

Regulations for the Priests (c. 8–11 Nisan [April] 1445 BC)

Leviticus 21–22

Restrictions on Mourning and Marriage for Ordinary Priests

21:1 The LORD said to Moses: “Say to the priests, the sons of Aaron—say to them, ‘For a dead person no priest is to defile himself among his people,

2 except for his close relative who is near to him: his mother, his father, his son, his daughter, his brother,

3 and his virgin sister who is near to him, who has no husband; he may defile himself for her.

4 He must not defile himself as a husband among his people so as to profane himself.

5 Priests must not have a bald spot shaved on their head, they must not shave the corner of their beard, and they must not cut slashes in their body.

6 “‘They must be holy to their God, and they must not profane the name of their God, because they are the ones who present the LORD’s gifts, the food of their God. Therefore they must be holy.

7 They must not take a wife defiled by prostitution, nor are they to take a wife divorced from her husband, for the priest is holy to his God.

8 You must sanctify him because he presents the food of your God. He must be holy to you because I, the LORD who sanctifies you all, am holy.

9 If a daughter of a priest profanes herself by engaging in prostitution, she is profaning her father. She must be burned to death.

Restrictions on Mourning and Marriage for the High Priest

10 “‘The high priest—who is greater than his brothers, on whose head the anointing oil is poured, who has been ordained to wear the priestly garments—must neither dishevel the hair of his head nor tear his garments.

11 He must not go where there is any dead person; he must not defile himself even for his father and his mother.

12 He must not go out from the sanctuary and must not profane the sanctuary of his God, because the dedication of the anointing oil of his God is on him. I am the LORD.

13 He must take a wife who is a virgin.

14 He must not marry a widow, a divorced woman, or one profaned by prostitution; he may only take a virgin from his people as a wife.

15 He must not profane his children among his people, for I am the LORD who sanctifies him.”

Restrictions for Priests With Physical Defects

16 The LORD spoke to Moses:

17 “Tell Aaron, ‘No man from your descendants throughout their generations who has a physical flaw is to approach to present the food of his God.

18 Certainly no man who has a physical flaw is to approach: a blind man, or one who is lame, or one with a slit nose, or a limb too long,

19 or a man who has had a broken leg or arm,

20 or a hunchback, or a dwarf, or one with a spot in his eye, or a festering eruption, or a feverish rash, or a crushed testicle.

21 No man from the descendants of Aaron the priest who has a physical flaw may step forward to present the LORD’s gifts; he has a physical flaw, so he must not step forward to present the food of his God.

22 He may eat both the most holy and the holy food of his God,

23 but he must not go into the veil-canopy or step forward to the altar because he has a physical flaw. Thus he must not profane my holy places, for I am the LORD who sanctifies them.”

24 So Moses spoke these things to Aaron, his sons, and all the Israelites.

Restrictions on Eating Priestly Food

22:1 The LORD spoke to Moses:

2 “Tell Aaron and his sons that they must deal respectfully with the holy offerings of the Israelites, which they consecrate to me, so that they do not profane my holy name. I am the LORD.

3 Say to them, ‘Throughout your generations, if any man from all your descendants approaches the holy offerings which the Israelites consecrate to the LORD while he is impure, that person must be cut off from before me. I am the LORD.

4 No man from the descendants of Aaron who is diseased or has a discharge may eat the holy offerings until he becomes clean. The one who touches anything made unclean by contact with a dead person, or a man who has a seminal emission,

5 or a man who touches a swarming thing by which he becomes unclean, or touches a person by which he becomes unclean, whatever that person’s impurity—

6 the person who touches any of these will be unclean until evening and must not eat from the holy offerings unless he has bathed his body in water.

7 When the sun goes down he will be clean, and afterward he may eat from the holy offerings, because they are his food.

8 He must not eat an animal that has died of natural causes or an animal torn by beasts and thus become unclean by it. I am the

LORD.

9 They must keep my charge so that they do not incur sin on account of it and therefore die because they profane it. I am the LORD who sanctifies them.

Relatives' Rights to Priestly Food

10 "No lay person may eat anything holy. Neither a priest's lodger nor a hired laborer may eat anything holy,

11 but if a priest buys a person with his own money, that person may eat the holy offerings, and those born in the priest's own house may eat his food.

