



LIVING IN THE PRESENCE OF A HOLY GOD

ABF Series • Pastor Brian

LEVITICUS INTRODUCTION

1. This is the third book in the Pentatuch/Torah/Law of Moses.
2. The title emphasizes the role of the Levites, but the book contains much more than this.
3. A key phrase is “the tent of meeting.”
4. The central message is that God is holy and desires His people to be also, for the purpose of relationship.
5. Leviticus was a book of blessing to the Israelites, not a book of burden.

LEVITICUS INTRODUCTION

6. Leviticus was written in a particular cultural setting, parts of which are unknown.
 - We don't know all of the cultic association with aspects of pagan worship.
 - We don't know all of the cultural associations with aspects of practical living.
7. Leviticus has a center point – the Day of Atonement. This impacts every element of the book.
8. The Old Covenant is not the testament/covenant for believers today.

A REMINDER ON READING OT LAW.

The Old Testament law does teach much about the person of God, the values of His desired world, the grace He extends to mankind, and the future He has prepared for those who come to Him on His terms.

THE TABERNACLE – THE PALACE OF GOD

1. The Israelites bring their tribute here (Exod. 25:1–9), just as a people would bring tribute to a king's palace.
2. The Israelites come and ‘stand before’ the Lord, just as one ‘stands before’ a ruler or person in authority (Lev. 9:5).
3. The tabernacle’s furniture and tapestries are incredibly ornate and unlike those of any other tent in Israel (Exod. 25:10 – 26:37; 30:1–10). This is clearly a tent fit for a king.

THE TABERNACLE – THE PALACE OF GOD

4. Just as kings had servants in their palaces who wore special uniforms and ministered before him (1 Kgs 10:5), so too the Lord has servants (the priests) in his palace-tent who wear special uniforms (Exod. 28) and minister before him (Exod. 28:43).
5. The tent has a throne room – the Most Holy Place – in which the Ark of the Covenant is the Lord’s royal ‘footstool’ (1 Chr. 28:2), and the carved cherubim on top of it, his royal ‘throne’ (2 Sam. 6:2).

GOD IS HOLY. WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

1. Powerful Creatorship: Majestic Holiness

- God is altogether separate from His creation. His holiness is independent. No one makes Him holy. He is.
- This aspect of His holiness is not transferable.

2. Purity: Moral Holiness

- God is altogether separate from any and all aspects of sin. He is pure light, and no darkness dwells within Him.
- This aspect of His holiness is transferable.

GOD IS HOLY. WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

The God of Israel separates himself from all other gods.

1. Power without moral purity becomes tyranny. The God of Israel is no tyrant.
2. Power without relationship becomes distant. The God of Israel is not distant.
3. Purity without care becomes sterile. The God of Israel extends his concern for others.
4. Purity without cleansing becomes impossible. The God of Israel provides a way for holiness.

GOD'S CALL FOR HOLINESS

1. God's call for holiness is an invitation for a relationship.
2. God's call for holiness is based upon his redemption of them (Lev. 11:45; 19:36).
3. God's call for holiness required a loyalty to His law (Lev 19)
 - The law provided a modeling of the values of God (vs. 2).
 - The law provided a guide for healthy human society (vs. 9-18).
 - The law provided parameters for purity from the surrounding paganism (vs. 26-28).

THE LAW OF GOD

- The law does not create relationship with the Lord; it regulates an existing relationship.
- The longest psalm in the Bible (Ps. 119) models how the faithful should view God's law: as something to thank God for (v. 7), rejoice in (v. 14), delight in (vv. 16, 24, 35, 47, 70, 77, 143, 174), long for (vv. 20, 40, 131), cling to (v. 31), love (vv. 47, 48, 97, 119, 127, 140, 159, 163, 167), sing about (v. 54), meditate on (vv. 78, 97, 148) and rejoice over (v. 162).

CATEGORIES THAT LIMIT RELATIONSHIP

1. Sin Categories:

- Unintentional Sins – sacrifices are available.
- High-handed Sins – no sacrifices are available.
- Intentional, but not High-handed – some sacrifices are available.

2. Ritual States:

- Clean – full participation in community.
- Unclean – no or limited participation in community.
- Holy - leadership in community events.

HOLINESS AS A CENTRAL THEME IN SCRIPTURE

Holiness defines:

1. God's creative work.
2. God's desire for redemption.
3. God's gift of atonement.
4. God's purpose for his people internally.
5. God's mission for his people externally.