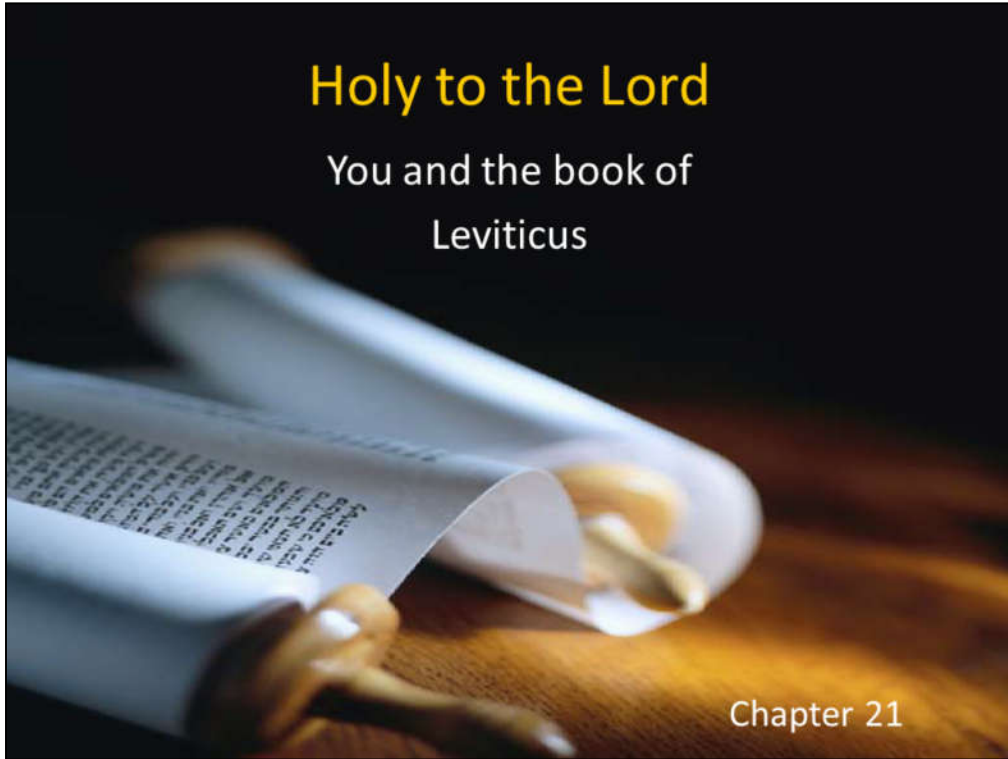


Holy to the Lord

You and the book of
Leviticus



Chapter 21

Priests and High Priests



Chapter 21 deals with priests and high priests, and regulations concerning them. What 2 things does God say that can make a priest unclean? Next slide ...

“Wife and Death”



Two things that can make a priest unclean. 2 sources of priestly contamination.

1. Prevent the priest from any kind of formal leadership or ritual participation in the cult of the dead.
2. Also prevents the priest from marrying a cult priestess

“Cult of the Dead”

