

Read the Whole Bible with Pastor

Monday (March 20) – Leviticus 18

Sex belongs only in the context of marriage between one man and one woman. Any kind of sexual relations outside of this are an abomination. The point of this section is not to provide an exhaustive list of all prohibited sexual activity. Instead, it contains specific examples of perverse sexual activity that were common in Egypt and in the nations occupying the land of Canaan. See how God's design for marriage has always been counter-cultural. The accusation that our Biblical understanding of human sexuality is just an old-fashioned social norm falls flat upon reading this chapter. Lord, have mercy upon us. We also live in an unclean land. Cleanse us from our sin through your service to us in Word and Sacrament.

Tuesday (March 21) – Leviticus 19

“You shall be Holy, for I the Lord your God am holy” (Leviticus 19:2b). Where does holiness come from? As you read this section, remember that the source of holiness is God. God comes to us and sanctifies us (makes us holy) through His means of grace. Through Word and Sacrament, He takes away our sin and sets us apart as His own people. This holiness which comes from God changes everything in the lives of His people. It changes the way they interact with their neighbors in their communities and the way they see the land they live on, the crops that feed them, the animals that are their livelihood, their family members, and the sojourner (the foreigner who lives in their land). God has called you and makes you holy. All our earthly blessings belong to God. He gives us the honor of being stewards of what belongs to Him.

Wednesday (March 22) – Leviticus 20, 21

Whether sacrificing to Molech was a means of guaranteeing the fertility of flocks and land or to achieve power and glory, the end goal was personal gain. Today, children are still sacrificed on the altar of Molech. In our land children are aborted to protect the financial positions, career paths, or reputations of their parents. Whatever the reason may be, the promised result is personal gain. God hates child sacrifice. All children, regardless of the circumstances of their conception, are knit together by God in their mothers' wombs. The Savior of the world was fully God and fully man from the moment of His conception. He did this to take the sin of the world unto Himself and carry it to the cross for us. Thanks be to God in Christ Jesus, He even carried the sin of sacrifice to Molech and the sin of abortion. Only by His precious blood is there forgiveness for every sin.

Thursday (March 23) – Leviticus 22

Priests had to be without any bodily defect (21:17, 18, 21, 23), just like defective animals could not be offered in sacrifice to God (22:18-25). The body of the priest was regarded as an offering to God. It was claimed by God and used by him. Though the blemished priest could not serve at the altar and burn incense, both blemished and unblemished priests ate the same

food. The blemished priest and his family benefitted from the physical integrity and service of the unblemished priests. Jesus has been anointed as our unblemished high priest. He offered himself as an unblemished sacrifice to purify and sanctify his fellow priests—all believers in Christ!

Friday (March 24) – Leviticus 23

Israel's calendar links sacred times with specific locations. The first of these locations is the tabernacle where God's presence dwells. The people were to travel to the sanctuary of the Lord for the Feast of Unleavened Bread and the Feast of Booths. The second location is the home. The Sabbath, the Day of Pentecost (23:17), and the Day of Atonement were all rest days from work which linked their dwelling places to the dwelling place of God. The third location is the land of Israel. The Feast of Unleavened Bread, The Feast of Weeks, and the Feast of Booths reminded the people that the land belonged to God and that it was his gift to them. The Israelite year was given to them by God and was organized around this rhythm of feast days. Our church year calendar is organized around the life and teachings of Jesus. It serves to make remembrance of God's promises a regular part of our lives. It ties our worship life in the sanctuary (our local congregation) to our homes and our whole lives.

Saturday (March 25) – Leviticus 24

Israel is given three ordinances concerning holy things: the lamps, the bread for the tabernacle, and God's Name. As you read this, consider how Christ has become for us the lamp and the bread. Christ is the light in the darkness that never goes out (John 1:5). Jesus is also the bread of life. In the Divine Service, the priesthood of all believers all eat the bread of the Presence in the heavenly sanctuary. In the New Testament, we are given the full revelation of God's holy Name. We call upon the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Martin Luther instructs us on the good way to use God's name: "Call upon it in every trouble, pray, praise, and give thanks."

Sunday (March 26) – Leviticus 25

God is the king of His people. Other kings in the surrounding regions would often proclaim a cancellation of all debts, freeing of slaves, restoration of land, and stabilization of the economy when they took the throne. God does something similar here, but He doesn't do it as a political gesture to gather support at the beginning of His reign. He does it to show His people that He is their God who released them from slavery and continues to do so. It is He who provides for them in this land which He gave them. Jesus the Messiah is the fulfillment of the year of Jubilee. Christ forgives sin, frees us from slavery to death, and promises us an inheritance in the new creation.