

### LEVITICUS

#### Lesson 32 - Chapter 22

This chapter contains a series of rules about priests and their families eating the food sacrificed to Yehoveh. Remember that the priests' chief food supply was those things brought by the people of Israel for sacrifice in the Tabernacle and later the Temple.

What is also noteworthy is that a direct parallel is drawn between the requirement of perfection for the priests who offer the sacrifices and the sacrificial animals themselves. Even the description of the **nature** of the banned blemishes on priests and on the sacrificial animals is similar.

Look at the list of defects that ends chapter 21; neither priest nor animal could come before the Lord (meaning they could not take their roles in the sacrificial process) if any of the following defects were noted: blindness, a broken or injured arm or leg, Scurvy, running sores, a limb which is too long or too short, crushed or missing testicles, or a growth in the eye.

God's definition of perfection, which is synonymous with the phrase "without blemish", is what is being defined in this list of disqualifying defects. It is clear that NO priest or animal was ever utterly perfect. It is instructive for our understanding of this requirement for perfection that modern day Rabbis who are actively searching for a "perfect" Red Heifer since the Jews' return to the Holy Lands have yet to find one. This is because it is the Rabbis who have defined what "perfect" means for the Red Heifer that standard has thus far fallen short. My point is that we must approach the supposed physical perfection of priest and sacrificial animal with some common sense; Yehoveh sets down definitions of perfection that were broad enough to allow for the natural variations and built-in imperfections that occur among all humans and animals, without being so wrapped up in punctilious detail that none could ever hope to qualify. The blemishes we see listed are the most obvious and easily detectible and so affected only a rather small fraction of the population of both priests and clean animals.

And without detouring just yet, let me point out that this attention to detail (bordering on the absurd) went far beyond that which God had ordained; for this manmade definition of perfection was more opinion and personal preference and intellectualism than divine decree in its source. It was this system of tradition-gone-wild that Yeshua was constantly referring to when He complained about the burden of the law. It was the Rabbis' laws not God's Law that Yeshua spoke against, not the very same Law that Christ Himself had made. It was man's ridiculous rules and regulations that were unachievable not God's fair and just Laws that expressed His nature and character.

That said, is it not fascinating that eventually Messiah would fulfill not only ALL the

requirements of the perfect priest, but for the perfect sacrificial substitute as well. A level of perfection that was so far beyond man's ability to comprehend that it had to be God Himself that took on the role of High Priest AND atoning sacrifice.

Let's look at a few of these N.T. verses that connect these commands of Leviticus with Yeshua's purpose.

**CJB Hebrews 7:23 *Moreover, the present cohanim are many in number, because they are prevented by death from continuing in office. 24 But because he lives forever, his position as cohen does not pass on to someone else; 25 and consequently, he is totally able to deliver those who approach God through him; since he is alive forever and thus forever able to intercede on their behalf. 26 This is the kind of cohen gadol that meets our need- holy, without evil, without stain, set apart from sinners and raised higher than the heavens; 27 one who does not have the daily necessity, like the other cohanim g'dolim, of offering up sacrifices first for their own sins and only then for those of the people; because he offered one sacrifice, once and for all, by offering up himself. 28 For the Torah appoints as cohanim g'dolim men who have weakness; but the text which speaks about the swearing of the oath, a text written later than the Torah, appoints a Son who has been brought to the goal forever.***

Here is a detailed explanation comparing the Levite priests.....more specifically the High Priest..... To Jesus and His ministry. Yeshua became the permanent High Priest upon His death and resurrection. Not LIKE a High Priest....but as a real High Priest; and this because a High Priest, a mediator, is still needed to make intercession on our behalf.

**CJB Hebrews 9:11 *But when the Messiah appeared as cohen gadol of the good things that are happening already, then, through the greater and more perfect Tent which is not man-made (that is, it is not of this created world), 12 he entered the Holiest Place once and for all. And he entered not by means of the blood of goats and calves, but by means of his own blood, thus setting people free forever. 13 For if sprinkling ceremonially unclean persons with the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer restores their outward purity; 14 then how much more the blood of the Messiah, who, through the eternal Spirit, offered himself to God as a sacrifice without blemish, will purify our conscience from works that lead to death, so that we can serve the living God! 15 It is because of this death that he is mediator of a new covenant [or will]. Because a death has occurred which sets people free from the transgressions committed under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promised eternal inheritance.***

Just as Yeshua is the High Priest He is also compared to the sacrificial animals; goats and bulls and heifers that He replaces with Himself.

