

Leviticus

I. Recap:

1. We have made our way through creation, the Fall, the Flood, the Tower of Babel – the four major events in the first division of the book of Genesis.
2. And we've been introduced to Abraham, the father of the nation of Israel, his sons, Isaac, Jacob, who would be renamed, Israel, one of Jacob's sons, Joseph.
3. We've witnessed the exodus, the great outgoing, the redeeming of the nation of Israel from bondage and death by way of a lamb that was slain. We've watched the descendants of Abraham go from bondage to liberty so that they might worship the living God, which makes this book so very, very important for us to understand.
4. We've seen the children of Israel camped at Mount Sinai for a year. And during that time God gave them the Ten Commandments. And as we were looking at the Ten Commandments together we saw that God essentially commands two things from man

Now we're in Leviticus:

1. A lot of Christians struggle with Leviticus because it's full of descriptions of ancient rituals that haven't been performed for two thousand years. Those who are new in their study of the Bible, you need to understand that the New Testament teaches us that all of these ceremonies have been fulfilled in the person of Jesus in his sacrificial death on the cross

1. Colossians 2:16–17 (ESV) ¹⁶ Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath. ¹⁷ These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ.
2. But with that said - this book is very applicable for us tonight because it covers an important topic

The theme: The holiness of God...and what was required so that Man could be in the presence of God

1. God is “holy” in the same way the Sun is “Hot” - Both life giving and destructive if approached flippantly
2. Last week we saw that God reestablished a connection with Humanity post fall - Garden of eden to Mount sinai
3. Now He lays out ground rules to being in his presence
4. **Structure of Leviticus:** We’re gonna attack this book in a unique way - Start from the outside and work our way in...

Chapters 1-7 and Chapters 23-27 = Rituals - (worship)

Chapters 8-10 and 21–22 = Priesthood (service)

Chapters 11-15 and 18-20 = Purity (daily walk)

Center portion - Chapters 16-17 = The day of atonement

1. Rituals (Chapters 1-7 and Chapters 23-27)

These speak describe How God wanted the worship of the children of Israel to be...and they will speak to us about how our worship should be as well...

Chapters 1-7 Offerings

1. **Leviticus 1 is titled – The Burnt Offering (These first 3 were voluntary)**
 1. The burnt offering was the foundation of the Levitical sacrificial system. Israel was to offer burnt offerings to the Lord every morning and every evening
 2. These first 3 offerings were to be voluntary
 3. **Here's the picture:** it speaks of us gladly bringing our lives to the Lord, and offering our lives to the Lord completely.
 4. **Romans 12:1 (ESV) ¹ I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.**

2. **Leviticus 2 is titled – The Grain Offerings**
 1. When they entered the land of promise the manna stopped. After forty years of doing no farming they had to cultivate land, plant crops, wait for the growth of the crop, harvest their crop. Then they were to bring a portion of that labor, a portion of that harvest to the Lord. A part of it would be thrown on the altar. And it would be burnt on the altar. And the rest of it would be eaten by the priest.
 2. **And here's the picture:** In the grain offerings the worshipper brings his labor to the Lord as a recognition that their is a part of their worship
 1. for the student - and your studies,
 2. for the employee or employer - and your specific job that you do at work, for the mom - your housework,

3. for the athlete - your practice and your performance,
4. for the artist – your rehearsal, your performance. Leviticus 3 is titled – The Peace Offerings

3. Leviticus 3 – The Peace Offerings

1. The peace offering also has a distinction. The peace offering was also called ‘The Fellowship Offering.’ This offering was actually shared between three parties.
2. A portion of the offering was put on the altar and given to the Lord...Part of it was given to the priest, who would take that part home for his meal. And then part of it was enjoyed by the person bringing the animal.
3. So this offering was like a holy barbecue...promoting unity
4. 1 Corinthians 12:12 (ESV)¹² For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.

4. Leviticus 4 is titled – The Sin Offerings (These next 2 were mandatory)

5. Leviticus 4:1–2 (ESV) ¹ And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, ² “Speak to the people of Israel, saying, **If anyone sins unintentionally** in any of the Lord’s commandments about things not to be done, and does any one of them,
6. Guys, we need to understand that unintentional sin...is still sin nonetheless...it still disturbs fellowship with God
 1. To sin is to miss the mark - You can miss the mark unintentionally...but you still missed it

2. Husbands feels this - When your wife comes to you and says...I can't believe you just did that!!! and you say "Did what?"
3. We do that with God. Unintentionally we can grieve Him.
4. Now, in this case - The person realizes that they've done something wrong. When they realize they've done something wrong they were to bring the sin offering.
5. **Here's the picture:** That's how it should work for us too, We all do things unintentionally that Grieve God and others... That's human, the bigger question is when that sin is made known to you - now what are going to do about it?
 1. God says bring your offering of repentance - That's good advice for us today

