

# Leviticus: I Am Yahweh, Be Holy, for I Am Holy

- Exodus 5.1–2, “Who is Yahweh that I should obey his voice? I do not know Yahweh.”
- Exodus 14.30–31; Leviticus 11.45, “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” (used seven times in Leviticus, see 19.36; 22.32–33; 23.42–43; 25.38, 55; 26.13) connected with being holy

## [title] **Leviticus: I Am Yahweh, Be Holy, for I Am Holy**

### **Be Holy: I Am Yahweh**

- Leviticus 11.44–45: “I am Yahweh: be holy, for I am holy”
  - o “Holiness ... is anything that belongs to God’s realm or sphere of existence” (Philip P. Jensen “Holiness in the Priestly Writings of the Old Testament.” Pages 93–121 in *Holiness Past and Present*. Edited by S. C. Barton. New York: T&T Clark, 2003).
  - o The root for holy or holiness (שׁקדָּ qdš) is used 852 in the Hebrew Bible; 152x in Leviticus, 105x in Ezekiel, and 102x in Exodus.
- “I am Yahweh” 49x: 11.44, 45; 18.2, 4, 5, 6, 21, 30; 19.3, 4, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 25, 28, 30, 31, 32, 34, 36, 37; 20.7, 8, 24; 21.12, 15, 23; 22.2, 3, 8, 9, 16, 30, 31, 32, 33; 23.22, 43; 24.22; 25.17, 38, 55; 26.1, 2, 13, 44, 45
- Why repeat this soooo many times?
  - o To show completeness; 49 is 7 x 7, or the perfect number of perfect times. Maybe.
  - o Better / More fully: God’s people are to be holy because their God is Yahweh!
- Leviticus 18–26 contains the greatest concentration of “holy” and related words in entire Bible
- EVERY area of life is touched on:
  - o Private family relationships
  - o Relationship with elderly
  - o Holidays
  - o Relationship with “neighbors”
  - o Relationship with foreigners
  - o Speech / language
  - o Gardening
  - o Business practices
  - o Judicial punishments
  - o Worship
  - o Food
  - o Real estate
  - o Ouija boards / mediums
  - o Clothes
  - o Care for the poor
- EVERY area of life is overseen by Yahweh, therefore be holy in EVERY area of life
- These passages also play a big part in several New Testament teachings / passages.

### **Love Your Neighbor: I Am Yahweh**

- Leviticus 19.18, “you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am Yahweh”
- Matthew 19.19; 22.39; Mark 12.31; Luke 10.27, 2<sup>nd</sup> greatest commandment on which, along with the 1<sup>st</sup> greatest commandment to love God, everything else hangs / depends
- Romans 13.8–10, loving our neighbor is the fulfillment of all God’s laws toward our neighbor
- Galatians 5.1–26 (6, 13, 14, 22), loving our brothers and sisters will prevent us from binding our scruples on them or from causing division or causing them to stumble and fall away
- James 2.1–13 (8), showing partiality is a violation of the command to love our neighbor and is just as evil as adultery or murder

## **Be Not Misyoked: I Am Yahweh**

- Leviticus 26.11–13, “I will make my dwelling among you and will be your God, and you shall be my people. I am Yahweh ... and I have broken the bars of the yoke and made you walk upright [openly/boldly LXX].”
- 2 Corinthians 6.14–7.1,
  - o Verse 16b is quoted from Leviticus 26.11 / Ezekiel 37.27 (cf. Leviticus 20.24, 26; also note 2 Corinthians 6.14 w/ Leviticus 19.19 LXX, and 2 Corinthians 6.17–18 with Isaiah 52.11; Ezekiel 20.34; 2 Samuel 7.14)
  - o Holiness in Leviticus 18–26 is brought into play here in 2 Corinthians; the context of both is not having any connection with anything that is unclean or unholy, especially anything associated with false gods and worship or devotion to such instead of full devotion to Yahweh
  - o Anyone fully devoted to Yahweh will be holy and will absolutely not be yoked with people or things who are not fully devoted to Yahweh
  - o Note the call to holiness in 2 Corinthians 7.1

## **Be Holy in All Your Conduct: I Am Yahweh**

- Leviticus 11.44–45, “I am Yahweh .... You shall therefore be holy, for I am holy.”
- 1 Peter 1.13–2.12,
  - o In 1.16 Peter quoted Leviticus 11.44–45 as the basis for his command in verse 15 to be holy; several commands are related to the idea of holiness in this passage, though:
    - o “Set your hope fully on the ... revelation of Jesus Christ,” 1.13 (cf. 1.21)
    - o “Be holy in all your conduct,” 1.15
    - o “Conduct yourselves with fear through the time of your exile” because you were made holy by “the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot,” 1.17–19
    - o Because you are holy, “love one another earnestly from a pure heart,” 1.22
    - o Having put away everything unclean / unholy / unpure, “like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation” and holiness, 2.1–2
  - o Why be holy?
    1. To glorify our holy God, 2.4–10, esp. 5 and 9
    2. To influence others to be with God and to be holy, 2.11–12
  - o Note the aspect of being God’s possession or portion in 2.9–10 with the previous point on 2 Corinthians 6.14–7.1 and Leviticus 26.11–13 (cf. Leviticus 20.24, 26)

Who is Yahweh that I should obey his voice? He is holy. He has separated us from all that is unholy and has cleansed us and made us holy by the blood of Jesus Christ. We must therefore obey all God’s commandments and rules. We must be holy for he is holy.