

# Leviticus 10-12 • Judgment for the Sons of Aaron

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Interesting that we should sing here tonight, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, because, of course, as I've mentioned several times, that is really the essence of what Leviticus is all about. It's an emphasis on the holiness of God.

And we sing Holy, Holy, Holy, we don't really know what it means. I mean, we know what it means grammatically. We can define it like a dictionary would define it, but we really don't understand it in real time. We know that the angels are constantly before the throne of God, crying Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord God Almighty, we know that.

We know that God is holy, we know that God expresses His holiness. We're going to see that tonight, but it catches us off guard, it takes us by surprise. You're going to see tonight how two young men were taken by surprise by the holiness of God, completely caught off guard. And we'll try to put ourselves in the place of the Israelites here tonight when this happened. Anyway, we better start with prayer.

Father God, as we study this book and we learn about Your holiness, we confess to You tonight that although we understand it from an intellectual place, we struggle to really understand You as a holy God from any kind of a experiential understanding of the word or the idea.

But I pray my father God that You would help us tonight that through Your Holy Spirit, You would speak to each person here. You would help us to understand what it is to serve and walk with the Holy God.

So Father, open our hearts to that concept that is very difficult for us to grasp. We ask it in the name of our Savior, Jesus, amen.

Chapter 10 begins in a time frame that is still within the week of ordination for Aaron and his sons as priests. Aaron as the high priest, his sons as priests. And you'll remember that we talked about their ordination last week, and we talked about the fact that it would take a week. It would be a week of that whole observance and we're still in that right now.

And chapter 10 begins by saying, “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 the LORD, which he had not commanded them.” (ESV)

And that first verse is one that we may struggle to understand a little bit, but I want to show you on the screen. I want to show you the verses, these verses in some different translations so that you can see. First of all, the ESV, as we just read,

**ESV:** 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 the LORD, which he had not commanded them.

**NASB:** Now Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took their respective firepans, and after putting fire in them, placed incense on the fire and **offered strange fire** before the LORD, which He had not commanded them.

**ESV:** Now Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer and put fire in it and laid incense on it (and here’s the key part) and **offered unauthorized fire** before the LORD, which he had not commanded them.

Now notice the New American Standard Bible (NASB) in that section that I've highlighted says, “**offered strange fire...**”

**NASB:** Now Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took their respective firepans, and after putting fire in them, placed incense on the fire and **offered strange fire** before the LORD, which He had not commanded them.

I don't know what that does for you as far as your understanding.

Now, the New King James (NKJV) has a slightly different reference. It says that,

**NKJV:** Then Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer and put fire in it, put incense on it, and **offered profane fire** before the LORD, which He had not commanded them.

**NIV84:** Aaron's sons Nadab and Abihu took their censers, put fire in them and added incense; and they **offered unauthorized fire** before the LORD, contrary to his command.

**NKJV:** *Then Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer and put fire in it, put incense on it, and **offered profane fire** before the LORD, which He had not commanded them.*

I'm not sure what that does for you in terms of helping you understand the passage.

And then the NIV is really pretty close to here, the ESV, saying that,

**NIV84:** *Aaron's sons Nadab and Abihu took their censers, put fire in them and added incense; and they **offered unauthorized fire** before the LORD, contrary to his command.*

You'll notice they use the same word as the ESV, “*unauthorized.*”

But again, the New American Standard Bible says “*strange fire*” and the New King James, “*profane fire.*” I looked up the Hebrew word, and really, the best word for word translation is, strange.

Now, a lot of people say, I want to find a Bible that is the closest word for word translation that I can get. Well, that's great. You want to find a really solid word for word translation of the Bible, knock yourself out. That doesn't mean it's the easiest to understand because word meanings change over years. Good grief. In just in the last generation, whole words and meanings of words have completely changed. In fact, they've even become opposites of what they used to be. You can imagine what happens in a few thousand years.

Well, the idea of “*strange fire*” meant something that was other than what the Lord had commanded. Okay. That's what “*strange*” means in that context. And in other words, Nadab and Abihu were simply just doing their own thing, making up their own rules. Deciding what they were going to...

Again we're in ordination week and these guys know that they have a very exalted position within the house of Israel, and they decide they're just going to waltz into the presence of God and decide that the rules didn't really apply to them. I mean, I'm taking some liberties, I suppose, with trying to guess their intent because the Bible doesn't tell us what the intent of their heart necessarily was. But we can see here that they seem to have no disrespect or regard for the Lord based on what happens.