Now notice it also defines exactly which sins or transgressions that His blood atones for as it says ".....the transgressions that were committed under the first covenant"...referring to the Law of the Torah. The New Covenant deals with HOW atonement is achieved and WHO is included among those that are permitted to use this new level of atonement for sin; and this NEW and unprecedented level is Christ's blood because it is applied once and for all (with the caveat

that the permitted group who may take advantage of this permanent method of atonement is ONLY those who trust in what Christ did. All others are excluded).

So let's be very clear about what is happening here as so vividly stated and yet routinely misused: we commit sins, and Messiah's blood makes our atonement. What is a sin? It is a transgression against the FIRST covenant. What is the first Covenant? The Law of the Torah.

See, the New Testament story of Jesus is all about a new level of atonement, not a new law. From an earthly sense it is as though we Americans retained all the same laws on our books, and we even determined that all the punishments remain the same as well. HOWEVER now someone else, a volunteer, can pay all those fines and serve that jail time, and even take our place in the death chamber.

How do I know that this is the case? How do I know FOR SURE that the BOTH the Law and its penalties remain; that ONLY the penalty has been transferred to Yeshua to bear for those who trust Him? Let me give you that piece of the puzzle:

**CJB Matthew 5:17 *"Don't think that I have come to abolish the Torah or the Prophets. I have come not to abolish but to complete. 18 Yes indeed! I tell you that until heaven and earth pass away, not so much as a yud or a stroke will pass from the Torah- not until everything that must happen has happened. 19 So whoever disobeys the least of these mitzvot and teaches others to do so will be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven. But whoever obeys them and so teaches will be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven.***

How much more plain spoken can it get? If Christ abolished the Laws themselves, then most certainly much more than a small letter or a stroke was changed. If Christ kept the laws but abolished the penalty contained within the Law for breaking the Law, then most certainly much more than a small letter or a stroke was changed. But He said NOT the tiniest piece of it would pass, and I'll take His word for it.

Indeed some of the law **has** transformed (for lack of a better word) FOR THOSE WHO TRUST HIM. For one thing He **is** our sacrifice and our High Priest once and for all (meaning all who trust).

Even more He has accomplished for us, His bride, the requirement that we have been reading about throughout Leviticus: we must be **perfect** is we're going to be part of Yeshua's priesthood because being a priest means having access to God that others don't have. Listen to this:

**CJB Ephesians 5:25 *As for husbands, love your wives, just as the Messiah loved the Messianic Community, indeed, gave himself up on its behalf, 26 in order to set it apart for God, making it clean through immersion in the mikveh, so to speak, 27 in order to present the Messianic Community to himself as a bride to be proud of, without a spot, wrinkle or any such thing, but holy and without defect.***

We have been **declared** perfect, blemish free priests: the bride of the High Priest. And His

spiritual Living Water that makes us clean accomplished this. You see blemishes and defects weren't necessarily sin but they **were** uncleanness. But these blemishes and defects could BECOME sin if we presented something to God that had blemishes and was full of defects, like ourselves for instance. And the way that happens is when we present our blemished lives and works, so riddled with defect, and say to God that by means of my own efforts and character I think I am good enough to commune with you, and to be allowed into your Heaven. Yeshua had to help us in two primary ways: 1st, He atoned for our sinful natures and sinful behavior by means of His blood; 2nd, Christ purified us from uncleanness by His Living Water.

How amazingly this fits utterly hand in glove with all we've been learning in the traditionally neglected (if not despised) book (at least by Christians) in the entire Bible: Leviticus. A book that is supposedly dead and obsolete and irrelevant; and yet we see every aspect of its rules and commands happening on a spiritual level in the New Testament.

I tell you truly there is utterly no way to grasp the depth of what happens under the New Covenant without first understanding the Torah. Let's read Leviticus chapter 22.

### **READ LEVITICUS CHAPTER 22 all**

This chapter is primarily about explaining circumstances under which priests may not officiate at sacrifices NOR eat the food that was brought as sacrifices.

