
LEVITICUS 22:1 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying,

Of the uncleanness of the priests, by which they were prevented from ministering in holy things, Lev 22:1-5. How they should be cleansed, Lev 22:6, Lev 22:7. The priest must not eat of any animal that had died of itself, or was torn by wild beasts, but must keep God's ordinances, Lev 22:8, Lev 22:9. No stranger, sojourner, nor hired servant shall eat of the holy things, Lev 22:10. A servant bought with money may eat of them, Lev 22:11. Who of the priest's family may not eat of them, Lev 22:12, Lev 22:13. Of improper persons who partake of the holy things unknowingly, Lev 22:14-16. Freewill-offerings, and sacrifices in general, must be without blemish, Lev 22:17-25. The age at which different animals were to be offered to God, Lev 22:26, Lev 22:27. No animal and its young shall be offered on the same day, Lev 22:28. How the sacrifice of thanks-giving was to be offered, Lev 22:29, Lev 22:30. All God's testimonies to be observed, and the reason, Lev 22:31-33.

LEVITICUS 22:2 "Tell Aaron and his sons to separate themselves from the holy things of the children of Israel, which they make holy to me, and that they not profane my holy name. I am the LORD.

Verse 2

Speak unto Aaron and to his sons, that they separate themselves - The same subject is continued in this chapter as in the preceding, with this addition, that besides the perfection of the priests, it was indispensably necessary that the sacrifices also should be perfect. In the service of God, according to the law, neither an imperfect offering nor an imperfect offerer could be admitted. What need then of a mediator between a holy God and sinful men! And can we expect that any of our services, however sincere and well-intentioned, can be accepted, unless offered on that living Altar that sanctifies the gift?

LEVITICUS 22:3 "Tell them, 'If anyone of all your seed throughout your generations approaches the holy things, which the children of Israel make holy to the LORD, having his uncleanness on him, that soul shall be cut off from before me. I am the LORD.

LEVITICUS 22:4 "Whoever of the seed of Aaron is a leper or has an issue; he shall not eat of the holy things, until he is clean. Whoever touches anything that is unclean by the dead, or a man whose seed goes from him;

Verse 4

Is a leper, or hath a running issue - See the case of the leper treated at large in the notes on Leviticus 13 (note) and Leviticus 14 (note); and for other uncleannesses, see the notes on Leviticus 15 (note).

LEVITICUS 22:5 or whoever touches any creeping thing, whereby he may be made unclean, or a man of whom he may take uncleanness, whatever uncleanness he has;

LEVITICUS 22:6 the person that touches any such shall be unclean until the evening, and shall not eat of the holy things, unless he bathe his body in water.

LEVITICUS 22:7 When the sun is down, he shall be clean; and afterward he shall eat of the holy things, because it is his bread.

LEVITICUS 22:8 That which dies of itself, or is torn by animals, he shall not eat, defiling himself by it. I am the LORD.

LEVITICUS 22:9 "They shall therefore follow my requirements, lest they bear sin for it, and die therein, if they profane it. I am the LORD who sanctifies them.

LEVITICUS 22:10 "No stranger shall eat of the holy thing: a foreigner living with the priests, or a hired servant, shall not eat of the holy thing.

Verse 10

There shall no stranger eat of the holy thing - For the meaning of the word stranger, see the note on Exo 12:43. The Jews suppose that stranger here means one who has had his ear pierced, (see the note on Exo 21:6), and that sojourner means a servant who is to go free on the Sabbatical year. Neither of these was permitted to eat of the holy things, because they were not properly members of the priest's family, and might go out and defile themselves even with the abominations of the heathen; but the servant or slave that was bought with money, Lev 22:11, might eat of these things, because he was the property of the master for ever. We see that it was lawful, under the Mosaic economy, to have slaves under certain restrictions; but these were taken from among the heathen, and instructed in the true religion: hence we find, as in the above case, that they were reckoned as a part of the priest's own family, and treated as such. They certainly had privileges which did not extend either to sojourners or to hired servants; therefore their situation was incomparably better than the situation of the slaves under different European governments, of whose souls their pitiless possessors in general take no care, while they themselves venture to profess the Christian religion, and quote the Mosaic law in vindication of their system of slavery. How preposterous is such conduct! and how intolerable!