In verse 2, it says, “*And fire came out from before the LORD and consumed them, (literally burnt them to a crisp) and they died before the LORD.*”<sup>3</sup> *Then*

*Moses said to Aaron, "This is what the LORD has said: 'Among those who are near me I will be sanctified, ...'" And by the way, that's the same word you can translate, holy. This is God, through Moses saying, listen, I will be seen as holy. And He goes on to say in that verse "...and before all the people I will be glorified.'"* (and it says,) *And Aaron held his peace.'"*

Let's talk about this for just a moment. This is a sad situation but it forever stands as a sobering reminder of the simple fact that God will not be trifled with. God will not be trifled with.

For one thing what Nadab and Abihu, I don't know how, Abihu I suppose, did was denigrating toward their position as a priest but worse than that, it was presumptive toward the Lord. It was careless. It was disrespectful and they died.

I'm not asking you to speak out, but if somebody, if you were doing a Bible study with someone and that someone said, well, I think that's a little harsh of the Lord. How would you respond? How would you work an understanding or an explanation of the holiness of God into your explanation of what happened to Nadab and Abihu?

There's a passage, I didn't make a slide out of it there, but there's a passage in Hebrews, even in the New Testament that we forget about. It's probably not the one kind of verse you're going to put up on your fridge. It's not one of those warm, fuzzy devotional verses.

But in Hebrews 10:31, it says, *"it's a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."* I don't know, what does that do for you? *"It's a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."*

He says, I will be seen as holy because I Am holy. I Am the Lord God. And, you're not going to get away with just with disrespecting Him.

Verse 4 says, *"And Moses called Mishael and Elzaphan, the sons of Uzziel the uncle of Aaron, and said to them, 'Come near; carry your brothers away from the front of the sanctuary and out of the camp.'"* <sup>5</sup> *So they came near and carried them in their coats out of the camp, as Moses had said."* What a terrible thing that must have been.

*"<sup>6</sup> And Moses said to Aaron and to Eleazar and Ithamar his sons, (now, these are his two remaining surviving sons, and look what the Lord says) 'Do not let the hair of your heads hang loose, and do not tear your clothes, (these were expressions of grief, He says don't do that) lest you die, and wrath come upon*

*all the congregation; (He's telling them not to mourn, but He goes on to say) but let your brothers, the whole house of Israel, bewail the burning that the LORD has kindled."*

And I know this might sound kind of cruel to you and me, but see, that's what I meant when I started off at the very beginning saying that the holiness of God takes us by surprise. And it challenges us to understand. We don't get it.

And people, the reason why someone would read this passage in Leviticus and the reason they would come back and they would say, well, I think God was just flat out being cruel here to these guys. I mean, first of all he burns Aaron's sons to a crisp. Has them hauled out by relatives and then says to Aaron and his remaining sons, I don't want you to mourn. Let the rest of the nation mourn for you, but you guys, you stay doing just what you're doing right now because I made you priests, and you have to carry on your ministry as priests.

And the reason someone would say that's cruel is because they don't understand the holiness of God. It takes them by surprise. It takes our breath away because we don't get it. We don't get that He's holy.

We think we can just waltz into His presence and the fact of the matter is we can, but we take for granted our ability to come into the presence of God at any time. We take for granted and we forget that it's because of, because Jesus suffered. He suffered terribly to give you and me the freedom to be able to enter into the presence of God. We forget all that. We think that was probably the way it's always been. It's not the way it's always been.

Furthermore, the Lord said in verse 7, *"And do not go outside the entrance of the tent of meeting, (they had to stay within the confines of that area) lest you die, for the anointing oil of the LORD is upon you."* (and there's the reason by the way) *And they did according to the word of Moses.*

<sup>8</sup> *And the LORD spoke to Aaron, (again) saying,* <sup>9</sup> *"Drink no wine or strong drink, you or your sons with you, when you go into the tent of meeting, lest you die. It shall be a statute forever throughout your generations."*

And I don't know if he's saying this because Aaron and his sons might have had a temptation to drink some kind of something to, I don't know, somehow soften their own emotional difficulty with what had just happened. But whatever the reason is for the Lord giving this directive, He's making it an ongoing directive. He says throughout all the generations, make sure that no priest ever goes before the Lord who has lost control of his faculties, because that's not a good

idea. Well, what might happen? Well, he might die. He might die. Once again, because it's the holiness of God that is being addressed here. That's what's going on.

