another.<sup>4</sup>But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared,<sup>5</sup>*he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit,*<sup>6</sup>*whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior,*<sup>7</sup>so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.
  5. Holiness is pursued only in the context of knowing that we were ransomed from the futile ways of our ancestors through Christ’s sacrifice.

- 1 Pet. 1:15–19. As he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, <sup>16</sup>since it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.” <sup>17</sup>And ... conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile, <sup>18</sup>knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers ... <sup>19</sup>with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.
6. In Christ’s dying for us, the ungodly, God’s love fills our hearts through the Holy Spirit—grace reigning through righteousness and leading to eternal life through Jesus (Rom. 5:5–6, 20–21).
    - Rom. 5:5–6, 20–21. God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. <sup>6</sup>For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.... <sup>20</sup>Where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, <sup>21</sup>so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.
  7. Through identifying with Christ in his death, our master changes (from the law to Christ), which leads to our living in the new way of the Spirit and bearing fruit for God (Rom. 7:4, 6; 8:13).
    - Rom. 7:4, 6. Likewise, my brothers, you also have died to the law through the body of Christ, so that you may belong to another, to him who has been raised from the dead, in order that we may bear fruit for God.... <sup>6</sup>But now we are released from the law, having died to that which held us captive, so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit and not in the old way of the written code.
    - Rom. 8:13. For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.
  8. Being united with Christ in his death results in his now living through us by faith (Gal. 2:20).
    - Gal. 2:20. I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.
  9. God’s grace does not nullify our need to work hard in our battle for holiness; it makes our pursuit possible (1 Cor. 15:10; Col. 1:29; 1 Peter 4:11).
    - 1 Cor. 15:10. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me.
    - Col. 1:28–29. Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. <sup>29</sup>For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.
  10. The imperative for us to seek holiness—i.e., salvation not simply from this cursed world in general but from specific sins we battle—is done in fear and trembling, recognizing that all our effort is the work of the God of the universe in us (Phil. 2:12–13; Eph. 2:10).
    - Phil. 2:12–13. Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, <sup>13</sup>for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.
  11. See the flow-of-thought in 2 Cor. 5:21–6:1; 1 Peter 2:24; 1 John 1:9–2:6
    - 2 Cor. 5:21–6:1. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. <sup>6:1</sup> Working together with him, then, we appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain.
    - 1 Pet. 2:24. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.
    - 1 John 1:9–2:6. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. <sup>1:10</sup> If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us. <sup>2:1</sup> My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you

may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. <sup>2</sup> He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world. <sup>3</sup> And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments. <sup>4</sup> Whoever says "I know him" but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, <sup>5</sup> but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him: <sup>6</sup> whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.

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## **VI. The Nature of Living in the Light of Yahweh's Holy Presence (Lev 11–26): An Overview**

- A. The Significance of Leviticus 10:10–11.** Leviticus 10:10–11 reads: “You are to distinguish between the holy and the common, and between the unclean and the clean, and you are to teach the people of Israel all the statutes that Yahweh has spoken to them by Moses.” This was the responsibility given to the priests, and Leviticus 11–27 provides the guidelines for the separation of the holy and the common and the body of statutes that were to be taught.

- B. Ritual and Ceremonial Purity (chs. 11–15).** Chapters 11–15 together address the need for ritual or ceremonial purity in light of the holy (the question of tolerated uncleanness). The chapters are grouped together by the use of formulaic summary statements beginning with “This is the law of...” that often conclude and synthesize the speeches (11:46–47; 13:59; 14:32; 15:32–33; see also 14:2; cf. 7:37). Furthermore, only in this section does Yahweh directly address Moses and Aaron together (11:1; 13:1; 14:33; 15:1).
- C. The Day of Atonement (ch. 16).** Ch. 16 addresses the Day of Atonement, highlighting the key sacrifice that removed the sins of all the faithful once a year. The expanded introductory formula in 16:1, the presence of calendrical material (16:29–34a), and the inclusion of the compliance report (16:34) all suggest that ch. 16 stands on its own, providing a bridge in the movement between the discussion of tolerated uncleanness (chs. 11–15) and prohibited uncleanness, all in relation to the call to be holy (chs. 17–26+27).
- D. The Holiness Code (chs. 17–24).** Chs. 17–24 makeup what is often referred to as the “Holiness Code,” detailing how a “kingdom of priests and a holy nation” would live (Exod. 19:5–6). Most directly, obedience to the call to “be holy” (Lev. 11:44–45; 19:2; 20:7, 26) meant “loving your neighbor as yourself” (19:18; cf. v. 34). God commands Israel to be holy in her conduct in order to remain separate from the nations and thus to serve as pointers to the distinctiveness of their God.
- E. Establishing Sabbath (chs. 25–26).** Chs. 25–26 gives instructions on Israel’s Sabbath identity and of Yahweh’s Sabbath-establishing program. The Sabbath was the sign of Israel’s covenant with God (Exod. 31:12–17), thus pointing to Yahweh’s desire to establish global rest through Israel. He gave it to them “that you may know that I, Yahweh, sanctify you” (Exod. 31:13). In Leviticus 25, Yahweh calls Israel to maintain the Year of Jubilee, memorializing in their calendar and social practice the establishment of freedom and rest, all in accordance with their national mission to see sovereign rest enjoyed once again on a global scale. Ch. 26 then relays the covenant blessings, curses, and restoration blessings that were designed (1) to motivate Israel’s allegiance and (2) to detail how God’s kingdom, Sabbath-establishing program would be accomplished in the end (see Lev. 26:34, 43).
- F. Voluntary vows (ch. 27).** Whereas chs. 1–26 highlight required Israelite practice, ch. 27 addresses voluntary acts, namely vows.

## VII. Holiness and Purity

Lev. 10:10–11. You are to distinguish between the holy and the common, and between the unclean and the clean,<sup>11</sup> and you are to teach the people of Israel all the statutes that Yahweh has spoken to them by Moses.

### A. Introduction:

1. Here two word pairs are grouped that identify the main categories addressed in Leviticus. Holiness is directly associated with Yahweh and life, whereas uncleanness is linked with chaos and death. “Holy” is here characterized as that which is fully distinct from the “common,” just as “clean” is contrasted with the “unclean.”
  - a. *Holy vs. Common:* This appears to be the main distinction in Leviticus, though within the book “common” is only mentioned here; the categories appear to point to the *state* of one’s being (e.g., God is holy, and we are to be holy in conduct as well) or to a declared *status* of persons, places, and

things in relation to God (e.g., Exod 29:21; Ezek. 22:26; 42:20, 23; Acts 10:14–15, 28; 11:8–9; cf. 1 Sam. 21:4[5] of bread; Ezek 48:15 of municipal area).

- b. *Clean vs. Unclean*: These categories are frequently mentioned in the book and relate to the *condition* of persons, places, and things. Uncleanness is incompatible with holiness, whereas clean may be holy or common. This interrelationship is highlighted in Lev 11:43–45:

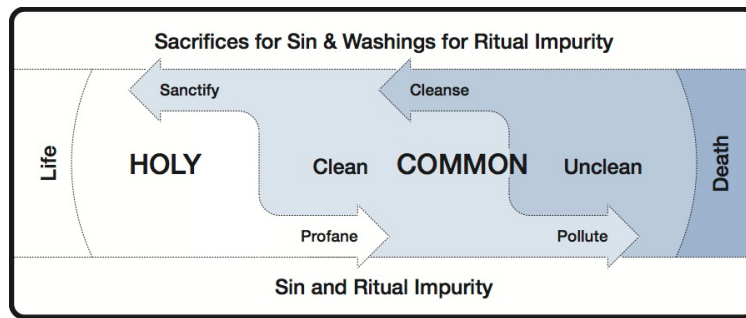
- Lev. 11:43–45. You shall not make yourselves detestable with any swarming thing that swarms, and you shall not defile yourselves [*tittamm<sup>o</sup>û*] with them, and become defiled [*w<sup>e</sup>niṣmētem*] through them [= condition]. For I am Yahweh your God. And you shall consecrate yourselves [*w<sup>e</sup>hitqaddiṣtem*], and be holy [*wihyītem q<sup>e</sup>dōšim*], for I am holy [*qādōš ʾānī*]. You shall not defile [*t<sup>e</sup>tamm<sup>o</sup>û*] yourselves with any swarming thing that crawls on the ground. For I am Yahweh who brought you up out of the land of Egypt to be your God. You shall therefore be holy [*wihyītem q<sup>e</sup>dōšim*], for I am holy [*qādōš ʾānī*].

2. The placement of “unclean” before “clean” identifies that:
  - a. The two pairs do not express a straight continuum but are in some way overlapping;
  - b. The former term in each pair is the more significant category, giving definition to its partner (i.e., commonness is the absence of holiness and cleanness is the absence of uncleanness).
3. Significantly, the first member of each pair is dynamic, seeking to extend its influence over its partner; in contrast, the common and the clean cannot transfer their state or condition, respectively.

**B. Three Different Views on the Nature and Relationship of Holiness and Purity:**

1. Gordon J. Wenham (*Leviticus*, 26):
  - a. Everything that is not holy is common, and everything common is either clean or unclean. Holiness appears to assume cleanness, but stands as its own category.
  - b. Holiness and uncleanness are completely incompatible, and so every effort is taken to distinguish the two.
  - c. Holy persons or things could be profaned, thus requiring sanctification to enjoy holiness again. That which was clean could be polluted and rendered unclean. Those things that were unclean could be made clean and further made holy by being sanctified by the priests. While those who were clean could never experience exile from the community, they also were never allowed to approach the Holy Places in the camp.

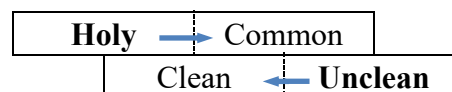
Fig. 5.1. Wenham's Holiness Continuum



Adapted from Gordan J. Wenham, *Leviticus*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979), 26.

2. Jacob Milgrom (“Holy, Holiness, OT,” *NIDB* 2:855) and J. E. Hartley (“Holy and Holiness, Clean and Unclean,” *DOT:Pent*, 426):
  - a. Persons or objects are subject to four possible, distinct states, defined in two complementary yet overlapping categories: holy–common, clean–unclean.
  - b. The categories:
    - i. Holy vs. common: Direct or appointed association could make people, objects, space, or time to be considered holy; everything not holy was common.
    - ii. Clean vs. unclean: These conditions were associated principally with the ritual standing of people, food, and space (= tolerated uncleanness), but they also addressed moral issues (= prohibited uncleanness).
  - c. A state and condition can exist simultaneously: what is clean can be either holy or common, and what is common can be either clean or unclean. (These relationships are represented by the adjoining boxes.) However, what is holy may not come into contact with what is unclean; these categories are mutually exclusive. (Their boxes do not touch.)
  - d. Holiness and uncleanness are also dynamic, in that the particular state or condition seeks to influence and overcome its parallel state or condition. (This is highlighted by the dotted lines, directional arrow, and bold-faced font.) However, the common and clean are static, unable to transfer their state or condition. Indeed, these categories are only understood in relation to their partner: cleanness is the absence of uncleanness and commonness is the absence of holiness.

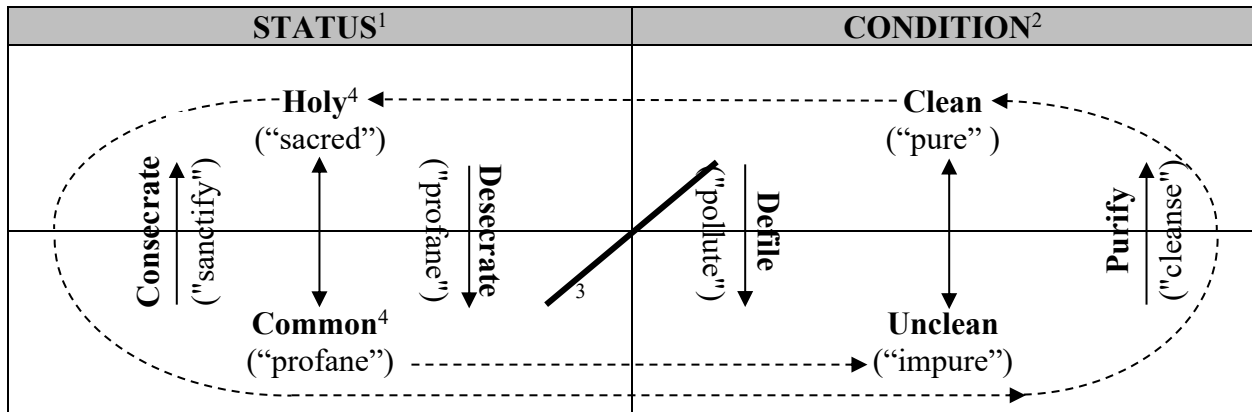
Fig. 5.2. Milgrom and Hartley's Holiness Continuum



3. Richard Averbeck, “Leviticus,” in *NIV Zondervan Study Bible*, 190.
  - a. With minor variation from Milgrom, this view sees the holy-common relationship to be one of status, whereas the unclean-clean relationship is one of condition.

- b. Thus, as noted by Milgrom, what is clean can be either holy or common; what is common can be either clean or unclean; but what is holy may not come into contact with what is unclean.





1. The “status” of a person, place, or thing as either “holy” or “common” (the left side of the chart; cf. Lev 10:10a).
2. The “condition” of a person, place, or thing as either “unclean” or “clean” (the right side of the chart; cf. Lev 10:10b).
  - a. Cleanness is the normal condition of creatures.
  - b. Uncleanness is a sub-standard condition acquired by bodily process or sin; it represented death or that which was abnormal or out of order.
    - i. It could be imparted by contact (e.g., Lev 11:39–40; 14:36; 15:4–11).
    - ii. There were two types:
      - (1) Tolerated uncleanness (ritual purity) resulted in exile from the community until purification (e.g., menstrual blood, bodily emissions, leprosy or “dead looking” skin, contact with a corpse; Lev 11–15).
      - (2) Prohibited uncleanness (moral sin) resulted in exile and likely death (e.g., incest, adultery, idolatry, witchcraft; Lev 18, 20).
3. The main concern that nothing unclean come into direct contact with that which is holy (the diagonal bar through the middle of the chart blocking the way between holy and unclean).
4. Whenever either a holy or a common person becomes unclean, they must first ritually “purify” their body before they approach that which is holy (see the arrowed lines going from both holy and common to unclean and from there to clean).

4. Evaluation:
  - a. Support for the second and third views comes in Peter’s dialog with God in Acts 10. Upon seeing the vision of the unclean animals, Peter declared, “I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean” (v. 14). The Lord responded, “What God has made clean, do not call common” (v. 15). Here we see that something can be clean and yet *not* common. Later, Peter asserts before Cornelius, “God has shown me that I should not call any person

common or unclean” (v. 28). This suggests that these categories are indeed distinct in some way, though perhaps overlapping. The distinction in view three between status and condition works well here.

- b. Just as “holiness” and “uncleanness” are the first of each pair in Lev 10:10, they signal in some ways the polar opposites of life and order on the one hand and chaos and death on the other. In this light, Wenham’s model, which treats “holiness” and “uncleanness” on the same continuum, makes good sense. However, Milgrom and Hartley have rightly recognized that “cleanness” is not restricted to the “common” but is a characteristic of all that “holy.”