7. Leviticus 5 is titled – The Guilt Offerings

1. Now it's interesting that in the trespass offerings there is not just the component of the offering for sin; but there is the component of restitution...They had to make restitution for the person they've wronged. They had to restore what was hurt or lost, plus twenty percent
 1. **This is a good picture for us:** Not only does sin create an issue with God, but sin also creates a fraction
 2. Often times restoration must be made in order for reconciliation to occur

3 Things the offerings teach us about worship in general

2. **1. The worshipper never came empty, never came empty-handed. He always had something to bring to the Lord -** The thing God wants most from you and I are our hearts, have you brought a heart to worship God tonight?
3. **2. The worshipper offered that which was costly. They weren't allowed to bring anything blemished to the Lord -** I think about David after he had sinned, Araunah wanted to give him all he needed to make a burnt offering to the Lord, but David said "No I'll buy it...I will give a burnt offering to the Lord"
4. **The worshipper was actively involved in the process -** Worship was never to be a spectator sport

2. Chapters 23-27 - Feasts and Sabbaths

The 7 feasts

1. Leviticus 23 and 24 deals with the seven feasts of Israel. In them we see that God always wanted his nation gathered together for times in the Word, worship, fellowship, and repentance.
 1. What God prescribed for Israel is really relevant to us. We need appointed times throughout the course of the year to gather in a special way –camps, retreats, conferences.
 2. **It is important to note these events and how they speak to us as N.T Christians**

Spring feasts

3. **Passover:** This was a day for them to remember their redemption from slavery through the hand of God - But it's also picture the death of Jesus. Our passover lamb
 1. 1 Corinthians 5:7 Christ our passover is sacrificed for us
 2. John 1:29 Behold the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world.”
4. **FirstFruits** - First Fruits was on the day following the Passover Sabbath. That would be Sunday. Anybody know what happened on the Sunday following the Passover in 32 A.D.? – the resurrection. So First Fruits is a picture of the resurrection of Jesus. The resurrection of Jesus guarantees the full harvest. Jesus risen guarantees that all who believe in Jesus will be raised
 1. 1 Corinthians 15:20 (ESV) ²⁰ But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.
5. **Unleavened Bread** - This was the week following the passover - All leaven, a picture of sin, is put out of the house.
6. **Pentecost** - This was fifty days after the First Fruits - It was the very day on which the Holy Spirit upon the believers in Acts 2. In the seventh month three feasts were celebrated

Fall feasts

7. **The Feast of Trumpets:** The Feast of Trumpets marked the beginning of ten days of consecration and repentance before God. It is one of seven Jewish feasts or festivals appointed by the LORD and one of three feasts that occur in the autumn

1. It was to call people to prepare their hearts for the biggest holy day of all - It's also a picture, it reminds us of the gathering of God's people when the Lord returns.
8. **The Day of Atonement:** We will speak about this in a little while
9. **The Feast of Tabernacles** – from the 15th to the 21st days the Jews joyfully celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles, picturing for us the blessings of the future kingdom, the millennial kingdom of Jesus

3. **Leviticus 25-27 deal with the idea of Sabbaths.**

The Sabbath year took place every seven years. The land rested. The people took Sabbaticals. Every 50th year was a jubilee. All debts were cancelled. All properties went back to the original owners.

1. For me, the practical application of these Sabbaths is that resting requires faith
2. **Leviticus 25:18–22 (ESV)** ¹⁸ “Therefore you shall do my statutes and keep my rules and perform them, and **then you will dwell in the land securely.** ¹⁹ **The land will yield its fruit, and you will eat your fill and dwell in it securely.** ²⁰ And if you say, ‘What shall we eat in the seventh year, if we may not sow or gather in our crop?’ ²¹ I will command my blessing on you in the sixth year, so that it will produce a crop sufficient for three years. ²² When you sow in the eighth year, you will be eating some of the old crop; you shall eat the old until the ninth year, when its crop arrives.
3. Why is it that sometimes the most difficult thing to do is rest?
 1. Because we feel like it all falls on us

2. The giant principle in these sabbaths was that if we are obedient to God and resting in Him He'll take care of us

The Priesthood (Chapters 8-10 and 21–22)

Exodus 40:12–13 (ESV) ¹² Then you shall bring Aaron and his sons to the entrance of the tent of meeting and shall wash them with water ¹³ and put on Aaron the holy garments. And you shall anoint him and consecrate him, that he may serve me as priest.