And the first thing that is commanded is that a priest is disqualified from eating the sacred donations.....the offerings.....if he is in a state of impurity for some reason. It says that if a priest DOES eat of that food then he is to be cut-off (**karet**) from the Lord. This time cut-off does not mean that the priest is to be killed or sent away; it simply means that he is to be removed from Yehoveh's presence in the sense that he is to be removed from his priestly duties presumably for some unspecified time, likely until he is ritually clean again.

Starting in verse 4 we get a series of examples of things that can cause a priest to become unclean, and which therefore means that priest cannot eat the food brought as sacred offerings by the people. Most of the types of uncleanness mentioned require an 8-day cycle of ritual cleansing before the priest is once again considered pure (the number 8 symbolizes atonement and redemption). But in a somewhat confusing statement verse 6 then says that "that person" shall only be unclean until sunset. What gives? What happened to the normal 8-day cycle of being cleansed from impurity that is ordained in earlier chapters?

The answer is that two different situations are being spoken of here. The first situation is where a priest directly defiles himself by committing an act that is prohibited such as the priest touching a dead body, or having some type of bodily discharge, or an open sore. All of these things would render him unclean. But the second situation is one in which a priest touches someone ELSE who was made unclean by doing or having one of those prohibited things. Remember that we have been taught that uncleanness can be transmitted by touch. So the idea is that touching someone who is ritually unclean defiles the priest and that unclean person's impurity is then transmitted to the priest (kind of like a secondary infection). The first

situation of direct defilement requires the usual 8-day cycle of purification. The second situation of indirect defilement (caused by contracting uncleanness from a person or an object that was unclean) requires only waiting until sundown (meaning the end of the day and the beginning of a new day) and then a ritual bath to make that priest clean again.

Now did the unclean priest have to go hungry until he was clean again since an unclean priest could not eat holy food? No; it wasn't that he could not eat at all, he just could not eat **sacred** food. So he would have to purchase non-sanctified food (like all regular Israelites ate) or acquire it in some other way.

Verse 10 says that no outsider or layperson or non-priest may eat of the sacred offerings offered at the Tabernacle Altar. But then it goes on to define just who an outsider and an insider are. What we find is rather instructional as it concerns Israeli society in general so let's look closely at verses 10 and 11.

Essentially we get 5 categories or classifications of people who might be living under the roof of a priest and each category is then told whether or not they may share the priest's portion of holy food. Remember, in general the family of a priest including his wife and children are fully entitled to share in that priest's holy food portion. But Israeli society was not only different than ours, today; it was a bit more complex so more explanation is needed.

The 5 categories are defined as 1) a lay person, also called an outsider (at the beginning of vs.10), 2) a bound or tenant laborer, 3) a hired laborer, 4) a priest's purchased slave, and 5) a person born into the priest's household. Since different Bible versions vary all over the map as to the precise words they use to translate each of these categories, your Bible may use slightly different words than what I read to you and probably even combine a couple of these categories so the distinction between the them is lost. It helps a lot to use the original Hebrew so as to understand the subtle but important distinctions.

Permit me to reiterate: pay close attention to these distinctions and variations because it will help you greatly in understanding matters all the way through the O.T. and New. These classes are NOT well defined in the Bible; it's understood by the writer that you already know the subtleties (and therefore the significance) of each category in whatever context it's used. If we don't understand these Israeli society and family rules we'll get some strange ideas and misconceptions about what is actually happening and the principles they are operating under.

The first category spoken of is at the beginning of verse 10, and in Hebrew it concerns a **zar**. **Zar** is a common Hebrew word and it usually just means stranger or foreigner. But as it is used here, it means "strange" as in the sense of "not belonging" or "out of place". Using the term "lay person" is probably the best translation for a church going Westerner. The idea is simply that no non-priest (that is a person who is strange or foreign to the priesthood) is permitted to eat of the sacred sacrifices and donations. It can also include Levites who were at one-time priests but have been removed from the priesthood for some serious infraction. The one caveat to all this is that those who are considered "family" of the priest CAN eat the holy food that the priest brings home. The remaining 4 terms we're going to define basically states whether that particular category is to be considered as part of the priest's family or not, and

therefore eligible to eat the holy food or not.

