



# ~ Thought For The Day ~

~gathering from the 4 winds~

“come just as you are”

**Refresh, Restore, Rebuild = Healing**



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## Prayer

Lord, help me learn how to avoid misjudging and misperceiving other people. I know that when I misjudge someone, it affects my opinion of that person in a way that can open a door to the devil in our relationship with each other. I don't want to give the devil an inch in any of my relationships, so I need You to help me think cautiously, to take time to get to know people, and to give them the benefit of the doubt when I don't understand something they say or do. Help me give people the same mercy I would expect them to give me. And help me get started on this path today. Fill me with discernment and wisdom, and remind me that I am not a miniature Holy Spirit or a Judge, but that I am allowed to test the spirits, but if that person has strayed I am to lead them back in love, and to do it the way that You have it written, God Father. Also remind me and place it in my heart and spirit that I am always to love my neighbor as myself, and to forgive as You forgave me, in Jesus' name. Amen.

## Scripture

Leviticus 21: 1-24 (AMP)

1 THE LORD said to Moses, Speak to the priests [exclusive of the high priest], the sons of Aaron, and say to them that none of them shall defile himself for the dead among his people [by touching a corpse or assisting in preparing it for burial], 2 Except for his near [blood] kin, for his mother, father, son, daughter, brother, 3 And for his sister, a virgin, who is near to him because she has had no husband; for her he may be defiled. 4 He shall not even defile himself, being a [bereaved] husband [his wife not being his blood kin] or being a chief man among his people, and so profane himself. 5 The priests [like the other Israelite men] shall not shave the crown of their heads or clip off the corners of their beard or make any cuttings in their flesh. 6 They shall be holy to their God and not profane the name of their God; for they offer the offerings made by fire to the Lord, the bread of their God; therefore they shall be holy. 7 They shall not take a wife who is a harlot or polluted or profane or divorced, for [the priest] is holy to his God. 8 You shall consecrate him therefore, for he offers the bread of your God; he shall be holy to you, for I the Lord Who sanctifies you am holy. 9 The daughter of any priest who profanes herself by playing the harlot profanes her father; she shall be burned with fire [after being stoned]. 10 But he who is the high priest among his brethren, upon whose head the anointing oil was poured and who is consecrated to put on the [sacred] garments, shall not let the hair of his head hang loose or rend his clothes [in mourning], 11 Neither shall he go in where any dead body lies nor defile himself [by doing so, even] for his father or for his mother; 12 Neither shall he go out of the sanctuary nor desecrate or make ceremonially unclean the sanctuary of his God, for the crown or consecration of the anointing oil of his God is upon him. I am the Lord. 13 He shall take a wife in her virginity. 14 A widow or a divorced woman or a woman who is polluted or profane or a harlot, these he shall not marry, but he shall take as his wife a virgin of his own people, 15 That he may not profane or dishonor his children among his people; for I the Lord do sanctify the high priest. 16 And the Lord said to Moses, 17 Say to Aaron, Any one of your sons in their successive generations who has any blemish, let him not come near to offer the bread of his God. 18 For no man who has a blemish shall approach [God's altar to serve as priest], a man blind or lame, or he who has a disfigured face or a limb too long, 19 Or who has a fractured foot or hand, 20 Or is a hunchback, or a dwarf, or has a defect in his eye, or has scurvy or itch, or scabs or skin trouble, or has damaged testicles. 21 No man of the offspring of Aaron the priest who has a blemish and is disfigured or deformed shall come near [the altar] to offer the offerings of the Lord made by fire. He has a blemish; he shall not come near to offer the bread of his God. 22 He may eat the bread of his God, both of the most holy and of the holy things, 23 But he shall not come within the veil or come near the altar [of incense], because he has a blemish, that he may not desecrate and make unclean My sanctuaries and hallowed things; for I the Lord do sanctify them. 24 And Moses told it to Aaron and to his sons and to all the Israelites.