### C. The Nature of Holiness

#### 1. Introduction:

- a. The opposite of holiness is “common,” which is simply understood to be that which is not holy. Common is the normal state of people and things outside the divine realm; within this state, people are either clean or unclean.
- b. The root *qđš* stands behind the attributive adjective “holy,” the substantive adjective “saint,” the noun “holiness,” and the verb “sanctify, consecrate.”
- c. In Scripture, Yahweh is tagged “the Holy One” (e.g., Ezek 39:7; Isa 40:25; 43:15; Hos 11:9; Hab 1:12; 3:3; Job 6:10) and “the Holy One of Israel” (e.g., 2 Kgs 19:22; Jer 50:29; 51:5; Isa 1:4; 43:3). Although he is “the One who is high and lifted up, who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy,” he nevertheless dwells also “with him who is of a contrite and lowly spirit” (Isa 57:15; cf. Rev 4:8). God’s very nature is holy (“I, Yahweh your God, am holy,” Lev 19:2; cf. Isa 6:3), and therefore holiness also characterizes his name (“the name of my holiness,” Lev 20:3; 22:2, 32; cf. Isa 57:15; Amos 2:7), his arm (Isa 52:10), his Spirit (63:10), and his word (Ps 105:42). God swears by his holiness, which is equivalent to swearing by his name (Amos 4:2; 6:8; Ps 89:35). Only Yahweh is holy in himself. The holiness of anything else is derived, either from God’s presence or from consecration to the sanctuary.
- d. Traditionally, the essential meaning of holiness has been understood to be “separateness,” in the sense of being separated *from* something. So, for example, the most world-renown Leviticus scholar Jacob Milgrom defines “holy” as “that which is unapproachable except through divinely imposed restrictions” or “that which is withdrawn from common use” (“Holy, Holiness, OT,” *NIDB* 2:850). He continues, “Though biblical *qadosh* attains new dimensions, it never loses the sense of withdrawal and separation” (p. 2:850). RESPONSE: Because holiness is the very essence of God’s character from which righteousness and glory come, its nature must be evident even when nothing else exists other than God himself. While such distinctions are potentially possible between the various members of the Trinity, “separate, separate, separate is Yahweh of hosts” (Isa 6:3) clearly misses something. Furthermore, seeing separateness as the essence of holiness fails to give the term content, and within Leviticus, “common” is defined as that which is not holy, so holiness itself must have content.

- e. More recently, P. J. Gentry has argued that holiness does not mean separate from, transcendent, or pure but instead means consecration or devotion, which could be understood as set apart *for* or *to* something (rather than *from* something) (“The Meaning of ‘Holy’ in the Old Testament,” *BSac* 170 [2013]: 400–17). He rightly stresses that etymological assessments are inconclusive and that context will determine meaning.
- i. Outside Gen 2:3, we first encounter “holiness” language in Exodus 3 when “the mountain of God” (Exod 3:1) is designated “holy ground” (3:5). Gentry highlights that nothing in the context suggests inaccessibility or restrictedness, separateness or distance, but rather that the ground is prepared or consecrated for a meeting with God (pp. 402–4). RESPONSE: Gentry’s proposal fits well; however, the designations “separate, transcendent, or pure” fit well also, so long as one recognizes that God’s presence has made this ground distinct from other ground. “The place *and* the people are ready to receive God because they belong to him” (p. 407).
  - ii. Gentry’s case is strong in his discussion of Exodus 19’s “holy nation” (pp. 404–8). Here Moses is to “consecrate” the congregation (19:10, 14) and the mountain (19:23), and the priests are to “consecrate” themselves (19:22), all in preparation for an encounter with God (19:11). Moses thus readies the people and geography to meet the Lord in person. RESPONSE: In Exodus 19, holiness as “devotion” makes good sense, but one could also see the relative “holiness” that is declared over the people and land to be that which is in direct association with Yahweh—less “devoted” or “set apart for” and more “associated with” or “related” to God.
  - iii. Gentry addresses Yahweh’s holiness in Isaiah 6, where we hear the Seraphim declare, “Holy, holy, holy is Yahweh of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!” (Isa 6:3) (pp. 408–16). Within this context, God’s devotion is contrasted with the social injustice of Israel highlighted in ch. 5. Isaiah 5:16 notes, “But Yahweh of hosts is exalted in justice, and the Holy God shows himself holy in righteousness.” Within Isaiah 5–6, Gentry argues that God’s holiness is again best seen as his devotion, which in this context is his devotion to social justice (justice and righteousness)—the covenantal call to love one’s neighbor (p. 413; cf. Milgrom, “Holy, Holiness, OT,” 2:857). Holiness is not purity, for “purity is the result of being completely devoted to God as defined by the covenant” (p. 413). RESPONSE: Gentry’s definition of God’s holiness as “devotion or consecration” sounds similar to John Piper’s very helpful definition of divine “righteousness” as God’s passion, commitment, or devotion to preserve and display his glory above all else. Yet Isaiah 5:16 says that “God shows himself holy in righteousness.” We must be able to distinguish the two. Furthermore, one must have a definition of holiness that allows it to contrast with “common” (Lev 10:10). Perhaps it is legitimate to say that “common”

is simply “not devoted,” but the “holy” seems better understood as that which is identified with Yahweh.

## 2. Defining Yahweh’s Holiness:

### a. Characteristics of Holiness:

- i. Majesty, awe, security, greatness, glory, splendor, sovereignty, beauty:
  - Exod. 15:11. Who is like you, O Yahweh, among the gods? Who is like you, majestic in holiness, awesome in glorious deeds, doing wonders?
  - Ezek 28:22. Behold, I am against you, O Sidon, and I will manifest my glory in your midst. And they shall know that I am the LORD when I execute judgments in her and manifest my holiness in her.
  - Isa. 6:3. Holy, holy, holy is Yahweh of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.
  - Isa 57:15. For thus says the One who is high and lifted up, who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: “I dwell in the high and holy place, and also with him who is of a contrite and lowly spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly, and to revive the heart of the contrite.”
  - Ps. 77:13. Your way, O God, is holy. What God is great like our God?
  - Ps. 29:2. Ascribe to Yahweh the glory due his name; worship Yahweh in the splendor of holiness.
  - Ps. 96:9. Worship Yahweh in the splendor of his holiness; tremble before him all the earth!
  - Rev. 4:8. Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!
  - Cf. Ps 50:2. Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God shines forth.
  - Cf. Isa 33:17. Your eyes will behold the king in his beauty; they will see a land that stretches afar.
- ii. Threatening, demanding, unapproachable, but loving.
  - Exod 19:10–25.
  - Josh 24:19. You are not able to serve the LORD, for his is a holy God. He is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions or your sins.
  - 1 Sam 6:20. Who is able to stand before the LORD, this holy God? And to whom shall he go up away from us?
  - Hos 11:9. I will not execute my burning anger; I will not again destroy Ephraim; for I am God and not a man, the Holy One in your midst, and I will not come in wrath.
- iii. Holiness manifests itself in “righteousness,” which suggests that God’s holiness is a broader than righteousness but includes it.
  - Isa. 5:16. But Yahweh of hosts is exalted in justice, and the Holy God shows himself holy in righteousness.
- iv. It is declared over all that belongs to God (Lev. 20:26; 27:9; Num. 3:12–13; 8:17) (= holy status or categorical holiness).
  - Lev. 27:9. If the vow is an animal that may be offered as an offering to Yahweh, all of it that he gives to Yahweh is holy.
  - Num. 3:12–13. The Levites shall be mine, <sup>13</sup>for all the firstborn are mine. On the day that I struck down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, I consecrated for my own all the firstborn of Israel. The Levites shall be mine.
- v. Holiness is usually not contagious (Hag 2:12), but it is dynamic, able to transform what is common (Exod 29:37; 30:29; Lev 6:27; Ezek 44:19; 46:20).
  - Hag. 2:12. [Haggai asked the priests,] “If someone carries holy meat in the fold of his garment and touches with his fold bread or stew or wine or oil or any kind of food, does it become holy?” The priests answered and said, “No.”

- Exod. 29:37. Seven days you shall make atonement for the altar and consecrate it, and the altar shall be most holy. Whatever touches the altar shall become holy.
  - Exod. 30:29. You shall consecrate them, that they may be most holy. Whatever touches them will become holy.
  - Lev. 6:27. Whatever touches its flesh shall be holy, and when any of its blood is splashed on a garment, you shall wash that on which it was splashed in a holy place.
  - Ezek. 44:19. And when they go out into the outer court to the people, they shall put off the garments in which they have been ministering and lay them in the holy chambers. And they shall put on other garments, lest they transmit holiness to the people with their garments.
  - Ezek. 46:20. And he said to me, “This is the place where the priests shall boil the guilt offering and the sin offering, and where they shall bake the grain offering, in order not to bring them out into the outer court and so transmit holiness to the people.”
- vi. Things are made holy by encountering God’s “glory,” which suggests that glory too is an expression of Yahweh’s holiness:
- Exod. 29:43. There I will meet with the people of Israel, and it shall be sanctified by my glory.”
  - Lev. 10:3. Among those who are near me I will be sanctified, and before all the people I will be glorified.
  - Isa. 6:3. Holy, holy, holy is Yahweh of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.
  - Cf. “the splendor of his holiness” in Pss 29:2; 96:9; 1 Chr 16:29.
- vii. It demands respect (cf. Exod. 19:21–24; Lev. 9:23–10:3; Num. 4:19–20; 2 Sam. 6:6–8)
- Exod. 19:21–24. And Yahweh said to Moses, “Go down and warn the people, lest they break through to Yahweh to look and many of them perish. <sup>22</sup> Also let the priests who come near to Yahweh consecrate themselves, lest Yahweh break out against them.” <sup>23</sup> And Moses said to Yahweh, “The people cannot come up to Mount Sinai, for you yourself warned us, saying, ‘Set limits around the mountain and consecrate it.’” <sup>24</sup> And Yahweh said to him, “Go down, and come up bringing Aaron with you. But do not let the priests and the people break through to come up to Yahweh, lest he break out against them.”
  - Lev. 9:23–10:3. And Moses and Aaron went into the tent of meeting, and when they came out they blessed the people, and the glory of Yahweh appeared to all the people. <sup>9:24</sup> And fire came out from before Yahweh and consumed the burnt offering and the pieces of fat on the altar, and when all the people saw it, they shouted and fell on their faces. <sup>10:1</sup> Now Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer and put fire in it and laid incense on it and offered unauthorized fire before Yahweh, which he had not commanded them. <sup>2</sup> And fire came out from before Yahweh and consumed them, and they died before Yahweh. <sup>3</sup> Then Moses said to Aaron, “This is what Yahweh has said, ‘Among those who are near me I will be sanctified, and before all the people I will be glorified.’” And Aaron held his peace.
  - Num. 4:19–20. But deal thus with them, that they may live and not die when they come near to the most holy things: Aaron and his sons shall go in and appoint them each to his task and to his burden, <sup>20</sup> but they shall not go in to look on the holy things even for a moment, lest they die.
  - 2 Sam. 6:6–8. And when they came to the threshing floor of Nacon, Uzzah put out his hand to the ark of God and took hold of it, for the oxen stumbled. <sup>7</sup> And the anger of Yahweh was kindled against Uzzah, and God struck him down there because of his error, and he died there beside the ark of God. <sup>8</sup> And David

was angry because Yahweh had broken out against Uzzah. And that place is called Perez-uzzah, to this day.

- b. Definition:
- i. In the directions given to the priests, it is clear that what is “holy” is that which is associated with Yahweh and which is distinct from the “common” (Lev 10:10; cf. 1 Sam. 21:4[5]; Ezek. 22:26; 42:20, 23).
  - ii. The association of God’s holiness with Yahweh’s name (Lev 20:3; 22:2, 32) and nature (Lev 19:2; cf. Isa 6:3) suggests (1) that divine holiness is understood by us only as it is disclosed through creation (i.e., *Yahweh* = “he causes to be”) and (2) that it nevertheless must be associated with God’s eternal nature, which in turn finds its manifestation in distinct ways within space and time.
  - iii. Holiness must be seen as “the essential nature that belongs to the sphere of God’s being or activity and that is distinct from the common and profane” (J. A. Naude, *NIDOTTE*, 3:879). We see this in texts like Exod. 15:11; 1 Sam. 2:2; Ps. 77:13; Isa. 40:25; cf. Deut. 4:35, 39; 32:39; 2 Sam. 22:32; Isa. 45:5, 18, 22; 46:9.
    - Exod. 15:11. Who is like you, O Yahweh, among the gods? Who is like you, majestic in holiness, awesome in glorious deeds, doing wonders?
    - 1 Sam. 2:2. There is none holy like Yahweh; there is none besides you; there is no rock like our God.
    - Ps. 77:13. Your way, O God, is holy. What god is great like our God?
    - Isa. 40:25. “To whom then will you compare me, that I should be like him?” says the Holy One.
  - iv. Holiness is that which is encountered as “glory” (Exod 28:22; Isa 6:3; Pss 29:2; 96:9) and which manifests itself through “righteousness” (Isa 5:16).
  - v. Numerous texts portray holiness as having something to do with “the reality and value of God’s transcendent fullness, expressed in his self-sustainability, his absolute and sole supremacy, his unique excellence and worth, and the beautiful harmony of all his acts with that fullness.”<sup>4</sup> Yet this definition restricts God’s holiness to a sphere where there is something to be transcendent or supreme over and where there are realities other than God that display a uniqueness about him. I suggest, therefore, that for holiness to be eternal a better definition is simply “***the reality and value of God’s fullness, expressed in his self-sustainability, his absoluteness and sole-ness, his excellence and worth, and the beautiful harmony of all his acts with that fullness.***” Divine holiness is the embodiment of what it means to be God.
  - vi. Eternal holiness is captured in the first Commandment, which declares Yahweh alone stands in the pantheon of heaven: “There shall never be to you other gods besides me” (Exod 20:2 // Deut 5:7). It is also what stands behind the Shema: “Hear O Israel: Yahweh our God, Yahweh is

<sup>4</sup> John Piper has defined God’s holiness in a comparable way: “His holiness is his transcendent fullness, his worth, and the beautiful harmony of all his acts with that worth” (“Prelude to Acting the Miracle: Putting Sanctification in Its Place,” DG 2012 National Conference).

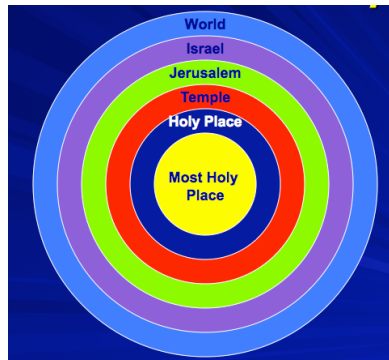
- one” (Deut 6:4). God is the embodiment of eternal, self-sustaining reality, the absolute and sole causer of all, and the measure of value.
- vii. God’s holiness makes it right, necessary, and loving to be devoted to the exaltation of his name and to call us to the same. It is right because he alone is God; it is necessary because if he failed to live this way he would no longer be God; and it is loving because only when people recognize and cherish his God-ness do we find a savior and true pleasure.
  - viii. God’s eternal holiness ultimately overflowed in the creation of space and time, not because of any need in God but because of God’s devotion to and pleasure in his own glory and because of his love manifest in displaying this glory. The overflow of God’s eternal holiness in creation ultimately manifests itself in righteousness (Isa 5:16) climaxing in the work of Christ (Rom 1:16–17), a righteousness defined most simply as his commitment to universal right order or his passion to preserve and display his glory above all else. God’s holiness implies his transcendence.
  - ix. John Frame has argued for a triperspectival approach to reality, wherein we should view all that is real from three angles: (1) normative, (2) situational, (3) existential. The situational relates to the state of reality (being); the normative relates to God’s law, the commandments revealed in Scripture (doing); and the existential is the personal (experience). Regardless of whether one agrees with Frame’s proposal for all truth, we see what appears to be evidence of this in three terms that bear strong overlap in Scripture:
    - (1) *Normative* = God’s righteousness (how God acts)—God’s standard for acting in the world is what will uphold his worth;
    - (2) *Situational* = God’s glory (what God emanates)—God’s worth received and recognized among the Trinity or in creation;
    - (3) *Existential* = God’s holiness (who God is in essence)—God’s fullness in reality and value.
3. The Holiness of Mankind:
- a. The respect demanded by Yahweh’s holiness overflows in the need for his people to live in a holy manner (Lev. 11:44–45; 19:2; 20:7, 26; cf. Matt. 5:18; 1 Thess. 4:3–5; 1 Pet. 1:14–16; 1 John 2:15–17) (= holy state).
    - Lev. 20:26. You shall be holy to me, for I Yahweh am holy and have separated you from the peoples, that you should be mine.
    - 1 Thess. 4:3–5. For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality; <sup>4</sup> that each of you known how to control his own body in holiness and honor, <sup>5</sup> not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God.
    - 1 Pet. 1:14–16. As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, <sup>15</sup> but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, <sup>16</sup> since it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.”
  - b. Israel’s missional identity was bound up in their call to be a “holy people.” In standing distinct from the nations (Lev 20:26; Deut 14:2), specifically through covenant faithfulness (Exod 19:5–6), they would mediate God’s glory and display his holiness. Significantly, as disclosed in the new

covenant, this holy existence was nothing less than the proclamation of the excellencies of God himself.