Now, verses 10 and 11 are also very important. It says, *“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 the LORD has spoken to them by Moses.”*

And the reason I emphasize those couple of verses is because, see, that's the lesson that Nadab and Abihu forgot. The whole idea of the difference between the holy and the common. They forgot, they just, they lost sight of it. They had no concept. And so they just they didn't have the proper respect and fear of the Lord.

But He says, listen, for you and your sons and ongoing generations, you are to teach the people of Israel to understand. And people, we're going to get into some chapters and I'm just telling you right now. Next week are going to be some challenging chapters from the standpoint that, first of all, they don't even apply to us anymore. And there's even stuff we're going to deal with here tonight that doesn't apply to us because we're not under the same covenant that the people of Israel were.

But what God was doing with the nation of Israel, and I've said this many times, in the wilderness, was He was teaching them to be able to discern the difference between what is holy and what is not. What is clean and what is unclean. We're going to get into animals here in just a little bit, and the ones they could eat the ones they couldn't eat.

And again you read these things and you think well what's this all about? It's about holiness. Understanding, discerning, and learning to recognize holiness, that which is set apart for God.

Here's the point. This is where it comes down to your life today. You see, the Bible calls believers, saints. Most of you know that. And the word, saint literally means holy one. Set apart one. One who is set apart unto God. Okay.

Now, even though Roman Catholicism defines a saint by their own rules and definitions, the Bible knows nothing of that. The Bible says every believer is a saint. Okay.

So you are holy. You are holy. And God wants you to understand and to be able to discern the difference between the holy and the common, even as it relates to your own life. And it says it in different ways in the New Testament. It'll say it, for example, Paul will say, the apostle Paul, that is, will say, "*You are not your own, ...you (have) ...been bought with a price.*" Therefore, honor God with your body. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)

Well, that's just a fairly elaborate way of saying God made you holy. You are set apart for Him. You are not set apart for you. Your life is not your own. In other words, you've been bought with a price. You've been purchased with the very blood of Jesus Christ. Therefore, you don't belong to yourself.

That means you can't just make your own personal decisions about, well, I'm going to do this or that. James addresses that. He says, you who say we're going to go to this or that city, and yeah, we'll spend a year there for a while, and we'll make some money, and then after that who knows? Then we'll probably... He says, hey, you don't even know, you don't even know anything. You don't know what tomorrow is going to bring. Well, he says, what is your life? It's a mist that appears for a moment, and then it's gone. He says, instead, you ought to say, if the Lord wills, we will do this or that. (James 4:13-15)

Why? Why the attitude? Because that is a dis-proper discerning of the one to whom I belong and the fact that my life is not my own. It's not mine to do what I want to do with it. Right? It doesn't mean I'm a slave.

It means though that I have been purchased by the blood of Jesus Christ and I owe Him my life. And though He does not take it by force, He wants me to offer it daily as a living sacrifice. The Bible tells us that sacrifice is a holy sacrifice "*and pleasing to God.*" In fact, Paul says it's "*your spiritual act of worship.*" To offer yourself daily to the Lord. (Romans 12:1)

Why? Because you discern holiness, the holy from the common. Okay, so this is what He's teaching His people in the Old Testament. He's using different things to do it and it's the same lesson that we need to learn as well.

He goes on here in verse 12 and He says, "*Moses spoke to Aaron and to Eleazar and Ithamar, his surviving sons: 'Take the grain offering that is left of the LORD's food offerings, and eat it unleavened beside the altar, for it is most holy. <sup>13</sup> You shall eat it in a holy place, because it is your due and your sons' due, from the LORD's food offerings, for so I am commanded. <sup>14</sup> But the breast that is waved and the thigh that is contributed you shall eat in a clean place, you and your sons and your daughters with you, for they are given as your due*"

*and your sons' due from the sacrifices of the peace offerings of the people of Israel. <sup>15</sup> The thigh that is contributed and the breast that is waved they shall bring with the food offerings of the fat pieces to wave for a wave offering before the LORD, and it shall be yours and your sons' with you as a due forever, as the LORD has commanded."*

Now, before we get into the final verses of this chapter, I want to tell you ahead of time a little bit about what's going on. And the reason I want to do that is because they're a little bit challenging to understand. We're going to learn in these verses that Moses discovered that the sons of Aaron hadn't handled an offering as it was supposed to be handled. And basically it concerned a sin offering.