The 2nd category spoken of, just a few words into vs. 10, is in Hebrew **toshav**. **Toshav** is a somewhat broad term and it can mean something like “guest worker”(usually meaning a foreigner). Perhaps it can be a foreign friend of the family who is staying for a while. It can even refer to a person who is being FORCED to live with the priest’s family, as a result of that person paying off a debt; therefore that **toshav** may in some cases be a Hebrew. Generally **toshav** indicates that there is no blood or in-law relationship therefore they are classified as friends or acquaintances NOT of a priestly line. A **toshav** is NOT a family member and by Hebrew thinking NOT property of the priest (like a slave) so he or she cannot eat the priest’s food allotment.

The 3rd category immediately follows the 2nd in our Bibles, and in some cases the two are even lumped together and presented as synonyms, which they are NOT. In Hebrew the 3rd category is **sakir**. **Sakir** means a hired laborer just as we think of it. Maybe it’s a day laborer or it could amount to a live-in maid. But the idea is that this person is NOT a slave of any kind nor are they a bondservant paying off a debt. They simply have a job and they’re paid for it. Most hired maids and servants DID live-in in those days, it was usually just part of the pay package.

The 4th category is presented at the beginning of verse 11 where most Bible versions will say “priest’s property” or “slave”. The Hebrew uses a series of words rather than a single word as we’ve had up to now, to define this category. And the words are **qanah nephesh**; literally it means “to acquire a living being”. A couple of words later it is added that this **qanah nephesh**, this acquired living being, was acquired by means of purchase with the priest’s own money (in Hebrew **qinyan** means something purchased and **kesepeh** means silver or some other type of money). So literally it says an acquired living being, a purchase by money.....a slave purchased from somebody. It was usually a foreign slave purchased from a slave trader because by law a Hebrew could not “own” another Hebrew.

What is key to notice is that THIS category of person IS considered family (against all modern logic) and therefore he or she IS permitted to eat the sacred food portion. In other words a **purchased** slave....in almost all cases NOT an Israelite..... is considered to be part of the family but a slave who lives with the family because they were forced to in order to pay off a debt (a bond-servant) was NOT considered family. A purchased slave is considered the priest’s own property while a bondservant is NOT the priest’s property. Make a mental note of this because this definition is important to the rest of the Bible.

The final category is usually described as those born into the family or household. Do NOT get the picture of the priest’s own children, here. That is not what is being referred to. The Hebrew word is **yelid beito** and while it literally means, “born into the household” it is NOT used in conjunction with the head of the household’s wife giving birth to his children. It is a term reserved for the children born from purchased slaves, from the priest’s **qanah nephesh**, who are not blood relatives of the priest. The children born from purchased slaves belonged to the slave owner just as does the slave.

Since several of these categories in one way or another involve servitude or slavery, I need to make clear that those slaves, who were NOT purchased, and therefore NOT family and NOT allowed to partake of the holy food given to the priest, were not starved. This simply meant that the food provided for them had to be purchased by the priest. Further don't get the idea that a purchased slave was somehow necessarily better off or better treated than a slave acquired by means of bond-servitude. Under the Law ALL slaves, no matter how acquired, or whether foreign or Hebrew....ALL slaves had to be treated decently and not abused, not starved, and not over worked.

Let me say this another way: every one of these categories is discussed and defined here in Leviticus 22 because the situation was that for one reason or another every one of these categories of people regularly wound up living in the home of a priest. The purpose of these categories ONLY pertains to whether or not they are entitled to eat of the sacred food portion assigned to the priest under whose roof they lived. And as we see some categories were and some weren't and it doesn't necessarily follow in the way we might logically think it would.

Verse 12 defines what happens if a priest's daughter marries outside of the priestly line; she stops receiving any of the sacred food. She is now joined to her husband so her NEW identity is with her husband and it ceases to be with her natural father and mother.

Yet if something happens via death or divorce and she has no other choice but to live once again in her father's house, then she once again qualifies to eat the sacred food as a family member. Notice the comment about an exception to this rule being "if she is without offspring". The idea is that if she had a son who is old enough to care for his widowed or divorced mother then it is HIS duty (according to the Law) to fully care for her. And since he would, by definition, NOT have been a priest then his mother would continue to be ineligible to eat holy food.

