

Leviticus

Getting Closer to God

A Study Guide Prepared
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Bible Center Church
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BEGINNING YOUR STUDY

WHAT BIBLE VERSIONS ARE GOOD?

Reading Leviticus in an easy to understand version will be key to *your* studying and applying the truth God reveals to your Christian walk. A person who studies this book carefully will gain great insight into holy living and will be like the man Jesus described,

“Every teacher of religious law who becomes a disciple in the Kingdom of Heaven is like a homeowner who brings from his storeroom new gems of truth as well as old.”

Matthew 13:52 (NLT)

The pastor will be preaching from our pew Bible which is *New Living Translation (NLT)*. It is a *dynamic equivalence* translation that seeks to communicate all the information contained in the original text. Another example of this type of translation is the *New International Version (NIV)*.

Most other modern English translations follow a *formal equivalence* philosophy and without being woodenly literal, seek to convey the form of the original text as much as possible. You should also consult one of these versions in your study as well:

- *English Standard Version (ESV)* – follows the KJV tradition
- *New King James Version (NKJV)* – update of KJV language
- *New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)* – update of RSV (includes Apocrypha)
- *New American Standard Bible (NASB95)* – update of NASB
- *New American Bible (NAB)* – translation with additional Roman Catholic scriptures

Moses wrote Leviticus in Hebrew. The pastor will be consulting the Hebrew text *Biblica Hebraica Stuttgartensia (BHS)* as well as comparing the Greek translation of Leviticus (*LXX*) when the passages are directly quoted in the New Testament (*NA²⁷*). If he turns up anything significant, this will be noted in the student notes with the appropriate lesson.

HOW SHOULD I PREPARE FOR LEVITICUS?

1. We should begin with intense, *prayer* to be what God wants us to be, *holy*. In this book we will find out what it means to be separated from this sinful world dominated by the evil one to live with the holy God as a people of faith. Ask God to open your eyes to His truth. We always need this, but much more in this study because much of what we will read has not been capable of being practiced in the nearly 2,000 years since Jerusalem fell in 70 AD destroying the Temple.
2. Because much of what is written here is cannot be applied directly to anyone, we must make certain that we not only understand its original direct application, but also what it was originally designed to teach people about approaching and living with a holy God, doing His will, as well as to treating those around us in a holy manner. This will give us some guidelines in developing *principles* which apply to all believers in every generation. Rooker in the *New American Commentary: Leviticus* notes,

Since the Book of Leviticus is mainly concerned with the preservation of the covenant relationship between sinful people and their holy God, the principles and theology of the passages are directly applicable to the believer's contemporary life because these conditions are not time bound.¹

¹ Mark F. Rooker, *Leviticus*, The New American Commentary, (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000), 3A:44.

- In order to understand the author's meaning, we will study the historical and cultural context in which Moses and the children of Israel were immersed. The language he used will provide us clues as to what they were to learn.
- Keep this **outline** of Leviticus we will be using in mind to avoid get lost in details:

RITUAL Sacrifices (Chapters 1-7)
 PRIESTS Ordained (Chapters 8-10)
 PURITY Rituals (Chapters 11-15)
 DAY OF ATONEMENT (Chapter 16-17)
 PURITY in Morals (Chapters 18-20)
 PRIESTS Qualifications (Chapters 21-22)
 RITUAL Feasts (Chapters 23-25)
 Call to Covenant Faithfulness (Chapters 26-27)

This outline is visualized on page iv and a video presentation of it can be viewed on YouTube: <https://youtu.be/IJ-FekWUZzE> or search: bible project Leviticus.

- Leviticus will be more challenging reading than many other portions of Scripture because the things it describes are so unfamiliar to us in modern society. Most of us have little or no experience in slaughtering animals, for instance, as we buy our meat already in packages. I would suggest doing your initial reading according to the following plan:

	Chapters
Monday	1-3
Tuesday	4-7
Wednesday	8-10
Thursday	11-15
Friday	16-20
Saturday	21-24
Sunday	25-27

- After you read that day's assignment, write down every question you have. You might want to use a paper notebook *or* make a note in your electronic Bible. Try reading in the *NLT* and one of these versions each day *ESV*, *NRSV*, or the *NASB95*.
- If you really want to '*master*' the book, you should follow this survey plan for the entire study. After about four weeks, the benefit of this reading in increasing comprehension will confirm this is the best way *or* you will come up with a better system. Whatever you do, don't give up! Keep reading, even if you slow down a little.
- You should make summary notes as you read through Leviticus. One way of doing this is to try to record a short title for each chapter along with additional notes of further break downs within each chapter. This chart should help you record your ideas:

Chapter Summary in Leviticus

Ch.	My Chapter Title	Content Breakdown
1	<i>Wholly Given Offering</i>	<i>Intro (1-2); Herd (3-9); Flock (10-13); Birds (14-17)</i>

2		
3		
4		
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1-7 RITUAL SACRIFICES

THANK YOU!