And they were told previously, and we read about this back in chapter 6, they were told that if the blood of the sin offering was brought into the holy place, then the rest of the sacrifice was to be burned. And again, that was back in chapter 6. But if they didn't bring the blood into the holy place, and sometimes they didn't, then the meat that remained of the sacrifice was to be eaten by the priests. That was just the rule, okay?

In the situation that we're going to read here in the coming verses, the blood of a sacrifice that Aaron's sons had offered was not brought into the holy place therefore, the rest of the sacrifice, the meat of that sacrifice was to be cooked and eaten by the priests. That's what they were supposed to have done, but they didn't do it.

Let's read it. Verse 16. *"Now Moses diligently inquired about the goat of the sin offering, and behold, it was burned up! (in other words, they burned the sacrifice without partaking of any of the meat) And he was angry with Eleazar and Ithamar, the surviving sons of Aaron, saying, <sup>17</sup> "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 the LORD? <sup>18</sup> Behold, its blood was not brought into the inner part of the sanctuary. (and remember, if that happens, if they don't bring the blood in, then they're supposed to partake of the meat. He says) You certainly ought to have eaten it in the sanctuary, as I commanded."*

All right, here's the kind of hard part to understand. It's at the very end here. *"<sup>19</sup> And Aaron said to Moses, "Behold, today they have offered their sin offering and their burnt offering before the LORD, and yet such things as these have happened to me! (and Aaron appears to be referring to the deaths of his two oldest sons here, and he goes on to say) If I had eaten the sin offering*



*today, would the LORD have approved?” And verse 20 tells us that, “And when Moses heard that, he approved.”*

Now, that's the tough part right there, because Aaron apparently assumed that if he and his sons had eaten the sin offering, the Lord would not have approved, but we don't know why. Okay. They don't explain why. It could be that Aaron and his sons felt unworthy to partake of that sacrificial meal because of what had just happened. But we don't know. We're just guessing.

But whatever the reason was Aaron's explanation satisfied Moses and he was like, okay, and he dropped the issue after that. So whatever it was, whatever the intent was for why Aaron's sons didn't follow through the way they'd been commanded. It wasn't, I guess what Moses eventually decided was this wasn't an obedience issue. There were other extenuating reasons. All right.

Chapter 11 deals with animals that could be consumed as food and those which were forbidden. And as we go through this chapter, you're going to see that the animals that the Jews were allowed to eat are called, clean. It doesn't, don't think of it just as they were, they'd been bathed or washed. Clean is a ceremonial term, meaning acceptable before the Lord. The animals that they were not to eat will be referred to as unclean. And it doesn't mean they were dirty, it just means they were not acceptable to be eaten according to the Lord. All right.

Chapter 11. *“And the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying to them, <sup>2</sup> “Speak to the people of Israel, saying, These are the living things that you may eat among all the animals that are on the earth.”*

And now He begins to describe different kinds of animals so that they can recognize the clean from the unclean.

*“<sup>3</sup> Whatever parts the hoof (in other words, has a separated hoof) and is cloven-footed and chews the cud, among the animals, you may eat. (okay) <sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, among those that chew the cud or part the hoof, you shall not eat these: The camel, because it chews the cud but does not part the hoof, is unclean to you. <sup>5</sup> And the rock badger, because it chews the cud but does not part the hoof, is unclean to you. <sup>6</sup> And the hare, because it chews the cud but does not part the hoof, is unclean to you. <sup>7</sup> And the pig, because it parts the hoof and is cloven-footed but does not chew the cud, is unclean to you.”*

Bummer. No bacon in Israel. Can you imagine? I mean, that just ruins a good burger right there, no bacon. Oh boy. Aren't you glad you live under a different covenant?