Now because God is holy being directly in God's presence is really dangerous so He appoints a special group of representatives called the priesthood - Their job was represent the people to God...and God to the people

Chapter 8 - preparation of the priests

There is great lessons for anyone who sin ministry or desires to be in ministry found in this chapter

1. Number one – They were washed in water (v.6)
 1. That speaks of us being immersed in the Word of God
2. Number two – They were robed in priestly robes that were made very specially for them and not only made for them, but they were put on them; they were placed on them (v.7-8)

1. And these robes tell us that we serve Jesus because - we're robed in His personhood; we're robed in His righteousness; we're robed in His servanthood
 2. And these garments tell us that – God not only calls us and ordains us for service; But He provides us with all the gear
 3. all the tools, all the equipping, all the gifting that we need to serve Him.
3. Thirdly – They were anointed with oil (v.12)
1. That speaks to us of the necessity of being anointed by the Holy Spirit
 2. We can only serve God in the power and by the direction of the Holy Spirit.
4. Fourth – They had the blood of a sacrifice on their blood on the right ear, blood on the thumb of the right hand blood on the big toe of the right foot (v.23)
1. And here's the picture. Guys, we need to understand that any of us that serve the Lord Jesus—and every Christian is called to serve Him—but those who are called to ministry – they are sinful as anybody else...and they need the blood of Jesus as much as anybody else.
 1. The blood applied to the right ear tells us that those who serve Jesus are called to hear His voice
 2. The blood applied to the thumb of the right hand tells us that we are called to labor for Him, to do His work, to do His will, not our agenda
 3. The blood applied to the big toe of the right foot tells us that we are called to walk in His ways

5. Fifth – They were consecrated for seven days

1. That word “consecrate” – it’s from the Hebrew word “yad”, which means the open hand. And here’s the picture. We come to the Lord with empty hands and open hearts saying, “Lord, would you fill my life with all that you want to fill it with?”

Chapter 9 - their ministry begins.

Leviticus 9:23 (ESV) ²³ And Moses and Aaron went into the tent of meeting, and when they came out they blessed the people...

There it is – the role of the priests...going in - representing the people before God, coming out - representing God to the people

Leviticus 9:23–24 (ESV) ²³ And Moses and Aaron went into the tent of meeting, and when they came out they blessed the people, and the glory of the Lord appeared to all the people. ²⁴ 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

Wow, God’s people responded to God’s presence with a shout of joy and falling down in worship.

1. Think about this verse in **Hebrews 12:28 (ESV) ²⁸ Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe, ²⁹ for our God is a consuming fire**

Chapter 10 - we have the first of only two narrative sections in the book.

And it's not a happy story. It's a story that's both tragic and terrifying. In the narrative, a day that should have ended with God being worshipped and glorified ended with a funeral of two of Aaron's sons.

Leviticus 10:1–3 (ESV) ¹ Now Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer and put fire in it and laid incense on it and offered unauthorized fire before the Lord, which he had not commanded them. ² And fire came out from before the Lord and consumed them, and they died before the Lord. ³ Then Moses said to Aaron, “This is what the Lord has said: ‘Among those who are near me I will be sanctified, and before all the people I will be glorified.’ ” And Aaron held his peace.

Wow, the story of this massive failure serves as a sober reminder how man can make a mistake of the glory and privileges of serving God.

- 1. This is what a guy named Joseph Parker had to say – “How often have we been within one step of Heaven, and have turned suddenly around, and fallen right back to the Earth that has every reason to be ashamed of us.”*
2. And what amplifies the tragedy of this chapter is that **Aaron's sons weren't ignorant outsiders**. They had seen God on Mount Sinai, we're told in Exodus 24. Their dad was the high priest. They were anointed to serve as priests. They were trained in the service of the Lord
3. **1 Corinthians 10:12 (ESV) ¹² Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall.**
4. **Here's the point:** Nadab and Abihu teach us that serving God needs to be taken seriously... There is no room for being cavalier or careless in serving God

Think about all they did here...

5. **They did a task that they wanted to do, not the task that God wanted them to do** - What they did was actually a task that God

had very clearly said in Exodus 30 was the job that their dad alone was supposed to do as high priest

6. **They did it on their time schedule, not God's** - It was only on the Day of Atonement that the high priest was permitted to take incense into the Holy of Holies
7. **They acted under their own authority, not the authority of the Word of God.** - It says they used unauthorized fire. The high priest was commanded to burn the incense on coals that were taken from the brazen altar. But Nadab and Abihu supplied their own fire. And God says, "I won't take that. That's unacceptable."
8. **And finally, they operated under the wrong influence** - Verse 9 and 10 imply that they were under the influence of alcohol
 1. **Here's the Big point:** If your in service to the Lord, don't be flippant or half hazard, understand it's serious business
 2. Guard your motives - It's for His glory not yours
 3. If your gonna do sometime in the name of God, DO IT HIS WAY
 4. What you do outside of the house of God will eventually effect you inside the house of God
 5. Strive to be Holy as God is holy

