

## Old Testament Survey Lesson Eight

### Introduction

Genesis—The beginnings of a people and promise

Exodus—The people are given a law code and a location of worship—Tabernacle  
(WHERE)

Today: The people will receive instructions and guidelines for HOW to worship a Holy God in the Tabernacle—Leviticus

### Development of Jewish Worship

- Intimate fellowship with God in the Garden (Genesis 3:8)
- Offerings/gifts presented prior to the law (Genesis 4:3-5)
- Worship and sacrifices at the altar

*And Noah began to be a farmer, and he planted a vineyard. 21 Then he drank of the wine and was drunk, and became uncovered in his tent. Genesis 9:20-21 NKJV*

*Then the Lord appeared to Abram and said, "To your descendants I will give this land." And there he built an altar to the Lord, who had appeared to him. 8 And he moved from there to the mountain east of Bethel, and he pitched his tent with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; there he built an altar to the Lord and called on the name of the Lord. Genesis 12:7-8 NKJV*

*Then Abram moved his tent, and went and dwelt by the terebinth trees of Mamre, which are in Hebron, and built an altar there to the Lord. Genesis 13:18 NKJV*

*So Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife, and the two of them went together. Genesis 22:6 NKJV*

*Then they came to the place of which God had told him. And Abraham built an altar there and placed the wood in order; and he bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, upon the wood. 10 And Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son. 11 But the Angel of the Lord called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" So he said, "Here I am." Genesis 22:9-11 NKJV*

*So he built an altar there and called on the name of the Lord, and he pitched his tent there; and there Isaac's servants dug a well. Genesis 26:25 NKJV*

*Then let us arise and go up to Bethel; and I will make an altar there to God, who answered me in the day of my distress and has been with me in the way which I have gone." Genesis 35:3 NKJV*

***And Moses wrote all the words of the Lord. And he rose early in the morning, and built an altar at the foot of the mountain, and twelve pillars according to the twelve tribes of Israel. Exodus 24:4 NKJV***

— Worship in the tabernacle—dwelling presence of God

***And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them. Exodus 25:8 NKJV***

— Offerings, sacrifices, and gifts as outlined in Leviticus

## **I. Overview of Leviticus**

*“Leviticus is not an easy book to understand.”* (Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch)

### A. Origins of Leviticus

#### 1. Leviticus’ Name

- a. Latin name from Greek “leyitikon”
- b. Related to priests or priestly-related
- c. Postbiblical, Rabbinic tradition: “torat Kohanain”—instructions for/by priests

**NOTE:** By name, many assume this middle book of the Pentateuch to be about the Levites, yet instead it focuses on the instructions for or given by priests for ALL people.

- One reference to Levites (Leviticus 25:32-33)
- Sections dedicated to the priest (Leviticus 8-10; 21-22)
- Numbers: Whole sections on Levites

- d. Hebrew: “and he called” (Leviticus 1:1)

#### 2. Leviticus’ location in the biblical text

- a. Follows Exodus
- b. Regulations for worship follow the construction of the place of worship

#### 3. Authorship: Moses

## B. Structure of Leviticus

1. Five (5) central themes
  - a. Laws about sacrifice/offerings (Leviticus 1-7)
  - b. Laws about priestly ordination (Leviticus 8-10)
  - c. Laws about physical and moral impurities—clean and unclean [animals, post childbirth, skin diseases, and bodily discharges]—(Leviticus 11-15)
  - d. Laws about physical and moral holiness (Leviticus 17-26)
  - e. Laws about vows (Leviticus 27)
2. Norman Geisler: Two-part book
  - a. Way to the Holy One (sacrifice and priesthood 1-10)
  - b. Way to Holiness (Sanitation and sanctification 11-27)

NOTE: These instructions are given by way of divine revelation as indicated when 20 of 27 chapters begin with “the Lord said unto Moses.”

## C. Purpose of Leviticus

1. Exodus deals with WHERE God is to be worshiped, while Leviticus deals with HOW God is to be worshiped.
2. Exodus (location) versus Leviticus (attitude and proper relationships).