Verse 8, *“You shall not eat any of their flesh, and you shall not touch their carcasses; (that means, after they’ve died) they are unclean to you.”*

<sup>9</sup> *“These you may eat, of all that are in the waters. (now we're going to talk about different kinds of creatures) Everything in the waters that has fins and scales, whether in the seas or in the rivers, you may eat. <sup>10</sup> But anything in the seas or the rivers that does not have fins and scales, of the swarming creatures in the waters and of the living creatures that are in the waters, is detestable to you. <sup>11</sup> You shall regard them as detestable; you shall not eat any of their flesh, (sorry, lobsters off the menu) and you shall detest their carcasses. <sup>12</sup> Everything in the waters that does not have fins and scales is detestable to you.”*

*“And these (verse 13) you shall detest among the birds; (now we're talking about the foul) they shall not be eaten; they are detestable: the eagle, the bearded vulture, the black vulture, <sup>14</sup> the kite, the falcon of any kind, <sup>15</sup> every raven of any kind, <sup>16</sup> the ostrich, the nighthawk, the sea gull, the hawk of any kind, <sup>17</sup> the little owl, the cormorant, the short-eared owl, <sup>18</sup> the barn owl, the tawny owl, the carrion vulture, <sup>19</sup> the stork, the heron of any kind, the hoopoe, and the bat.”* I didn't read a whole lot of there that was a big loss.

Verse 20 says, *“All winged insects...”* Now this is where it really gets weird. I have never been tempted to eat an insect. I've eaten a few by accident. Riding my bike as a kid down the street with my mouth wide open and in goes a bug. It's a terrible thing, but it happens occasionally.

It says, *“All winged insects that go on all fours are detestable to you. <sup>21</sup> Yet among the winged insects that go on all fours you may eat those that have jointed legs above their feet, with which to hop on the ground. (like, well, it'll go on to say of them) <sup>22</sup> Of them you may eat: the locust of any kind, (no thank you) the bald locust of any kind, (double no thank you) the cricket of any kind, (that's a hard no) and the grasshopper of any kind. <sup>23</sup> But all other winged insects that have four feet are detestable to you.*

<sup>24</sup> *“And by these you shall become unclean. (He says) Whoever touches their carcass shall be unclean until the evening, <sup>25</sup> and whoever carries any part of their carcass shall wash his clothes and be unclean until the evening. <sup>26</sup> Every animal that parts the hoof but is not cloven-footed or does not chew the cud is unclean to you. Everyone who touches them shall be unclean. <sup>27</sup> And all that walk on their paws, among the animals that go on all fours, are unclean to you. Whoever touches their carcass shall be unclean until the evening, <sup>28</sup> and he who carries their carcass shall wash his clothes and be unclean until the evening; they are unclean to you.”*

You guys remember the story of Samson where he kills a lion, and then comes back later on to find out that a bunch of bees have taken up residence in the carcass. And he scoops out some of the honey and eats it and thinks he found a pretty... He wasn't supposed to touch that. That stuff is all unclean and he was even someone who had a Nazirite vow. And they were especially set apart to follow these specific rules. But anyway, just tells you a little bit about his disobedience.

*“<sup>29</sup> And these are unclean to you among the swarming things that swarm on the ground: the mole rat, the mouse, the great lizard of any kind, <sup>30</sup> the gecko, the monitor lizard, the lizard, the sand lizard, and the chameleon. <sup>31</sup> These are unclean to you among all that swarm. Whoever touches them when they are dead shall be unclean until the evening.”*

Verse 32 says, *“And anything on which any of them falls when they are dead shall be unclean, whether it is an article of wood or a garment or a skin or a sack, any article that is used for any purpose. It must be put into water, and it shall be unclean until the evening; then it shall be clean. <sup>33</sup> And if any of them falls into any earthenware vessel, all that is in it shall be unclean, and you shall break it. <sup>34</sup> Any food in it that could be eaten, on which water comes, shall be unclean. And all drink that could be drunk from every such vessel shall be unclean. <sup>35</sup> And everything on which any part of their carcass falls shall be unclean. Whether oven or stove, it shall be broken in pieces. They are unclean and shall remain unclean for you.”*

He's got some more insights here. *“<sup>36</sup> Nevertheless, a spring or a cistern holding water shall be clean, but whoever touches a carcass in them shall be unclean. <sup>37</sup> And if any part of their carcass falls upon any seed grain that is to be sown, it is clean, <sup>38</sup> but if water is put on the seed and any part of their carcass falls on it, it is unclean to you.*

*<sup>39</sup> “And if any animal which you may eat dies, whoever touches its carcass shall be unclean until the evening, (so this is even touching a clean animal that is now dead) <sup>40</sup> and whoever eats of its carcass shall wash his clothes and be unclean until the evening. And whoever carries the carcass shall wash his clothes and be unclean until the evening.”* You got to know there were a lot of hunters, I'm sure, that had to follow those kinds of rules.