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**Leviticus 21–22. Priests and Sacrifices**

These chapters are an elaboration on the provisions of chapters 1–9 . Priests must be without physical defect and may marry only a virgin. Sacrificial animals must also be without defect and at least eight days old.  
(Halley's Bible Handbook; Henry Halley; 2000; Zondervan; Bible History and Commentaries; page 162)

Shall we turn now to Leviticus, chapter twenty-one?

As we have often told you, a priest had a two-fold function. First he was to stand before God representing the people, bringing their offerings before the Lord, and there standing before God for the people. Then he would come out and he would stand before the people, for God. He was the people's representative to God; he was God's representative to the people. He was a go-between. Thus, the priest was a special kind of an individual.

Even as in the New Testament there were special rules for the bishops, lifestyles that they had to adopt in order to be a bishop in the church. Certain rules that applied to the bishop that didn't apply to all the others within the church, because his life was to be exemplary. As Paul said to Timothy, "Be thou an example unto the believer" (1 Timothy 4:12). It is never a very effective leader who said, "Now do as I say". The truly effective leader will say, "Now do as I do," setting the example. Thus, the priest as God's representative was to be a special kind of person.

So in chapter twenty-one, God gives some of the special aspects of the priests and of the priesthood.

Now they were not to defile themselves for the dead among the people (Lev 21:1):

Now if a person died and you touched the dead body, you were considered unclean. Ceremonially you could not enter unto God until that day was over, until sundown. Then you'd have to take a bath and then you could come into the tabernacle. But for ceremonial purposes, approaching God purposes, you couldn't do it; you were unclean. Now the priest was never to touch a dead body of anyone except those of his own immediate family; that is, a mother, a father, a son, a daughter, or those of his immediate family, lest he would defile himself with a ceremonial uncleanness.

So that's what this is pertaining to in the first part in the twenty-first chapter, of those that he could touch.

His sister who was a virgin, that is near to him, who has no husband; But he will not defile himself, being a chief man among his people, to profane himself. Neither should they make any baldness upon their heads, [That is in a taking of a vow. Many times people would shave their heads. A priest was not to take that kind of a vow. He wasn't to get the Hari Krishna look.] and neither shall they shave off the corner of their beards, nor make any cuttings in their flesh (Lev 21:3-5).

In other words, his body was to be a rather unblemished kind of body. He wasn't to defile his body or to mark up his body, because really the priest was standing before God. Standing before God, God wanted the fellow to be whole and sound, and not weird looking and so these are the requirements.

They shall be holy [Or separated, the word holy is actually separated] unto their God, and not profane the name of their God: for the offerings of the Lord are made by fire. Now they shall not take a wife who was a whore, or profane; neither shall they take a woman who has been put away from her husband: [He was not to marry a divorced woman.] He is to be set apart; for he offers bread to God: [because the Lord said] I the Lord, which sanctify you, am holy. Now the daughter of any priest, if she would defile herself then she was to be burned with fire. And when the high priest had the anointing oil poured on him, then he was not to defile himself for any dead body, he wasn't to touch any dead body as long as the anointing oil was upon him, not even of his father, or mother; [Again dealing with a wife] He was to take a virgin of the children of Israel as a wife (Lev 21:6-14).

Now there were certain things physically that could disqualify a person from the priesthood, and God deals with the physical disqualifications.

If any man has any blemish, he shall not approach God, that is a priest can not be blind, or lame, or have a flat nose, or anything that is superfluous, [You couldn't have any weird growth on your body,] or a man that is brokenfooted, or brokenhanded, Or crookbacked, or a dwarf, he that has a blemish in his eye, or scurvy, or scabbed, cannot really approach unto God. No man that has a blemish of the seed of Aaron the priest shall come nigh to offer the offerings of the Lord (Lev 21:17-21):

So the physical disqualifications for those who would approach God.

