

Families On Mission Week 4 Devotional Guide

Day 22 Exodus 14 Crossing The Red Sea

WHOA! What an incredible account we get to read about in today's passage. God showed Himself strong in an amazing way as He parted the Red Sea, allowing His people who were trapped with Egyptians on one side and the Sea on the other to pass through to safely on the other side.

The situation the Hebrews found themselves in at the beginning of this passage seemed very bleak. It had to feel like they were sitting ducks about to be taken back into slavery with likely even harsher treatment from the Egyptians

BUT GOD INTERVENED!

Possible meditation, discipleship, and discussion questions:

- *Throughout God's Word, we can see instances where circumstances looked bleak, but God's plan was never thwarted. God had chosen Israel to be His people, so He was certainly strong enough to protect them from the Egyptians-- and aren't you glad He chose to protect them in such a magnificent way?*
- *What are other ways we see God's protection over His people in the Bible?*
- *How has God protected and sustained your family against all odds?*

Day 23-- Exodus 20- The Ten Commandments

In chapter 19, we learn that it's been 3 months since the children of Israel left Egypt and began this journey to the Promised Land. God had already provided bread from heaven for them, given them water from a rock, made bitter water sweet and fit to drink, and given them victory over Amalek.



Today's familiar passage is where God initially gives the children of Israel the Ten Commandments. There are so many ways your conversation with your children could go in this passage, but I wanted to draw your attention to one very key parallel here:

In v. 3, the very first commandment is given, setting up the ultimate authority structure for us all: There is one God, and you shall not have any other gods before Him. Verses 4-11 give us 3 more commandments that flesh out our duties toward and relationship with that one God.

Beginning in verse 12, God shifts to our earthly relationships. Just as we saw at creation where God created the family unit to be the very first human institution, here we see how children are to learn the earthly authority structure within that same institution. In the context of family, children learn to obey and honor, what authority is, what is right and moral and what is not. In the same way, we are to recognize our heavenly authority, so we are to recognize our earthly ones.

The work you are doing as mom and dad truly is the most important work of your life. It's no wonder Satan has worked so hard to destroy the family unit, impress upon people the "antiquated nature" of that structure, and make moms and dads believe the lie that they aren't relevant enough, and even sufficient enough to make an impact on their children.

Families On Mission Week 4 Devotional Guide

Possible meditation, discipleship, and discussion questions:

- *What are some of the other gods that we could put before the One true God?*
- *What are our attitudes towards honoring our parents? Romans 1:28-32 puts this even more into perspective. Most children would easily (and rightfully) protest that they aren't "full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, and maliciousness..." (V29,) but what do they do with that little phrase in v30 that seems so benign compared to the rest of the list? "Disobedient to parents." It's easy to make the point that all sin is equal to a holy God, but in that Romans 1 passage, the Apostle Paul really makes that personal, doesn't he?*

Day 24-- Leviticus 1-- God's Instructions

The central theme of the book of Leviticus is that God is holy, and He expects His people to be holy. Throughout this book, we discover various ways that should look.

Leviticus also shows us that God made a way for unholy people to be forgiven and brought back into fellowship with Him through the shedding of the blood through sacrifice. The passage we are reading today will seem very hard to read with your children- as well it should be. Can you imagine taking the life of something just to show that you have sinned, and you are sorry? I can't even fathom the sorrow that must have caused adults and children alike for thousands of years.

Doesn't that make Jesus' once-for-all sacrifice for you even more precious? No longer are we required to bring our very best livestock and put our hand on his head (v4) before slaughtering it as a sacrifice for our sins. The One, truly holy, righteous, and perfect person Who ever lived became that priceless sacrifice once for all for us

at the cross. Now, we are able to come directly before the throne of God, clothed in the righteousness of Jesus rather than our own filthy rag works. (Hebrews 4 and Isaiah 64:6.)

Leviticus truly is an awe inspiring book!

