

31: May 2, 2026

Shabbat Message

Emor / Say / אֶמֹר

Leviticus 21:1-24:23

Seeds of Life Series: Torah the Seeds for Life

The Priest that Yehovah Wants

Introduction

In this Torah portion we see the Feasts of Yehovah being highlighted along with preparations of the Tabernacle again and a few other laws such as not offering unblemished sacrifices and sacrifices of thanksgiving. With all of these sacrifices we are now ready to celebrate these set apart Feasts of Yehovah. Then we enter into the protocols of how to prepare for the worship of the Tabernacle.

Laws Regarding Priests

Leviticus 21:1-4

1. Priests were forbidden from defiling themselves by touching the dead except in the case of a close relative. (Numbers 19:11-22).
2. Priests could not even prepare their wives for burial because they were not blood relatives. This law was a polemic against the cult of the dead, which was widespread in the ancient Near East.
3. The Egyptians were so preoccupied with death that their pharaohs would spend year preparing their pyramid tombs.

Don't Do What the Nations Do

Leviticus 21:5

1. The priest was also forbidden to follow the mourning laws of the Canaanites.
2. They would mutilate their flesh to show their sorrow and pain as well as to venerate the dead.
3. The Prophet Jeremiah in chapter 10 was adamant that we do not learn the way of the nations. The Hebrew word is lamad meaning do not be instructed in the way of the nations.

Holiness of Priests

Leviticus 21:7

1. In the ancient Near East there were two types of prostitutes. 1.) Common prostitutes were sexually loose and were paid for their services.
2. Cult prostitutes on the other hand committed sexual acts as worship to pagan gods.
3. The prohibition against marrying a divorced woman carried over into the Brit Chadasha rules about elders and deacons (1 Tim 3; Titus 1:5-9).

House Rules of the Priests

Leviticus 21:9

1. Because the family in Israel was a solid unit the activity of each member reflected on the others.
2. The punishment here was probably death by stoning after which the body was burnt.
3. Same difference when it comes to the Body of Messiah if one part of the body suffers everyone else suffers alongside of them. Whatever sin one part of the body commits everyone else is judged as well.

Priests to Be Without Blemish

Leviticus 21:16-23

1. A priest in Israel had to be in good physical condition and without blemish. While the text lists 12 physical defects that would print a person from serving as a priest later rabbis expanded the list to 142.
2. The Brit Chadasha does not really address physical requirement but only spiritual qualification for ministers. (1 Timothy 4:8
3. While the church teaches that the Torah does not carry over to the Brit Chadasha which is a lie we should still strive to be healthy and do things that promote our health. (3 Yochanan 1:2). **ὕγιής hugiēs**, hoog-ee-ace'; from the base of G837; healthy, i.e. well (in body); figuratively, true (in doctrine):—sound, whole.

Take Away

1. The Priests could not defile themselves when someone dies because they had to be ritually clean at all times.
2. The Priests could not defile themselves with prostitutes or even a divorced woman but had other marry virgins.
3. A Priest had to be both Spiritually and Physically healthy both in spirit and body.

Application

1. I will strive to be set apart from anything that causes spiritual death in my life as part of the Priesthood of the believer in the Brit Chadasha.

2. I will not prostitute myself to the world but only be married to my Messiah and Savior.
3. I will make it my goal to be spiritually and physically fit for the work of the Kingdom as a priest.

Beth Ohr Messianic Congregation

Torah Cycle 2025-2026