

Leviticus

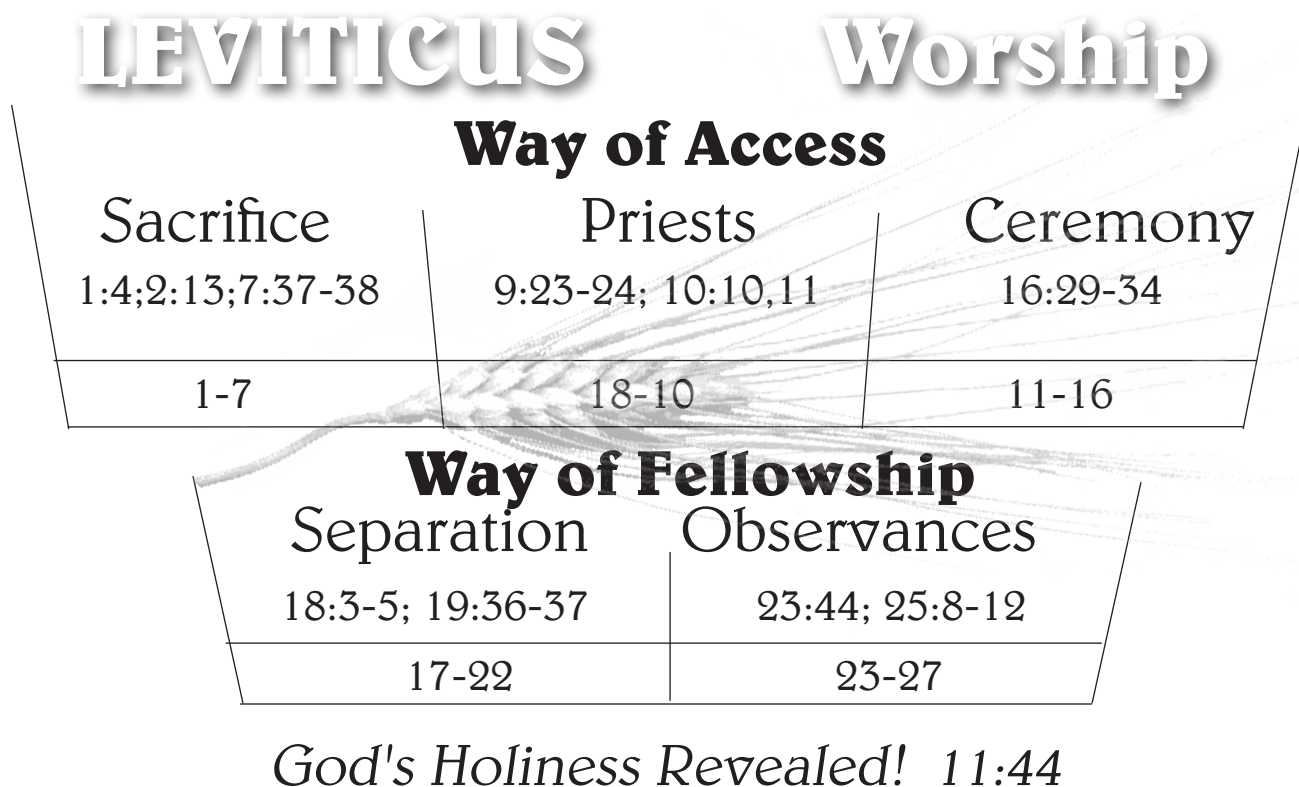


“For I am the LORD your God. Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am holy. And you shall not make yourselves unclean with any of the swarming things that swarm on the earth. ‘For I am the LORD who brought you up from the land of Egypt to be your God; thus you shall be holy, for I am holy.’”

Leviticus 11:45

Welcome to the book of Leviticus!

To begin your study of Leviticus, meditate on the book's content represented in the overview chart below. What are the two major movements of the Leviticus? How does each sub-section give information that clarifies the two major movements? In Chapters 1-16 we view principles of access to God that is acceptable in His sight. In Chapters 17-27 we deal with the way of pleasing and honoring fellowship once access has been given. Note the theme phrase at the bottom of the overview chart: 'God's holiness revealed.' What comes to your mind when you think of God's holiness?



Also note the passages listed within the overview chart. Take this opportunity to refer to each one, relating the section titles to the appropriate Scripture. What have you learned thus far about Leviticus? The book of Leviticus gives us a wealth of spiritual truth and insight into the Holy character of God and the need of man as we approach our Holy Creator. Two key verses are prominent. For Chapters 1-16, we have chosen 11:44 reflecting the opportunity and responsibility of sinful man to have pure access to the Father. For Chapters 17-27, we have chosen 22:32-33 reflecting God's desire for us to avoid defilement after our access has been granted.

Open your heart as you read!