LEVITICUS 22:11 But if a priest buys a slave, purchased by his money, he shall eat of it; and such as are born in his house, they shall eat of his bread.

LEVITICUS 22:12 If a priest's daughter is married to an outsider, she shall not eat of the heave offering of the holy things.

LEVITICUS 22:13 But if a priest's daughter is a widow, or divorced, and has no child, and has returned to her father's house, as in her youth, she may eat of her father's bread: but no stranger shall eat any of it.

Verse 13

But if the priest's daughter be a widow - and is returned unto her father's house - A widow in Bengal not infrequently returns to her father's house on the death of her husband: the union betwixt her and her own family is never so dissolved as among European nations. Thousands of widows in Bengal, whose husbands die before the consummation of marriage, never leave their parents - Ward.

LEVITICUS 22:14 "If a man eats something holy unwittingly, then he shall add the fifth part of its value to it, and shall give the holy thing to the priest."

Verse 14

Then he shall put the fifth part thereof unto it - The holy thing of which he has unknowingly eaten shall be fairly valued, and to this value he shall add one fifth more, and give the whole to the priest.

LEVITICUS 22:15 The priests shall not profane the holy things of the children of Israel, which they offer to the LORD,

LEVITICUS 22:16 and so cause them to bear the iniquity that brings guilt, when they eat their holy things; for I am the LORD who sanctifies them."

LEVITICUS 22:17 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying,

LEVITICUS 22:18 "Speak to Aaron, and to his sons, and to all the children of Israel, and say to them, 'Whoever is of the house of Israel, or of the foreigners in Israel, who offers his offering, whether it be any of their vows, or any of their freewill offerings, which they offer to the LORD for a burnt offering;

LEVITICUS 22:19 that you may be accepted, you shall offer a male without defect, of the bulls, of the sheep, or of the goats.

LEVITICUS 22:20 But whatever has a defect, that you shall not offer; for it shall not be acceptable for you.

Verse 20

Whatsoever hath a blemish - The same perfection is required in the sacrifice that was required in the priest; see on Lev 22:2 (note), and the notes on Leviticus 21 (note).

LEVITICUS 22:21 Whoever offers a sacrifice of peace offerings to the LORD to accomplish a vow, or for a freewill offering, of the herd or of the flock, it shall be perfect to be accepted. It shall have no defect.

LEVITICUS 22:22 Blind, injured, maimed, having a wart, festering, or having a running sore: you shall not offer these to the LORD, nor make an offering by fire of them on the altar to the LORD.

LEVITICUS 22:23 Either a bull or a lamb that has any deformity or lacking in his parts, that you may offer for a freewill offering; but for a vow it shall not be accepted.

Verse 23

That hath anything superfluous or lacking - The term שרוע sarua signifies any thing extended beyond the usual size, and the term קלוט kalut signifies any thing unusually contracted; and both mean any monstrosity, whether in redundance or defect. Such things, it seems, might be offered for a freewill-offering, because that was not prescribed by the law; God left it to a man's piety and gratitude to offer such additional gifts as he could: what the law required was indispensably necessary, because it pointed out the Gospel economy; but he that made a vow to offer such a sacrifice as the law had not required, could of course bring an imperfect offering. Some contend that the last clause of this verse should be thus read: If thou offer it either for a freewill-offering, or for a vow, it shall not be accepted. It was the opinion of the Jews, and it appears to be correct, that none of these imperfect animals were ever offered on the altar; but the person who made the freewill-offering of such things as he had, sold the animal, and gave its price for the support of the sanctuary.