As one can imagine mistakes **were** made. Verses 13-15 deal primarily with what happens if someone unqualified to eat sacred food accidentally does. Understand that these rules apply ONLY when it is an honest, unintentional error and not a trick or a deception or an outright disregard for the Law; therefore the penalty is relatively minor as the accidental violator must pay the value of the sacrifice PLUS a 20% penalty. Accidents and lapses are given much mercy but **even then** there is a consequence (although it is typically small). Never can one affront Yehoveh's holiness (even without malice) and be given a complete pass. Let's not ever forget that.

I think verse 16 gives us a little hint of something that went on quite a bit among Israel; something that happened with regularity in most pagan cultures. At this moment in history God was in the process of leading the Israelites OUT OF their paganism with the giving of the Torah. Basically it says that the priests have a dual responsibility: they are to make sure that **they themselves** do not profane God's holy property (in this case specifically the food resulting from the sacrificial offerings), and secondly they are to make sure that the ordinary Israelites do not sin by eating the holy food to which they have no right. Easy enough to understand but then it goes on to say, "For it is I, Yehoveh, who make them sacred." This is not a throw-in phrase, in my estimation.

I believe what is being addressed here is the standard pagan belief that you can make YOURSELF holy (even god-like) by doing certain things. And one of the standard things you could do was to eat the food of the gods. Ingest holy food, and PRESTO! you become holy. We've talked previously about how we see all these mentions of the offerings being "food for God" and the smoke of the burnt offerings being "a sweet aroma for his nostrils". I have taught you that the Israelites were serious about those words. In their cultural thinking, which at that time was based on pagan concepts and practices born from 4 centuries of living in Egypt, even though Yehoveh didn't TELL them so it was merely common sense to them that God needed to eat, and had a nose that liked good smelling things (that's just how gods are). And the common element among all the pagan societies of that era was that the animals burned up on altars was ACTUAL food for their gods. Since it was holy food, if one was to eat of that food, it would transmit holiness to the one who ate of it. So holiness could actually be misappropriated (at least that was the thinking).

God was telling Israel something that he would have to tell them for decade after decade, and still so much of the Hebrew society didn't get it: HE makes holy. You can't sacrifice your way to holiness....you can't obey the Laws well enough to attain holiness.... and, in the current case, you can't EAT your way to holiness. You can only be DECLARED holy by the only one who has that authority, Yehoveh Himself. Following the Laws brought a kind of holiness, a kind of righteousness to the worshipper, but not the SAVING kind and not a spiritual kind. The kind it brought was the kind that comes from being obedient. The kind that comes from setting your heart and mind on believing that what God says is true, and that REAL life comes from living a Torah life. But the way all this happened was that it had to come in a precise, unchangeable order: FIRST you have to be redeemed by God, next you must be DECLARED holy by God, THEN you are to, out of gratitude and the awareness of the truth, follow Him in obedience. You have been made holy and righteous, now go and live a holy and righteous life. No other order will do and it remains so to this day.

We'll move pretty rapidly through the next several verses. I'd like you to notice, however, that where in vs. 18 it talks about anyone offering a "burnt offering", whether of a vow or a votive offering, our study of the Hebrew words for these offerings comes in handy. Because starting with verse 21 when it begins to speak of an offering for another sacrifice, we're not just getting a repeat of what God just finished saying a moment ago. Each of these are different kinds of sacrifices, and each with their own purpose and own protocol and own requirements of exactly WHAT the sacrificial offering is to consist of.

The first grouping of offerings (verses 18-20) are all based on the '**Olah** sacrifices, and the 2nd grouping (verses 21-22) is based on the **Shelamim** sacrifices. And, of course, God makes clear that no defect can appear on the animals used for these sacrifices; and further, as we saw last week, the list of prohibited defects of the sacrificial animal is precise and almost perfectly parallels the list that disqualifies a priest from officiating a sacrificial ritual. Clearly both the sacrifice and the sacrificer MUST be without blemish. Further the sacrifice MUST come from a certain prescribed group of animals and the sacrificer MUST come from a certain prescribed group of people (the Levites).

We saw earlier how Yeshua precisely paralleled this pattern. He had to be the blemish-free



sacrifice, which came from a certain group (the tribe of Judah), and He had to be the perfect priest of a certain type (the order of Melchizedek RATHER than the order of Aaron).