I'M SORRY.

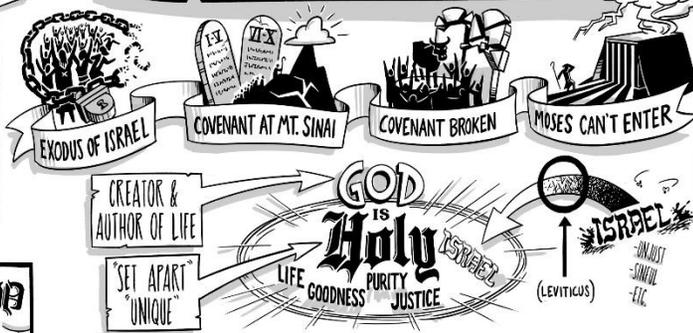
ATONEMENT = COVERING THE SIN

GRAIN & FELLOWSHIP OFFERINGS

BURNI, PURIFICATION, & RESTITUTION OFFERINGS

LEVITICUS

GOD GRACIOUSLY PROVIDES A WAY FOR PEOPLE TO LIVE IN HIS PRESENCE



23-25 RITUAL FEASTS

SEVEN ANNUAL FEASTS

PASSOVER, UNLEAVENED BREAD, FIRST FRUITS, WEEKS/PENTECOST, TRUMPETS, DAY OF ATONEMENT, TABERNALES

26-27 CALL TO COVENANT FAITHFULNESS

OBEEDIENCE

PEACE & ABUNDANCE IN THE LAND

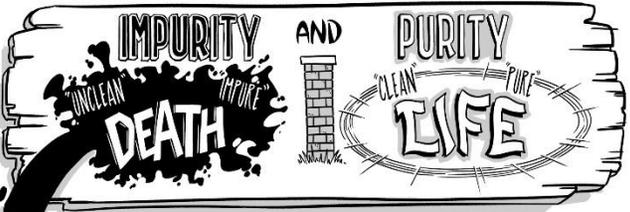
DISASTER & EXILE FROM THE LAND

8-10 PRIESTS ORDAINED

MOSES ORDAINS THE PRIESTS

AARON & SONS

AARON'S SONS VIOLATE GOD'S HOLINESS... AND DIE



21-22 QUALIFICATIONS FOR PRIESTS

PEOPLE

PRIESTS REPRESENT

HIGHEST LEVEL OF MORAL INTEGRITY & RITUAL HOLINESS

11-15 RITUAL PURITY

1. CONTACT WITH REPRODUCTIVE FLUIDS

2. HAVING A SKIN DISEASE

3. TOUCHING MOULD

4. TOUCHING DEAD BODIES

5. EATING IMPURE ANIMALS

SEE YOU IN TWO WEEKS?

ASSOCIATED WITH MORTALITY & THE LOSS OF LIFE

HYGIENE? CULTURAL TABOO?

IMPURITY IS NOT SINFUL... IT'S NORMAL & TEMPORARY.

CULTURAL SYMBOLS TO REMIND ISRAEL THAT GOD'S HOLINESS AFFECTS EVERY PART OF LIFE

16-17 DAY OF ATONEMENT

PURIFICATION OFFERING TO ATONE FOR THE SINS OF ISRAEL

THE SCAPEGOAT A SYMBOL OF GOD'S REMOVAL OF SIN FROM ISRAEL

CONFESS THE SINS OF ISRAEL

CAST INTO THE WILDERNESS

18-20 MORAL PURITY

CARE FOR THE POOR

SEXUAL INTEGRITY

SOCIAL JUSTICE

ISRAEL CALLED TO LIVE DIFFERENTLY THAN THE CANAANITES

created by the Bible Project

CAN I REALLY GET IT?

Leviticus is challenging to interpret because many of the things it deals with are so unfamiliar to us. Since we are not under that system of worship, it also presents difficulty in accurately applying the truths it teaches to life in Christ.

With your disciplined reading schedule, survey chart, and periodic watching the Bible Project's Overview video presentation on YouTube: <https://youtu.be/IJ-FekWUZzE> you will have a good grasp of the structure of Leviticus and will begin to grasp the relationships of the various parts.