12 If a priest's daughter marries a lay person, she may not eat the holy contribution offerings,

13 but if a priest's daughter is a widow or divorced, and she has no children so that she returns to live in her father's house as in her youth, she may eat from her father's food, but no lay person may eat it.

14 "If a man eats a holy offering by mistake, he must add one fifth to it and give the holy offering to the priest.

15 They must not profane the holy offerings which the Israelites contribute to the LORD,

16 and so cause them to incur a penalty for guilt when they eat their holy offerings, for I am the LORD who sanctifies them."

Laws Concerning Acceptable Sacrificial Animals

17 The LORD spoke to Moses:

18 "Speak to Aaron, his sons, and all the Israelites and tell them, 'When any man from the house of Israel or from the foreigners in Israel presents his offering for any of the votive or freewill offerings which they present to the LORD as a burnt offering,

19 if it is to be acceptable for your benefit it must be a flawless male from the cattle, sheep, or goats.

20 You must not present anything that has a flaw, because it will not be acceptable for your benefit.

21 If a man presents a peace offering sacrifice to the LORD for a special votive offering or for a freewill offering from the herd or the flock, it must be flawless to be acceptable; it must have no flaw.

22 "You must not present to the LORD something blind, or with a broken bone, or mutilated, or with a running sore, or with a festering eruption, or with a feverish rash. You must not give any of these as a gift on the altar to the LORD.

23 As for an ox or a sheep with a limb too long or stunted, you may present it as a freewill offering, but it will not be acceptable for a votive offering.

24 You must not present to the LORD something with testicles that are bruised, crushed, torn, or cut off; you must not do this in your land.

25 Even from a foreigner you must not present the food of your God from such animals as these, for they are ruined and flawed; they will not be acceptable for your benefit."

26 The LORD spoke to Moses:

27 "When an ox, lamb, or goat is born, it must be under the care of its mother seven days, but from the eighth day onward it will be acceptable as an offering gift to the LORD.

28 You must not slaughter an ox or a sheep and its young on the same day.

29 When you sacrifice a thanksgiving offering to the LORD, you must sacrifice it so that it is acceptable for your benefit.

30 On that very day it must be eaten; you must not leave any part of it over until morning. I am the LORD.

31 "You must be sure to do my commandments. I am the LORD.

32 You must not profane my holy name, and I will be sanctified in the midst of the Israelites. I am the LORD who sanctifies you,

33 the one who brought you out from the land of Egypt to be your God. I am the LORD."

The Seven Annual Feasts (c. 8–11 Nisan [April] 1445 BC)

Leviticus 23

Introduction—The Sabbath

1 The LORD spoke to Moses:

2 "Speak to the Israelites and tell them, 'These are the LORD's appointed times which you must proclaim as holy assemblies—my appointed times:

3 "Six days work may be done, but on the seventh day there must be a Sabbath of complete rest, a holy assembly. You must not do any work; it is a Sabbath to the LORD in all the places where you live.

4 "These are the LORD's appointed times, holy assemblies, which you must proclaim at their appointed time.

Spring Feast—The Passover (14th of First Month: Nisan)—Good Friday

5 In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, at twilight, is a Passover offering to the LORD.

Spring Feast—The Feast of Unleavened Bread (15th–22nd of First Month: Nisan)—Easter

6 Then on the fifteenth day of the same month will be the festival of unleavened bread to the LORD; seven days you must eat unleavened bread.

7 On the first day there will be a holy assembly for you; you must not do any regular work.

8 You must present a gift to the LORD for seven days, and the seventh day is a holy assembly; you must not do any regular work.”

Spring Feast—The Feasts of Firstfruits

9 The LORD spoke to Moses:

10 “Speak to the Israelites and tell them, ‘When you enter the land that I am about to give to you and you gather in its harvest, then you must bring the sheaf of the first portion of your harvest to the priest,

11 and he must wave the sheaf before the LORD to be accepted for your benefit—on the day after the Sabbath the priest is to wave it.

12 On the day you wave the sheaf you must also offer a flawless yearling lamb for a burnt offering to the LORD,

13 along with its grain offering, two tenths of an ephah of choice wheat flour mixed with olive oil, as a gift to the LORD, a soothing aroma, and its drink offering, one fourth of a hin of wine.