God's holiness is revealed in Leviticus. The quality of our access to God depends upon acceptable sacrifice and service. How would you describe your access? Your sacrifice? Are you practicing separation from the contamination?



KEY BACKGROUND on the book of Leviticus

AUTHOR

Although the book does not make an explicit statement of its Mosaic authorship, the phrase, and the Lord spoke to Moses, occurs about thirty times. Further, our Lord believed that Moses wrote the book as attested by Mark 1:44 (compare Ezra 6:18; Matthew 8:2-4 with Leviticus 14:1-4).

DATE

In Exodus 40:7, a chronological note is given: "It came to pass in the first month of the second year, on the first day of the month, that the tabernacle was reared up." This would date the book either shortly before or in the first month of 1444 B.C.

PURPOSE

"The inescapable fact of a dichotomy of God's holiness and man's sinfulness is the universal basic problem confronting all humanity. The entire message of Leviticus is directed to it." (Jensen, Survey of the Old Testament, Page 105)

OTHER BACKGROUND

The best explanatory commentary on Leviticus is the book of Hebrews. God spoke the words recorded in Leviticus to Moses out of the tabernacle of the congregation. (1:1) Before, He had spoken distantly from Mount Sinai. Now He is instructing His people how they can approach Him and have fellowship.

God has not changed. He is the same holy God that desires His people to be holy. That word, in fact, is mentioned 81 times in the book. The precepts of the law in the remaining chapters show God's standard for conduct.

There is much symbolism and teaching in types in Leviticus which the New Testament expands for us. The New Testament writers refer to this rich book 44 times. The sacrifices reminded the Israelite of his deep sinfulness and great need for atonement. They pointed to Christ, the Perfect and Final Sacrifice. (Note Hebrews 8-10)

Not only is Christ our Sacrifice, He is our Priest, which is discussed in Hebrews 8-10. Hebrews 4-7 is a sequel to this book. It teaches that Christ is our High Priest, and 1 Peter 2:5 says we are a royal priesthood. Just as Leviticus instructs priests to be consecrated by being washed, clothed and anointed, so we need to be washed (Titus 3:6), clothed in garments of salvation and righteousness (Isaiah 61:10) and anointed by the Holy spirit (1 John 2:27).

[Genesis](#) begins with God's pre-eminence and ends with a promise of deliverance. [Exodus](#) opens with a problem of bondage and closes with the pathway to freedom. [Leviticus](#) heralds the peaceway of sacrifice and closes with the premise that devotion to God is crucial! Leviticus views the need for offerings that are pleasing in His sight (1:1-4). The book closes with commandments to govern God's people as they walk (27:34). Offerings are provided way of access, and keeping commandments as a means of fellowship!



Leviticus Chapter Chart

ACCESS THROUGH OFFERINGS

Read Chapters 1-3

Chapter	Title	Key Verse
1		
2		
3		

KEY QUESTIONS:

1. What are the three offerings in this section and what do you perceive as the significance of each?

2. In what manner was each offering given and what is God's response?

3. With what was each offering to be offered?

4. Why wasn't Israel supposed to eat fat or blood?

5. Why was God so particular about the ways these offerings were to be presented?

What about today?

1. Read Hebrews 10:5-18. What do you learn about true sacrifice? What does God require from you?

2. Read Romans 12:1,2. What is a living sacrifice? In what ways do you find yourself living as a living sacrifice?

Thank God for the ability to have access to perfect peace!

Chapter	Title	Key Verse
4		
5		
6		
7		

KEY QUESTIONS:

1. What was the nature of the sin offering and why was it necessary?

2. What kinds of sins are dealt with and how was forgiveness experienced?

3. What are the similarities and differences between the sin offering and the trespass offering?

4. Why are the offerings considered more than once?

5. What is a wave offering and why was it necessary?

6. Note the summary verses 7:37, 38.

What about today?

1. Consider guilt in the life of a Christian. What do we learn from this section about feeling guilty? (Note 1 John 1:9).

2. Search your heart today and every day for unintentional sin. What are we to do when sin is discovered? (Read Psalm 139:23, 24).

Chapter	Title	Key Verse
8		
9		
10		

KEY QUESTIONS:

1. What was the purpose and significance of the anointing oil?

2. What was the purpose of the ram of ordination offering? How does it compare with the ram of the burnt offering?

3. What was Aaron's job and why was it necessary?

4. What does 9:23, 24 reveal about God's holiness?

5. Why was Nadab and Abihu's sin so serious? What was the root of their sin?

6. How does the Lord respond to Aaron? What do we learn about Aaron in this section?

What about today?

1. Study and compare Acts 5:1-11. What correlations would there be? What are the implications for our offerings to the Lord?