- Lev 20:26. You shall be holy to me, for I the LORD am holy and have separated you from the peoples, that you should be mine.
  - Deut 14:2. For you are a people holy to the LORD your God, and the LORD has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.
  - Exod. 19:5–6. Now therefore if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant and be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine, <sup>6</sup> then you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.
  - 1 Pet. 2:9. But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.
- c. Because the holy life is seen as an overflow of obedience to commands, human holiness is here seen not simply as an identification with the reality and value of Yahweh’s transcendent fullness (i.e., by status) but as an actual display of God’s holiness in life. That is, by dependent surrender to God, humans show the unique and worth of Yahweh’s sole supremacy in all things. Thus growth in holiness can be seen as a manifestation of Yahweh’s holiness through our lives. We pray for this reality to be true in the Lord’s prayer: “May your name be displayed as holy . . . on earth as it is in heaven” (Matt. 6:9–10).
- d. How then does human holiness relate to deeds of righteousness? I suggest that we become more like God as we display his passion for right order wherein he and his image in others are valued highly. “Holy” is a quality associated with God that is manifest in right acts. Thus, Paul can treat “sanctification/holiness” as a fruit of our “freedom/righteousness” in Christ (Rom 6:22; cf. 6:7), and the author of Hebrews can stress the necessity of “holiness” as a “fruit of righteousness” (Heb 12:14–15), whereas John can call people to “practice righteousness” as evidence that we are “righteous” (1 John 3:7).
4. Two Kinds of Holiness:
- a. *Holiness as symbolic set-apart status* was not lost by unclean condition, but “holy” objects or people needed to become clean to be used once again for holy purposes (categorical holiness or holy status).
  - b. *Holiness as a real life state*, distinguished for God and from the world by surrender to and alignment with God’s definitions of life and order.
    - i. Required for worship before God’s holy presence.
    - ii. Called for cleanness (thus faith, surrender, and forgiveness of sin).
    - iii. Necessitated categorical holiness (member of the holy people).



Fig. 5.3. Gradations of Sacred Space



- D. Uncleaness** (see esp. Hannah K. Harrington, “Clean and Unclean,” *NIDB*, 681–89):
1. Introduction:
    - a. The designation of clean and unclean do not refer to dirt or repugnant features but to one’s condition before God.
    - b. Uncleaness is defined in Leviticus, whereas the clean is merely understood as that which was not unclean. *Uncleaness is best explained as that which is associated with the curse: chaos and disorder, death, and the murderous ways or judgment of the serpent.* This makes cleanness associated with divinely created order and life.
    - c. Types of Uncleaness:
      - i. Tolerated or Ritual Uncleaness
      - ii. Prohibited or Moral Uncleaness
      - iii. Unclean Food
    - d. Clean and common were the normal condition and state of people. Moral purity was symbolized in ritual cleanness and expressed in active covenant loyalty. These distinctions are seen in the parallel between “clean hands” and a “pure heart” in Ps. 24:4.
      - Ps. 24:3–4. Who shall ascend the hill of Yahweh? And who shall stand in his holy place? <sup>4</sup> He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully.
  2. Tolerated or Ritual Uncleaness (adapted from Harrington, “Clean and Unclean,” 683)
    - a. Impurity brought about by certain natural functions of the body, most of which are necessary, routine, and unavoidable. Contact with death, scale disease, or sexual discharge rendered one ritually impure.
    - b. Does not appear to have anything to do with hygiene, for it can be transferred to individuals who are simply in the same room of a corpse or leper. Furthermore, it can affect houses or fabrics that have no connection to germs or disease.
    - c. Ritual impurity was contagious.
      - Hag. 2:12–14. [Haggai asked the priests,] “If someone carries holy meat in the fold of his garment and touches with his fold bread or stew or wine or oil or any kind of food, does it become holy?” The priests answered and said, “No.” <sup>13</sup> Then Haggai said, “If someone who is unclean by contact with a dead body touches any of these, does it become unclean?” The priests answered and said, “It does become unclean.” <sup>14</sup> Then Haggai answered and said, “So is it with this people, and with this nation before me,

declares Yahweh, and so with every work of their hands. And what they offer there is unclean.”

- d. Contact with the following made a person ritually unclean:
  - i. Death
    - (1) A corpse is the most impure item in the priestly system. It contaminates anyone who touches it or shares a roof with it, and it requires a weeklong cleansing period (Num. 19), which includes washings on days 3 and 7 and which must be spent at least substantially outside the camp (Num. 5:2).
    - (2) Contact with a carcass of any animal not ritually slaughtered conveys one-day of impurity followed by bathing, and carrying the carcass demands laundering as well (Lev. 17:15).
  - ii. Scale disease
    - (1) Includes types of baldness, skin eruptions, discoloration, or extreme psoriasis (Lev. 13).
    - (2) This disease functions as a divine curse on many occasions (Lev. 14:34; Num. 12:10–15; 2 Sam. 3:29; 2 Chr. 26:19–20), and it can also be found in houses and fabrics as mildew, mold, or fungus, resulting in the need for the affected stone to be removed and the affected fabrics burned (Lev. 13:52; 14:40).
  - iii. Sexual discharges
    - (1) Includes the flow of blood from a new mother (Lev. 12:1–6), which includes strict impurity of a week (for a boy) or two (for a girl), plus an extended time of low-level impurity of 33 days (for a boy) or 66 days (for a girl). Phase 1 of the impurity means she cannot go to the sanctuary and is contagious to other persons and various objects, including food. Phase 2 means her impurity is only threatening to a holy place.
    - (2) Irregular discharges from male or female sexual organs (e.g., gonorrhoea or menstrual blood outside of a woman’s period) render a person impure (Lev. 15:1–15, 25–30). Both require healing and then sacrifices and washings for purification.
    - (3) Regular menstrual flows and semen discharge are purified by the wait of a week for the former and until evening for the latter, both after bathing (implied for the menstruant) (Lev. 15:16–24). Sexual discharges render a person contagious to persons, objects, and food for the duration of their impurity.
- e. While ritual impurity was not sin, it still required purification.
  - i. The specifications:
    - (1) Unclean less than 7 days: Nocturnal emission, engage in sex, menstruation (Lev. 15:16–19) > needs water bathing ritual
    - (2) Unclean more than 7 days: Birth of baby (due to blood loss) (Lev. 12:1–8); abnormal genital discharge (Lev. 15:1–15, 25–30) > needs sin/purification offering
  - ii. Why the 7 day limit? *Answer*: “The contracted impurity, be it even so slight at the outset, will grow in force until it has the power to pollute the sanctuary from afar” (Milgrom, *Lev. 1–16*, 270). Failure to be

purified would be sin worthy of death because sustained uncleanness contaminates sacred space.

- Lev. 15:31. Thus you shall keep the people of Israel separate from their uncleanness (i.e, through purification), lest they die in their uncleanness by defiling my tabernacle that is in their midst.

3. Prohibited or Moral Uncleanness (adapted from Harrington, “Clean and Unclean,” 682)
  - a. Impurity incurred through a violation of God’s law, whether by unintentional or intentional disobedience or through a mismanagement of tolerated uncleanness.
  - b. Such sins included:
    - i. Idolatry
      - (1) Creating and worshipping idols (Ezek. 22:4), Baal worship (Jer. 2:23), contacting the dead (Lev. 19:31), and child sacrifice (Lev. 20:25; Ps. 106:38–39).
      - (2) Idolatry defiles both the idolater and the sanctuary and land (Lev. 18:28; 20:3; Jer. 32:34; Ezek. 5:11; 23:38–39; 36:18).
      - (3) Cleansing secured through the death of the idolater and the destruction of idols and shrines (Lev. 27:29; Deut. 7:5, 25; 13:13–19; Josh. 7), but repentance appears to have been able to alleviate the death sentence, as in the case of Manasseh (2 Chr. 33:12–13).
    - ii. Homicide
      - (1) Does not include capital punishment or killing in war, both of which were commanded.
      - (2) Defiles the land and can bring crop failure (Gen. 4:10–12; 2 Sam. 21:1–14; Ps. 106:38; Hos. 4:2–3).
      - (3) Purification secured through the death of the murder (Num. 35:33) and sometimes the whole family (Josh. 8:24–25), but repentance appears to have been able to alleviate the death sentence, as in the case of David’s murder of Uriah (2 Sam. 12:7–14; Ps. 51).
    - iii. Sexual misconduct
      - (1) Sins like incest (Lev. 18:6–18; Ezek. 22:11), adultery (Lev. 18:20; Num. 5:13–29; Ezek. 18:6–15; 33:26); homosexuality (Lev. 18:22), bestiality (Lev. 18:23), and remarriage to one’s spouse after an intervening marriage (Deut. 24:1–4).
      - (2) Sleeping with a woman known to be menstruating causes at least ritual impurity, if not also moral impurity (Lev. 18:19; 20:18; Ezek. 18:6).
      - (3) Sexual sins result in the violator and the land becoming unclean (Lev. 18:24–30; Deut. 24:4).
      - (4) Cleansing is secured only through the violator being cut off from the community (Lev. 18:29).
    - iv. Cultic violations
      - (1) Bringing any impure person or object into the sanctuary (Lev. 12:4; 22:3), allowing holy food to mix with impure food (Lev.

- 7:19–21), neglecting to perform necessary purifications or sacrifices (Lev. 5:2–5; Num. 19:20), failing to cleanse oneself (whether priest or laymen) for Sabbath or pilgrimage festivals (Num. 6:10–11; Neh. 13:19, 22), failing to keep agricultural priestly portions pure (Deut. 26:13–14).
- (2) The deliberate mixing of impurity and holiness can only be purified by the cutting off of the violator (Lev. 7:19–21; 22:3); sometimes the punishment is an immediate divine act (Lev. 10:1–2; 2 Sam. 6:7).
  - (3) The unintentional pollution of sanctified things causes impurity but can be purified by a guilt offering (Lev. 5:15–16).
- c. Punishments are severe, and the sin could only be addressed through animal sacrifices.
4. Unclean Foods
- a. Introduction (Some of this is adapted from Harrington, *NIDB*, 682; Hartley, *DOT:Pent*, 426–28):
    - i. Unlike tolerated uncleanness (i.e., unavoidable physical conditions like menstruation), Israel must choose whether they would follow God with respect to their diets. Because unclean food was prohibited, no cleansing rituals are prescribed. Eating unclean food was sin.
    - ii. Scholars struggle to know why particular animals are forbidden and others are not. Some proposals (highlighted in Hartley, *DOT:Pent*, 428–29):
      - (1) *Nutritional health*:
        - (a) The laws against unclean animals guarded Israel from diseases carried by certain animals (e.g., pork often carries trichinosis). Response: Why would Jesus declare all foods clean (Mark 7:14–20)? While the Israelites’ clean and unclean legislation could have been an instrument in God’s hand to preserve his people, it is very difficult to see God no longer interested in health after the coming of Christ. This difficulty suggests that nutritional health is *not* a central element in the clean and unclean legislation.
        - (b) All plant eaters are clean, whereas all carnivores are unclean, and it is the latter that have a higher possibility of bringing contaminations to humans. The shift from the Mosaic law to freedom in Christ is a shift from the pedagogue to the mature. As such, today God gives us freedom to regulate, but the law gave restrictions of that which without wise moderation would be harmful. Response: It remains to be established that the meat of meat-eaters has higher potential for carrying disease. Christians must show moderation with *all* foods, not just those that God used to declare unclean.
      - (2) *Purity of religion*: The laws against unclean animals prevented the assimilation of foreign cultic practices into Israel worship of

Yahweh. Response: Something like the bull was the most valued Israelite sacrifice and yet also revered by Israel's pagan neighbors.

- (3) *Positive behavioral parallels*: The clean animals exhibited behaviors desirable to humans (e.g., the several references to an animal's cud-chewing symbolized meditating on God's law) Response: One can identify numerous features of clean animals that may symbolically point toward the character of holiness, especially "unity, integrity, and perfection" (Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 54). For example:
- (a) The standard of wholeness clarifies one reason why blemished animals could not be offered and why priests with physical imperfections could not serve at the sanctuary (Lev 21:16–23; 22:17–25).
  - (b) The prohibitions against various mixtures, such as sowing a field with two kinds of seed or wearing a garment of two different materials (Lev 19:19) appear to point to the integrity of holiness.
- (4) *The life-death nexus*: Jacob Milgrom has argued that clean was associated with life, whereas unclean with death, which is the opposite of holiness, the life center. Response: This view has much to commend it, for it explains much. For example:
- (a) The abhorrence of death explains the rules dealing with a corpse or with carcasses of various animals.
  - (b) Skin disease bears the appearance of life being sapped out of a person.
  - (c) The loss of blood and semen represent the loss of life-giving bodily fluids.
  - (d) As for clean and unclean animals, Milgrom sees more randomness in the choice of beast, but he notes Scripture promotes reverence for blood and life by limiting Israel's flesh intake to a minimal number of animals, mainly herbivores from domesticated small and large cattle and some wild game, fish, birds, and locusts.
- b. DeRouchie's proposal: *Unclean foods are those in some way associated with the God-hostility or curse of the serpent*.
- i. The framework:
    - (1) The first explicit distinction between clean and unclean animals occurs in the narrative of Noah's flood, when Yahweh directed Noah to take "seven pairs of all clean animals, the male and his mate, and a pair of the animals that are not clean, the male and his mate, and seven pairs of the birds of the heavens also, male and female, to keep their offspring alive on the face of all the earth" (Gen 7:2–3; cf. v. 8). Noah then used "some of every clean animal and some of every clean bird" when he offered burnt offerings to Yahweh following the deluge (8:20).

