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# Ignite

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*“Heavenly Father, thank You for the lessons that Your Church can learn through the history of Israel. Thank You that like Israel, we have also been called to be holy, because You are holy. It is humbling to realise that as part of Christ's Body, we have also been chosen, in Him, to be kings and priests unto God - to be a chosen people, who tell the world that Jesus died for their sin and rose again, so that by faith in Him we may be holy, as He is holy. Thank You that by faith in Christ, we have been called to be Your very own, and to proclaim the wonderful deeds of Him Who called us out of darkness into His marvellous light. May we live and work from this day forward, to be more like Jesus, and to live a holy life that is separated from this fallen world system. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.*





# SERMON SUMMARY

**Note to Word Facilitator:** The sermon notes below is a summary of the sermon. You may choose to further summarize it according to the needs and context of your CG members. The goal is not just to go through it “verbatim” but to prepare well, allowing members to recall and engage the message in the best possible way.

## Leviticus 5 - Pursuing Holiness:

### Holy - to be or not to be

**Pastor Mike Ngui**

#### **Leviticus 19: 1-4, 18**

*The Lord said to Moses, “Speak to the entire assembly of Israel and say to them: ‘Be holy because I, the Lord your God, am holy. “Each of you must respect your mother and father, and you must observe my Sabbaths. I am the Lord your God. “Do not turn to idols or make metal gods for yourselves. I am the Lord your God.*

*“Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against anyone among your people, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the Lord.*

#### **Leviticus 20:7-8, 26**

*‘Consecrate yourselves and be holy, because I am the Lord your God. Keep my decrees and follow them. I am the Lord, who makes you holy.*

*You are to be holy to me because I, the Lord, am holy, and I have set you apart from the nations to be my own.*

#### **Leviticus 22:31-33**

*“Keep my commands and follow them. I am the Lord. Do not profane my holy name, for I must be acknowledged as holy by the Israelites. I am the Lord, who made you holy and who brought you out of Egypt to be your God. I am the Lord.”*

## Introduction

The idea of holiness is oftentimes overwhelming. Reading Leviticus for the first time certainly does not help with the many do nots and rituals involving blood. Instead of mulling over the requirements in Old Testament times, we are to think of it as a guideline to what God expects of us who profess the Christian faith: Being set apart for Him. We are to follow God's standards based on His Word.

The outline of Leviticus 17 to 22 can be summarized as:

- 17 – prohibition against 'DIY' religion
- 18 – prohibition against incest
- 19 – (contents of sermon as summarized below)
- 20 – punishments for violating prohibitions
- 21 & 22 – purity of the priests

**BIG IDEA: We are saved from sin to be holy.**



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**I God Saved Us to be Holy** [Exo 20:2](#), [Lev 19:2b](#), [Lev 19:36b](#), [1 Pet 1:14-16](#)

In Leviticus 19, it is repeated over and over again that God proclaims over the Israelites *"I am the Lord"*. In verse 36 we see that it was He *"who brought you out of the land of Egypt."* This speaks of the covenant God made with the Israelites in bringing them out of slavery in Egypt – the formation of God's people and setting them apart from all the pagan peoples surrounding them. In 1 Peter, this call of holiness extends from just the Israelites in the OT, to all people in the NT and today.

**1. Our holy living is in response to God's act of salvation *Exo 20:2; cf Lev 19:2b, 26b***

The Israelites being brought out of Egypt is about historic redemption. It is based on God's graciousness and the people who responded to Him and committed themselves to Him in thanksgiving.

Similarly when we claim to profess the faith, there needs to be a change in the way we think and live because when we say we commit our lives to God, we are claiming the promise for irreversible change from being enslaved to sin and death, and be free and alive in Christ. The Gospel is not for the afterlife – it is for the now.

**2. Our holy living is rooted in God's character *Lev 19:2***

God himself defined what holiness is. He is pure and perfect. Jesus during His time on earth was a glimpse of holy living. In the same fashion, we are to function as witnesses to the world through good Christian conduct.

## **II God Called Us to be Distinctive**

**1. Distinctive in our religious life *Lev 19:3-8, 1 Pet 1:17***

After the exodus from Egypt, Israelites were taught to attend to worship as per God's instruction, and not to the ways of the pagans around them. Likewise in the modern era, we are to do proper worship with a proper attitude and heart. Total worship (from how we sing songs, listen to sermons all the way to prayer) is to be on God's terms and not our own. When the heart is right, we will go to Him carefully and with reverence.