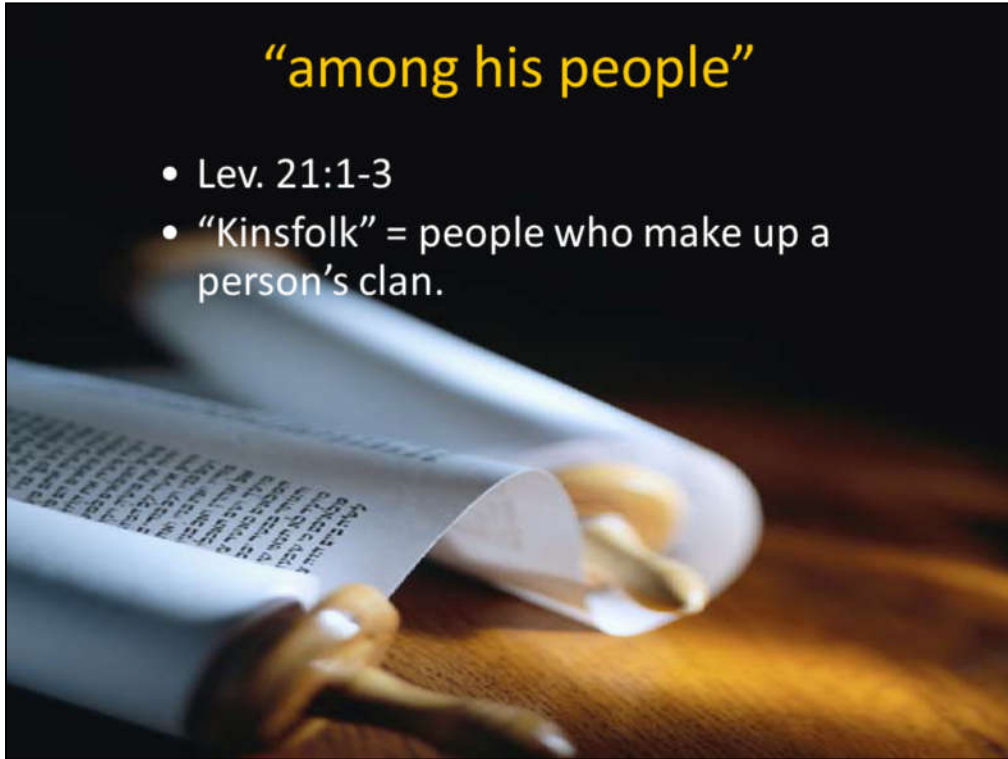


“Cult of the Dead” is a reference to any worship of the dead or souls of the dead. “The animist neighbors of the Israelites seem to have believed that on death the spirit of a person entered the supernatural world, the spiritual realm. The spirits of the dead were much more “alive,” more influential than ever after death. Their corpses were regarded as sacred, for they provided a physical bridge into that realm. This led to common involvement of people in the cult of the dead, together with all other forms of spiritism in Israel. Death was not to be regarded as something sacred, part of the supernatural cosmic process, but as something unclean, a prime source of defilement” (Kleinig 452).

Indian Reserves—sacrifices to spirits.

“among his people”

- Lev. 21:1-3
- “Kinsfolk” = people who make up a person’s clan.



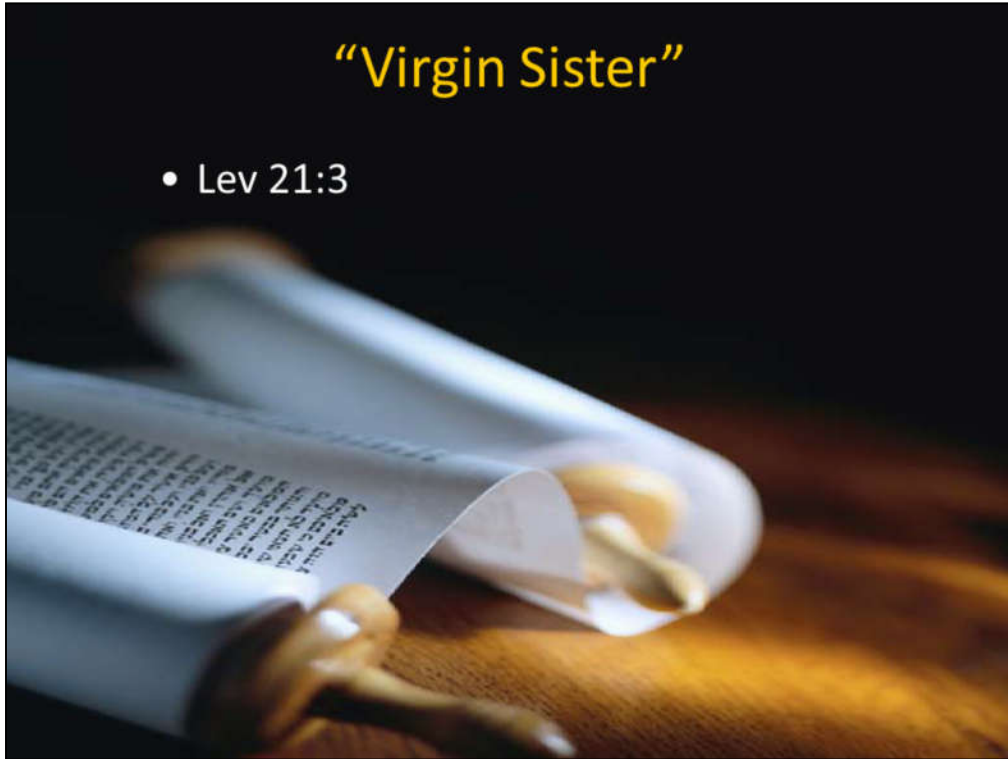
Lev. 21:1-3

Who are “his people”

E.g., “the Levites” – so we are talking about family here, and dependency.

“Virgin Sister”

- Lev 21:3



Lev. 21:4

Why virgin sister?

-Virgin refers to her legal status as a single woman. Because she is not married, she is legally still part of the priest's family.

-Shows the importance of bloodline.

Funeral Etiquette



Lev. 21:5

1. These three forms of self-abasement were certain mourning rites. But the priests are not allowed to mourn in such ways.
2. Priests are holy, not allowed to mutilate themselves as a sign of devotion.

Priest and Husband



Lev. 21:4

Can priests marry? Yes!