- (2) What is amazing is that there is no clear instruction in Genesis 6–7 regarding the clean-unclean distinction. Noah appears to have already been well aware of this dichotomy, and Moses assumes that we as readers of the Pentateuch will make the necessary connections. Prior to this narrative, the place where animals are most clearly discussed is in the fall narrative of Genesis 3.
  - (3) Within this framework, the division between clean and unclean animals is most naturally understood as a result of the Adamic curse. Specifically, the ancients considered unclean those animals most closely associated with either the murderous activity of the serpent or the divine punishment against him. The serpent was “more crafty than other beasts of the field” (Gen 3:1) and he was cursed more than “all livestock and all beasts of the field” (3:14). The beasts most imitating his “craftiness” are those predatory in nature (with a will to kill), all of which are “unclean.” Those animals most identified with his dust-eating, death-culminating curse would be bottom feeders (the realm of dust) and those linked in any way to the realm of death or waste, all of which were “unclean.”
- ii. Proposed connections:
- (1) Land animals
    - (a) Clean: Split hooves *and* cud chewers (Lev 11:2–8). Hooved animals are all ungulates, animals that use the tip of their toe (or hoof) to support the weight of their bodies. Hooved animals, therefore, touch as little of the *dust* as possible, their weight resting on the hard or rubbery sole and a hard wall formed by a thick nail rolled around the tip of the toe. Clean animals had to be both split hooved (double protection from the cursed dust) and cud chewing, the latter of which means they are ruminants—i.e., herbivores who spend extra time “ruminating” (or meditating) on the food provided by God. No clean land animal is a predator.
    - (b) Unclean: Those that do not align with both the above features. Furthermore, unclean are all animals with paws, which walk directly on the ground with no “protection” (11:27). Also, unclean are all swarming creatures, which surround and infest (11:29–31) or which have multiple legs and crawl on their bellies in the dust (11:41–43).
  - (2) Water animals
    - (a) Clean: Both fins and scales (Lev 11:9–12). Fins propel and give balance, whereas scales shield or guard.
    - (b) Unclean: The absence of stability or protection (both absent from Adam’s activity in the Garden) could be what is highlighted in the unclean creatures.

- (3) Air animals
  - (a) Clean: No criteria given, but non-permitted birds and insects noted (Lev 11:13–23); those insects that hop on the ground (portraying the defeat of the curse) are clean.
  - (b) Unclean: All birds of prey that thrive on consuming flesh; all winged insects that do not hop on the ground but rest there.
- iii. Theological import:
  - (1) Within this context of the curse and the association of unclean foods with the serpent, it was natural to view all enemies of God as unclean. Those who ate unclean foods were themselves offspring of the serpent rather than offspring of the woman who hoped in the Messiah.
    - Lev 20:25–26. You shall therefore separate the clean beast from the unclean, and the unclean bird from the clean. You shall not make yourselves detestable by beast or by bird or by anything with which the ground crawls, which I have set apart for you to hold unclean. You shall be holy to me, for I Yahweh am holy and have separated you from the peoples, that you should be mine.
  - (2) With this, Hartley notes (*DOT:Pent*, 429): “The rules dealing with clean/unclean animals were a strong moral force, for they made the Israelites conscious at every meal that they were to order their lives to honor the holy God with whom they were in covenant.” The truth of this statement is heightened by the fact that the call to be holy as God is holy is directly associated with food regulations in three spots (Lev 11:44–45; 20:25–26; Deut 14:21; cf. Exod 22:31).
  - (3) The reason Christ’s coming makes “all foods clean” (Mark 7:19)<sup>5</sup> and by implication necessitates that believers no longer “call any person common or unclean” (Acts 10:28) is because at the cross Christ “disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, triumphing over them” (Col 1:15). That is, in the first coming of Christ “the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan” (Rev 12:9).<sup>6</sup> The war against the devil is decisively over and therefore pictures are no longer needed to heighten hope for the day when all will be made clean. Instead, foods like pork (and crow:) become *victory foods* that declare the eschatological shift from old age of death to new age of life, even as we still await the consummation when “the God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet” (Rom 16:20).

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<sup>5</sup> And by implication, holy, for they are also not “common” (Acts 10:14–15).

<sup>6</sup> An amillennialist would further hold that this is the exact eschatological reality spoken about in Rev 20:2: “And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years.”

“Sinfulness, in the case of the clean-unclean regulations, related to persons’ intentions toward God’s word. Did people listen to and obey his instruction concerning ritual purity? If a couple ignored or rejected the regulations concerning ritual purity, that would be sin. It is sinful to reject or ignore the instruction of God concerning ritual purity.” (Schnittjer, *The Torah Story*, 328)

**E. Sin, Pollution, Punishment, and Provision:**

1. Sin: Mismanagement and violations of the categories of holy and common, unclean and clean (Lev. 10:10). To treat what is holy as if it were common is to profane or desecrate the person or thing, an action that resulted in harmful consequences for individual and community.
2. Pollution and Punishment:
  - a. The land is God’s (Lev. 25:23), and tolerated and prohibited uncleanness pollute both it (Lev. 18:25, 27–28; Num. 35:33–34) and God’s sanctuary (Lev. 15:31; 20:3), impeding Israel’s relationship with Yahweh. Ritual uncleanness and sin are polluting effects that needed to be addressed.
  - b. All tabernacle regulations addressed fellowship with the presence of God, and sins could result in personal death because of the weightiness of such encroachment (Lev. 10:1–3; 20:1–27; Num. 35:33–34). Failure of the immediate community to punish by death could result in the cutting off of an entire clan (Lev. 20:4–5).
  - c. This pollution can ultimately result in God’s removal of his presence (Exod. 33:3; Deut. 23:14; Ezek. 8:4; 9:3; 10:18–19; 11:23; Lam. 2:7; cf. Ps. 51:11) and in Israel’s being “vomited out” of the land (Lev. 18:24–29; 20:22–24).
3. Provision: Ritual washings and atonement through sacrifice provided the major means of dealing with the polluting influence of uncleanness and sin.

**F. The NT Vision of Purity** (Some of this is adapted from a 2011 BCS student paper by Dustin Schramek titled, “Cleansing from Defilement.”)

1. The Continuing Need for Purity
  - a. Just as access to the presence of God in the OT was restricted to all who were unclean, so too impurity still makes one unfit for enjoying relationship with God. “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God” (Matt. 5:8; cf. Heb. 12:14).
  - b. Washing is necessary if one wants a share in the inheritance of salvation Christ provides. When Jesus was about to wash Peter’s feet, Peter objected, “You shall never wash my feet.” Peter rightly saw that Jesus was too great to do menial and dirty tasks, but he failed to see that being washed by Jesus was his only hope to be made fit to be in God’s presence. Jesus replied to him, “If I do not wash you, you have no share with me.” Peter was then eager to have his whole body washed, but Jesus replied, “The one who has bathed does not need to wash, except for his feet, but is completely clean” (John 13:8, 10). Similarly, Paul declared in 1 Cor 6:9–11: “Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality,<sup>10</sup> nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.<sup>11</sup> And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified,



- you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.”
- c. The consummation of the kingdom will enjoy perfect purity: “Nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb’s book of life” (Rev. 21:27).
2. Throughout his ministry, Jesus reversed the effects of sin and defilement in ways not seen in the OT:
    - a. In Haggai 2:13, we learn that uncleanness was contagious: “Haggai said, ‘If someone who is unclean by contact with a dead body touches any of these [kinds of food], does it become unclean?’ The priests answered and said, ‘It does become unclean.’” The ministry of Jesus showed a clear reversal of this principle.
    - b. According to Lev. 14:1–20, when a person was healed of leprosy, he became “clean” only after the sacrifice of a bird, blood rights, remaining out of his tent for seven days, shaving his head, and washing his clothes and body, and then on the eighth day making a sacrifice (burnt and grain offering) by which he would be atoned, declared clean, and restored to the community. In contrast, in the story of Jesus’ healing a man with leprosy, we read (Mark 1:40–42): “And a leper came to him, imploring him, and kneeling said to him, ‘If you will, you can make me clean.’ Moved with pity, he stretched out his hand and touched him and said to him, ‘I will; be clean.’ And immediately the leprosy left him, and he was made clean.” No elaborate ritual. No sacrifice. No washing. No waiting a week. The man was both healed and cleansed immediately.
    - c. In Mark 5:1–20, Jesus commanded unclean spirits to come out of a man and then highlighted his quest to destroy what is unclean by permitting the unclean spirits to enter unclean pigs, which then ran over a cliff to their death.
    - d. In Mark 5:25–34, Jesus was touched by woman that had a flow of blood for twelve years, which mean she had been perpetually unclean for over a decade! Again, rather than becoming unclean himself, he healed her and made her clean.
    - e. Mark 5:21–24, 35–43 shows Jesus overcoming the ultimate source of defilement: death. Even after being told that Jairus’ daughter was dead, Jesus went into his house, took the little girl by the hand (which should have made him unclean) and raised her from the dead.
    - f. In the old covenant revelation, uncleanness had a polluting effect, making unclean all that it touched. In contrast, for Jesus, cleanness was contagious, in that he could make clean what was unclean with a mere touch.
  3. Jesus’ baptism, death, and resurrection were the means by which he secured cleanness for all who believe.
    - a. Even though John’s baptism was “for repentance” (Matt. 3:11), the sinless Jesus underwent the waters in order “to fulfill all righteousness” (3:15). One symbol of baptism is cleansing from sin (Acts 22:16; 1 Peter 3:21), and it seems probable that Christ’s “cleansing” pre-substitutionary sacrifice served as the washing necessary for purity. “Not only did Jesus fulfill the laws

- requiring sacrifice for sin but the purity laws requiring washing from defilement and in doing so exemplified the significance of baptism” (Lisa Seelinger, *Cleansing in Christ: How the Cleansing Christ Provided from Defilement Relates to the Issue of Shame for Muslims* [Unpublished dissertation, 2010], 19).
- b. In many instances, complete cleansing required not only washing but sacrifice. The good news for us is that “the blood of Jesus [God’s] Son cleanses us from all sin” (1 John 1:7). Christ’s death-defeating work not only removes God’s wrath and imputes to us righteousness, it also purifies us completely. “For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of a heifer, sanctify for the purification of the flesh, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God” (Heb. 9:13–14; cf. 1:3; 10:10, 19–22).
4. To those purified by Christ, nothing can alter our state of cleanness. “To the pure, all things are pure, but to the defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure; but both their minds and their consciences are defiled” (Tit. 1:15). This means there is nothing that can keep us from enjoying God’s presence. “Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water” (Heb. 10:19–22; cf. 4:16).

### VIII. Tabernacle, Holiness Continuum, and Atonement: Shadows, Reality, and Escalation

#### A. OT Shadows as Pointers to the Real

1. The earthly tabernacle and all rituals related to it bore a built-in obsolescence from the very beginning. Moses was to make on earth a pattern of the real he saw, and when the real comes, the picture would no longer be needed.
  - a. The earthly tabernacle and all its pageantry were mere shadows of the real.
    - Exod. 25:8–9, 40. And let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell in their midst. <sup>9</sup>Exactly as I show you concerning *the pattern of the tabernacle, and of all its furniture*, so you shall make it... <sup>40</sup>And see that you *make them after the pattern for them*, which is being shown you on the mountain.
    - Heb. 8:4–5. There are priests who offer gifts according to the law. <sup>5</sup>They serve a *copy and shadow of the heavenly things*. For when Moses was about to erect the tent, he was instructed by God...
    - Heb. 10:1. For since *the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities*, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near.
    - Col. 1:16–17. Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath. *These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ.*
  - b. The brighter the light, the fewer the shadows!
    - Rev. 21:23–25; 22:5. <sup>21:23</sup>And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb. <sup>24</sup>By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it, <sup>25</sup>and its gates will never be shut by day—and *there will be no night there....* <sup>22:5</sup>And *night will be no more.*

They will need no light of lamp or sun, for *the Lord God will be their light*, and they will reign forever and ever.

- Jas. 1:17. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom *there is no variation or shadow due to change*.
2. As representative bearers of Israel's iniquity, the priests served as pointers to the ultimate High Priest who would take on himself the sins of the world
    - Lev. 10:17. Why have you not eaten the sin offering in the place of the sanctuary, since it is a thing most holy and has been given to you that you may *bear the iniquity of the congregation, to make atonement for them before Yahweh?*
    - Num. 18:1, 5. So Yahweh said to Aaron, "You and your sons and your father's house with you shall bear iniquity connected with the sanctuary, and you and your sons with you shall *bear iniquity connected with your priesthood...*" <sup>5</sup>And you shall keep guard over the sanctuary and over the altar, that there may never again be wrath on the people of Israel.
    - Zech. 3:1–10, esp. vv. 8–9. Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, you and your friends who sit before you, for they are *men who are a sign*: behold, I will bring *my servant the Branch...* <sup>9</sup>and I will remove the iniquity of this land in a single day.
  3. The atoning sacrifice as substitute
    - a. Representative of payment for sin (propitiation resulting in expiation)
      - Lev. 17:11. 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*.
      - Heb. 9:22. Indeed, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.
    - b. Blood cleanses tabernacle of defilements: Sprinkling the substitutionary blood atoned (i.e., re-consecrated and purified) the tabernacle and its furniture from all defilement on behalf of the priests and the people, resulting in the expiation (forgiveness) of the people's sin and the propitiation of God's wrath against them (cf. Lev. 16:33; Num. 35:33–34).

## B. The Reality:

1. Christ, the Tabernacling Presence of God
  - John 1:1, 14. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... <sup>14</sup>*And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us*, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.
  - John 2:19–21. Jesus answered them, "Destroy *this temple*, and in three days I will raise it up." <sup>20</sup>The Jews then said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?" <sup>21</sup>But he was speaking about *the temple of his body*. (cf. Matt. 26:61; Mark 14:58)
  - Eph. 2:19–22. So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, <sup>20</sup>built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, <sup>21</sup>in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into *a holy temple in the Lord*. <sup>22</sup>In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.
  - 1 Pet. 2:4–5. As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, <sup>5</sup>you yourselves like living stones are being built up as *a spiritual house*, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God *through Jesus Christ*.
2. Christ, the High Priest and Sin Bearer
  - Zech. 3:8–9. Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, you and your friends who sit before you, for they are men who are a sign: behold, I will bring *my servant the Branch...* <sup>9</sup>and I will remove the iniquity of this land in a single day.
  - Heb. 2:17. He [Christ] had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become *a merciful and faithful high priest* in the service of God, *to make propitiation for the sins of the people*.