Purity

These are probably some of the hardest to understand chapters in the bible, but this is what we need to remember **"God is Holy" When your in a pure state you can be in God's presence, but when your in an impure state you can't...So chapters 11-15 and 18-20 define what purity was to look like for the children of Israel - Ritual and Moral**

1. Chapters 11-15 - Ritual purity

Chapter 11 He speaks about pure and impure animals

Why are some animals pure and some impure, I have no idea, but the Big picture that you must take away from this is that God's holiness was to have an impact on every part of God's people...including what they eat and what they drink

Chapter 12-15 He speaks child birth - skin disease and bodily fluids

Now the reason God addressed these was because these were associated with life and death, and God was the author of life.

1. Now understand It wasn't wrong to be ritually impure, but it was wrong to be ritually impure and go into the presence of God, but wait a few days, take a bath, offer a sacrifice and you were pure again

2. Chapters 18-20 - Moral purity

The key verse is [Leviticus 18:2–4 \(ESV\)](#) ² “Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, I am the Lord your God. ³ You shall not do as they do in the land of Egypt, where you lived, and you shall not do as they do in the land of Canaan, to which I am bringing you. You shall not walk in their statutes. ⁴ You shall follow my rules and keep my statutes and walk in them. I am the Lord your God.

The rest of Leviticus 18 deals with marriage and sexual sin. God forbids –

1. Incest – [verses 7-17](#)
2. multiple partners – [verse 18](#)
3. adultery – [verse 20](#)
4. abortion – [verse 21](#)
5. homosexuality – [verse 22](#)

6. bestiality – verse 23

In Leviticus 18:24 God declares that all these things defile a nation

Here's the key principle. God's holiness must be supposed to effect every single part of our lives

1. some things are holy; and some things are not.
2. And where are we going to find that out? – on TV, in the movies, public opinion polls?
3. Psalm 1:1–2 (ESV) ¹ Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; ² but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night

Chapters 16 - The Day of atonement

Now odds are there's a lot of sin that's happening that's just not being dealt with so God speaks with Moses..and says this

Leviticus 16:7 (ESV) ⁷ Then he shall take the two goats and set them before the Lord at the entrance of the tent of meeting

So God says “bring 2 goats for sacrifice...you're gonna need to purify yourself as well...

So what does he do with the first goat?

v.15 “Then he shall kill the goat of the sin offering that is for the people and bring its blood inside the veil and do with its blood as he did with the blood of the bull, sprinkling it over the mercy seat and in front of the mercy seat.

¹⁶ Thus he shall make atonement for the Holy Place, because of the uncleannesses of the people of Israel and because of their transgressions,

all their sins. And so he shall do for the tent of meeting, which dwells with them in the midst of their uncleanness

So what does He do with the 2nd goat?...He became the scapegoat

Leviticus 16:21–22 (ESV) ²¹ And Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat, and confess over it all the iniquities of the people of Israel, and all their transgressions, all their sins. And he shall put them on the head of the goat and send it away into the wilderness by the hand of a man who is in readiness. ²² The goat shall bear all their iniquities on itself to a remote area, and he shall let the goat go free in the wilderness

Here's the big point: This is such a great picture of the message of the Gospel. My sin, your sin, was all laid on Jesus so that we could be free. In Jesus our sins are removed

Psalm 103:12 (ESV) ¹² as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us.

Chapter 17 - Our way of atonement

Have you ever thought? “why is there so much blood in Leviticus?”

Leviticus 17:11 (ESV) ¹¹ **For the life of the flesh is in the blood,** and I have given it for you on the altar to make atonement for your souls, for it is the blood that makes atonement by the life

Because God is holy, all his dealings must be holy, therefore the only way to deal with Sin which is essentially life taking is to take the life of the offender, Now thats why sacrifice was so important because It was a the only way a holy God could deal with our sin issue - A life for life taken

Now heres was the problem -There was no perfect sacrifice on earth...so thats why the Day of Atonement was once a year

Hebrews 10:1–3 (ESV) ¹ For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near. ² Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be

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offered, since the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have any consciousness of sins? ³ But in these sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year.

Day after day...year after year...generation after generation...constantly being reminded of the fact that we're sinners...

Hebrews 10:12–14 (ESV) ¹² But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, ¹³ waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet. ¹⁴ For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.

Jesus is that perfect sacrifice that made holy for all time those who come to him by Faith.

Thank you Jesus