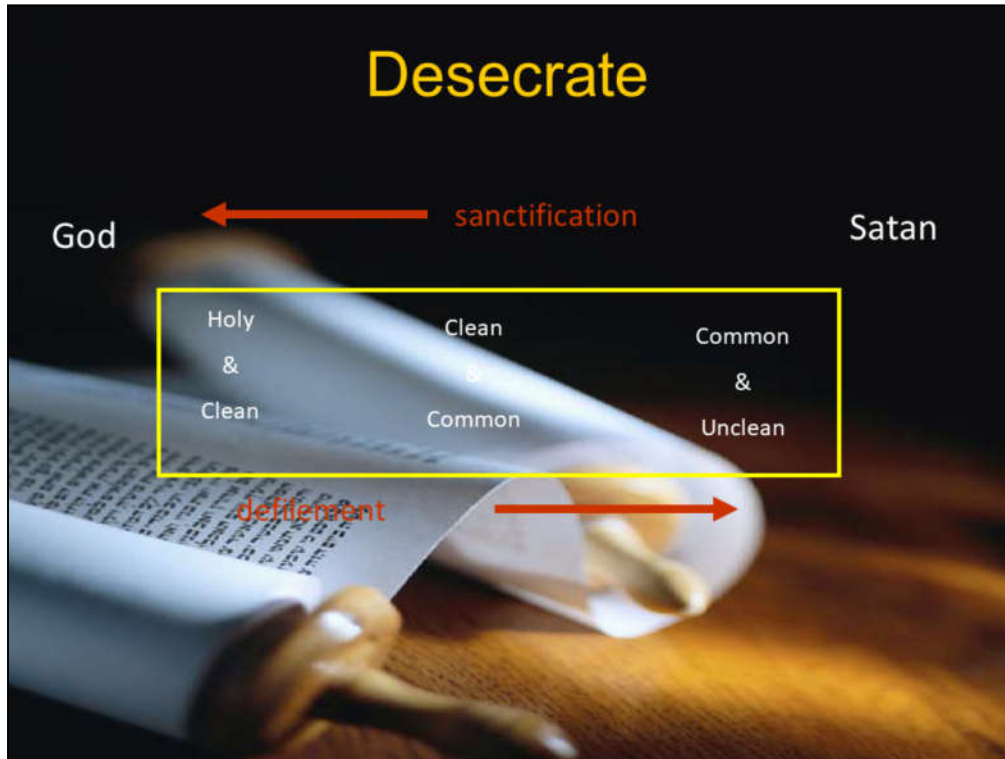
What is this verse talking about?

-An israelite husband was normally responsible for the burial of his wife, but that was not allowed in the case of priests.

-This prohibition means that the priest could not prepare his wife for burial, because she is not his “flesh” relative (not the same as “one flesh” (gen 2:24) but blood-relative)

-Some think this simply means that the priest can't bury his wife's relatives, but can bury his wife.

-Why is the closeness of relatives important here?



Lev. 21:4

-To treat something holy as if it were common. (Eg, God's Name, His sanctuary, His priests, and their daughters).

-Are these categories still relevant today? Does the incarnation itself break this associative stigma. God became man = Holy becomes common??

-Does Jesus make what is common holy?

Priestly Standards



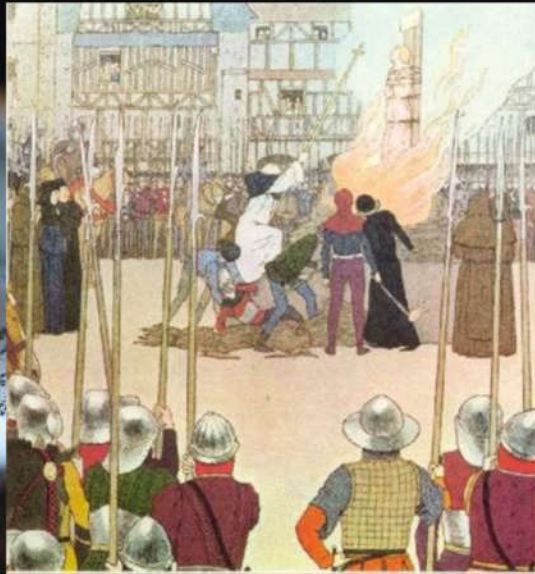
Lev 21:7

-The priest was not to marry a prostitute, cult prostitute, divorcee or any woman who has been desecrated, why?

-Because cult prostitutes were thought holy among pagans.

-Because the priest is holy/possesses holiness (vv. 6, 8)

Burned at the Stake!?



Lev. 21:9

- When the daughter of a priest desecrates herself, the father is thereby desecrated!
 - “Sins of the daughter?”
 - Islamic girl who’s father killed her b/c she wouldn’t wear a hijab.
- Cremation? Good, bad, or indifferent?
 - In Moses’ day, it was decidedly BAD
 1. shows disrespect for the human body and was associated with animism
 2. Cremation was the most severe sanction against any evildoer, for it removed all traces of the person from the face of the earth.
 3. Medieval punishment for heresy.