If you listen and take notes on the Sunday sermon, you will have a good introduction to each passage. On Sunday afternoon, re-read the Scripture of the sermon.

Sometime during the week begin jotting down answers to the Study Questions. Feel free to add your own questions along with possible answers. We want to observe *who, what, when, where, why, and how*.

As to the *WHO* question, the people to whom Moses originally gave these instructions had just been delivered from Egypt and were not very holy. All they had was a call to be a separate people for God. They had constructed the Tabernacle so that God could dwell in their midst without destroying them, but they needed to learn what that holiness meant and how they could live with their Savior and God.

Likely these instructions were written down for their children, the second generation, the ones who would enter the land and conquer it. It was with them and their descendants who would continue to worship God that this ongoing covenant was made.

WHAT ABOUT US?

They were also written down for our instruction in the present age.

"These things happened to them as examples for us. They were written down to warn us who live at the end of the age."

– 1 Corinthians 10:11 (NLT)

All Scripture is profitable to study.

¹⁶All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right.¹⁷God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.

– 2 Timothy 3:16–17 (NLT)

We are not looking to re-institute these rituals, but we do seek to learn about our great salvation. In Leviticus, we can expect to understand what Jesus' death was meant to do. His blood cleanses us from all sin.

We also will be looking at the moral standard of love to which Jesus Christ saved us. If it was unloving to do something in Leviticus, we should consider if it might not be unloving still today. For instance, Paul deals with a believer in Corinth who had his father's wife, thus not acting in love towards his father.

Dr. Lindsey points out the reality as well as the limitations of the Levitical sacrifices:

- Sacrificial atonement involved the actual removal of the guilt and punishment for the particular sin(s) involved.¹
- They were limited in *moral efficacy*. Since empty ritualism was never an acceptable option to God, a truly acceptable sacrifice must have been prompted by genuine faith and moral obedience to the revealed will of God (26:14–45, esp. v. 31; Pss. 40:6–8; 51:16–17; Prov. 21:27; Amos 5:21–24; Heb. 10:5–10; 11:4, 6).
- They were limited in *scope* to certain kinds of personal sins. Theologically they did not atone for the sin nature, or for the imputed sin of Adam. Nor did they even include willful acts of sin which were committed in defiance of God (cf. Num. 15:30–31) and therefore not a complete and final scheme whereby all forms of sin could be removed.
- They were limited in *purpose* to the covenant preservation and renewal of a redeemed people. Corporately, and perhaps for the most part individually, the occasion of the slaying of the Passover lamb and the application of its blood to the doorposts in Egypt were outward expressions of inward faith that signaled the regeneration and justification of individual Israelites. The subsequent sacrificial system dealt ideally with worship and covenant renewal, not initial salvation. It was comparable to the New Testament believer’s experience of 1 John 1:9, not to the sinner’s experience of John 3:16.
- Except for the Day of Atonement ritual, the sacrifices were limited in scope and duration to one sin per sacrifice. The forgiveness granted was real though temporary (in the sense that each sin required another sacrifice).²
- Their efficacy was not inherent in the animals sacrificed or in the entire sacrificial ritual. God provided atonement and forgiveness in view of the all-sufficient sacrifice that Jesus Christ would offer on the cross. Christ’s death was “a sacrifice of atonement” by which God paid in full for the forgiveness which He had extended before the Cross (Rom. 3:25). In other words, the Levitical sacrifices were validated in the mind of God on the basis of Christ’s death as the one truly efficacious Sacrifice for all sin, the Lamb of God who was slain from the foundation of the world (Rev. 13:8; cf. 1 Peter 1:19–20). The efficacious value of the sacrifices was therefore derivative rather than original. It is in this sense that the author of Hebrews asserts, “It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins” (Heb. 10:4)³

Another great take-away from Dr. Lindsey relates to *typology*,

... those who seek to interpret types must always remember:

1. to give proper *attention to the historical reality*, noting especially its symbolic and redemptive significance to Old Testament believers and its subsequent continuation, commemoration, and influence on future generations of Israelites until its fulfillment in the antitype;

¹ F. Duane Lindsey, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, 1985, 1, 164.

² F. Duane Lindsey, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, 1985, 1, 165.

³ F. Duane Lindsey, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, 1985, 1, 165–166.

2. to *locate the chief point(s) of resemblance* between the type and its antitype, and not to press the interpretation beyond these points;
3. to *relate the understanding of the typical significance to New Testament believers*, not to Old Testament believers; and
4. to *interpret in the light of the established doctrines of Scripture* rather than attempting to establish a doctrine on a type.⁴

What are the differences between Israel and the Church?