14 You must not eat bread, roasted grain, or fresh grain until this very day, until you bring the offering of your God. This is a perpetual statute throughout your generations in all the places where you live.

Spring Feast—The Feasts of Weeks—Pentecost

15 “You must count for yourselves seven weeks from the day after the Sabbath, from the day you bring the wave offering sheaf; they must be complete weeks.

16 You must count fifty days—until the day after the seventh Sabbath—and then you must present a new grain offering to the LORD.

17 From the places where you live you must bring two loaves of bread for a wave offering; they must be made from two tenths of an ephah of fine wheat flour, baked with yeast, as first fruits to the LORD.

18 Along with the loaves of bread, you must also present seven flawless yearling lambs, one young bull, and two rams. They are to be a burnt offering to the LORD along with their grain offering and drink offerings, a gift of a soothing aroma to the LORD.

19 You must also offer one male goat for a sin offering and two yearling lambs for a peace offering sacrifice,

20 and the priest is to wave them—the two lambs—along with the bread of the first fruits, as a wave offering before the LORD; they will be holy to the LORD for the priest.

21 “On this very day you must proclaim an assembly; it is to be a holy assembly for you. You must not do any regular work. This is a perpetual statute in all the places where you live throughout your generations.

22 When you gather in the harvest of your land, you must not completely harvest the corner of your field, and you must not gather up the gleanings of your harvest. You must leave them for the poor and the foreigner. I am the LORD your God.”

Fall Feast—The Feast of Trumpets (1st of Seventh Month: Tishri)

23 The LORD spoke to Moses:

24 “Tell the Israelites, ‘In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you must have a complete rest, a memorial announced by loud horn blasts, a holy assembly.

25 You must not do any regular work, but you must present a gift to the LORD.”

Fall Feast—The Day of Atonement (10th of Seventh Month: Tishri)

26 The LORD spoke to Moses:

27 “The tenth day of this seventh month is the Day of Atonement. It is to be a holy assembly for you, and you must humble yourselves and present a gift to the LORD.

28 You must not do any work on this particular day, because it is a day of atonement to make atonement for yourselves before the LORD your God.

29 Indeed, any person who does not behave with humility on this particular day will be cut off from his people.

30 As for any person who does any work on this particular day, I will exterminate that person from the midst of his people!

31 You must not do any work. This is a perpetual statute throughout your generations in all the places where you live.

32 It is a Sabbath of complete rest for you, and you must humble yourselves on the ninth day of the month in the evening, from evening until evening you must observe your Sabbath.”

Fall Feast—The Feast of Tabernacles/Booths (15th–22nd of Seventh Month: Tishri)

33 The LORD spoke to Moses:

34 “Tell the Israelites, ‘On the fifteenth day of this seventh month is the Festival of Temporary Shelters for seven days to the LORD.

35 On the first day is a holy assembly; you must do no regular work.

36 For seven days you must present a gift to the LORD. On the eighth day there is to be a holy assembly for you, and you must present a gift to the LORD. It is a solemn assembly day; you must not do any regular work.

37 “These are the appointed times of the LORD that you must proclaim as holy assemblies to present a gift to the LORD—burnt offering, grain offering, sacrifice, and drink offerings, each day according to its regulation,

38 besides the Sabbaths of the LORD and all your gifts, votive offerings, and freewill offerings which you must give to the LORD.

39 “On the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you gather in the produce of the land, you must celebrate a pilgrim festival of the LORD for seven days. On the first day is a complete rest and on the eighth day is complete rest.

40 On the first day you must take for yourselves branches from majestic trees—palm branches, branches of leafy trees, and willows of the brook—and you must rejoice before the LORD your God for seven days.

41 You must celebrate it as a pilgrim festival to the LORD for seven days in the year. This is a perpetual statute throughout your generations; you must celebrate it in the seventh month.

42 You must live in temporary shelters for seven days; every native citizen in Israel must live in temporary shelters,

43 so that your future generations may know that I made the Israelites live in temporary shelters when I brought them out from the land of Egypt. I am the LORD your God.”

Concluding Summary

44 So Moses spoke to the Israelites about the appointed times of the LORD.

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