**2. Distinctive in our everyday life *Lev 19:19-32, Eph 4:22-24, Matt 7:20***

In the days of the Old Testament, the Israelites were taught how to be inwardly and outwardly exclusive for God, essentially branding themselves different from their pagan neighbours. They were to rely on prophets and priests to know the will of God, not trying to pry it out of reluctant deities

via self-harm or occultic practices such as seances and fortune-telling. They were made exclusive by restricting what foods they eat, materials they wear, how they rear livestock and sow crops.

Similarly, we as believers are to make ourselves distinct from the world's standards. We are to go into God's Word and choose to be different in the way we live in terms of integrity (such as ethics, morals, finances, politics, business and work) and in living day to day (such as the language used, modesty for both male and female bodies, conduct both at work and at home).

The quality of the fruit of our choices in life will reveal the nature of the tree that produces it. Our conduct should reflect God's character.

### **3. Distinctive in our treatment of one another** *Levi 19:11-18*

Just as the Israelites were instructed to care for foreigners living with them, we are to provide humane treatment for all who are created in the image of God. Regardless if they are outside our family, church, community, even foreign workers, we are to treat them as fellow human beings, not lesser than human despite "feelings" and rhetoric of those in power. Love is to be the distinctive feature that separates Christians from the world.

## **III God Empowers Us to Live Distinctly Holy Lives** *2 Pet 1:3, Gal 5:16, 22-23, Rom 12:1-2*

God has given us a new heart and foundation to live holy lives. We are to be active participants in living God's way, by leaning into God instead of just our own strength and allowing God to mould us from the inside out.

### **Conclusion**

The Old Testament is our reference point of what God has in mind for those who say they believe in Him, despite it being a document of the past. Even as centuries passed, His expectations of His people remain the same - we are to set ourselves apart for Him to the world, and to be His witness in the world. When we profess the faith, holiness becomes our responsibility. We are to be trained into God's intention so that we are able to respond to the world and be recognized as His own.

### **Prayer - Trusting Jesus**

*Lord Jesus, I know I have sinned against You. And I am sorry and I want to turn away from all that is wrong. Thank You for making it possible for me to have forgiveness from You. Please Lord Jesus, come and be the Master of my life and help me by Your Spirit to live right.*

*In Your Name I pray. Amen.*



# SERMON REFLECTION

The term “historic redemption” struck a chord for me. It was not merely God keeping a promise to the Israelites’ forefathers. It is about God’s graciousness toward His people and the people responding to Him, committing their lives moving forward to His standards in thanksgiving. There was a transaction that happened there.

In this “metamorphosis” of becoming God’s People, the Israelites were to set their lives apart from the pagan practices around them and brand themselves as God’s People. There are a total of 613 commandments in Leviticus for the people of God. These include laws on food that was considered clean to eat, the materials to be used for clothing, how to worship God, how to treat each other as family, community and even foreigners, how to conduct businesses in an honest way, so on and so forth. They were to live markedly different in almost every way from everyone else around them.

In a similar fashion when someone converts to Islam or Judaism today, there is an outward change in the very physical sense. For example, there will be a change in the length of clothing worn, types of clothing worn, diet and living practices. All that declares, “Hey, I am from this religion and I am set apart for my god.”

Christians are very privileged in the sense that we are released from such a need for an outward change. Ours is much simpler sounding: be changed from the inside out. Through Jesus and the Gospel, we are no longer shackled by the cumbersome practices of the laws in Torah. Rather, we are free to practise the spirit of the Law that has been given to the Israelites. Reading Leviticus, let us consider and appreciate the fact that we are not required to observe the onerous number of commandments or

make drastic outward changes to our lifestyles. We can give thanks that coming to God has been simplified to nothing more than a child coming to the Father.

However, let it be impressed on our hearts, that even as God has made it much easier for us to come to Him, holiness has been, and always will be His standard. We are to allow ourselves to be changed from the inside out, to change our ways to His ways, and ultimately be made holy, set apart for His glory and pleasing in His sight.