2. Read Revelation 1:4-7. What does it mean for us to be priests before our God?

Chapter	Title	Key Verse
11		
12		
13		
14		
15		
16		

KEY QUESTIONS:

1. Why are there clean and unclean animals?

2. What was God's attitude toward the unclean and why did it seem so harsh?

3. What does the word swarming teach us?

4. What correlations are evident between leprosy and sin?

5. How was one cleansed from leprosy? What is pictured here?

6. Why were the laws on leprosy given?

7. Why did God want Israel to be clean? Read 16:29, 30.

What about today?

1. What spiritual leprosy has or is now affecting you?

2. What are the swarming things of today?

3. What do you do when you find yourself unclean?

Even among the people of God, the leprosy of the world rots away at the fabric of God's morality. And yet, there is a cure! (See 1 John 1:9 and Romans 6:12-14).

SEPARATE & HOLY

Read Chapters 17-22

Chapter	Title	Key Verse
17		
18		
19		
20		
21		
22		

KEY QUESTIONS:

1. What is God revealing when He talks about the blood?

2. Why were such stringent sexual laws necessary?

3. What do you learn here about God's view of justice?

4. Why was God's response so harsh and why should all of these people have been put to death?

5. Why were the offerings supposed to be without defect?

6. Note the conclusion (22:32, 33) concerning to the necessity of holy gifts!

What about today?

1. Do you have appreciation and reverence for the blood sacrifice of Christ?

2. Do you practice social equity?

3. In what ways could the worship of Molech have a 20th century correlation?

Our God has not changed. He still desires His children to walk holy before Him in love and purity. True separation involves a turning away from the world and its standards (1 Peter 1:13-16)!

OBSERVANCES

Read Chapters 23-24

Chapter	Title	Key Verse
23		
24		

KEY QUESTIONS:

There are seven [appointed times](#) listed in this section along with the teaching of Jesus and His apostles concerning each holy day and feast. Take the time to consider each one and ask the questions:

What did each mean to the Jews?

What did each mean to the Christ-followers who followed?

What does each one have to do with my life of devotion to the Lord God?

OBSERVANCE	PURPOSE	TEACHING OF CHRIST & THE APOSTLES
Sabbath		Hebrews 4:1-10
Passover		1 Corinthians 11:17-34
First Fruits		Romans 8:23; 1 Corinthians 9:7
Pentecost		Acts 2
Trumpets		1 Corinthians 15:52; Revelation 1:10
Atonement		Hebrews 9
Tabernacles		Mark 9:2-13; 11:8

What about today?

What do you learn about devotion from these feasts and observances?

What are the times where you evaluate your commitment to the Lord Jesus and reflect upon your life? Don't let the days, months, and years slip by (Ephesians 5:16)!

Chapter	Title	Key Verse
25		
26		
27		

KEY QUESTIONS:

1. What does the feast of Jubilee teach us about God's perspective on man's nature?

2. What is promised and warned concerning periods of time in the land?

3. What principles do we learn about God's ownership?

What about today?

1. How would you specifically define pride of power in your life?

2. What have you set apart to the Lord? What specifically are you are holding back?

It is critical that times of refreshing come for the spiritual, physical, and emotional welfare of the sons of Adam, and particularly the sons of Abraham!



CONCENTRATION ON CONSECRATION

Leviticus 11:44

"For I am the Lord your God. Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy..."

Consecration (setting apart) and holiness are not just available options to godliness, they are requirements for "all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus".

CONSECRATION IS COMMANDED BY GOD

What does each section of passages teach us about consecration?

A. Because of Who He Is

Exodus 20:1-6; Leviticus 11:44, 45; Leviticus 19 (esp. vs. 1-2, 37);
Leviticus 20:7-8; John 15:1,4,5.

B. Because of What He Has Done and Is Going To Do

Exodus 13:2,11-16; Exodus 34:10-16, 24¹ Leviticus 20:22-24; John 15:16

C. Because of Who We Are Supposed To Be in Him

Exodus 19:4-6; Leviticus 20:26; 1 Peter 2-9; John 15:14

CONSECRATION IS DEMONSTRATED BY GOD'S SON

John 17:19 (in light of John 15:13; John 17:4)

CONSECRATION IS REQUIRED OF YOU AND ME IN ORDER TO BE FREE!

"Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body." (1 Corinthians 6:19,20)

"For you once were not a people, but now you are the people of God!" (Peter 2:10)

We can never be perfected by works of the flesh. If we love God, however, we will keep His commandment to set ourselves apart for His purposes. We do so as a privilege - not a burden. And through obedience we are set free!

In what ways do you concentrate upon your consecration?



Here is an opportunity to examine the relationship between leprosy and sin.

Sin is like leprosy: what starts out as a small 'dot' can spread and grow until the whole body is covered with rot!

In order to be wholly holy we need to learn how to avoid 'spiritual leprosy', as well as how to deal with it. Carefully consider the following points to discern how they apply to your life. What do you learn from each group of passages?

