

Leviticus 11:44–45; 1 Peter 1:14–16
The Relevance of Obscure Old Testament Laws
June 10, 2012

Sermon Outline

Notes:

I. Children's Overview

- A. Some Rules Are Temporary (Knives, Fires)
- B. OT Rules about Eating (Aims at Heart Holiness)
- C. NT Rules (Aims at Heart Holiness for adults)

Mark 7:19b (Freedom – *What* you eat)

Thus [Jesus] declared *all foods* clean.

1 Corinthians 10:31 (Love – *Why* you eat)

So, whether you *eat or drink*, or whatever you do, do all **to the glory of God**.

Key Idea

*We often think that keeping all the OT Rules found in Leviticus would be hard but these laws point to a spiritual or heart holiness that is far **more** difficult. Fortunately, Leviticus also points us to the way of holiness God would provide for his people, which is Jesus.*

II. The Way Leviticus Functioned for Israel

- A. Literal Obedience & Heart Obedience

Leviticus 11:44–45

⁴⁴ For I am the LORD your God. Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am holy. You shall not defile yourselves with any swarming thing that crawls on the ground. 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.***”

- B. Theological Truth Taught
 - 1. Ceremonial Law (Sacrifices; Food)

Sacrifice ⇔ God's Provision ⇔ Jesus

Unique Nation ⇔ Unique Savior ⇔ Jesus

2. Moral Law

1 Corinthians 9:8–10

⁸ Do I say these things on human authority? Does not the Law say the same? ⁹ For it is written in the Law of Moses, “You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain.” (Cf. Deuteronomy 25:4) Is it for oxen that God is concerned? ¹⁰ Does he not certainly speak for our sake? ***It was written for our sake, because the plowman should plow in hope and the thresher thresh in hope of sharing in the crop.***

Ox ⇔ People ⇔ God’s Character ⇔ Jesus

C. Summary (Alan. P. Ross)

“The law, then, was given as a gracious provision to a redeemed people to make them a holy nation and prepare them to be a kingdom of priests. It had several purposes:

... **The law revealed what was required to be in communion with God.** ... This issue is two-sided. (a) The law clearly revealed the holiness of God. ... (b) The law revealed human sinfulness. It made people aware that in all areas of life they were not like God at all.

... **The law regulated the worship and purity** of the people of God. ... To profane the ritual or to fail to enact it was saying there were other ways to God beside what he himself had declared. And to alter the ritual was to divert the plan of God that was supposed to be fulfilled precisely in the new covenant.

... **The law was a pedagogue leading to Christ.** The law in many ways laid the foundation for the full revelation of God’s plan of salvation that came in the person of Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God.

... **The law was thus both regulatory and revelatory.** The regulatory aspects of the law—kinds of animals, composition of incense, handling of blood, and all the other ritual acts—were bound up in the culture and experience of ancient Israel. The revelatory aspects of the laws—holiness of God, nature of sin, access to God, forgiveness of sin, removal of impurity, and all the many theological meanings of the acts—taught the abiding truths of the person and work of the LORD as they were unfolding in Scripture.”

III. The Way Leviticus Functions for Christians

A. Jesus Fulfilled the Law

“When Christ came and inaugurated the new covenant, the regulatory aspects of the law came to an end: there was no longer a temple, sacrifices, or a functioning priesthood based on the Sinai covenant. But what all these laws revealed about the nature and will of God did not come to an end, for they are binding revelation.”

Matthew 5:17–20

¹⁷ “*Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them **but to fulfill** them.* ¹⁸ For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished. ¹⁹ Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. ²⁰ For I tell you, *unless your righteousness **exceeds** that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.*”

Romans 10:4

⁴ For *Christ is the end of the law* for righteousness to everyone who believes.

B. The Law was Our Teacher/Pedagogue

“A **pedagogue** was a servant who came alongside the child as a tutor and supervised that child in everything until maturity. Then the pedagogue was no longer needed.”

Galatians 3:23–26 (Cf. Romans 3:20–22)

²³ Now before faith came, we were held captive under the law, imprisoned until the coming faith would be revealed. ²⁴ So then, the law was our **guardian** until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith. ²⁵ But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian, ²⁶ for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith.

“The law was a pedagogue leading to Christ. The law in many ways laid the foundation for the full revelation of God’s plan of salvation that came in the person of Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God. ... The people of God in the Old Testament represent the beginning of the household of faith; they were living in the promises and awaiting the fulfillment. *Now that the Messiah has come and the promises are being fulfilled, the household of faith no longer needs the pedagogue, but can live in light of the fulfillment of the promises. Nevertheless, what the pedagogue was teaching through the ritual and the rules can now be freely applied in the spiritual life.*”

C. Spiritual Obedience is More Demanding

1. Food (Not What but Why you eat - Love)

1 Corinthians 10:23–24, 31

²³ “All things are lawful,” but not all things are helpful. “All things are lawful,” but not all things build up. ²⁴ ***Let no one seek his own good, but the good of his neighbor.*** ...

³¹ So, whether you ***eat or drink,*** or whatever you do, do all **to the glory of God.**

2. Love of Neighbor/Enemy!

Matthew 5:43–48

⁴³ “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall ***love your neighbor*** and hate your enemy.’ ⁴⁴ But I say to you, **Love your enemies** and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵ so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. ⁴⁶ For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? ⁴⁷ And if you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? ⁴⁸ ***You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.***