*“<sup>41</sup> Every swarming thing that swarms on the ground is detestable; it shall not be eaten. <sup>42</sup> Whatever goes on its belly, and whatever goes on all fours, or whatever has many feet, any swarming thing that swarms on the ground, you shall not eat, for they are detestable. <sup>43</sup> You shall not make yourselves*

*detestable with any swarming thing that swarms, and you shall not defile yourselves with them, and become unclean through them. <sup>44</sup> For I am (YAHWEH) the LORD your God. Consecrate yourselves (that means set yourselves apart) therefore, and be holy, for I am holy. You shall not defile yourselves with any swarming thing that crawls on the ground. <sup>45</sup> For I am the LORD who brought you up out of the land of Egypt to be your God. You shall therefore be holy, for I am holy.”*

You guys remember? Again, holy, the word holy has such a powerful force of meaning, but when God says to the people of Israel, *be holy*, He's telling them to be other. And ultimately God, even God's holiness means, other. God is saying, I am other. I'm not like you. I'm not like you. I am other so since I am other, I want you to be other.

Now what is He saying to them? Well again, He's giving them guidelines that are different from any other nation on the face of the earth. And He's saying follow these guidelines. These are going to be unique. These are going to set you apart from any other nation on the face of the earth and if you follow these, they will make you other than the other people. Right.

Do you understand people that we're supposed, today we're supposed to be other. We're not supposed to be like the world. There's the world. There's the way they live. There's the way they talk. There's the things they run after. There's the things they dream about. There's the things they covet, and desire, and kill for. And God says to you and me, be other. Right. They care about money and power and pleasure. God says you be other, you be different, you're Mine, you belong to Me. Be different, be holy, be other.

Verse 46, *“This is the law about beast and bird and every living creature that moves through the waters and every creature that swarms on the ground, <sup>47</sup> to make a distinction (here we go again) between the unclean and the clean and between the living creature that may be eaten and the living creature that may not be eaten.”*

And so there you go. You take that home and clean out your cupboards. If you got any ham, get rid of it. I'm joking. You know, I'm joking. But there are a lot of Christians that are really confused about this. I get, it's not uncommon for me to get questions from believers. What do the, pastor Paul, do the food laws apply to us today? Are we supposed to follow these food laws that God gave to Israel?

Okay, number 1., you're not a Jew under the covenant that God made with the Jews, okay? That's not you. God made a covenant with Israel. Israel is not the church and the church is not Israel. That's so important to understand. That's the first thing.

But the second thing is, in the New Testament, all of these issues are dealt with. Let me show you on the screen from Mark chapter 7. These things came up. It says,

**Mark 7:14-19 (ESV)**

*And he called the people to him again and said to them, "Hear me, all of you, and understand: There is nothing outside a person that by going into him can defile him, but the things that come out of a person are what defile him." And when he had entered the house and left the people, his disciples asked him about the parable. And he said to them, "Then are you also without understanding? Do you not see that whatever goes into a person from outside cannot defile him, since it enters not his heart but his stomach, and is expelled?" (Thus he declared all foods clean.)*

*And he called the people (this is Jesus) to him again and said to them, "Hear me, all of you, and understand: There is nothing outside a person that by going into him (in other words, by him eating it, that) can defile him, but the things that come out of a person (man, those) are what defile him." (He's talking about what comes out of their mouth and out of their heart) And when he had entered the house and left the people, his disciples asked him about the parable. And he said to them, "Then are you also without understanding? Do you not see that whatever goes into a person from outside cannot defile him, since it enters not his heart but his stomach, and (it) is (simply) expelled?" (look at this, what's in parentheses) (Thus he declared all foods clean.)*

Are Christians under the food laws? No. I mean, I don't think you can get any clearer than this, guys. I mean, you can try, I suppose, but I don't think you're going to get any... I mean, you've also got Acts chapter 10. We just finished the Book of Acts. Wasn't that long ago we were in chapter 10, remember? Peter's up on top of the house and he falls into a trance, has a vision. Sees this huge sheet being let down from heaven by the 4 corners with all of the animals that we just read here in Leviticus where God said, don't eat those. And what did God say to Peter? Rise, Peter, kill and eat. Yeah. You can put bacon on that burger, buddy. And what did Peter say? Never, Lord. I've never eaten anything that's unclean. God said, don't call unclean what the Lord has approved.