(Through The Bible C-2000 Series; 1986; Chuck Smith; Commentaries OT & NT)

## CHAPTER 13

**Religion in the Home: THE FATHER AS PRIEST IN PATRIARCHAL TIMES:** IN THE DAYS of the early patriarchs, the father was the priest for the whole family, and this honor and responsibility of exercising the priesthood usually was bestowed upon the first-born son upon the death of the father. This practice continued until the law of Moses transferred this right to the tribe of Levi, which tribe then furnished the priests to Israel as a nation. 1 The altar. The religion in the homes of those early days largely centered about an altar upon which animal sacrifices were offered up to God. Thus when Abraham came into the land and had pitched his tent in the vicinity of Bethel, the Scriptural record says of him, "And there he builded an altar unto the Lord, and called upon the name of the Lord" (Gen 12:8). Later on it is recorded that he built an altar at Hebron (Gen 13:18). It is said that Jacob built one at Shechem (Gen 33:1-20). And then in obedience to the command of the Lord, he went to Bethel, and like his grandfather, built an altar to the Lord there. Anticipating doing this, he said to his family, "Let us arise, and go up to Bethel; and I will make there an altar unto God, who answered me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way which I went" (Gen 35:3). The altar in the home life of those early days helped to produce a sense of sin, a realization of God's holiness, and a knowledge that the way of approach to God was through a sacrifice. The altar was the forerunner of the family prayer life in a Christian home today, which is based upon forgiveness of sin through the blood of Christ of which the animal sacrifice was a symbol. The teraphim. In the land of Babylonia, from which Abraham had originally come, there was family worship of household gods, and the home had its altar along with clay figurines of these gods, which were called "teraphim." These family gods served as guardian angels of the home. At the death of a father, these household gods, or teraphim, would often be left to the oldest son, with the understanding that others' of the family would have the right to worship them.<sup>2</sup> When Jacob left the home of Laban in Haran, Genesis says, "Rachel had stolen the images [Teraphim] that were her father's" (Gen 31:19). Laban was very much agitated over this theft. He pursued Jacob's party and said to him, "Wherefore hast thou stolen my gods?" (Gen 31:30). But why was Laban so concerned about discovering those lost teraphim? Sir Charles Leonard Woolley, in charge of excavations at Ur of the Chaldees, tells of a tablet of that region which reveals a law that throws light on Rachel's theft. Dr. Woolley puts the law thus: "The possession of the household gods conferred the privilege of primogeniture."<sup>3</sup> Thus Rachel must have stolen her brother's birthright when she took her father's teraphim, and she was thereby seeking to make Jacob the legal heir to the wealth of Laban.<sup>4</sup> This ancient form of idolatry was vitally linked to family affairs. It would seem that Rachel brought forth those stolen teraphim when the family was about to move from Shechem to Bethel. Jacob said to his family at that time, "Put away the strange gods that are among you and be clean" (Gen 35:2). The presence of these relics of former days would indicate an effort to combine the superstitions and heathen charms of an idolatrous worship along with the worship of the true and living God. The teraphim appeared on several occasions in later history of the Israelites.

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION UNDER THE LAW:** The law of Moses was very definite in its requirement that parents must train their children in the knowledge of God and His laws. Concerning these divine precepts it said: "Teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons" (Deu 4:9). Concerning the carrying out of this commandment, one writer has said: "Religious education in the family, as it has continued, is a special mark Judaism"<sup>5</sup> It became the very solemn duty of Hebrew parents to teach their children the commandments of the law, and also to explain to them the real meaning of the religious observances. No doubt it has been this emphasis upon religious education in the family which has contributed so largely to the permanence of the Jew in history.<sup>6</sup> And it is also true that any failure of the Jews to fulfill their God-given mission in the world may be traced in part at least to their failure in family religious training.