I would also like this opportunity to point out another principle that is laid out so very well but is easily overlooked; it says in verse 24 and 25 that not only must Israel not use for sacrifice any defective animals from their own herds, they also must not use foreign animals that have the same defects. Notice that there is NO prohibition against using foreign-raised animals for sacrifice; it's only that they must meet the same exact standard of being defect-free as for animals raised by the Hebrews and offered at the altar. Here's the thing; the principle is that the requirements for presenting to God that which is acceptable to God are universal. It doesn't matter if the source is Hebrew or gentile; perfection is the requirement. Israel doesn't get a break on this requirement nor do gentiles. This is a doctrine that Paul taught so diligently in various books of the N.T. Before Yehoveh, from a spiritual point of view, all humanity was the same; and when it comes to the requirements for being in His presence we're all the same; and when it comes to what is good and evil, clean and unclean, right and wrong, fair and unfair, just and unjust, holy and impure, ***perfect and imperfect***.....we're all the same.

So do not be deceived: if the requirement to be acceptable to God is the same for all (and in our era that requirement is trust in Messiah Yeshua) do you really believe that the rules and ordinances that define good and evil, clean and unclean, just and unjust, and so forth are different for different groups? That Yehoveh has plan A for the Jews and plan B for the gentiles as concerns righteousness and holiness before Him? Torah defines righteousness and holiness for all, and it defines life and goodness for all. God doesn't have one Torah for the Hebrews and another Torah for gentiles. But it sure seems like the institutional Church says so, doesn't it? The New Testament is for gentiles, the Old Testament for Jews. Yet God doesn't say, "well Hebrews, you have to be very strict on following the principles of my Torah, but gentiles can just kind of make it up as they go". Jews have no latitude but gentiles have no boundaries. In essence is that not the implication behind the standard Christian teaching that Torah is irrelevant for gentiles, but is alive and well for Jews? Let that marinate for a while.

Chapter 22 winds down by giving us a couple of ordinances regarding just how YOUNG a sacrificial animal can be and it is from the 8th day of it's birth and onward that it becomes suitable for presenting to God. Interesting that the requirement for Hebrew boys being circumcised (which is precisely symbolic of being presented to God) is the same: they must undergo b'rit milah on the 8th day after birth.

Next we see that no animal may be killed on the same day its mother is killed and vice-versa. This is generally regarded as simply an instruction to be a merciful and humane.

And finally Yehoveh reminds all of us just who He is: He is Holy and He is the one who has redeemed us. No one else is even capable. And He redeemed us for a purpose: He wants to be our God.

I'd like to wrap things up today by saying that the principles we continue to learn throughout Leviticus and Torah are either referred to or repeated throughout the N.T.; more than half of the words of the N.T. are simply quotes taken directly from the O.T. And it was the patterns

and principles that we're studying in Torah that Jesus elevated to all their spiritual intent. Jesus did NOT break the mold; He perfected it.

All these requirements of Leviticus that ONLY priests could approach God (which seem kind of unfair to us) and that priests could not bury their dead in some cases are all brought forward to the N.T.

Listen to 1 Peter 2:5 and 2:9 .....**CJB 1 Peter 2:5 you yourselves, as living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be cohanim set apart for God to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to him through Yeshua the Messiah.**

**CJB 1 Peter 2:9 But you are a chosen people, the King's cohanim, a holy nation, a people for God to possess! Why? In order for you to declare the praises of the One who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.**

As a Believer you are a priest; the only way one can be a priest is as a Believer. There are no Believers who aren't priests, and there are no priests who aren't Believers.

Now pay attention to Luke. **CJB Luke 14:26 "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father, his mother, his wife, his children, his brothers and his sisters, yes, and his own life besides, he cannot be my talmid.**

Nothing but nothing can be above God; if it is necessary that you MUST be separated from everything you are closest to on earth in order to follow Him, then so be it. The words of Luke are Jesus talking.

**CJB Matthew 8:21 Another of the talmidim said to him, "Sir, first let me go and bury my father." 22 But Yeshua replied, "Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead."**

Priests ordained by Jesus are to emulate the priests of Israel; just as the Temple priests could not deal with dead things, neither should Believers. Of course, as with all of Yeshua's teachings, he is raising the Torah rules to their full spiritual purposes; the examples of Torah are physical demonstrations of spiritual principles. This is NOT saying that Believers shouldn't participate in funerals. Rather it is drawing the distinction between those who will forsake all to follow Yeshua as so gain life, versus those who will cling to the ways of tradition and gain death.

We'll begin chapter 23 next time.