Separate yourself from it!

(Avoid opportunities to get it; don't make your home among the infected.)

Leviticus 13:46. Compare with Leviticus 20:24-26; Psalm 1:1; Proverbs 4:14-15;

Proverbs 5:8; 1 Corinthians 5:2; Ephesians 5:3-17.

When you notice it beginning, deal with it immediately! (Don't let it spread!)

Leviticus 13:2. Compare with Psalm 32:3; 1 Corinthians 5:6-7; Hebrews 12:15

If 'the rot' got you, get cleansed!

Luke 5:12-13; 17:12-13. Compare with Psalm 32:3-5; Psalm 51; Proverbs 28:13; 1 John 1:8-9.

Show yourself to be clean by walking in cleanliness!

Leviticus 14:2,3,11; Luke 5:14; 17:14. Compare with Luke 3:8

('Therefore, bring forth fruits in keeping with repentance....'); Ephesians 4:1; 5:8;

Colossians 1:10, 21-23; 3:5-10; 1 Peter 2:9.

Don't forget the One who set you free!

Leviticus 14:7; Luke 17:15-18. Consider Isaiah 53:3-9; John 8:36; 2 Corinthians 5:21;

Revelation 5:9-10.

"But if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin." 1 John 1:7



HOLINESS OR HAPPINESS?

By A.W. Tozer

A selfish desire for happiness is as sinful as any other selfish desire. Its root is in the flesh which can never have any standing before God. 'The carnal mind is enmity against God for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.' (Romans 8:7)

People are coming more and more to excuse every sort of wrongdoing on the grounds that they are 'just trying to secure a little happiness'. Before she will give her consent to marriage, the modern young lady may ask outright whether or not the man 'can make me happy', instead of wondering selflessly whether she can bring happiness to her life partner. The lovelorn columns of the newspapers are wet with the self-pitying tears of persons who write to inquire how they can 'preserve their happiness'. The psychiatrists of the land are getting fat off the increasing numbers who seek professional aid in their all-absorbing search for happiness. It is not uncommon for crimes to be committed against persons who do nothing worse than 'jeopardize someone's happiness.

That is the hedonistic philosophy of old Grecian days misunderstood and applied to everyday living in the twentieth century. It destroys all nobility of character and makes milksops of all who consciously or unconsciously adopt it; but it has become quite the popular creed of the masses. That we are born to be happy is scarcely questioned by anyone. No one bothers to prove that fallen men have any moral right to happiness, or that they are in the long run any better off happy. The only question before the house is how to get the most happiness out of life. Almost all popular books and plays assume that personal happiness is the legitimate end of the dramatic human struggle.

Now I submit that the whole hectic scramble after happiness is an evil as certainly as is the scramble after money or fame or success. It springs out of a vast misunderstanding of ourselves and of our true moral state. The man who really knows himself can never believe in his right to be happy. A little glimpse of his own heart will disillusion him instantly so that he is more likely to turn on himself and own God's sentence against him to be just. The doctrine of man's inalienable right to happiness is anti-God and anti-Christ, and its wide acceptance by society tells us a lot about that same society.

The effect of this modern hedonism is felt also among the people of God. The gospel is too often presented as a means toward happiness, to peace of mind or security. There are even those who use the Bible to 'relax' them, as if it were a drug.

How far wrong all this is will be discovered easily by the simple act of reading the New Testament through once with meditation. There the emphasis is not upon happiness, but upon holiness. God is more concerned with the state of people's hearts than with the state of their feelings. Undoubtedly the will of God brings final happiness to those who obey, but the most important matter is not how happy we are but how holy. The soldier does not seek to be happy in the field; he seeks rather to get the fighting over with, to win the war and get back home to his loved ones. There he may enjoy himself to the full; but while the war is on his most pressing job is to be a good soldier, to acquit himself like a man, regardless of how he feels.

The childish clamor after happiness can become a real snare. One may easily deceive himself by cultivating a religious joy without a correspondingly righteous life. No man should desire to be happy who is not at the same time holy. He should spend his efforts in seeking to know and do the will of God, leaving to Christ the matter of how happy he shall be.

For those who take this whole thing seriously, I have a suggestion: Go to God and have an understanding. Tell Him that it is your desire to be holy at any cost and then ask Him never to give you more happiness than holiness. When your holiness becomes tarnished, let your joy become dim. And ask Him to make you holy whether you are happy or not. Be assured that in the end you will be as happy as you are holy; but for the time being let your whole ambition be to serve God and be Christlike.

If we dare to take a stand like that we may expect to know a new degree of inward purification. And, God being who He is, we are more than likely to know a new degree of happiness as well, but a happiness that springs out of a more intimate fellowship with God, a happiness that is elevated and unselfish and free from the pollutions of the flesh.