Possible meditation, discipleship, and discussion questions:

- *This is a great opportunity to talk about whether or not you-- or your children-- can ever be perfect before God.*
- *Perhaps you'll want to ask your children how they would have felt had they had to make a sacrifice like that-- or to tell them how you would have felt.*
- *There are no longer sacrifices made like that before we can talk to God, because of what Jesus did when He died on the cross for our sins. How was Jesus able to stop that system of sacrifices that had gone on for thousands of years?*

Scientifically, the book of Leviticus contains information, warnings, laws, etc. that are WAY ahead of their time. That fact has led many to declare that Moses is one of the greatest scientific minds of all time. Of course, we know where his life-preserving wisdom originated, don't we? He got his laws from the One Who created us and knew best for us. As a homeschool mom, I always marvel at the science in this book, and it would be a great study for you and your older children one day to look into some of it and discover how God used those laws to preserve His people when thousands and thousands were dying from plague and disease through the centuries.

Day 25-- Leviticus 10- God's Instructions

Remember what we learned was the central theme of Leviticus? God is holy, and He expects His people to be holy. Multiple times throughout

Families On Mission Week 4 Devotional Guide

this book, we read of God telling the people specifically, “Be holy, for I am holy.” (11:44,45; 19:2; 20:7, 26)

We don’t talk a lot about holiness nowadays, do we? As a culture, we prefer to discuss “freedom and self-expression,” but at what cost? Do we, as God’s people, truly view God as holy and ourselves as needing to be likewise? Is that just an antiquated concept that no longer fits in our context today?

Today’s passage will force us to wrestle with that concept, for a quick gloss over this passage may well leave you confused and questioning why God would do what He did. As is always true with scripture, a little deeper study and evaluation will make everything seem significantly clearer.

It is so important to understand the timing and context of what you’re reading every time you approach God’s Word. The Bible truly is “quick and powerful,” alive and relevant for every time, but it was written in a certain time and that always should be considered when studying it. Let’s take just a minute to set some context here before diving in, for that will help us better understand what happened.

Already in Leviticus, God has started prescribing how He was to be worshipped. He laid out the guidelines for the various offerings in chapters 1-7. Chapter 8 began with the Lord telling Moses to consecrate Aaron and his sons to serve as priests or ones who act as mediators between God and His people. In chapter 9, we see Aaron serving as the high priest with his sons helping him. Then, something awesome happened. In 9:23-24, Moses and Aaron came out of the tabernacle and blessed the people and “the glory of the LORD appeared to all the people. And fire came out from before the

LORD and consumed the burnt offering and the pieces of fat on the altar, and when all the people saw it, they shouted and fell on their faces.”

CAN YOU EVEN IMAGINE? That fire that came straight from God on to the altar was to be tended by the priests for use for all the sacrifices as commanded in Leviticus 6:12.

I hope that context will help you better understand and explain today’s chapter, for we will see Nadab and Abihu, sons of Aaron and priests of the Lord, make very foolish choices and suffer the consequences of them.

What they did...

- They put fire in their censer (or the vessel they were to use to present the incense before God,) laid incense on it and offered “unauthorized fire” before the LORD.

Why that mattered...

- They assumed a role that was not theirs to fill. God had given that duty to their father as high priest alone, and offering incense was a very solemn thing, allowing the high priest to enter the Holy of Holies.
- Instead of taking the fire that God had just sent straight from heaven to be used in His worship, they lit their own to use in worship their way.

Nadab and Abihu were at best careless and irreverent in their approach to the worship of the Most Holy God. They took matters into their own hands and did things their own way instead of the way God had laid out for His people to worship Him. They disregarded all that God had been laying out in exchange for doing things their own way, and God’s punishment of them was quick and severe.

“Be holy, for I am holy...”