LEVITICUS 22:24 That which has its testicles bruised, crushed, broken, or cut, you shall not offer to the LORD; neither shall you do thus in your land.

Verse 24

Bruised, or crushed, or broken, or cut - That is, no bullock or lamb that is injured in any of the above ways, shall be offered unto the Lord.

LEVITICUS 22:25 Neither shall you offer the bread of your God from the hand of a foreigner of any of these; because their corruption is in them. There is a defect in them. They shall not be accepted for you.”

Verse 25

Their corruption is in them - Viz., they are bruised, crushed, broken, etc.

LEVITICUS 22:26 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying,

LEVITICUS 22:27 “When a bull, or a sheep, or a goat, is born, then it shall remain seven days with its mother; and from the eighth day and thenceforth it shall be accepted for the offering of an offering made by fire to the LORD.

Verse 27

When a bullock - is brought forth - This is a most unfortunate as well as absurd translation. The creature called an ox is a bull castrated; surely then a bullock was never yet brought forth! The original word שׁוֹר shor signifies a bull, a bullock, or indeed any thing of the neat kind: here, even common sense required that it should be translated calf; and did I not hold myself sacredly bound to print the text of the common version with scrupulous exactness, I should translate the former clause of this verse thus, and so enter it into the text: When a Calf, or a Lamb, or a Kid is brought forth, instead of, When a bullock, a sheep, or a goat is brought forth, the absurdity of which is glaring.

Seven days under the dam - In vindication of the propriety of this precept it may be justly asserted, that the flesh of very young animals is comparatively innutritive, and that animal food is not sufficiently nourishing and wholesome till the animal has arrived at a certain growth, or acquired the perfection of its nature. There is something brutish in eating the young of beast or fowl before the hair and hoofs are perfect in the one, and the feathers and claws in the other. Before this period their flesh is not good for food. See the note on Lev 9:1.

LEVITICUS 22:28 Whether it is a cow or ewe, you shall not kill it and its young both in one day.

Verse 28

Ye shall not kill it and her young in one day - This precept was certainly intended to inculcate mercy and tenderness of heart; and so the Jews understood it. When it is necessary to take away the lives of innocent animals for the support of our own, we should do it in such a way as not to blunt our moral feelings; and deplore the necessity, while we feel an express gratitude to God for permission, to do it.

LEVITICUS 22:29 "When you sacrifice a sacrifice of thanksgiving to the LORD, you shall sacrifice it so that you may be accepted.

LEVITICUS 22:30 It shall be eaten on the same day; you shall leave none of it until the morning. I am the LORD.

Verse 30

Leave none of it until the morrow - See the note on Lev 7:15.

LEVITICUS 22:31 "Therefore you shall keep my commandments, and do them. I am the LORD.

LEVITICUS 22:32 You shall not profane my holy name, but I will be made holy among the children of Israel. I am the LORD who makes you holy,

Verse 32

Neither shall ye profane my holy name - God's name is profaned or rendered common when we treat his commands as we often do those of our fellows, when they do not appear to have self-

interest to recommend them. He therefore profanes God's holy name who does not both implicitly believe and conscientiously obey all his words and all his precepts.

I will be hallowed among the children of Israel - The words children of Israel, בני ישראל, beney Yishrael, which so frequently occur, should be translated either the descendants or posterity of Israel, or the people of Israel. The word children has a tendency to beget a false notion, especially in the minds of young people, and lead them to think that children, in the proper sense of the word, i. e., little ones, are meant.

LEVITICUS 22:33 who brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God. I am the LORD.”

Verse 33

Brought you out of the land of Egypt - By such a series of miraculous interferences, to be your God - to save you from all idolatry, false and superstitious worship, teach you the right way, lead and support you in it, and preserve you to my eternal kingdom and glory. God, infinite in his own perfections, has no need of his creatures; but they need him; and, as a source of endless felicity, he opens himself to all his intelligent offspring.