

YOBL

Year of Biblical Literacy

Week 6: How to be Holy

Daily Reading for Week

- Leviticus 14-15, Psalm 34
- Leviticus 16-18, Psalm 35
- Leviticus 19-20, Psalm 36
- Leviticus 21-23, Psalm 37
- Leviticus 24-25, Psalm 38
- Leviticus 26-27, Psalm 39
- Numbers 1-4, Psalm 40
- Videos: Leviticus, Numbers, Sacrifice and Atonement

Focus of time together

To examine how exactly Israel was to practice holiness individually and communally and to reflect on what it means for us to be holy today.

Quick Fire (1 minute per person)

Has going through the Year of Biblical Literacy been what you expected it to be thus far? How has it been different than what you thought it would be like? One minute per person

Opening Prayer (5 minutes)

Intro to Discussion

Last week we focused on the two complementary sides of salvation: God redeemed Israel out of slavery and into holy life in the Promised Land. The forty years in the wilderness between leaving Egypt and entering the land were a sort of 40-year training plan in how to become a holy nation. God's good plans for Israel and the world involved much more than simply not being slaves. He wished to transform the freed slaves into the most loving, just, righteous people the world had ever seen. It was to be the ultimate ashes to glory story. In fact, they were to become such a special and impressive nation that the rest of the world would come ask them, "What is the secret to your success?" And to this they would respond, "Making Yahweh our king and living according to his good commands." In this way, they would truly be a kingdom of priests, connecting the rest of the world to God.

So what did this holy calling entail exactly? What did it mean to be holy? Firstly,

holiness was simply to do with uniqueness, differentiation, distinction. Israel was supposed to be an entirely unique nation, a people set apart to live in illuminating contrast to the rest of the world. This immediately begged the question though of how- in what unique way are we to live?

This second question is what the many chapters of intensive prescriptions and rules throughout Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy are essentially cataloguing. The Torah was to be their user guide for how to live and they were therefore to memorise it and pass it down to each generation.

Whole Group Discussion (60 minutes)

Questions for Basic Understanding

These questions are to help us interpret and understand the text as it was intended to be interpreted and understood.

Can anyone offer a one-sentence summary of Leviticus? To help you answering, think about: "If the author of Leviticus wanted his hearers to come away with one thing, what would it be? Why did he work so hard to keep and record and pass along this text?"

Can you recall one specific way in which Israel was supposed to do or practice holiness?

Questions for Interacting with Scripture

These questions are to help us slow down to taste and notice Scripture, savour its richness and meditate on the complexity of its meaning.

Reading chapter upon chapter about laws and regulations, what thoughts or feelings did you notice coming up in yourself?

Questions for Examining Ourselves

These questions are to help us look at ourselves, be aware and honest about who we are in light of our interaction with Scripture and consider any appropriate action.

If you try to imagine being apart of Israel at this time, how would you have responded to some of these Levitical commands? Do you think you would have obeyed? Would you have loved them or hated them?

Questions for Practicing Community

These questions are to help us reflect thoughtfully on our felt experience together as community and provide opportunities to build on it further..

Hebrews 11 defines faith as the "confidence in what we hope for and assurance of things we do not see." This is an excellent example of how scripture gives us a definition, but still leaves us in a mystery. In the context of a small group, practicing faith as a value means acting toward one another with an acute recognition of this mystery, remembering that none of us has all the answers and we all have to rely on trust in the midst of incomplete knowledge. Did you notice yourself in disagreement with something that someone said in this session? What was it like practicing the value of faith and trusting that God is at work in that person's life? Were there any times where you felt someone or yourself did not adhere to the value of faith and instead jump in with judgement or correction?

Closing Time of Prayer (15-20 minutes)

End your time by praying corporately together. Offer to Jesus everything that you have experienced tonight in home group, throughout your week thus far, and your hopes for the next week.