Families On Mission Week 4 Devotional Guide

Possible meditation, discipleship, and discussion questions and ideas:

- *We can never disconnect the Old Testament from the New, for God's story is one continuous account of the redemption of man through Christ. The same God Who gave all kinds of instructions about His holiness to the Jews in Leviticus is still holy today, and He expects His people to understand that and to approach Him with reverence even now. Check out I Peter 1. Marvel anew at the miracle of salvation as Peter explains it's impact in verses 3-12. Our relationship with God is something into which "the angels long to look." WOW!*
- *Therefore, says Peter, the natural reaction we should have to this miracle of redemption at such cost is detailed in the rest of chapter 1.*
 - *Prepare your minds for action.*
 - *Be sober-minded.*
 - *Set your hope in Christ Jesus.*
 - *Do not be conformed to old passions.*
 - ***BE HOLY AS GOD IS HOLY!***
- *Even in 21st century culture, we serve the same holy God as they did in the days of Moses. We have greater access to Him through Jesus, but we must still walk in holiness before Him. Yet, how often we as His body are guilty of exactly what Nadab and Abihu did-- doing things our own way, fulfilling our own desires, etc. rather than making our worship about the Holy God we are coming before.*

If we and our children would get a good view of the power and holiness of God, we would never be the same again.

Day 26-- Leviticus 11-- God's Instructions

Today's passage will give us a LOT of information about clean and unclean foods. In verse 44, though, we will start to see some stated reasons for all those dietary laws. "*For I am the LORD your God, consecrate yourselves therefore and **Be holy for I am holy**... I am the Lord Who brought you out of the land of Egypt to be your God. You shall therefore **be holy for I am holy**...*"

So, what does God's holiness and His expectations for the children of Israel have to do with food? There are a couple of things to think about and talk about through this passage:

1. We see in this chapter that God wanted His people to be separated from the pagan people groups around them. That would not happen the more they mingled with groups who they did not know. Their diet was to make their fellowships with other groups more difficult. (We see an example of this difference played out in Daniel 1 if you care to check that out.)
2. God was giving them very wise guidelines. We now know the science behind many of these laws, and it is solid-- especially for that climate and that time period. Through the dietary and sanitary laws God gave the Jews, they avoided the impact of diseases and plagues throughout history.

Possible meditation, discipleship, and discussion questions and ideas:

- *These seemingly odd dietary laws were all part of God's plan to set His people apart and to preserve them to Himself. Any guidelines, boundaries or rules on*

Families On Mission Week 4 Devotional Guide

His people today are for the same purpose. We should all ask ourselves if we are willing to “be holy as God is holy.” even if it means looking, acting, or talking differently than those around us.

Day 27-- Leviticus 16-- Day of Atonement

Today we will get a much clearer view of just how short Nadab and Abihu’s personally conceived strategy for entering God’s presence actually fell from God’s standards.

“Be ye holy, as I am holy.” We must not forget that as we read here of the prescribed way the priests had to prepare themselves to even be able to make the sacrifices for the people. Don’t forget that these sacrifices had to be made year after year, so the preparation, the cleansing, and the prescribed activities surrounding them were an ever-present reminder of their unworthiness to be in the presence of a holy God.

Possible meditation, discipleship, and discussion questions and ideas:

- *Do we still have to sacrifice animals to God in this way? Why or why not?*
- *Why was Jesus’ sacrifice the last one needed?*
- *Can we be holy enough in our own goodness to enter God’s presence?*

Day 28-- Leviticus 25- Year of Jubilee

If you rush through this chapter, you’ll miss some pretty amazing principles by making the assumption that you’re merely reading about ancient Jewish law. Notice that the chapter begins and ends similarly, with God noting His Lordship over the people and the land.

Since God had given them the land, He certainly had the right and authority to tell them how to live in it. Both the Sabbath year and the Year of

Jubilee would have forced the Hebrew people to put their trust solely in God and to acknowledge His ownership of them and all they have.

Possible meditation, discipleship, and discussion questions:

- *These laws were counterintuitive, and by my research, there is little evidence to suggest the Jews ever really kept these as prescribed. If you or your older kids are interested, it would be a fascinating study to dive deeper into these laws and try to trace the history of them.*
- *What did Jesus tell His followers about His kingdom and His ways? They are not like the we would expect-- the last would be first, to lead you serve, etc.*

This was a LONG week of content, but I pray that the background information offered for the chapters we covered in Leviticus was helpful for you as you tried to understand the significance of it and why it’s important to include in your reading with your children.