- Israel was a nation, the Church is not a nation.
- The Law applies to the physical descendants of Jacob (Israel) whether they are a nation or not.

⁴ F. Duane Lindsey, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, 1985, 1, 166.

	DEDICATORY		COMMUNAL	EXPIATORY	
	BURNT 1:3-17	GRAIN 2:1-16	FELLOWSHIP 3:1-17	SIN 4:1-5:13	GUILT 5:14-6:7
OCCASION	Voluntary worship; certain prescribed rituals and calendrical offerings	An auxiliary offering accompanying burnt and always accompanying fellowship offerings; could be sin offering for the very poor	THANK OFFERING: for unexpected deliverance or blessing already granted VOTIVE OFFERING: for blessing or deliverance granted in answer to prayer which had accompanying vow FREEWILL OFFERING: to express thankful devotion without regard to specific blessing	Unintentional sin against divine command by an individual or the entire nation	Misappropriation or denial of rightful due to God or man, normally assessable in monetary compensation
DISTINCTIVENESS	Wholly burned on the altar (Lev. 1:9)	As a nonbloody offering, it accompanied bloody offering No yeast or honey	Most parts eaten before the Lord by the worshiper (and his family)	(See "Occasion" above)	Sacrifice (See "Occasion" above) was usually accompanied by compensation plus fine to wronged party
OLD TESTAMENT THEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE	Signified the worshiper's act of total dedication to God	Signified dedication of everyday life to God in recognition of His covenant mercies	The worshiper recognized the meat eaten as a token of God's covenant faithfulness	Provided atonement and forgiveness for specific unintentional sins where no restitution was involved	The ram was for expiation accompanied by payment of restitution to the wronged party
TYPOLOGY	Christ died as the Lamb of God in complete dedication to the accomplishment of God's will	Christ's perfect person is associated with His sacrificial death Bread of Life Salt (Mt. 5:3)	Christ's death is the basis of fellowship with God and other believers	Christ died as a satisfactory substitutionary sacrifice to provide the forgiveness of sins	Christ's death atones for the damage or injury caused by sin ¹
NT References					
Application	Physical rituals point to spiritual realities God says how to approach Total Sacrifice/Obedience Atones for Worshipper According to Means Acceptable to God	Living (bloodless) sacrifices Thanks for basic needs met Salt points to eternal covenant	Joyful thanks Cleanness required	Cost of forgiveness Letting go of burden Corporate guilt (teachers?) Mercy & Justice Equal Opportunity to Worship Unintentional sins Confession	Reparation to Wronged Accountable to God Let go of guilt Removes a debt

There are *similarities* and *differences* between these various sacrifices. In particular we should compare *burnt* and *fellowship* as well as try to understand the relationship of *sin* and *guilt* offerings.

¹ adapted from Lindsey, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, 1985, 1, 170.

Also it will be helpful to search our everything that is said in Scripture regarding a particular offering, such as the *burnt* offering, rather than to confine ourselves to *chapters 1-5* or even just *Leviticus*.

	BURNT 1:3-17			GRAIN 2:1-16			FELLOWSHIP (Peace) 3:1-17		
Worshipper	Anyone			Anyone			Anyone		
What's Accepted?	Flawless Bull	Flawless Male Sheep or Goat	Turtledove or Young Pigeon	Choice Wheat Flour	Baked Unleavened Loaves or Wafers Griddled or Pan Fried	Coarse Grain (First Ripe)	Bull or Cow	Male or Female Sheep	Male or Female Goat
Place Presented	Tent Entrance For Acceptance	North Side of Altar	At the Altar				Tent Entrance	Before the Tent of Meeting	Before the Tent of Meeting
ID Ritual	Hands on Head						Hands on Head	Hands on Head	Hands on Head
Result	Atonement								
Slaughtered	Presenter	Presenter	Priest				Presenter	Presenter	Presenter
Officiant	Priests	Priests	Priests	Priest	Priest	Priest	Priest	Priest	Priest
Blood	Presented Splashed on Sides of Altar	Splashed on Sides of Altar	drains against Sides of Altar				Splashed on Sides of Altar	Splashed on Sides of Altar	Splashed on Sides of Altar
Preparation	Presenter Skins & Cuts Up	Presenter Cuts Up with head/suet	Head Off Torn by the Wings into nearly two parts	Olive Oil Frankincense	Olive Oil	Olive Oil Frankincense	Gift to the Lord Fat of Entrails Two Kidneys with Fat & Protruding Lob of Liver	Gift to the Lord Fatty Tail Fat of Entrails Two Kidneys with Fat & Protruding Lob of Liver	Gift to the Lord Fat of Entrails Two Kidneys with Fat & Protruding Lob of Liver
Priests	Prepare Fire Place Parts	Places Parts	Places Bird	Handful as Memorial Portion Olive Oil	Crumble in Pieces Pour Olive Oil Memorial Portion	Crumble in Pieces Pour Olive Oil Memorial Portion All Frankincense			
Remainder	Presenter Washes Entrails & Legs	Presenter Washes Entrails & Legs	Cut Off Tail Feathers	Remainder belongs to Priests	Remainder belongs to Priests		Kept by Presenter	Kept by Presenter	Kept by Presenter