NOTE: Leviticus calls Israel to a holy life more than any other book

- “Holy” appears 90 times in Leviticus—50 times in chapters 19-27
- “Sanctify” appears 17 times
- Hebrew root for holy appears 160 times—20% of all occurrences in the Old Testament
- Holiness is not just the call of priests—for ALL people

## II. Content of Leviticus

### A. Sacrifices and offerings

#### Old Testament Sacrifices and Offerings

Type	Leviticus	Offering	Purpose
<b>Burnt Offering</b>	1; 6:8-13; 8:18-21; 16:24	Bull, ram; dove or pigeon by the poor; burned to ashes	Free act of worship; atoned for unintentional sins, that is, those done without planning or desire. Showed complete surrender to God.
<b>Grain Offering</b>	2; 6:14-23	Grain, flour, olive oil, incense, baked bread	Free giving of thanks and praise to God for His goodness and provisions; offered with a burnt offering or fellowship offering, but never alone.
<b>Fellowship Offering</b>	3; 7:11-34	Any animal without defect from a herd or flock	Free act of worship; the priests and the person bringing this offering ate part of it together to show fellowship between God and humankind.
<b>Sin Offering</b>	4:1-5:13; 6:24-30; 8:14-17; 16:3-22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Young bull for the high priest and Israelites.</li> <li>b. Male goat for leader.</li> <li>c. Female goat or lamb for a common person.</li> <li>d. Dove or pigeon for poor.</li> <li>e. Flour for the very poor.</li> </ul>	Required for certain unintentional sins. Forgiveness and cleansing from sins confessed.
<b>Guilt Offering</b>	5:14-6:7; 7:1-6	Ram or lamb	Required to atone for unintentional sins; required restitution and a fine of 20%. Necessary to restore relationships.

## 1. Purpose of offerings and sacrifice

- a. Outline relationship between God and humanity
- b. Worship is connected to sacrifice

NOTE: New Testament understands this concept in Romans 12:1

- c. Not an exhaustive list of sacrifices—no note of incense offering (Exodus 30:7-8) or drink offering (Exodus 29:38-41)
- d. Emphasis is on private offering/sacrifices vs. public—common offering

## 2. Names

- a. “Whole burnt offering”—“that which goes up” in Hebrew
- b. “Cereal” or “grain” offering
- c. “Peace” “Fellowship,” or “well-being”—covenant meal
- d. “Sin” offering—sacrifice or repentance for sins
- e. “Guilt/Reparation”—also sacrifice or repentance for sins, but additionally underscoring the need for restitution—special sin offering

## 3. Significance of Five Offerings

- a. Result on God (1-3): Pleasing odor

NOTE: “Nuah”=Rest, be at ease, experience comfort/pleasure (Noah)

- b. Result on one who gives (4-5): person is forgiven

NOTE: Sin and guilt offerings are tied to a specific occasion—sin against God/holy things

***“Speak to the children of Israel, saying: ‘If a person sins unintentionally against any of the commandments of the Lord in anything which ought not to be done, and does any of them.’ Leviticus 4:2 NKJV***

NOTE: Leviticus begins with celebration and moves on to the possibility of restoration if and when needed.

## 4. Common elements

- a. Worshiper never comes into God’s presence without a gift—offer ourselves
- b. The offering—thing brought near—highlights the issue of nearness to God
- c. Animal without blemish

NOTE: Necessary for Christ to be born of a virgin to bypass sinful seed of man—without sin

***Knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, 19 but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. 1 Peter 1:18-19 NKJV***

- d. Worshiper and priest share the responsibilities

NOTE: Christ's sacrifice once and for all

Hebrews 10:1-10

B. The Priesthood (Leviticus 8-10)

1. Development of the priesthood

- a. Patriarchal period—head of family offered sacrifices
- b. Post-Exodus—priests offered sacrifices for national community
- c. Aaron-Moses' brother-first high priests assisted by sons (judged by death: Leviticus 10:1-3)

2. Levitical Priestly Ministry

- a. Represented the people before God (Mediator)

***In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You had no pleasure. Hebrews 10:6 NKJV***

- b. Taught God's laws and principles

***Of the sons of Phinehas, Gershom; of the sons of Ithamar, Daniel; of the sons of David, Hattush; 3 of the sons of Shecaniah, of the sons of Parosh, Zechariah; and registered with him were one hundred and fifty males. Ezra 8:2-3 NKJV***