**FAMILY PILGRIMAGES TO THE SANCTUARY:** A very important part of Hebrew family life was the pilgrimage made to the place of the sanctuary. "Thrice in the year shall all your men children appear before the Lord God, the God of Israel" (Exo 34:23). The whole family could go, but the male members were required to go on this pilgrimage. The feasts of the Lord came at these three seasons of the year. The element of thanksgiving was largely emphasized in most of them. The Lord made a special promise to those going on such a pilgrimage to God's house. "Neither shall any man desire thy land, when thou shalt go up to appear before the Lord" (Exo 34:24). With so many of the menfolk gone from their homes, God promised to look after these homes against any possible attack from an enemy while the family was away on this pilgrimage. The family of Elkanah was in the habit of making such pilgrimages. "And this man went up out of his city yearly to worship and to sacrifice unto the Lord God of hosts in Shiloh" (1 Samuel 1:3). It was while on such a pilgrimage that Hannah prayed for a baby boy, and in due time Samuel was born. The most famous example of a family pilgrimage to Jerusalem is of course that of Joseph, Mary, and Jesus. Luke reports it: "Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast" (Luk 2:41-42). We can scarcely imagine how much that trip to the Holy City must have meant to the boy Jesus. The journey alone would be thrilling to any child, but to Jesus it was being in his Father's House that gave him the biggest thrill of all (Luk 2:49). Some Bible readers have been perplexed because Luke says that Joseph and Mary went a day's journey before discovering that Jesus was absent from them. But the present-day Syrian customs of family religious pilgrimages throw light on what actually took place. Luke says: "They sought him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance" (Luk 2:44). On such pilgrimages, kinsfolk and acquaintances travel together in large groups, and the young people of the party are considered to be perfectly safe as long as they are with this group. On these trips parents often go for hours at a time without seeing their sons. It is quite probable that Jesus was with the caravan when it started out, and then was detached from his kinsfolk and returned to the city and to the temple.<sup>7</sup>

**THE BIBLE IN THE JEWISH HOME OF CHRIST'S TIME:** In the days when Jesus grew up as a boy in his Nazareth home, whatever else of the Hebrew Scriptures the youth may have been acquainted with, they grew up to hear recited a prayer called "The Shema." This prayer was in reality the quotation of three passages from the Pentateuch. It was repeated morning and evening by the men. And Jewish boys when they became twelve years of age had to be able to repeat this prayer. The three Scriptures that made up the Shema were: Deu 6:4-9; Deu 11:13-21; and Num 15:37-41. It is quite likely that after Jesus returned from that pilgrimage to Jerusalem, He would borrow the manuscript from the synagogue of Nazareth (if He did not have a copy of the Scriptures in His own home) and study

in it, especially the books of Moses and the prophets. In His teachings He often referred to these writers, and was especially fond of Isaiah and 8 Jeremiah. The widespread use of the Shema in Christ's time became with many a mere form with little or no meaning. It was possible for this prayer to become as vain as a heathen prayer. Doubtless Christ was protesting such use of it when He said, "But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen [Gentiles] do" (Mat 6:7).<sup>9</sup> The practice of the phylactery, which the Pharisees made such wide use of, was based on some of the Scripture in the Shema, and as used by them, was condemned by Jesus.<sup>10</sup>

**ENTERTAINING FELLOW-BELIEVERS IN NEW TESTAMENT TIMES:** In the days of the apostles, great importance was attached to the religious duty of believers entertaining fellow believers who came to their town. In time of persecution, such hospitality would be of great value. Luke tells of one such time of persecution thus: "Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word" (Act 8:4). How welcome a Christian home of refuge would be to one who had to flee from his home because of his testimony for Christ! The Apostle Paul stayed in the home of Aquila and Priscilla, while he carried on his missionary work in Corinth (Act 18:1-3). One of the qualifications of a good bishop Paul gave in the words "given to hospitality" (1Ti 3:2). And to laymen he stressed the importance of being "given to hospitality" (Rom 12:13). Peter told the saints, "Use hospitality one to another without grudging." (1Pe 4:9). The word translated "hospitality" means "friendly to strangers." Peter was not thinking of believers entertaining their Christian friends, but rather of their entertaining traveling Christians who were in need of food and shelter.<sup>11</sup> The hospitality among the early Christians promoted Christian fellowship, and thus strengthened growth in the faith. It must have exerted a great influence upon the youth growing up in the homes where it was practiced. (See also Chapter Seven, "The Sacred Duty of Hospitality.")

