

So Moses went down to the people. He consecrated them for worship, and they washed their clothes. He told them, "Get ready for the third day, and until then abstain from having sexual intercourse." Exodus 19:14, 15

lectio // Exodus 19:7-25

This is so specific. Clean clothes and no sex. I understand that their clothes, although their garments were miraculously durable, still needed to be cleaned to go before God. But sex? Is this like the rumor that boxers and basketball players don't have sex the night before the fight or the big game? Was it distracting? Certainly, the common denominator couldn't be "dirty." Sex isn't dirty. Maybe it was solely based on focus. Maybe bathing (and laundry) along with no sex was the common link for focus? I know there are some pretty specific "additional" laws tagged on by the priests and scribes about cleanliness and bodily functions. Maybe his was part of it? Either way, as I have written on this passage before, God was THREE TIMES serious about anyone coming near the boundary markers - instant death! And the possibility of God's judgment being unleashed on the community? Whew. So intense. This would definitely put the fear of God in me to experience that warning. We say that fear is ineffective in the long run and that love is more capable of creating permanent change, but you see one of your brothers go wandering into the forbidden zone and get fried, and I'd say that would convince me! However, that didn't happen and God told Moses, go get Aaron and bring him up here. Imagine being Aaron at that point?

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Dad,

I understand the seriousness of the situation I just read about. I'm guessing that human kind had really gone off the rails as it pertained to that wonderful walk in the garden back in the beginning. The story of how you re-engaged with people (Israel) alone is frustratingly fascinating - speaking to Abram. I have no context of a family story that includes 400 years of slavery under a horrible leader. Makes me think of Jewish lives matter kind of theme. Yet, I know that all of what I read was necessary, not just in forming a new relationship, but laying the long groundwork of the law and its inability to save us. That story is even LONGER! We still try to work out our salvation! I am so grateful for your mercy, forgiveness. I am thankful I have been adopted by you into the family of God.

contemplatio

rest in the presence of God, allowing the words revealed to take root