

## **"I am Holy"** **Leviticus 9:1-5, 22-10:3**

It has been said of famous people that millions of people think they know them, but they don't. That could also be said of God. Except the stakes are much higher. That's why Leviticus matters, because it tells us what God is really like.

### **God is Holy**

*The statement that God keeps on making about himself in this book is 'I am holy', and everything in Leviticus is built around that statement. Everything used in worship of him is holy and his people must be holy. But what does it mean to be holy?*

To be holy is to be separate, to be distinct. We think of God as being like us, we make him in our own image. But Leviticus tells us that God is *not* like us. It tells us he is holy: set apart.

Two events in Leviticus 9 and 10 tell us two things about what it means for God to be holy.

***Holy in power:*** In Leviticus 9 fire comes from the Lord's presence and the people fall on their faces. They are in the presence of One who is infinitely more powerful than them. But if someone has infinite power you also want their character to be pure.

***Holy in Moral Purity:*** Nadab and Abihu offered unauthorised fire before the Lord. The outcome was not pretty. Until their offering everything had been done, 'as the Lord commanded.' But now, they do something the Lord had not commanded. They thought they could decide what could and could not be done. Often we think exactly the same. But these two men discovered that they aren't God. They stand as a warning to any one who thinks that God's holiness and commands don't matter.

The Lord's commands to his people in Leviticus 19, to model his holiness in the world, tell us what his character is like: He is infinitely loving, righteous, truthful, faithful and just. He is holy in his moral perfection. And there lies our problem, because we are not like that.

### **Holy and Unclean Cannot Mix.**

In Leviticus 11-15 the Lord uses the ritual states of clean and unclean to teach the people 3 things: 1. The Lord has separated them from the other nations. 2. As he has called them to be different, they are to live differently. 3. The laws of clean/unclean would have been a daily reminder that God is holy and we are not.

As a result, these laws would have become like a burden. You would long for God to make you clean and holy, and lift the fear of his holiness that you lived under.

### **The Holy One Who Lifts the Burden**

When we are slimed by our sin, we feel unclean, and we long to be clean. Jesus came as the holy one, who cleansed the unclean. He taught us where the real uncleanness is: our hearts, but showed us that he can make us clean. As we put our trust in him, we are counted holy in him, and his Holy Spirit works in our lives to make us more like him. When you know you are accepted by God in Jesus because he has made you clean, you will respond as the people did in Leviticus 9: with joy and awe. It is the only right response to God's grace and his holiness.