- Heb. 9:24. For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now *to appear in the presence of God on our behalf*.
3. Christ, the Mercy Seat
- Exod. 25:21–22. And you shall put the mercy seat on the top of the ark, and in the ark you shall put the testimony that I shall give you. <sup>22</sup>There I will meet with you, and from above the *mercy seat (hilastērion)*, from between the two cherubim that are on the ark of the testimony, I will speak with you about all that I will give you in commandment for the people of Israel.
  - Lev. 16:14–15. And he shall take some of the blood of the bull and sprinkle it with his finger on the front of the mercy seat on the east side, and in front of the *mercy seat* (Grk = *hilastērion*) he shall sprinkle some of the blood with his finger seven times. <sup>15</sup>Then he shall kill the goat of the sin offering that is for the people and bring its blood inside the veil and do with its blood as he did with the blood of the bull, sprinkling it over the mercy seat and in front of the mercy seat.
  - Rom. 3:24–26. [We are] are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, <sup>25</sup>whom God put forward as a *mercy seat (hilastērion)*, ESV = *propitiation*) by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God’s righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. <sup>26</sup>It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. (See Heb. 9:5.)
4. Christ, the Substitutionary Atoning Sacrifice
- Isa. 53:4–5, 8, 10–12. Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. <sup>5</sup>But he was wounded for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his stripes we are healed... <sup>8</sup>By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who considered that *he was cut off out of the land of the living*, stricken for the transgression of my people?... <sup>10</sup>Yet it was the will of Yahweh to crush him; he has put him to grief; when his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of Yahweh shall prosper in his hand. <sup>11</sup>Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall *the righteous one*, my servant, *make many to be accounted righteous*, and he shall bear their iniquities. <sup>12</sup>Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors.
  - 1 John 1:9; 2:1–2. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness... <sup>2:1</sup>If anyone sins, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ *the righteous*. <sup>2</sup>*He is the propitiation (hilasmos) for our sins*, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.
  - 1 John 4:10. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation (*hilasmos*) for our sins.
  - Col. 2:13–14. And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, *having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us* with its legal demands. This he set aside, *nailing it to the cross*.
  - Heb. 10:1–10. For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near. <sup>2</sup>Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, since the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have any consciousness of sins? <sup>3</sup>But in these sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. <sup>4</sup>For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins... <sup>10</sup>*we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all*.
5. Christ, the Perfect Tabernacle, Priest, and Sacrifice
- Heb. 9:7, 11–14. But into the second [veil–i.e., the Holy of Holies] only the high priest goes, and he but once a year, and not without taking blood, which he offers for himself and for the unintentional sins of the people... <sup>11</sup>But when Christ appeared as *a high priest* of the good

things that have come, then *through the greater and more perfect tent* (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) <sup>12</sup>he entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but *by means of his own blood*, thus securing an eternal redemption. <sup>13</sup>For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of a heifer, sanctify for the purification of the flesh, <sup>14</sup>how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

## IX. Growing in Holy Conduct

### A. Leviticus 18:5 within Its Biblical Context

#### 1. Introduction to the Interpretive Challenge:

##### a. The central texts:

- Lev 18:1–5. And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, <sup>2</sup>“Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, I am the LORD your God. <sup>3</sup>You shall not do as they do in the land of Egypt, where you lived, and you shall not do as they do in the land of Canaan, to which I am bringing you. You shall not walk in their statutes. <sup>4</sup>You shall follow my rules and keep my statutes and walk in them. I am the LORD your God. <sup>5</sup>You shall therefore keep my statutes and my rules; *if a person does them, he shall live by them*: I am the LORD.
- Ezek 20:11, 13, 21. I gave them my statutes and made known to them my rules, by which, *if a person does them, he shall live*. . . . <sup>13</sup> But the house of Israel rebelled against me in the wilderness. They did not walk in my statutes but rejected my rules, by which, *if a person does them, he shall live*; and my Sabbaths they greatly profaned. Then I said I would pour out my wrath upon them in the wilderness, to make a full end of them. . . . <sup>21</sup> But the children rebelled against me. They did not walk in my statutes and were not careful to obey my rules, by which, *if a person does them, he shall live*; they profaned my Sabbaths. Then I said I would pour out my wrath upon them and spend my anger against them in the wilderness.
- Neh 9:29. And you warned them in order to turn them back to your law. Yet they acted presumptuously and did not obey your commandments, but sinned against your rules, which *if a person does them, he shall live by them*, and they turned a stubborn shoulder and stiffened their neck and would not obey.
- Rom 10:3–8. For, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God’s righteousness. <sup>4</sup> For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes. <sup>5</sup> For Moses writes about the righteousness that is based on the law, that *the person who does the commandments shall live by them*. <sup>6</sup> But the righteousness based on faith says, “Do not say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’” (that is, to bring Christ down) <sup>7</sup> “or ‘Who will descend into the abyss?’” (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). <sup>8</sup> But what does it say? “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart” (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim).
- Gal 3:9–14. So then, those who are of faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith. <sup>10</sup> For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, “Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them.” <sup>11</sup> Now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law, for “The righteous shall live by faith.” <sup>12</sup> But the law is not of faith, rather “*The one who does them shall live by them*.” <sup>13</sup> Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree”— <sup>14</sup> so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith.
- Luke 10:25–29. And behold, a lawyer stood up to put him to the test, saying, “Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” <sup>26</sup> He said to him, “What is written in the Law? How do you read it?” <sup>27</sup> And he answered, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and

your neighbor as yourself.”<sup>28</sup> And he said to him, “You have answered correctly; *do this, and you will live.*”<sup>29</sup> But he, desiring to justify himself, said to Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”

- b. Key questions:
  - i. Paul appears to be saying that Lev 18:5 was about a doing kind of righteousness, whereas the new covenant is about a believing kind of righteousness. As in Deut 16:20 and Ezek 20:11, keeping the statutes and judgments (or doing righteousness) will result in life. Is life, therefore, earned in the old covenant? Is it eternal life?
  - ii. How should we understand Paul’s assertion that Lev 18:5 teaches “the righteousness from law” (Rom 10:5), whereas Deut 30:11–14 speaks about “the righteousness from faith” (Rom 10:6)? How can Moses be pitted against Moses?
  - iii. Is Paul pitting Hab 2:4 (“the righteous shall live by faith”) against Lev 18:5? Did not Moses himself affirm the need for faith (Num 14:11; Deut 1:32; 9:23)?
2. Two Evangelical Approaches to the Questions:
  - a. Walter C. Kaiser Jr., *The Promise-Plan of God*, 79–80; cf. idem, “Leviticus and Paul: ‘Do This and You Shall Live’ (Eternally?),” *JETS* 14 (1971): 19–28.
    - i. Kaiser stresses that the “doing” called for in Lev 18:5 is *not* about getting into relationship with God but about enjoying an already existent relationship with God, for Yahweh stresses twice in 18:2 and 18:5 that he is *already their God* (*The Promise-Plan of God*, 79–80). That is, Israel is *already* alive by faith, and the call is to manifest this life through law-obedience (80).
    - ii. One of the ways to obey the law was to recognize the imperfection of one’s life and make a sacrifice for sins. That is, Lev 18:5 assumes and provides for law breakers through the sacrificial system (80).
    - iii. Kaiser highlights that the “life” is less a reward and more the sphere of existence. He affirms (80 n. 19) here J. Oliver Buswell’s statement (*A Systematic Theology of the Christian Religion*, 313): “The words *en autē* [Rom. 10:5] and the corresponding words in Galatians 3:12, *en autois*, where the same Old Testament passage [Lev. 18:5] is quoted, should not be construed as instrumental, but as locative, indicating the sphere or horizon of life of a godly man. . . . Moses is obviously describing, not the means of attaining eternal life, but the horizon within which an earthly godly life ought to be lived.”
    - iv. INITIAL RESPONSE: Kaiser is here wrongly treating Israel’s redemption from Egypt as if it were redemption from sin; most of Israel is spiritually *dead*, not alive, and very few actually approached the sacrificial system by faith. Thus, while the structure of grace was present in the old covenant, the grace remained external for the majority, and the result was their ruin.

- b. Jim Hamilton, “The One Who Does Them Shall Live by Them: Leviticus 18:5 in Galatians 3:12,” *The Gospel Witness* (Aug 2005): 10–12.
- i. Hamilton asserts that God never called Israel to do anything apart from faith, so we must not view the old covenant as a legalistic system in any way. Such a view “fails to appreciate the gracious character of the Levitical system” (10), for of all books, Leviticus says that, if you can’t keep the law, fall back on the substitutionary sacrifice, and then keep pursuing law keeping. The Mosaic law called for perfect obedience, but the requirements could only be kept by faith—“a willing obedience that flows from trusting hearts” (11).
  - ii. Paul is not directly pitting Moses against Moses or against Habakkuk but is speaking redemptive-historically. “The issue in Galatians 3:11–12 is not that the Old Testament presented a legalistic way of gaining salvation but that the period in salvation history in which the Levitical system was operative has ended” (11). Paul is asserting that *today* (in the new covenant age after Christ’s initial coming), the law is not of faith, but originally it was. Now that Jesus has come, he has made the law obsolete; the context for our faith is the new covenant, not the old, so in that sense, “the law is not of faith.” “‘Before faith came’ Leviticus 18:5 meant that the one who *by faith* kept the Mosaic Covenant would live. Now that ‘faith has come,’ the Mosaic covenant is no longer in force, it has served its redemptive-historical purpose, with the result that anyone who seeks to live by it must keep all of its regulations flawlessly since its sacrifices are now abolished” (12; cf. Gal 5:3).
  - iii. INITIAL RESPONSE: Hamilton is correct to see redemptive-history governing Paul’s argument, but he fails to distinguish that while the law-covenant called for an obedience flowing from faith, neither the root of faith nor the fruit of obedience was lived out by the majority of the old covenant members. As such, there is a real sense in which we can say that even in Moses’ day, *the law was not of faith*. The age of the law-covenant was an age of stubbornness, lack of faith, and rebellion. But in Christ, the age of faith has come.
3. DeRouchie’s View:
- a. In the OT, righteousness is consistently associated with *outward living*—with character and behavior that aligns with God’s definition of right order. When Moses declares, “Righteousness, righteousness you shall pursue, that you may live” (Deut 16:20; cf. Rom 9:30–31), what he is saying, *obey/do the law in order to live*. Similarly, in Deut 6:25, he asserts, “And it will be righteousness for us, if we are careful to *do* all this commandment.” What makes Gen 15:6 so significant is that Abraham’s *faith* in God is being counted as if it were a deed when it is not a deed. Believing the God of promise is counted for what it is not—righteousness. Abraham could not produce the heir, and when he recognized this and looked to God by faith, the Lord credited it to him as righteousness—i.e., imputed to him an alien

righteousness as if he had perfectly brought about the called-for deed. This is Paul's argument in Rom 4:3–5.

- b. In Lev 18:5, God is calling Israel, who was saved from Egypt but whose hearts were not changed, to do in order to live. If their behavior aligned perfectly with God's right order, they would enjoy all the covenant blessings. However, this is impossible, so the law would ultimately bring death and the law-covenant would bear a ministry of condemnation (2 Cor 3:9). "The very commandment that promised life proved death to me" (Rom 7:10). Jesus alone secures, through his perfect righteousness, the life that we can only enjoy *by faith*. That is, God must count to us by faith what *is not* ours.
- c. Jesus does not perform a Pharisaical obedience, for his life of surrender brought great glory to the Father. Jesus' obedience was not self-exalting but God-exalting. Because no one in the old covenant could align with the perfect God-exalting obedience that the Lord called for, the law produced increased sin (Rom 3:20; 5:20). The law was not the problem, for truly "in the law [is] the embodiment of knowledge and truth" (Rom 2:20) and "the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good" (Rom 7:12). Nevertheless, when weakened by the flesh (Rom 8:3), the law identified brokenness and brought forth an age of death. When you give good law to hard-hearted people, it kills them. With this, when you give good law to hard-hearted people, the law-covenant itself becomes legalistic, and this is why Paul identifies Lev 18:5 as testifying to a righteousness from law versus a righteousness from faith (Rom 10:5).
- d. Lev 18:5 declares that if one wants reward and wants to enjoy sustained relationship with God, he must stay close to the Lord. Such truth should have broken the Israelites and moved them to plead with God to count them for what they weren't (i.e., righteous) and to trust his provision of the substitute, wherein God counts its unblemished nature to them and their sin to it. Perfect obedience would have been God-dependent obedience, but the fact that none could remain perfectly dependent meant that if life was to be enjoyed by any, it would only be by God declaring them right by faith when in fact they were not. The life that was promised by the law is ultimately secured only in Jesus.
- e. God was Israel's God in a distinct way through covenant, but he was not the majority's spiritual savior or king or satisfier. As such, he was "their God" in a similar way that the Lord is God over everyone in the universe through the original Adamic covenant. The majority were not eternally saved. Israel is a microcosm of God's relationship with the whole world, and just as most of the world will be in hell, so too with Israel. Paul is reading Lev 18:5 in light of these realities. He is distinguishing God's revealed will for the law (do in order to live) and his sovereign will for the law (condemn in order to point to the need for Jesus). Lev 18:5 falls within the redemptive-historical context of death (i.e., imperfect human doing brings death), and therefore it stands in contrast with the life of faith. Blessing and curse, life and death were the options before the community, and later retribution theology in the



wisdom literature appears to treat this life and death eschatologically, reading it not only as immediate life/death in the land but lasting, eternal life/death.

- f. Preston Sprinkle (“Law and Life: Leviticus 18:5 in the Literary Framework of Ezekiel,” *JSOT* 31.3 [2007]: 275–93) has noted that within the book of Ezekiel, the prophet himself contrasts the human doing of Lev 18:5 and the future divine doing within the new covenant. In Ezek 20:11 we read, “I gave them my statutes and made known to them my rules, by which, *if a person does them, he shall live*” (cf. Ezek 18:5, 9, 17, 19, 21; 33:10, 13, 19; Amos 5:4). This type of pattern resulted not in Israel’s life but in their death; they entered into curse. They were unclean like a woman in her menstrual cycle (Ezek 36:17) and they were dead, like the dried skeletons of a defeated army in the valley (37:1). Into this context, Yahweh declares in 36:27, “And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.” Then later in 37:14, we read, “And I will put my Spirit within you, and you shall live.” In the context of the valley of dry bones vision, this is nothing less than resurrection. Then in 37:24 we read of this resurrected people: “My servant David shall be king over them, and they shall all have one shepherd. They shall walk in my rules and be careful to obey my statutes.” Sprinkle writes, “What was previously held out as a conditional possibility is here fulfilled by Yahweh himself in his program of restoration” (290). Thus already in the OT, there is the explicit contrast of the old covenant as a human deeds-based covenant and the new covenant as a divine-enablement covenant, ultimately by faith.
- g. Even earlier Deuteronomy already provided a similar contrast.
- i. We read the command, “Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no longer stubborn” (Deut 10:16) with the promise, “And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, so that you will love the LORD your God with all your heart and all your soul, for the sake of your life (30:6). Later we learn why (Deut 30:8–14):
- Deut 30:8–14. And you shall again obey the voice of the LORD and keep all his commandments that I command you today. <sup>9</sup> The LORD your God will make you abundantly prosperous in all the work of your hand, in the fruit of your womb and in the fruit of your cattle and in the fruit of your ground. For the LORD will again take delight in prospering you, as he took delight in your fathers, <sup>10</sup> when you obey the voice of the LORD your God, to keep his commandments and his statutes that are written in this Book of the Law, when you turn to the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. <sup>11</sup> For (ׁ?) this commandment that I command you today *will not be* too hard for you, neither *will it be* far off. <sup>12</sup> It *will not be* in heaven, that you should say, ‘Who will ascend to heaven for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?’ <sup>13</sup> Neither *will it be* beyond the sea, that you should say, ‘Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us, that we may

hear it and do it?’<sup>14</sup> But the word is very near you. It *will be* in your mouth and in your heart, so that you *will* do it.”

Deut 30:11–14 is the exact passage that Paul cites as teaching a righteousness from faith *in contrast* to Lev 18:5 that teaches a righteousness from law (Rom 10:3–8).

- ii. Throughout Deuteronomy the consistent command-promise combination is “do this *so that* you may live” (e.g., Deut 4:1; 5:33; 8:1; 11:8–9; 16:20; 22:7; 30:19; 31:13; cf. Rom 7:10). In contrast, Deut 30:6 is the one place that changes the pattern for it reads, “The LORD will circumcise your heart . . . to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, *for the sake of your life*” (DeRouchie’s translation). What the people could not attain on their own, God would work in order to bring it about.
- h. In Habakkuk, the curses are coming; Babylon is on the other side of the hill. It is obvious that Israel *has not* kept the covenant, for they are about to die, not live. Thus the only context for enjoying life is to fall back on the mercy of God *by faith*, receiving from a declaration of righteousness and a gift of life that *should not be yours* based on your deeds: “Behold, his soul is puffed up; it is not upright within him, but the righteous shall live by his faith” (Hab 2:4). This what Abraham did (Gen 15:6), and it is what Habakkuk is calling for. Hab 2:4 is the text Paul uses in Gal 3:11–12 to contrast the doing-nature of Lev 18:5.
- i. We can understand the old covenant as a legalistic, works-based covenant if we recognize that the good law was given to a hard-hearted people. It called for the root of faith overflowing in the fruit of obedience, but the inability of the recipients to live out the life of dependence perfectly resulted in covenant curses and death to all.