- c. Custodians of the Tabernacle with Levities' help

***And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: 6 "Bring the tribe of Levi near, and present them before Aaron the priest, that they may serve him. 7 And they shall attend to his needs and the needs of the whole congregation before the tabernacle of meeting, to do the work of the tabernacle. 8 Also they shall attend to all the furnishings of the tabernacle of meeting, and to the needs of the children of Israel, to do the work of the tabernacle. 9 And you shall give the Levites to Aaron and his sons; they are given entirely to him from among the children of Israel. 10 So you shall appoint Aaron and his sons, and they shall attend to their priesthood; but the outsider who comes near shall be put to death." Numbers 3:5-10 NKJV***

3. Priestly ordination (Leviticus 8)

NOTE: Through a sacred public service, the priests are consecrated or set apart for holy service to God for the people.

NOTE: Because even the priests are flawed human beings, sacrifices must be offered to deal with their own sinfulness.

C. Laws concerning clean and unclean (Leviticus 11-15)

1. Clean/Unclean Animals (Leviticus 11)

- a. Focus is Israelite's diet
- b. Unacceptable—certain meats
  - Ethical—abstain tames desire for violence
  - Aesthetic—appearance is repulsive, not on table
  - Theological—associated with pagan religions are taboo
  - Hygenic—likely carriers of disease

2. Uncleaness from childbirth (Leviticus 12)

3. Uncleaness from skin disease (Leviticus 13 and 14)

4. Uncleaness and bodily discharges (Leviticus 15)

D. Laws concerning physical and moral holiness (Leviticus 16-26)

1. Day of Atonement

- a. Yom Kippur or “the great day”
- b. New Testament—“the fast”

***Now when much time had been spent, and sailing was now dangerous because the Fast was already over, Paul advised them. Acts 27:9 NKJV***

- c. Starts in the evening

***It shall be to you a Sabbath of solemn rest, and you shall afflict your souls; on the ninth day of the month at evening, from evening to evening, you shall celebrate your Sabbath." Leviticus 23:32 NKJV***

- d. Day of Atonements: Priests, sanctuary, and people

— Aaron must offer sin offering for self

***"Aaron shall offer the bull as a sin offering, which is for himself, and make atonement for himself and for his house. Leviticus 16:6 NKJV***

— Jesus went once and had no sin to atone for Himself

*But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation. 12 Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. 13 For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, 14 how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? Hebrews 9:11-14 NKJV*

— Cleanse the sanctuary

*Then he shall make atonement for the Holy Sanctuary, and he shall make atonement for the tabernacle of meeting and for the altar, and he shall make atonement for the priests and for all the people of the assembly. Leviticus 16:33 NKJV*

NOTE: Only day blood is carried into the Holy of Holies

*"Then he shall kill the goat of the sin offering, which is for the people, bring its blood inside the veil, do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bull, and sprinkle it on the mercy seat and before the mercy seat. 16 So he shall make atonement for the Holy Place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions, for all their sins; and so he shall do for the tabernacle of meeting which remains among them in the midst of their uncleanness. Leviticus 16:15-16 NKJV*

*For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens; 27 who does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the people's, for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself. 28 For the law appoints as high priests men who have weakness, but the word of the oath, which came after the law, appoints the Son who has been perfected forever. Hebrews 7:26-28 NKJV*

— Slain sin offering

— Scapegoat—priest confesses sins of the people and goat bears our sin to the wilderness

*Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. Isaiah 53:4 NKJV*

*Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, And He shall divide the spoil with the strong, Because He poured out His soul unto death, And He was numbered with the transgressors, And He bore the sin of many, And made intercession for the transgressors. Isaiah 53:12 NKJV*



***The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! John 1:29 NKJV***

2. Laws of holiness (Leviticus 17-29)

NOTE: All of these laws point to the reality that holiness (not legalism) should be evident in all aspects of life.