There's your answer. We're not under, we're not under the law, we know that. We're not under the food laws. Don't let anybody tell you that you have to keep specific food laws. Now if there's certain things you don't want to eat because you feel that they're not healthy, or they don't agree with you, or whatever the thing, that's up to you. That's between you and the Lord. But we don't make a religion out of it or a commandment out of it.

Chapter 12. We're going to do rather quickly because it's a short chapter. It's just 8 verses long, and it basically just includes instructions from the Lord about childbirth and what people were to do. What they were commanded to do related to childbirth, depending on whether a woman gave birth to a boy or a girl. All right. Here we go.

*“The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, <sup>2</sup> “Speak to the people of Israel, saying, If a woman conceives and bears a male child, then she shall be unclean seven days. As at the time of her menstruation, she shall be unclean. <sup>3</sup> And on the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised.”* This one of the coolest things.

Why did God command that the baby had to be eight days old before he was circumcised? Well, the fact of the matter is that the clotting of blood doesn't really start happening in a small baby like that until the eighth day. Now we've found ways to get around it today. If a baby is born in the hospital today they give them an injection of vitamins so that they, I think it's vitamin K or something like that, to make the blood clot and they can circumcise a baby almost right away. But God who created the human body of course, knew that it would take eight days for that blood clotting capability to really come into full bloom. And so He said, circumcise your child on the eighth day. Simple as that.

Verse 4. *“Then she shall continue for thirty-three days in the blood of her purifying. She shall not touch anything holy, nor come into the sanctuary, until the days of her purifying are completed.”* So this is after the baby is born.

*“<sup>5</sup> But if she bears a female child, then she shall be unclean two weeks, as in her menstruation. And she shall continue in the blood of her purifying for sixty-six days.”* And by the way, there's no explanation given for the differences between the birth of male and female children and the instructions that went along with it.

*“<sup>6</sup> “And when the days of her purifying are completed, whether for a son or for a daughter, she shall bring to the priest at the entrance of the tent of meeting a lamb a year old for a burnt offering, and a pigeon or a turtledove for a sin*

*offering, <sup>7</sup> and he shall offer it before the LORD and make atonement for her. Then she shall be clean from the flow of her blood. This is the law for her who bears a child, either male or female.”*

Look at, I want you to pay attention to verse 8. *“And if she cannot afford a lamb, (and some people couldn’t) then she shall take two turtledoves or two pigeons, one for a burnt offering and the other for a sin offering. And the priest shall make atonement for her, and she shall be clean.”*

A woman of a little bit more means could spare a lamb from the flock, but if she's poor, then she was only required to bring two turtle doves or two pigeons. Guess what happened when Jesus was brought as a baby? Let me put this on the screen, Luke chapter 2.

**Luke 2:22-24 (ESV)**

*And when the time came for their purification according to the Law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, “Every male who first opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord”) and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the Law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.”*

*And when the time came for their purification according to the Law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, “Every male who first opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord”) and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the Law of the Lord, (look at this) “a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.”*

Mary and Joseph offered what was for the poor so that tells you a little bit about their family. Right? Let's pray.

Father God, we read in the Bible that You are other, that You are holy. And I pray my Father that You would continue to speak to your people about what that means. What does it mean to be holy? What does it mean for You? What does it mean for us? And how, Lord, would You have us conduct our lives as You guide us and direct us to discern the difference between the holy and the common of this world?

Father, we confess to You today that our flesh does not tend toward holiness. In fact, quite the opposite. The draw of our minds and our flesh and our desires is completely worldly. But Lord, we know that You are transforming us day by day. And I pray father, that as we continue to feed upon Your Word, focus on You, on the moving of Your Spirit in our lives. That You would continue to do that work in us to form Christ in us into true holiness.

Thank You, Father, for all that You are doing. Let it be for Your glory in Jesus precious name and all God's people said, amen. God bless you. Have a good rest of your evening.