## B. Progressive Sanctification

### 1. The Call and Need for Sanctification:

- Lev. 11:44. Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am holy. (cf. 19:2; 20:7)
- Lev. 20:26. You shall be holy to me, for I Yahweh am holy and have separated you from the peoples, that you should be mine.
- Rom. 6:17–18, 22. But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed,<sup>18</sup>and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness....<sup>22</sup>But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life.
- 1 Thess. 4:3. For this is the will of God, your sanctification.
- Heb. 12:14. Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord.
- 1 Pet. 1:14–16. As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance,<sup>15</sup>but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct,<sup>16</sup>since it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.”

### 2. The Nature of Progressive Sanctification:

- a. *Definition*: While there is a holy status accorded by God’s declaration of something or someone as his own (e.g., the priests are holy and Israel is holy), the sanctification we refer to here is an ever-increasing holy state (progressive sanctification), not just holy status, which flows out of the

declaration of right standing with God; sanctification or holiness in this light is the increasing expression of and witness to God's worth and absolute supremacy, seen in righteous desires and deeds.

- b. Holiness in Lev. 19.
  3. The Means for Growing in Holy Conduct—An Overview:
    - a. Celebrate past grace: substitutionary sacrifice that fuels sanctification
    - b. Trust future grace: promises that motivate sanctification
    - c. Learn from God's discipline: hard lessons that nurture sanctification
- C. Celebrating Past Grace: Substitutionary Sacrifice that Fuels Sanctification**
1. Sanctification is a gift, enabled by God.
    - a. Yahweh declares that he is the one who sanctifies people.
      - Lev. 22:31–33. So you shall keep my commandments and do them: I am Yahweh. <sup>32</sup>And you shall not profane my holy name, that I may be sanctified among the people of Israel. *I am Yahweh who sanctifies you*, <sup>33</sup>who brought you out of the land of Egypt to be your God: I am Yahweh. (See also 21:8, 23; cf. 26:11–13.)
    - b. God generates holiness in those who have eyes to see, ears to hear, and hearts to know his glory, all of which are a gift. People grow in holiness when they are near the holy God, having benefited from atonement and having a proper fear of him that leads to the obedient life.
      - Exod. 20:20 Do not fear, for *God has come to test you, that the fear of him may be before you, that you may not sin.*"
      - Lev. 9:24; 10:3. And fire came out from before the LORD and consumed the burnt offering and the pieces of fat on the altar, and when all the people saw it, they shouted and fell on their faces.... <sup>10:3</sup> This is what Yahweh has said, "*Among those who are near me I show myself holy*, and before all the people I will be glorified."
      - Lev 22:32. And you shall not profane my holy name, that I may show myself holy among the people of Israel. I am the LORD you sanctifies you.
      - Deut. 29:2, 4; 30:6. <sup>29:2</sup>You have seen all that Yahweh did before your eyes in the land of Egypt.... <sup>3</sup>But to this day Yahweh has not given you a heart to understand or eyes to see or ears to hear.... <sup>30:6</sup>*And Yahweh will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, so that you will love Yahweh your God with all your heart and with all your soul, for the sake of your life.*
      - Jer. 32:40. I will make with them an everlasting covenant, that I will not turn away from doing good to them. And *I will put the fear of me in their hearts, that they may not turn from me.*
    - c. If justification and eternal life are gifts (Rom. 3:24; 6:23), and the fruit of justification is progressive sanctification and its end eternal life (6:22), then sanctification too is a gift. So we say, "Thanks be to God!" (6:17).
      - Rom. 3:24. ...and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.
      - Rom. 6:7, 22–23. For one who has died has been justified from sin.... <sup>22</sup>But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life. <sup>23</sup>For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.
      - Rom. 6:17–18. But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, <sup>18</sup>and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness.
  2. The ground and generator of sanctification: Imputed righteousness established through penal substitution.
    - a. The Question: What is the bridge between God's declaration, "I am Yahweh who sanctifies you" (Lev. 20:8; 22:32; cf. 21:8, 15, 23; 22:9, 16),

and our fulfilling his imperative, “You shall be holy, for I Yahweh am holy” (20:26; cf. 11:44–45; 19:2; 21:8; 1 Pet 1:15–16)?

- b. It seems significant that the call to “be holy, for I am holy” occurs first (Lev. 11:44) only *after* the detailed instructions regarding the substitutionary sacrifice (chs. 1–7). That is, as is argued in the NT (e.g., Rom. 6:6–7, 22; 8:1–4), in Leviticus justification (i.e., the declaration of imputed righteousness in light of penal substitutionary atonement) is the ground and generator of the holy life.
- Rom. 6:6–7, 22. We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. <sup>7</sup>For *one who has died has been justified from sin...* <sup>22</sup>But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, *the fruit you get leads to sanctification* and its end, eternal life.
  - Rom. 8:1–4. There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. <sup>2</sup>For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. <sup>3</sup>For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, <sup>4</sup> in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.  
[NOTE: In light of the parallel use of “condemnation” in both vv. 1 and 3, it is clear that, whereas the *for (gar)* at the head of v. 3 connotes ground, the *for (gar)* at the head of v. 2 connotes proof; that is, justification (“no condemnation,” v. 1) is shown to be real by sanctification (“the law of the spirit of life,” v. 2), which is itself grounded in justification (“he condemned sin in the flesh,” v. 3).]
- c. Support from Leviticus that sanctification (as growth in holy living) is grounded in justification (as imputed righteousness) is seen in God’s promising that he will show himself holy among those who are *near him*—a reference that seems to point both to the manifestation of his saving power (cf. Ezek 36:23; Eph 2:13) and the spark of progressive holiness that such saving activity will spark (cf. Lev 22:32). The call to holiness that begins in Leviticus 11 finds its basis in the past grace of substitutionary atonement as described in chs. 1–10.

#### D. Trusting Future Grace: Promises that Motivate Sanctification

1. The promises of blessing *and* curse motivate sanctification in both the old and new covenants (for more on this, see section X below). Faith in God’s promises creates hope or dread, and what we anticipate tomorrow changes who we are today.
  - 2 Pet. 1:4. He has granted to us his precious and very great *promises*, so that *through them you may become partakers of the divine nature*, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire. (cf. Rom. 4:18–21; 15:13)
  - 2 Cor. 1:20. For all the promises of God find their Yes in him. That is why it is through him that we utter our Amen to God for his glory.
  - 2 Cor. 7:1. Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God.
  - 1 John 3:2–3. Beloved, we are God’s children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. <sup>3</sup>And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.
2. Old and New Covenant Blessings and Curses:
  - a. Old Covenant:
    - i. Blessings: Lev. 26:1–13; Deut. 28:1–14; 30:3–10

- ii. Curses/Warnings: Lev. 26:14–39; Deut. 28:15–68; 29:19–21; cf. Gen 12:3, where the enemies of the Abrahamic covenant receive Abrahamic covenant curses
  - iii. Restoration Blessings—apparently all the original blessings in escalation: Lev. 26:40–46; Deut. 30:1–14
- b. New Covenant
- i. The blessings of the new covenant are the “restoration blessings” of the old, secured through Christ.
    - (1) Spiritual blessings are now enjoyed (Eph. 1:3; 2 Cor. 6:16–18 with Lev. 26:11–12), but the full inheritance is secured and coming, including complete salvation, the kingdom, and new bodies in the new heaven and earth (Matt. 5:5; 25:34; Rom. 8:17–18, 23; 1 Cor. 15:50–52; 2 Cor. 4:17; Eph. 1:14; Heb. 1:13–14; 1 Pet. 1:3–5; Rev. 21:1–7).
    - (2) In 2 Cor. 6:16–18, Paul applies the old covenant spiritual blessing of God’s presence (Lev. 26:11–12) to Christians, working through its application in the new covenant promise of Ezek 37:27.
      - 2 Cor. 6:16. What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God said, “I will make my dwelling among them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.”
      - Lev. 26:11–12. I will make my dwelling among you, and my soul shall not abhor you. <sup>12</sup>And I will walk among you and will be your God, and you shall be my people.
      - Ezek. 37:26. My dwelling place shall be with them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.
 This OT quotation suggests:
      - (a) That all restoration blessings of the old covenant include all the original blessings, but now with never the chance of loss;
      - (b) That the old covenant blessings and restoration blessings have direct bearing on Christians;
      - (c) That Christ’s obedience of faith wholly met the required loyalty needed to enjoy God’s blessing (“If you walk in my statutes and observe my commandments and do them...then I will make my dwelling among you” (Lev. 26:3, 11).
    - (3) The promise of blessing motivates the seven churches in Revelation: 2:7, 10–11, 17, 26–28; 3:5, 12, 21.
  - ii. The old covenant curses become the new covenant curses that God will bring on all the world that do not submit to Christ and his ways.
    - Deut. 30:6–7. And Yahweh your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, so that you will love Yahweh your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live. <sup>7</sup>And Yahweh your God will put all these curses on your foes and enemies who persecuted you.
    - Gen. 12:3. I will those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse.

**Fig. 5.4. Mosaic Covenant Blessings, Curses, and Restoration Blessings Referred to by the Prophets**

Blessings			
1.	Yahweh's presence / favor / loyalty (Lev. 26:11–12)	6.	General & unspecified (Deut. 28:2, 6, 8, 12–13)
2.	Confirmation of the covenant (Lev. 26:9)	7.	Peace & security in the land with no fear: a. <i>general</i> (Lev. 26:5–6); b. <i>from harmful animals</i> (Lev. 26:6); c. <i>from enemies</i> (Lev. 26:6)
3.	Be a holy people to Yahweh (Deut. 28:9)		
4.	Rains in season (Lev. 26:4; Deut. 28:12)		
5.	Abounding prosperity and productivity: a. <i>general</i> (Deut. 28:12); b. <i>fruit of the womb</i> (Lev. 26:9; Deut. 28:4, 11); c. <i>fruit of the livestock</i> (Deut. 28:4, 11); d. <i>fruit of the ground</i> (Lev. 26:4–5, 10; Deut. 28:4, 8, 11)	8.	Victory over enemies (Lev. 26:7–8; Deut. 28:7)
		9.	Freedom from slavery (Lev. 26:13)
		10.	Global influence & witness (Deut. 28:1, 10, 12)
Curses			
1.	Anger & rejection from Yahweh (Lev. 26:17, 24, 28, 41; Deut. 4:24–25; 29:20, 24, 27–28; 31:17–18, 29; 32:16, 19–22, 30)	13.	Exile & captivity: a. <i>of the people</i> (Lev. 26:33–34, 36, 38–39, 41, 44; Deut. 4:27; 28:36–37, 41, 63–64, 68; 29:28; 30:4; 32:26); b. <i>of the king</i> (Deut. 28:36)
2.	Rejection & destruction of the cult (Lev. 26:31)		
3.	War and its ravages: a. <i>general</i> (Lev. 26:17, 25, 33, 37; 28:25, 49, 52; 32:23–24, 30, 41–42); b. <i>siege</i> (Lev. 26:25–26, 29; Deut. 28:52–53, 55, 57)	14.	Forced idolatry in exile (Deut. 4:28; 28:36, 64)
		15.	Futility (Lev. 26:16, 20; Deut. 28:20, 29–31, 33, 38–41)
4.	Fear, terror, & horror (Lev. 26:16–17, 36–37; Deut. 28:66–67; 32:25)	16.	Dishonor & degradation (Lev. 26:19; Deut. 28:20, 25, 37, 43–44, 68)
		17.	Loss of possessions & impoverishment (Deut. 28:31)
5.	Occupation & oppression by enemies & aliens (Lev. 26:16–17, 32; Deut. 28:31, 33, 43–44, 48, 68; 32:21)	18.	Loss of family (Deut. 28:30, 32, 41; 32:25)
		19.	Helplessness & stumbling (Lev. 26:36–37; Deut. 28:29, 32; 32:35–36; 38–39)
6.	Agricultural disaster & non-productivity: a. <i>general</i> (Lev. 26:20; Deut. 28:17–18, 22, 40; 29:23); b. <i>drought</i> (Lev. 26:19; Deut. 28:22–24); c. <i>crop pests</i> (Deut. 28:38–42)	20.	Psychological afflictions (Deut. 28:20, 28, 34, 65–67)
		21.	Lack of peace & rest (Deut. 28:65)
7.	Starvation / famine (Lev. 26:26, 29, 45; Deut. 28:53–56; 32:24)	22.	Denial of burial (Deut. 28:26)
8.	Illness, pestilence, & contamination (Lev. 26:16; Deut. 28:21–22, 27–28, 35, 59–61; 29:22; 32:24, 39)	23.	Becoming like the cities of the plain (Deut. 29:23)
		24.	Death & destruction (Lev. 26:36, 39; Deut. 4:26; 28:20–22, 44, 48, 51, 61; 29:20; 30:15, 18–19; 31:17; 32:25–26, 35, 39, 42)
9.	Desolation: a. <i>of holy places</i> (Lev. 26:31); b. <i>of cities &amp; towns</i> (Lev. 26:31, 33); c. <i>of the land</i> (Lev. 26:32–35, 43; Deut. 28:51; 29:23)	25.	General & unspecified (Deut. 4:30; 28:20, 24, 45, 59, 61, 63; 29:19, 21–22; 31:17, 21, 29; 32:23, 35)
10.	Destruction by fire (Deut. 28:24; 32:22)	26.	General punishment, curse, & vengeance (Lev. 26:41, 43; Deut. 28:16, 20–21, 27; 30:19; 32:35, 41, 43)
11.	Harm from wild animals (Lev. 26:22; Deut. 32:24)		
12.	Decimation & infertility: a. <i>of family</i> (Lev. 26:22; Deut. 28:18, 59); b. <i>of cattle</i> (Lev. 26:22; Deut. 28:18, 51); c. <i>of population generally</i> (Lev. 26:22, 36; Deut. 4:27; 28:62; 32:36)	27.	Multiple punishments (Lev. 26:18, 21, 24, 28)
Restoration Blessings			
1.	Renewal of Yahweh's presence, favor, & loyalty (Lev. 26:42, 45; Deut. 4:29, 31; 30:3, 9)	6.	Restoration of general prosperity, well-being, & wealth (Deut. 30:3, 5, 9; 32:39)
2.	Renewal of the covenant (Lev. 26:42, 44–45; Deut. 4:31)	7.	Return from exile & repossession of the land (Deut. 30:3–5)
3.	Restoration of true worship & ability to be faithful (Deut. 4:30; 30:6, 8)		
4.	Population increase (Deut. 30:5, 9)	8.	Reunification (Deut. 30:3–4)
5.	Agricultural bounty (Lev. 26:42; Deut. 30:9)	9.	Power over enemies & aliens (Deut. 30:7)
		10.	Freedom & restoration from death & destruction (Lev. 26:44; Deut. 30:6; 32:39)
Prepared by Jason S. DeRouchie; most of the categorization is taken from Douglas Stuart, "Malachi," in <i>The Minor Prophets: An Exegetical &amp; Expository Commentary</i> , ed. Thomas Edward McComiskey (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998), 1259–1260; cf. idem, <i>Hosea–Jonah</i> , WBC 31 (Dallas: Word, 1987), xxxi–xlii. All references are pulled from Leviticus 26, Deuteronomy 4, and 28–32. No single prophetic book, except perhaps Isaiah, mentions all categories.			