Heart of these Laws: Love

***You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord. Leviticus 19:18 NKJV***

a. Love neighbor in context of hate and injustice

***You shall not go about as a talebearer among your people; nor shall you take a stand against the life of your neighbor: I am the Lord. 17 'You shall not hate your brother in your heart. You shall surely rebuke your neighbor, and not bear sin because of him. Leviticus 19:16-17 NKJV***

b. Type of love poured on persecutors

***Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do." And they divided His garments and cast lots. Luke 23:34 NKJV***

***Then he knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not charge them with this sin." And when he had said this, he fell asleep. Acts 7:60 NKJV***

c. "Ahab" one gives top priority to loved one

d. Not equal to self-love, instead refers to self-denial, denial of one's selfish desires

NOTE: Selfishness hinders humanity from loving one's neighbor

NOTE: Breaking one's selfish ego is to love oneself and is the beginning of loving neighbor

### 3. Feasts and Holy Days

<b>Name</b>	<b>Leviticus</b>	<b>Purpose and Explanation</b>
<b>Sabbath</b>	23:3	A day of rest set apart to God; no work for people or animals.
<b>Sabbath Year</b>	25:1-7	A year of rest for the land.
<b>Year of Jubilee</b>	25:8-55; 27:17-24	To help the poor; debts were canceled; slaves freed, and land returned to first owners.
<b>Passover</b>	23:5	To recall deliverance from Egypt; each family killed and ate a lamb with bitter herbs and unleavened bread.
<b>Unleavened Bread</b>	23:6-8	To recall that God brought Israel out of Egypt in haste; ate bread without yeast, met together several times, and gave offerings.
<b>Firstfruits</b>	23:9-14	To recognize the Lord's blessing in the land; waved a sheaf of barley grain and gave a burnt offering and a grain offering.
<b>Weeks; Harvest (Pentecost)</b>	23:15-21	To rejoice and give thanks for the grain harvest; a feast of joy; included both required and freewill offerings.
<b>Trumpets; Rosh Hashanah (New Year)</b>	23:23-25	To present Israel to God and seek His favor; the people met, blew trumpets, and offered sacrifices.
<b>Day of Atonement</b>	16:23:26-32	To cleanse priests and people from sin; to purify the Holy Place; people rested, fasted in mourning over their sins, and sacrificed.
<b>Tabernacles (Booths, Ingathering)</b>	23:33-43	To recall the journey from Egypt to Canaan' for a week they lived in booths made of tree branches or palm trees and rejoiced for all the Lord had provided; each seventh year, priest read all of the Pentateuch.
<b>Sacred Assembly</b>	23:36	To recall the closing of the cycle of feasts; they met, rested, and offered sacrifices.

- a. Reminder for Israel that they were God's set apart people.
- b. Times of celebration, worship, and remembrance.
- c. Time to be with family
- d. Time to assist the poor (Leviticus 23:22)

NOTE: For 70 years while in captivity, they did not celebrate Passover, Pentecost, or Tabernacle

— Zechariah= “Lord has remembered” and Haggai= “my feasts”

### **Conclusion:**

Three themes:

#### 1) Sacrificial Worship

— Christ's work on the cross is seen as the once-for-all atoning sacrifice for all of humankind.

***Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. Hebrews 9:12 NKJV***

— Christ's work far surpasses the sacrificial worship of the Old Testament

***But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises. Hebrews 8:6 NKJV***

#### 2) Clean and Unclean

- In light of Acts 10:9-15, 28, the ceremonial distinction between the clean and unclean is abrogated—done away us.
- Jesus declared all food clean (Mark 7:19)
- Jesus healed lepers by touching them (Mark 1:41)
- Matters of the heart—deeper meaning

#### 3) Love Commandment

- Impossible for humanity to obey
- New Testament increases demands of love

IMPORTANT: The cross and power of the Holy Spirit becomes the solution to the demanding nature of the law.

(ILL) 10 ft. tall

*“Leviticus is an important book for New Testament believers in that it provides them with an indispensable foundation for realizing the depth and width of the love that their Lord has shown them. Leviticus points to the pervasiveness of sins, the abyss of human sinfulness, the daunting task of becoming holy and, therefore, the appalling gap between natural men and women and a holy God. The book’s various means for bridging the gap, while showing the Lord’s condescension, give the impression that they are insufficient, foreshadowing, and demanding a fuller system of atonement!”—Dictionary of Old Testament: Pentateuch*

**What bridges the gap? THE CROSS!**