Photo by Timothy Eberly on Unsplash

*Lord our Father, thank you for sending your son Jesus Christ into the world. Thank you for making it so much easier to come before you. Forgive us when we forget that you are Holy, and come to you in a lackadaisical manner. Help us to ingrain in the heart and mind through your Word that we are to be holy in our everyday because you are holy always. In Jesus's name we pray, Amen.*

*Contributed by Adeliyn*

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# APPLICATION

## **Note to Word facilitator:**

*As you prepare for this session, this is a great time to pray that the Holy Spirit will guide you to use the questions efficiently. You can select, modify or entirely create your own questions, according to the needs of your CG, especially if you feel that there are too many questions than required for the allocated time. The questions below are crafted with a certain flow in mind. You could use these towards the end or insert them in between your own sermon reflection and summary.*

## **Suggested Icebreaker Questions**

- Have you been teased or teased others for being Holy before? How so, and why did it happen?
- Describe a holy person [eg. by their appearances / conduct].

## **Suggested Word Introductory Questions**

- What comes to mind when you hear this word: *holiness*?
- What helps you to live a holy life? What stops you from doing so?

## **Suggested Questions linked to the Sermon:**

### **God Saved Us to be Holy**

- What is your view on salvation?
- Since professing the faith, how has that changed your view on life (What has changed/ been made different)?

### **God Called Us to be Distinctive**

- What is your view of worship? What is God's view on worship?
- How are we treating others that are "not like us"? (Focus on one area during discussion i.e. a family member, a church member, neighbours, etc)
- What is one decision you made this week itself that reflects a certain distinction as a Christ follower? What decision made or action taken didn't (in



hindsight)?

### **God Empowers Us to Live Distinctly Holy Lives**

- What changes do you want to see take place in your life that would reflect holy living unto the Lord?
- According to 1 Peter 1:3, His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. If this is true, what might be holding us back from being holy? (Eg job security, business problems, family priorities, addiction, a compartmentalized life, bitterness, anger, acute anxiety issue, etc)

### **Question Bank** *(Extra questions you can use to bring discussion further as you see fit):*

- Are you compartmentalizing worship? Does it fit into the point towards being holy? (Eg engaging only with parts of a celebration service and tuning out when speaker or worship leader's style isn't "your cup of tea")
  - What makes you distinct from your peers? (Depending on your lifestyle groups: parents with babies or toddlers/ preteens/ teenagers/ adults, young adult living with parents/ living outside the home)
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# PRAYER



Photo by Timothy Eberly on Unsplash

**Note to CGL:** You (or someone you assign this portion to), may lead by praying OR reading these prayers together as a CG during worship.

## **SAT-7, Middle East & North Africa (MENA)**

A ministry that serves the peoples of the MENA region through a Christian satellite TV service for 21 Arab countries, Iran and Turkey.

*Pray for:*

- The work of SAT-7 and its people as they look to God to make the love of God visible to millions of people everyday.
- The people in MENA that face daily challenges of poverty, oppression, and persecution.

- The millions of refugees from Syria and Yemen and the 300,000 homeless after the blast in Beirut in August.
- The finances of SAT-7.

## **Our Nation**

*Pray for:*

- Wisdom upon the King and Sultans of the 8 States to rule the states wisely, with good relationship with the rakyat of all races, keeping our government in check during this Emergency.
  - The Judiciary as they sit on a backlog of cases – money laundering, corruption, bribery, civil service (abuse of power), that God will work through the judges to dispense righteousness and justice.
  - The independence of government institutions – MACC, Jabatan Audit Negara, Immigration, Bank Negara – for good management of the nation's finances and rich resources.
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# **OTHER RESOURCES**

*Below are some links to resources for you. Do **CLICK** on the images below!*

## **FEATURED**

*In view of our current changing landscape that affects us individually and corporately, here are some featured resources for you this month!*



### 📄 Holiness

6 minutes 34 seconds

[youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com)

In this video, we explore the paradox that God's holiness ...

[Bible](#) [Doctrine](#) [Prayer & Spirituality](#) [Christian Living](#)

[Video Clip](#)



### 📄 Sacrifice and Atonement

7 minutes

[youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com)

In this video on sacrifice and atonement, we trace the the...

[Bible](#) [Doctrine](#)

[Video Clip](#)



### 📄 Overview: Leviticus

8 minutes 16 seconds

[youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com)

Israel's holy God invites them to live in His presence desp...

[Bible](#) [Christian Living](#)

[Video Clip](#)



### 📄 Holiness as the Church Bearing Fruit

[seedbed.com](https://www.seedbed.com)

Holiness, as we have seen, is not merely about eradicatin...

[Timothy Tennent](#)

[Bible](#) [Doctrine](#) [Teaching](#) [Christian Living](#)

[Article](#)

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*Be blessed by a compilation of inspiring DUMC Stories that you can share with others!*