- iii. Like the curses against enemies in the Abrahamic covenant, the “curses” of the new covenant resemble the old covenant curses that God will pour out on all the non-believing world. They also serve as warnings designed to keep God’s people in alignment with God’s ways. In contrast to the old covenant, where the majority did not heed the warnings, all true new covenant members will heed the warnings and enjoy lasting life. This means that no new covenant member will ever experience the curses, at least in a punitive way. God can still discipline those he loves (Heb 12:5–11; cf. Lev. 26:18, 23, 28).
- (1) Jesus’ parable of the “sheep and goats” (Matt. 25:31–46)
  - (2) Jesus’ “blessings and woes” in the Sermon on the Plain (Luke 6:20–26)
  - (3) See also Matt. 6:15; Rom. 8:13; 11:22; 1 Cor. 6:9–11; Gal. 5:4, 19–21; 2 Tim. 2:12; Heb. 2:3; 6:4–8; 10:26–31; 12:15; Rev. 2:5, 16, 22–23; 22:19.
- iv. Note: There at least three reasons God may cause traumatize someone and cause them to experience the cursedness of the world. Elihu said regarding the natural forces, “They turn around and around by his guidance, to accomplish all that he commands them on the face of the habitable world. Whether *for correction* or *for his land* or *for love*, he causes it to happen” (Job 37:12–13). Discerning God’s purposes in providence can be difficult, but the specific situation surrounding one’s case can help clarify. Whereas personal sin can bring harm (e.g., Acts 5:1–10; 1 Cor. 10:27–32), it is not the sole cause (e.g., John 9:2–3). Nevertheless, every taste of the curse should move one to repent of sin and surrender to God (Lev. 26:18, 21, 24, 28; Luke 13:1–5).
3. Promises motivate holiness by helping to defeat:
- a. Anxiety
    - Matt. 6:30–34. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? <sup>31</sup>Therefore do not be anxious, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ <sup>32</sup>For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. <sup>33</sup>But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. <sup>34</sup>Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.
    - Phil. 4:5–7. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; <sup>6</sup>do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. <sup>7</sup>And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.
  - b. Covetousness
    - Heb. 13:5. Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.”
    - Phil. 4:19. And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.
  - c. Lust
    - Matt. 5:8, 27–30. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.... <sup>27</sup>You have heard that it was said, “You shall not commit adultery.” <sup>28</sup>But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart. <sup>29</sup>If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away.

For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell. <sup>30</sup>And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell.

d. **Bitterness**

- Rom. 12:17–19. Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. <sup>18</sup>If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. <sup>19</sup>Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.”
- Matt. 6:14–15. For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, <sup>15</sup>but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

e. **Fear of man**

- Matt. 10:28–33. And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. <sup>29</sup>Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. <sup>30</sup>But even the hairs of your head are all numbered. <sup>31</sup>Fear not, therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows. <sup>32</sup>So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven, <sup>33</sup>but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven.

f. **Fear of condemnation**

- Rom. 8:1, 33–34, 38–39. There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.... <sup>33</sup>Who shall bring any charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies. <sup>34</sup>Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.... <sup>38</sup>For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, <sup>39</sup>nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.
- John 10:27–30. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. <sup>28</sup>I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. <sup>29</sup>My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand. <sup>30</sup>I and the Father are one.

g. **Fear of failure**

- Phil. 1:6. And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.
- 1 Thess. 5:23–24. Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>24</sup>He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.

## E. **Learning from Divine Discipline: Hard Lessons that Nurture Sanctification**

### 1. Curses are blessings in disguise for those who learn from them, for “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble” (Jas. 4:6; 1 Pet. 5:5).

- Lev. 26:14, 16, 18, 21, 23–24, 27–28. But if you will not listen to me and will not do all these commandments ... <sup>16</sup>then I will do this to you: ... <sup>18</sup>And if in spite of this you will not listen to me, then I will discipline you again sevenfold for your sins.... <sup>21</sup>Then if you walk contrary to me and will not listen to me, I will continue striking you, sevenfold for your sins.... <sup>23</sup>And if by this discipline you are not turned to me but walk contrary to me, <sup>24</sup>then I also will walk contrary to you, and I myself will strike you sevenfold for your sins.... <sup>27</sup>But if in spite of this you will not listen to me, but walk contrary to me, <sup>28</sup>then I will walk contrary to you in fury, and I myself will discipline you sevenfold for your sins.
- Isa. 9:13–14[12–13]. The people did not turn to him who struck them, nor inquire of the LORD of hosts. <sup>14</sup>So the LORD cut off from Israel head and tail, palm branch and reed in one day
- Isa. 30:15–16. For thus said the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel, “In returning and rest you shall be saved; in quietness and in trust shall be your strength.” But you were unwilling,



<sup>16</sup> and you said, “No! We will flee upon horses”; therefore you shall flee away; and, “We will ride upon swift steeds”; therefore your pursuers shall be swift.

- Isa. 42:25. So he poured on him the heat of his anger and the might of battle; it set him on fire all around, but he did not understand; it burned him up, but he did not take it to heart.
  - Jer. 2:30. In vain have I struck your children; they took no correction; your own sword devoured your prophets like a ravaging lion.
  - Jer. 3:3. Therefore the showers have been withheld, and the spring rain has not come; yet you have the forehead of a whore; you refuse to be ashamed.
  - Jer. 5:3. O Yahweh, do not your eyes look for truth? You have struck them down, but they felt no anguish; you have consumed them, but they refused to take correction. They have made their faces harder than rock; they have refused to repent.
  - Jer. 15:7. I have winnowed them with a winnowing fork in the gates of the land; I have bereaved them; I have destroyed my people; they did not turn from their ways.
  - Jer. 25:3–4. For twenty-three years, from the thirteenth year of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah, to this day, the word of the LORD has come to me, and I have spoken persistently to you, but you have not listened. <sup>4</sup> You have neither listened nor inclined your ears to hear, although the LORD persistently sent to you all his servants the prophets.
  - Hos. 6:1. Come, let us return to Yahweh; for *he has torn us, that he may heal us*; he has struck us down, and he will bind us up.
  - Hos. 7:10. The pride of Israel testifies to his face; yet they do not return to the LORD their God, nor seek him, for all this.
  - Amos 4:6–12. I gave you cleanness of teeth in all your cities, and lack of bread in all your places, *yet you did not return to me*, declares Yahweh. <sup>7</sup>I also withheld the rain from you when there were yet three months to the harvest; I would send rain on one city, and send no rain on another city; one field would have rain, and the field on which it did not rain would wither; <sup>8</sup>so two or three cities would wander to another city to drink water, and would not be satisfied; *yet you did not return to me*, declares Yahweh. <sup>9</sup>I struck you with blight and mildew; your many gardens and your vineyards, your fig trees and your olive trees the locust devoured; *yet you did not return to me*, declares Yahweh. <sup>10</sup>I sent among you a pestilence after the manner of Egypt; I killed your young men with the sword, and carried away your horses, and I made the stench of your camp go up into your nostrils; *yet you did not return to me*, declares Yahweh. <sup>11</sup>I overthrew some of you, as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and you were as a brand plucked out of the burning; *yet you did not return to me*, declares Yahweh. <sup>12</sup>Therefore thus I will do to you, O Israel; because I will do this to you, prepare to meet your God, O Israel!
  - Zeph. 3:7. I said, “Surely you will fear me; you will accept correction. Then your dwelling would not be cut off according to all that I have appointed against you.” But all the more they were eager to make all their deeds corrupt.
  - Hag. 2:17. I struck you and all the products of your toil with blight and with mildew and with hail, *yet you did not turn to me*, declares Yahweh.
  - Psa. 78:17, 32. *Yet they sinned still more against him*, rebelling against the Most High in the desert.... <sup>32</sup>*In spite of all this, they still sinned*; despite his wonders, they did not believe.
  - Psa. 119:71. It is good for me that I was afflicted, *that I might learn your statutes*. Cf. Pss 94:12; 119:67, 75.
  - Lam. 2:14. Your prophets have seen for you false and deceptive visions; they have not *exposed your iniquity to restore your fortunes*, but have seen for you oracles that are false and misleading.
  - Rev 16:8–10. The fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and it was allowed to scorch people with fire. <sup>9</sup> They were scorched by the fierce heat, and they cursed the name of God who had power over these plagues. *They did not repent and give him glory*. <sup>10</sup> The fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and its kingdom was plunged into darkness. People gnawed their tongues in anguish <sup>11</sup> and cursed the God of heaven for their pain and sores. *They did not repent of their deeds*.
2. While Christ has wholly and completely bore the ultimate curse for believers (for more on this, see section X below), believers still live in the old age and

experience suffering. However, for believers, experiencing the effects of old age curses is now holiness-generating rather than punitive.

- Heb. 12:9–11. We have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live? For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but *he disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness*. For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.
  - Rev. 3:19. Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline, so be zealous and repent.
- a. *The battle with sin* is still evident, but believers have been freed from sin’s enslavement and condemnation. Furthermore, rather than being “given over” (*παραδίδωμι*) to rebellion and a debased mind, God now “gives us over” (*παραδίδωμι*) to obedience and a renewed mind (Rom. 6:16–18; 12:2; cf. 1:24, 26, 28; 7:22–23, 25).
- Rom. 6:16–18. Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? <sup>17</sup>But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed (*παρεδόθητε*), <sup>18</sup>and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness.
  - Rom. 12:2. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.
  - Rom. 1:24, 26, 28. Therefore God gave them up (*παρέδωκεν*) in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves.... <sup>26</sup>For this reason God gave them up (*παρέδωκεν*) to dishonorable passions.... <sup>28</sup>And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up (*παρέδωκεν*) to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done.
  - Rom. 7:22–23, 25. For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, <sup>23</sup>but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. <sup>25</sup>Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin.
- b. *The battle with brokenness and decay* is very apparent, but it only develops our dependent faith in God and heightens our longing for the future (Rom. 8:20–23; 2 Cor. 4:16–18).
- Rom. 8:20–23. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope <sup>21</sup>that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. <sup>22</sup>For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. <sup>23</sup>And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.
  - 2 Cor. 4:16–18. So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. <sup>17</sup>For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, <sup>18</sup>as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.
- c. *The battle with death* is on all, but in Christ the sting is removed and death becomes the channel to great gain (Phil. 1:21; cf. Rom. 5:17; 6:23; Rev. 22:4).
- Phil. 1:21. For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

- Rom. 5:17. For if, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ.
- Rom. 6:23. For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.
- Rev. 22:4. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.

## X. The Christian, Old Covenant Blessings and Curses, and the Prosperity Gospel

### A. A Biblical Theological Framework for Addressing the Prosperity Gospel:

1. Key Texts: Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 27–28
2. Deuteronomy 4:25–31 provides the pattern of Redemptive History: Blessings (Lev. 26:1–13; Deut. 28:1–14) > Curses (Lev. 26:14–39; Deut. 28:15–68) > Restoration Blessings (Lev. 26:40–45; Deut. 30:1–14). Christians live in the period of restoration blessing, and the new covenant is seen as the realization of promises both from the Abrahamic and (old) Mosaic covenants (Lev. 26:42, 45).
3. Jesus is born under the law to redeem those under the law (Gal. 4:4–5), and bears the climactic curse of death for all in him (3:13), thus serving as the channel through whom the world is blessed (3:14).
4. The promises of blessing and curse in Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 27–32 are echoed in Jesus' parable of the "sheep and goats" (Matt. 25:31–46, with use of OT language of "blessing" and "curse"), in his "blessings and woes" in the Sermon on the Plain (Luke 6:20–26), and in numerous other warning passages sprinkled throughout the NT (e.g., Matt. 6:15; Rom. 8:13; 11:22; 1 Cor. 6:9–11; Gal. 5:4, 19–21; 2 Tim. 2:12; Heb. 2:3; 6:4–6; 10:26–31; 12:15; Rev. 22:19). In both the old and new covenants, therefore, God's promises are key motivators in the battle against sin. As Peter asserts, "He has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires" (2 Pet. 1:4; cf. Rom. 4:18–21). Similarly, right after citing old covenant blessing and restoration blessing texts (Lev 26:11–12; Ezek 37:27), Paul declares, "Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God" (2 Cor 7:1; cf. 6:16). Finally, John says, "And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure" (1 John 3:3).
5. Jesus' perfect old covenant righteousness/obedience becomes imputed to the elect (Rom. 5:18–19; 1 Cor. 1:30; 2 Cor. 5:21; Phil. 2:8; 3:9; 1 Pet. 2:24; cf. Isa. 53:11), thus qualifying us to share in the complete, imperishable, undefiled, and unfading inheritance of the saints (Col. 1:11–12; 1 Pet. 1:3–5) and securing for us by the Spirit every covenant restoration blessing (Eph 1:3; cf. 2 Cor. 1:20)—most immediately the presence of God (2 Cor. 6:16 with Lev. 26:11–12 and Ezek 37:27), as we await our full inheritance later (Matt. 25:34; 2 Cor. 1:22; Eph. 1:13–14; 1 Pet. 1:3–5), which will include God himself (Rom. 5:2, 11; 2 Pet. 3:18; Rev. 21:3) and all the glories associated with him, like complete salvation (Heb. 1:14); the kingdom (Matt. 25:34; 1 Cor. 15:50–52); no more curse, frustration, or brokenness (Rev. 21:3; 22:1–3); indestructible resurrected bodies

(Rom. 8:11, 20–23); and a new/restored earth (Gen. 17:4–6; Matt. 5:5; Rom. 4:13; 8:20–21; 1 Cor. 3:21–23; Rev. 21:1).

- The quote in 2 Cor. 6:16 draws on both Lev. 26:11–12, the “blessings” portion (not the “restoration blessings” portion), and Ezek. 36:27, a “restoration blessing.” This suggests that (1) all the restoration new covenant blessings include the regular old covenant blessings but so much more and that (2) Christians are direct recipients of old covenant blessings that were only to be enjoyed through loving God and keeping his commandments (Deut. 7:9, 12–15).
  - How can we as sinners enjoy blessings that were conditioned on obedience? At the very least it is because Jesus’ obedience secured our blessing, for his righteousness is counted as ours (Rom. 5:19; 2 Cor. 5:21).
6. The obedience of the elect, through which we will enjoy the full inheritance of new covenant blessings, is merely evidence of the genuineness of our faith and fruit or proof of our identification with Christ by whose Spirit all obedience is wrought (Rom. 6:17; 8:4, 13; Gal. 5:16–17, 22–25); while necessary or mandatory to enjoy the blessings, good works merely display the worth of Christ and prove that we are alive in him (Matt. 25:34–39; John 5:29; Rom. 2:6–11, 13; 1 Pet. 1:6–7, 17; 2 Pet. 1:10). Our holy conduct is made possible only by blood-bought power, the display of God’s holiness springing directly out of our nearness to God’s presence made possible through substitutionary atonement (Lev. 10:3).
  7. Because Christ has fully satisfied God’s wrath, taking all condemnation upon himself and securing justification, sanctification, and glorification for all in him (Rom. 3:24; 6:22–23; 8:28–30; 1 Cor. 1:30; 6:11), new covenant curses are never experienced by those truly a part of the new covenant. Nevertheless, because new covenant saints today live in the overlap of the ages, when the old age of death and curse remains manifest, believers still battle sin (Rom. 6:16–18; cf. 1:24, 26, 28; 7:22–23, 25), experience the futility of the old age in the destruction of the body and toilsome work (8:20; 2 Cor. 4:16), and face physical death (Phil. 1:21; cf. Rom. 5:17; 6:23). However, because those in Christ have been given new hearts, they respond rightly to the curses, thus removing their stinger and allowing them to be holiness-creating rather than punitive.
  8. The promised curses of the new covenant still create a necessary and real dread of what could happen if one fails to persevere in the strength that God supplies (see Deut. 30:7), and they thus are a means of developing holiness (2 Pet. 1:4; cf. Rom. 4:18–21; 2 Cor. 7:1; 1 John 3:3). Nevertheless, all new covenant believers can rest securely, knowing that the faithful God will complete the work he started (Phil. 1:6), will sanctify us completely (1 Thess. 5:23–24), and will “fulfill every resolve for good and every work of faith by his power, so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified” in us (2 Thess. 1:11–12).

