

Leviticus 22:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

What man soever of the seed of Aaron is a leper, or hath a running issue; he shall not eat of the holy things, until he be clean. And whoso toucheth any thing that is unclean by the dead, or a man whose seed goeth from him;

Analysis

What man soever of the seed of Aaron is a leper, or hath a running issue; he shall not eat of the holy things, until he be clean. And whoso toucheth any thing that is unclean by the dead, or a man whose seed goeth from him;

This verse falls within the section on **Acceptable Sacrifices**. Requirements for acceptable sacrifices and those who may eat sacred offerings, maintaining sacrifice quality.

The central theme of Leviticus is God's holiness and the call for His people to be holy. The Hebrew word qadosh (קָדוֹשׁ) means 'set apart' or 'sacred,' emphasizing both separation from sin and consecration to God's purposes. The Aaronic priesthood mediated between God and Israel, offering sacrifices and maintaining the tabernacle. This prefigured Christ's superior priesthood after the order of Melchizedek. Ritual purity laws taught Israel to distinguish between clean and unclean, holy and common, training them in discernment and reverence for God's presence.

The New Testament reveals that Christ's sacrifice accomplishes what the Levitical system could only symbolize—complete forgiveness and restoration of relationship with God.

Historical Context

Requirements for acceptable sacrifices and those who may eat sacred offerings, maintaining sacrifice quality. Chapters 17-27, often called the 'Holiness Code,' expand covenant obligations beyond ritual to encompass all of life—sexuality, economics, justice, and relationships. The repeated refrain 'I am the LORD' grounds these laws in God's character and covenant relationship with Israel. Israel received these laws while encamped at Sinai, before entering Canaan. The laws prepared them for life in the promised land, distinguishing them from Canaanite practices and establishing their identity as God's holy nation. The portable tabernacle, central to Levitical worship, accompanied them through wilderness wanderings and eventually found permanent form in Solomon's temple. The Israelite dietary laws in Leviticus 11 have no exact parallel in surrounding cultures, though some ancient cultures had food taboos, suggesting unique revelation rather than borrowed customs.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does God's holiness, as revealed in this verse, shape your understanding of worship, obedience, and daily living?
2. How does Christ's superior priesthood, prefigured in this verse, assure you of access to God and effective intercession?
3. How can you develop greater spiritual discernment in distinguishing what honors God from what defiles?

Interlinear Text

אֲשֶׁר וְעַד יְהוָה וְאֶת אֶחָר	אֲשֶׁר יְרֻעָה	אֲשֶׁר אֶת אֶחָר	אֲשֶׁר אֶת אֶחָר	אֲשֶׁר אֶת אֶחָר	אֲשֶׁר אֶת אֶחָר
What man soever	What man soever	of the seed	of Aaron	H1931	is a leper
H376	H376	H2233	H175		H6879
וְאִם יְהִי בְּלֵב אֶת	וְאִם יְהִי בְּלֵב אֶת	בְּקָדְשִׁים	לֹא יְאַכֵּל	לֹא יְאַכֵּל	לֹא יְאַכֵּל
H176	or hath a running issue	H2100	H6944	H3808	he shall not eat
				H398	H5704
רָאשֵׁךְ יְטַהֵּר עַד	רָאשֵׁךְ יְטַהֵּר עַד	בְּכָל	בְּכָל	בְּכָל	בְּכָל
H834	until he be clean	H2891	H5060	H3605	any thing that is unclean
					H2931
בְּפָשָׁע	בְּאַשְׁר אֲשֶׁר	בְּאַשְׁר אֲשֶׁר	בְּאַשְׁר אֲשֶׁר	בְּאַשְׁר אֲשֶׁר	בְּאַשְׁר אֲשֶׁר
by the dead	H176	What man soever	H834	goeth	H4480
H5315		H376		H3318	H7902
יְרֻעָה:					
of the seed					
H2233					

Additional Cross-References

Leviticus 21:1 (Parallel theme): And the LORD said unto Moses, Speak unto the priests the sons of Aaron, and say unto them, There shall none be defiled for the dead among his people:

Leviticus 11:39 (Parallel theme): And if any beast, of which ye may eat, die; he that toucheth the carcase thereof shall be unclean until the even.