Any connection with Whole burnt offering? (Lev. 1:9)

Leftovers of bull taken to a clean place and Burned outside the camp (Lev. 4:9)

The “High Priest”



Samuel anoints Saul.

Lev. 21:10ff

-The mark of consecration with the anointing oil made him most holy, the lords own possession

-Can never touch a dead person, not even his own father and mother! (**See Luke 9:60**) Read Luke 9:57-62

-Can still marry! But only a virgin from his own kinsfolk; ie, from the tribe of Levi.

-Why? So that he does not desecrate his offspring among his kinsfolk.

Constant Reminders

- “I AM the Lord”



Lev. 21:12, 15

-“I am the Lord”

-“who sanctifies you” vv. 8, 15

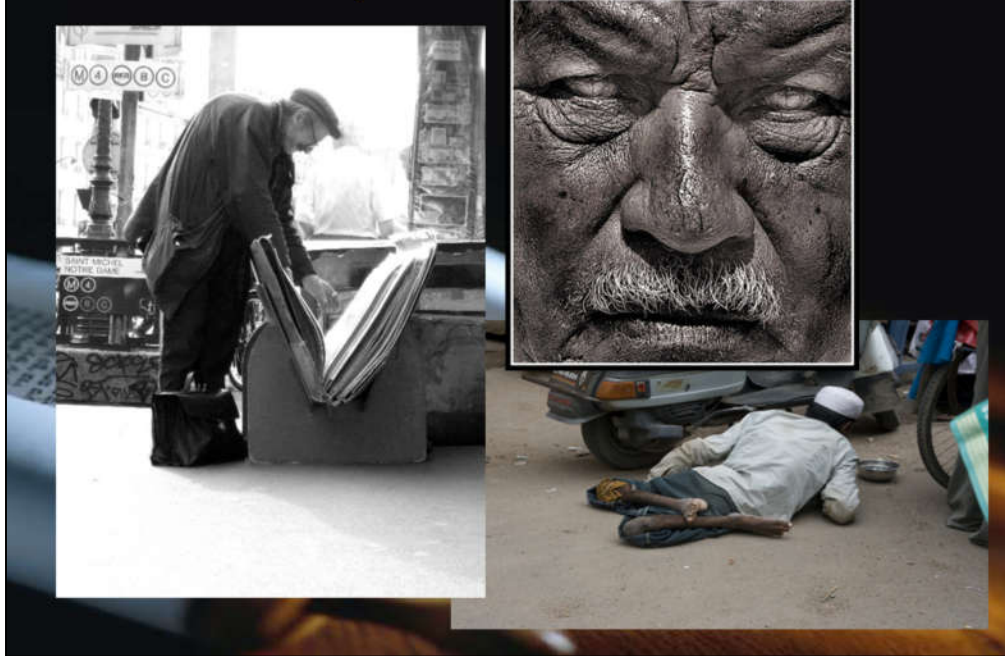
-Called the “Divine Self-Revelation”, God finds it important to remind the hearer who is speaking these words.

-Jesus’ “I AM” statements in the gospel of John reveal that He is God.

-What does this tell us about what is written in the Bible?

-The bible is God’s Word, and that must be continually emphasized, especially in today’s culture that has a native distrust of authority.

Unpriestly Defects



Lev 21:16ff

Why were such people disqualified from certain functions of the priestly office? Do physical defects and imperfections really offend the holiness of God? How can we understand this today?

Presenting the Gifts

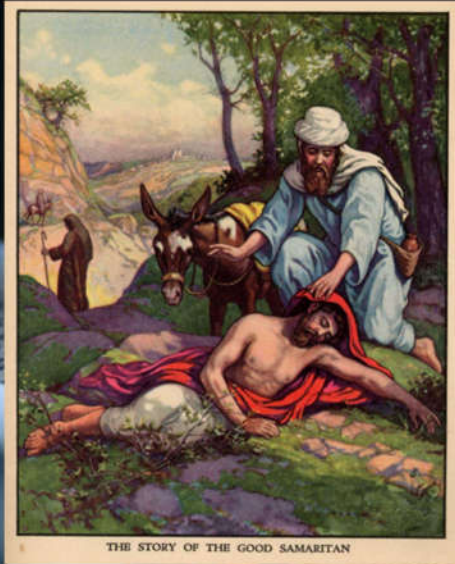


Lev. 21:16

Eat the Holy Food



Healing of the New Covenant



Jesus Heals the blind, the lame, lepers, etc. Read about the Good Samaritan--Luke 10:25-37.

Fulfillment by Christ



- Hebrews 7:26
- Ephesians 5:25-27
- Philippians 2:14-15
- Revelation 14:1-5