			Remove Entrails Cast on East Side of Altar						
Priests	Offers All in Smoke	Offers All in Smoke	Offers in Smoke	Offers in Smoke			Offers Gift in Smoke	Offers Gift in Smoke	Offers Gift in Smoke
Disposition	Soothing Aroma	Soothing Aroma	Soothing Aroma	Soothing Aroma			Soothing Aroma	Soothing Aroma	Soothing Aroma
Summary	Burnt (Whole) Offering	Burnt (Whole) Offering	Burnt (Whole) Offering	Most Holy Gifts of the Lord	Most Holy Gifts of the Lord	A gift to the Lord	Food Gift	Food Gift	Food Gift
Additional Instructions				Never with Yeast or Honey which may be given to Priest, not burnt Never w/o Salt of Covenant	Never with Yeast or Honey which may be given to Priest, not burnt Never w/o Salt of Covenant				All the Fat Belongs to the Lord Never Eat Fat or Blood
Further References									

	SIN 4:1-5:13				GUILT 5:14-6:7
Worshipper	High Priest	All	Leader	Ordinary Person	
What's Accepted?	Flawless Bull	Flawless Bull	Flawless Male Goat	Flawless Female Goat or Female Sheep	
Place Presented	Tent Entrance	Before the Tent of Meeting	Place of Burnt Offering	Place of Burnt Offering	
ID Ritual	Hands on Head	Elders Hands on Head	Hand on Head	Hand on Head	
Result		Atoned & Forgiven	Atoned & Forgiven	Atoned & Forgiven	
Slaughtered	High Priest	Someone	Sinner	Sinner	
Officiant	High Priest	High Priest	Priest	Priest	
Blood	Sprinkled in Tent before the Veil Some on Horns of Incense Altar	Sprinkled in Tent before the Veil Some on Horns of Incense Altar			

	Pour Rest at Base of Entrance Altar	Pour Rest at Base of Entrance Altar	Some on Horns of Incense Altar Pour Rest at Base of Entrance Altar	Some on Horns of Incense Altar Pour Rest at Base of Entrance Altar	
Preparation	To be Burned Fat of Entrails Two Kidneys with Fat & Protruding Lob of Liver	To be Burned Fat of Entrails Two Kidneys with Fat & Protruding Lob of Liver	To be Burned All Fat like in Peace Offering	To be Burned All Fat like in Peace Offering	
Priests					
Remainder	Hide & Rest Burned outside Camp in Clean Place	Hide & Rest Burned outside Camp in Clean Place			
Priests					
Disposition					
Summary		Sin Offering of the Assembly	Sin Offering		
Additional Instructions	Unintentional Violation of Lord's Commands	Unintentional Violation of Lord's Commands	Unintentional Violation of Lord's Commands Pleads Guilty or Sin Made Known to Him	Unintentional Violation of Lord's Commands Pleads Guilty or Sin Made Known to Him Fails to Bear Witness in Court Touches Uncleanness Foolish Oath Poor can bring two turtledoves or two young pigeons	
Further References					

Leviticus by Chapter

RITUAL Sacrifices

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____
- 4 _____
- 5 _____
- 6 _____
- 7 _____

RITUAL Feasts (Chapters 23-25)

- 23 _____
- 24 _____
- 25 _____

PRIESTS Ordained

- 8 _____
- 9 _____
- 10 _____

PRIESTS Qualifications (Chapters 21-22)

- 21 _____
- 22 _____

PURITY Rituals

- 11 _____
- 12 _____
- 13 _____
- 14 _____
- 15 _____

PURITY in Morals (Chapters 18-20)

- 18 _____
- 19 _____
- 20 _____

DAY OF ATONEMENT

- 16 _____
- 17 _____

Call to Covenant Faithfulness

- 26 _____
- 27 _____