**CHRISTIAN GATHERINGS IN THE HOME:** The early gathering place for Christian worship was in the home. The earliest excavation of a church by archaeologists, where a date has been ascertained, is of a room within a house that was set apart for worship, and was thus furnished as a chapel. It dates back to the third century A. D.<sup>12</sup> It seems difficult for the twentieth-century Christians to realize that most, if not all, of the earliest churches met in homes. Dr. A. T. Robertson lists some of those early gathering places: The church in Jerusalem met: - in the house of Mary (Act 12:12) - at Philippi in the house of Lydia (Act 16:40) - at Ephesus in the house of Aquila and Priscilla (1Co 16:19) - and later in Rome (Rom 16:5) - and likewise there was the church that met in the house of Philemon in Colossae apparently (Philemon 2). The homes surely received a special blessing from that service. There was responsibility also.<sup>13</sup>

**JEWISH ATTITUDE TOWARD SICKNESS IN CHRIST'S TIME:** The Jews of that day were largely lacking in a scientific knowledge of medicine. This fact may be accounted for in their belief that sickness was caused by either the sin of the sick person, or of his relations, and that it was sent as punishment for that sin. Concerning the blind man, the disciples asked Jesus, "Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?" (Joh 9:2). Also, sickness was usually attributed to demons. Therefore, they considered that the cure was the casting out these evil spirits. Among them, it was the most pious rather than the most educated man who would have this power. Jesus referred to this practice when the Pharisees wrongly accused him: "And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out?" (Mat 12:27) These facts explain the Jewish lack of medical knowledge in those days.<sup>2</sup> Mark adds an interesting fact in his report of Christ healing the woman with the issue of blood. He says that she "had suffered many things of many physicians" (Mar 5:26). One writer quotes the Talmud of Babylon as authority for the fact that some of the rabbis themselves posed as physicians, and very queer remedies indeed were prescribed by them for a woman with this ailment. If one course of procedure did not succeed in healing, another one was suggested. One of these was this: "Dig seven pits, and burn in them some vine branches not yet four years old. Then let the woman, carrying a cup of wine in her hand, come up to each pit in succession, and sit down by the side of it, and each time let the words be repeated: 'Be free from thy sickness.'"<sup>3</sup>

**PREVALENCE OF SICKNESS IN PALESTINE IN CHRIST'S DAY AND IN MODERN TIMES:** The Gospel records tell of the presence of a multitude of sick people in the land, and how these were brought in great numbers to Jesus to be healed. "And at even . . . they brought unto him all that were diseased . . . and all the city was gathered at the door. And he healed many that were sick of divers diseases" (Mar 1:32-34). In the days before the British occupation of the land, and before the modern Jews brought scientific medical skill in the healing of disease, the Land of Israel was overrun with all kinds of afflicted people. One traveling through the land would scarcely ever be out of sight of blind beggars, or crippled people, or lepers, etc. Such a situation has served to illustrate the conditions under which the ministry of Christ was carried on so effectively, in meeting the need in the homes where sickness was present.<sup>4</sup>

#### **EXPECTATION OF SUPERNATURAL POWER TO HEAL BY A REPRESENTATIVE OF GOD**

Dr. Trumbull has called attention to a very interesting situation which he discovered in the Orient. He says:

"Another fact that sheds light upon the work of Jesus and His disciples in their ministry of healing, is the universal expectation, in the East, of the cure of disease through the supernatural power of some reputed representative of God. So it is, and so it has been."<sup>5</sup>

A multitude of people lay about the pool of Bethesda expecting an angel to trouble the waters and cure their sicknesses (Joh 5:1-4). A blind beggar was given an orange and a crust of bread, but he pointed to his sightless eyes, and asked Dr. Trumbull to cure his blindness. He thought that this traveler was a representative of God who could heal him. Such is the faith that exists in the East, in modern times. This universal faith in divine power to heal, in Messianic times, presented Jesus and His apostles with a marvelous opportunity to demonstrate the healing power of a compassionate God.<sup>6</sup>

(Wight Manners; Manners and Customs of Bible Lands; Wight, Fred H.; 1953; Reference Customs)

(AMP Bible; The Everyday Life Bible; Joyce Meyers; Scripture; Commentaries; Past Pastor Sermons; Dictionary; 2006; pg 190-191)  
(Word 9 Bible Software; 2010; Concordance, Dictionary, Scripture, Sermons of Saints past, Devos; Sparkling Gems From The Greek)