

Leviticus

Pertaining to the Levites

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Title of the Book

- From Greek Λευιτικός (*Leuitikos*)
- English takes its title from Latin (*Leviticus*), taken in turn from Greek
- Meaning: “relating/pertaining to the Levites”
- The Hebrew title comes from the first word of the text: “And he called”

Time of the Events

- The Book of Leviticus was written probably near the end of the desert wanderings (~1452 B. C.), covering only about one month—from the completion of the tabernacle to the departure from Mt. Sinai

Key Words

- “holy” (~87 times)
- In contrast with holiness, “sin” and “uncleanness” in various forms are used about 194 times
- “blood” (agent of cleansing; 89 times)
- “atonement” appears at least 45 times

Key Phrases

- “The Lord spoke” or “said” or “commanded” (56 times) in 27 chapters
- “I am the Lord your God” (21 times)

Verses to Remember

- 11:44-45—“sanctify yourselves,” “be holy”
- 17:11—“the life of the flesh is in the blood”
- 19:2—“be holy”
- 19:18—“Love your neighbor as yourself”
- 20:7-8—“sanctify yourselves,” “be holy”
- 20:26—“be holy”

Chapter to Remember

- Ch. 16—The Day of Atonement
from “Yom Kippur”
- Significant and solemn day in the
Hebrew calendar (as important as
The Passover)
- The high priest entered the Holy of
Holies to make atonement for sin

The Holy of Holies

- In Leviticus 16 while “holy of holies” does not occur, there is a clear description of “the holy of holies” (NASB)
 - “Most Holy” or “Most Holy Place” (NKJV)
 - Ex. 26:33-34
 - 2 Chron. 3:8, 10; 4:22; 5:7

Day of Atonement Summarized

- The high priest would enter the Holy of Holies alone, once a year
- He would take from the Israelites a bull for a sin offering, two male goats for a sin offering and one ram for a burnt offering

Day of Atonement Summarized

- The high priest would offer the bull for the sin offering to make atonement for himself and for his household
- He would present the two goats before the Lord at the doorway of the tent of meeting (the tabernacle)

Day of Atonement Summarized

- The high priest would cast lots for the two goats—one would be a sin-offering, one a scapegoat
- After the symbolic transfer of sins, the scapegoat would be thrust into the wilderness (desert)

Day of Atonement Summarized

Leviticus 16 & 23:26-32

- Occurred on the tenth day of the seventh month
- “You shall do no work at all”
- “a sabbath of complete rest”
- The only fast day commanded

Outline

- 1:1-6:7—The Law of Sacrifices
Dedication—five kinds of offerings
 1. Burnt offering—need for perfect consecration, spotless life (ch. 1)
 2. Grain offering—perfect service (ch. 2)

Outline

3. Peace offering—communion: God and his people participating (ch. 3)
4. Sin offering—refers to sins against God; the fallen are safeguarded by sacrifice (ch. 4)
5. Trespass offering—trespasses against others are sins against God

Outline

- **6:8-10:20**—The Law of the Priests
Mediation
 1. Consecration of Aaron and his sons, death of Nadab and Abihu
 2. Christ, our High Priest, is the one mediator (1 Tim. 2:5)

Outline

- **Chs. 11-22**—The Law of Purity Separation
 1. They must be a people of pure food, pure body and house (ch. 14), a pure nation, pure marriages, pure morals, and pure priests
 2. Christians must be pure in heart and soul (Mt. 5:8; 2 Cor. 6:17; 7:1; 2 Tim. 2:19)

Outline

- **Chs. 23-25**—The Law of Feasts, Fasts and Years
Commemoration
 1. Annual feast days (Ch. 23)
 - Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread—commemorated deliverance from Egypt

Outline

- Pentecost or Feast of Weeks—commemorated first harvest in Canaan
 - Tabernacles—commemorated God's providential care during the desert wanderings
2. Annual fast—Day of Atonement—day of remembrance of sins (Ch. 16 & 23:27-32)

Outline

3. Sabbatical year—rest for the soil every seventh year (25:1-7)
 4. Year of Jubilee—every 50th year slaves were liberated and debtors freed
- **Chs. 26-27**—Special Laws
 - Obedience and disobedience (ch. 26)
 - Vows and tithes (ch. 27)

Trivia

Where is the only passage in Leviticus where the Levites are mentioned?

- Lev. 25:32-33