## **B. Health, Wealth, and the Christian**

1. Christians live in an overlap of the ages, where the curse has been overcome but not fully removed; therefore, Christians will experience suffering.
  - a. Physical death is part of the curse, but for believers death is merely the channel to eternal life with Jesus (Rom. 5:17; Phil. 1:21; Rev. 2:10).

- Rom. 5:17. For if, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ.
  - Phil. 1:21. For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.
  - Rev. 2:10. Do not fear what you are about to suffer.... Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life.
- b. Battling with sin is part of the curse, but Christians are no longer condemned and enslaved to sin and have hope of full freedom from sin (Rom. 1:21–24, 26, 28; 6:17–18; 8:1; 12:2).
- Rom. 1:21–24, 26, 28. For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things. Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity.... God gave them up to dishonorable passions.... God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done.
  - Rom. 6:17–18. But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness.
  - Rom. 8:1. There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.
- c. Frustration and decay in this world are part of the curse, but Christ has overcome both, securing full physical re-creation in the age to come (Rom. 8:20–24; 2 Cor. 4:16; 1 Cor. 15:50–57).
- Rom 8:20–24. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved.
  - 2 Cor. 4:16. So we do not lose heart. Though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day.
  - 1 Cor. 15:50–57. I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.
- d. Suffering is the necessary God-given lot of all believers (Ps. 34:19; Matt. 10:25; Luke 10:3; 14:33; John 12:25; Acts 14:22; Rom. 8:17; Phil. 1:29; 1 Thess. 3:3; 2 Tim. 3:12; 1 Pet. 4:12, 19; Heb. 12:7–8; 13:12–14):
- i. David: Many afflictions come to the righteous.
    - Ps. 34:19. Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but Yahweh delivers him out of them all.
  - ii. Jesus:
    - (1) Persecution is expected.
      - Matt. 10:22, 25. You will be hated by all for my name's sake. But the one who endures to the end will be saved.... <sup>25</sup>It is enough for the disciple to

be like his teacher, and the servant like his master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household.

- Luke 10:3. Go your way; behold, I am sending you out as lambs in the midst of wolves.
- John 15:18, 20. If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. . . . <sup>20</sup>If they persecuted me, they will persecute you.”
- John 16:33. I have said these things to you that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.

(2) Following Christ comes at a cost.

- Luke 14:33. So therefore, any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple.
- John 12:25. Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

iii. Paul:

(1) Tribulations, suffering for Christ’s sake, and persecutions are necessary for believers.

- Acts 14:22. [Paul and Barnabas were] strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying that through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.
- Rom. 8:17. . . .and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.
- Phil. 1:29. For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake. . . .
- 1 Thess. 3:3. . . .that no one be moved by these afflictions. For you yourselves know that we are destined for this.
- 2 Tim. 3:12. Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.

(2) Suffering is a means toward godliness.

- Rom. 5:3–5. We rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, <sup>4</sup>and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, <sup>5</sup>and hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

(3) Paul experienced substantial suffering in ways much broader than persecution.

- 2 Cor. 6:4–5. As servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: by great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, <sup>5</sup>beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger.
- 2 Cor. 11:23–28. Are they servants of Christ? I am a better one—I am talking like a madman—with far greater labors, far more imprisonments, with countless beatings, and often near death. <sup>24</sup>Five times I received at the hands of the Jews the forty lashes less one. <sup>25</sup>Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I was adrift at sea; <sup>26</sup>on frequent journeys, in danger from rivers, danger from robbers, danger from my own people, danger from Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the wilderness, danger at sea, danger from false brothers; <sup>27</sup>in toil and hardship, through many a sleepless night, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. <sup>28</sup>And, apart from other things, there is the daily pressure on me of my anxiety for all the churches.

- Phil. 4:12–13. I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. <sup>13</sup>I can do all things through him who strengthens me.
- iv. Peter: Believers should expect suffering, for through it we identify with Christ.
- 1 Pet. 4:12–13, 19. Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. <sup>13</sup>But rejoice insofar as you share Christ’s sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed. . . . <sup>19</sup>Therefore let those who suffer according to God’s will entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good.
- v. Hebrews:
- (1) God’s discipline nurtures holiness and the peaceful fruit of righteousness.
- Heb. 12:7–8, 10–11. It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? <sup>8</sup>If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. . . . <sup>10</sup>He disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness. <sup>11</sup>For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.
- (2) Nothing on earth is lasting, so we persevere through suffering in light of what is to come.
- Heb. 10:34. For you had compassion on those in prison and you joyfully accepted the plundering of your property, since you knew that you yourselves had a better possession and an abiding one.
  - Heb. 13:12–14. So Jesus also suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through his own blood. <sup>13</sup>Therefore let us go to him outside the camp and bear the reproach he endured. <sup>14</sup>For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city that is to come.
2. Wealth (Provision):
- a. God cares about our earthly needs, calls us to pray for them to be met, gives us all things to enjoy, and promises to provide for all those dependent on him (Matt. 6:9–11, 25–26, 31–33; Phil. 4:19; Heb. 13:5–6; 1 Tim. 4:4–5; 6:17).
- Matt. 6:9–11. Pray then like this: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread.
  - Matt. 6:25–26, 31–33. Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? . . . Therefore do not be anxious, saying, “What shall we eat?” or “What shall we drink?” or “What shall we wear?” For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.”
  - Phil. 4:19. And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.
  - Heb. 13:5–6. Keep your life free from the love of money, and be content with what you have, for he said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.” So we may confidently say, “The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?”

- 1 Tim. 4:4–5. For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, for it is made holy by the word of God and prayer.
  - 1 Tim. 6:17. As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy.
- b. Earthly wealth is fleeting, and the love of money is excessively destructive (Matt. 6:19–21, 24; 1 Tim. 6:9–10; 1 John 2:15–17).
- Matt. 6:19–21, 24. Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.... No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon [i.e., things of this world].
  - 1 Tim. 6:9–10. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs.
  - 1 John 2:15–17. Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and the pride in possessions—is not from the Father but is from the world. And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.
- c. Those rich in earthly goods will struggle to find satisfaction in God (Matt. 19:23–26; Mark 4:18–19).
- Matt. 19:23–26. And Jesus said to his disciples, “Truly, I say to you, only with difficulty will a rich person enter the kingdom of heaven. Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God.” When the disciples heard this, they were greatly astonished, saying, “Who then can be saved?” But Jesus looked at them and said, “With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.”
  - Mark 4:18–19. And others are the ones sown among thorns. They are those who hear the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches and the desires for other things enter in a choke the word, and it proves unfruitful.
- d. Christians must fight to nurture contentment and dependence by being rich in good deeds, by placing their hope in God and looking to him for strength, and by focusing on eternity rather than this world (Luke 12:32–34; Eph. 4:28; Phil. 4:11–13; 1 Tim. 6:6–8, 17–20; 1 John 3:16–17).
- Luke 12:32–34. Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions, and give to the needy. Provide yourselves with moneybags that do not grow old, with a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.
  - Eph. 4:28. Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need.
  - Phil. 4:11–13. Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. I can do all things through him who strengthens me.
  - 1 Tim. 6:6–8. Now there is great gain in godliness with contentment, for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. But if we have food and clothing, with these will be content.
  - 1 Tim. 6:17–20. As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with



everything to enjoy. They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life.

- 1 John. 3:16–17. By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers. But if anyone has the world’s good and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God’s love abide in him?

### 3. Health (Protection):

- a. Jesus often healed physical sickness and charged his disciples to do the same (Matt. 4:23; 10:6–8; Mark 2:8–12).
  - Matt. 4:23. And he went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people. Cf. 9:35.
  - Mark 2:8–12. And immediately Jesus, perceiving in his spirit that they thus questioned within themselves, said to them, “Why do you question these things in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Rise, take up your bed and walk’? But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins”—he said to the paralytic—“I say to you, rise, pick up your bed, and go home.” And he rose and immediately picked up his bed and went out before them all, so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, “We never saw anything like this!”
  - Matt. 10:6–8. The twelve Jesus sent out, instructing them, “Go nowhere among the Gentiles and enter no town of the Samaritans, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And proclaim as you go, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand.’ Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons....”
- b. While Jesus healed many, he raised only three from the dead, at times only due to his compassion with no mention of faith (*ruler’s daughter*, Mark 5:35–36, 41–43; *son of the widow of Nain*, Luke 7:12–15; *Lazarus*, John 11:38–46).
- c. Because in his first coming Jesus restricted his ministry to the Jews and did not raise all the dead, right all wrongs, and relieve all pains—realities that could cause offense, we know that his own earthly ministry was only a partial foretaste of the consummate kingdom (Matt. 10:6–8; Luke 4:16–21; 7:18–23).
  - Matt. 10:6–8. The twelve Jesus sent out, instructing them, “Go nowhere among the Gentiles and enter no town of the Samaritans, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And proclaim as you go, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand.’ Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons....”
  - Luke 4:16–21. And Jesus came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. And as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read. And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” And he rolled up the scroll and gave it to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. And he began to say to them, “Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.”
  - Luke 7:18–23. The disciples of John reported all these things [i.e., the miracles that Jesus was doing] to him [in prison]. And John, calling two of his disciples to him, sent them to the Lord, saying, “Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?” And when the men had come to him, they said, “John the Baptist has sent us to you, saying, ‘Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?’ In that hour he healed many people of diseases and plagues and evil spirits, and on many who

- were blind he bestowed sight. And he answered them, “Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have good news preached to them. And blessed is the one who is not offended by me.” Cf. Matt. 11:1–6.
- d. Paul’s gifts of healing were apparently only sporadic, for he did not heal all.
    - i. Paul healed the crippled man in Lystra (Acts 14:10), the demonized girl in Philippi (16:18), many people in Ephesus (19:12), and Eutychus when he was taken up dead after falling out of a window (20:9–10).
    - ii. Paul couldn’t gain relief from his “thorn,” whether it be sickness or persecution: 2 Cor. 12:7. So to keep me from becoming conceited. . . . a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited.
    - iii. Paul couldn’t heal himself from the ailment that he had when he preached in Galatia (Gal. 4:13–14).
    - iv. Paul evidently couldn’t heal Timothy from his stomach ailments (1 Tim. 5:23) or Epaphroditus from his life threatening sickness (Phil. 2:26–27) or Trophimus whom he “left ill at Miletus” (2 Tim. 4:20).
  - e. Christians are to pray for physical healing in the present, all the while confident that God will grant total healing in the future (Rom. 8:20–24; 1 Cor. 15:50–57; 2 Cor. 4:16; Jas. 5:13–15; Rev. 21:4; 22:3).
    - Rom 8:20–24. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved.
    - 1 Cor. 15:50–57. I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?” The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.
    - 2 Cor. 4:16. So we do not lose heart. Though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day.
    - Jas. 5:13–15. Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praise. Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.
    - Rev 21:4; 22:3. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away. . . . No longer will there be anything accursed.”
  - f. The prayer for health and wholeness in the present should be to the end that the glories of Christ may be witnessed more in this age; however, the future day of being with Christ must always be seen as the ultimate gain (Phil. 1:20–26; 3 John 2–3).

- Phil. 1:20–26. It is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now as always Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death. For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account. Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith, so that in me you may have ample cause to glory in Christ Jesus, because of my coming to you again.
- 3 John 2–3. Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in good health, as it goes well with your soul. For I rejoiced greatly when the brothers came and testified to your truth, as indeed you are walking in the truth.

### C. The Role of Suffering in the Christian's Life

1. While living in the overlap of the age of curse and the age of blessing, Christians should expect suffering (Matt. 10:25; Luke 14:33; John 15:20; Acts 14:22; Rom. 8:16–18; 2 Cor. 6:4–5; 2 Tim. 3:12; 1 Pet. 4:12–14).
  - Matt. 10:25. It is enough for the disciple to be like his teacher, and the servant like his master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household.
  - Luke 14:33. So therefore, any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple.
  - John 15:20. Remember the word that I said to you: 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will also keep yours.
  - Acts 14:22. ... strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying that through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.
  - Rom. 8:16–18. The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him. For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.
  - 2 Tim. 3:12. Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.
  - 1 Pet. 4:12–14. Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed. If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.
2. God uses the suffering of Christians for great benefit in the present.
  - a. Suffering deepens faith, hope, and holiness (Rom. 5:3–5; Heb. 12:3–4, 7–10; Jas. 1:2–4).
    - Rom. 5:3–5. More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.
    - Heb. 12:3–4, 7–10. Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted. In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood.... It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. Besides this, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live? For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but he disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness.

- Jas. 1:2–4. Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.
- b. Suffering nurtures dependence and humility, which is the only context for receiving help from God (1 Pet. 5:6–11; 2 Cor. 1:8–9).
- 1 Pet. 5:6–11. Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.” Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, casting all your anxieties upon him, because he cares for you. Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world. And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you. To him be the dominion forever and ever. Amen.
  - 2 Cor. 1:8–9. For we do not want you to be ignorant, brothers, of the affliction we experienced in Asia. For we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself. Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death. But that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead.
- c. Suffering exalts the surpassing worth of Christ (Matt. 13:44; 2 Cor. 12:8–10; Phil. 1:27–30; Heb. 10:34).
- Matt. 13:44. The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. (*The amount you value something is measured by what you are willing to give up in order to gain it.*)
  - 2 Cor. 12:8–10. Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.
  - Phil. 1:27–30. Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel, and not frightened in anything by your opponents. This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation, and that from God. For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake, engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.
  - Heb. 10:34. For you had compassion on those in prison, and you joyfully accepted the plundering of your property, since you knew that you yourselves had a better possession and an abiding one.
3. Suffering in the present for Jesus’ sake (i.e., considering him your greatest treasure today) leads to eternal, all-satisfying life with him in the future (Matt. 7:14; Mark 8:34 with Gal. 2:20; Luke 18:22; Phil. 3:7–11).
- Matt. 7:14. For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.
  - Mark 8:34–36. And calling the crowd to him with his disciples, he said to them, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel’s will save it. For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul?” (Cf. Gal. 2:20)
  - Luke 18:22. One thing you still lack. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.

- John 12:25–26. Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. If anyone serves me, he must follow me; and where I am, there will my servant be also. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him.
- Phil. 3:7–11. But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith—that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

**XI. Summary:** God gives Mosaic legislation to the priests and people of Israel explaining sacrificial protocol, the difference between the clean and unclean, the day of atonement, how to live the holy life, and how to commemorate God’s faithfulness through different holy festivals so that Israel will be able to safely dwell in God’s Sabbath presence.

## **XII. Guided Reading for Leviticus:**

### **A. Points of Focus:**

1. Key chapters: 1, 4, 5, 16, 19, 26
2. Key persons: Aaron, Moses, Nadab & Abihu, priests
3. Key places: altar, Holy Place, Most Holy Place, Tabernacle, Tent of Meeting

### **B. Questions:**

1. In one sentence or less, what distinct contribution does Exodus make to our knowledge of the tabernacle? What about Leviticus?
2. What is the time frame during which most of the laws in Leviticus were given to Israel?
3. What is “the key thought of Leviticus” and in what way did the sanctuary provided for sacrifice symbolize this reality?
4. What are the primary functions of the various offerings Israel was to make to God? Which of Israel’s offerings to Yahweh were “mandatory”? Which were for “unintentional” sins? Which were for “intentional” sins?
5. What is the title and purpose of the special day described in Lev 16? What was the role of the two distinct goats sacrificed on this day?
6. Using the notes and cross-references as a help, what is so significant of about Lev 19:18 in the Bible as a whole?
7. According to Lev 26:14–39, what would spark God to send curses on Israel, and what does the continual refrain in 26:18, 21, 23, and 27 suggest was God’s ultimate intention through the curses?
8. Among the OT feasts and sacred days, what is the description and purpose of the Sabbath, the Passover, Unleavened Bread, Day of Atonement, Booths, and Purim?