



*Go for God!*

# The Book of LEVITICUS

## Introduction & Chapters 1 – 4

- Author: Moses

- Theme: “Holiness”

- The Writing of the PENTATEUCH (First five books of the Bible):  
1450-1410 B.C.

- **Key Verses:** Leviticus 11:44-45 - *For I am the Lord your God. You shall therefore consecrate yourselves, and you shall be holy; for I am holy. Neither shall you defile yourselves with any creeping thing that creeps on the earth. 45 For I am the Lord who brings you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God. You shall therefore be holy, for I am holy.*

Leviticus 17:11 - *“For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul”*

Leviticus 20:7-8 - *“Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am the LORD your God. And you shall keep My statutes, and perform them: I am the LORD who sanctifies you”*

- **Key Chapter: 16** – The *Day of Atonement* (“*Yom Kippur*”) was the most important single day in the Hebrew calendar as it was the only day the high priest entered into the Holy of Holies to “*make atonement for you, to cleanse you, that you may be clean from all your sins before the LORD*” (16:30).

> **Comments on LEVITICUS:**

- **C.I. Scofield** writes, “LEVITICUS is devoted to the worship of the redeemed people of God, as is shown by the frequent occurrence of words relating to *holiness and sacrifice*. In the Hebrew Bible this book is called by its first word, *wayyiqra*, meaning *and He called* . . . The vocabulary of sacrifice pervades the book: the words “priest,” “sacrifice,” blood,” and “offering” occur very frequently; and “qodesh,” rendered “holiness” or “holy,” appears more than 150 times. Observe also the repeated command: “*Be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy*” (11:44-45; 19:2; 20:7,26).

(My sidenote: The Greek word for church is *ekklesia* which means “*a calling out or called out ones*”. This word is used 115 times in the New Testament. Thus we see the similarities.)

- **W.H. Griffith Thomas** writes, “No other book has so many lessons on access to God and worship (Psa. 65:4). “Offering and “Sacrifice” occur ninety-one times. “Clean” and its cognates and contrasts 186 times. It is the only book by means of which the Epistle to the Hebrews is understood.

The following truths are symbolized and emphasized in Leviticus:

1. The Great Problem: Sin
2. The Great Provision: Sacrifice
3. The Great Power: Priesthood
4. The Great Plan: Day of Atonement
5. The Great Possibility: Access to God.
6. The Great Principle: Holiness
7. The Great Privilege: The Presence of God

Thus the Book teaches that access to God and communion with Him are essential to life, that they are only possessed on the ground of Redemption (Ex. 5:1), and through the Sacrifice and Priesthood of Christ (**Heb 10:5-25**), by which the laws of Holiness are made possible (1 Peter 1:15,16- *but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, “Be holy, for I am holy.”*). As Leviticus follows Exodus, so communion, holiness, worship must follow (and cannot precede) pardon. Leviticus thus emphasizes the necessity, teaches the possibility, provides for the reality, and assures of the completeness of Holiness (2 Cor. 7:1 – *Therefore, having these promises, beloved let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.*)

- **Warren Wiersbe** writes, “Happiness, not holiness, is the chief pursuit of most people today, including many professed Christians. They want Jesus to solve their problems and carry their burdens, but they don't want Him to control their lives and change their character. It doesn't disturb them that eight times in the Bible, God said to His people, “Be holy, for I am holy,” and He means it.

“But wasn't the Book of Leviticus written for the priests and Levites in ancient Israel?” you may ask; and the answer is, “Yes.” But the lessons in Leviticus aren't limited to the Jews in ancient Israel. The spiritual principles in this book apply to Christians in the church today. The key verses of Leviticus — “*Be holy, for I am holy*” (Lev 11:44-45) — are applied to the New Testament church in 1 Peter 1:15-16; and the Book of Leviticus itself is quoted or referred to over 100 times in the New Testament. Since all Scripture was given by inspiration of God (2 Tim 3:16), then all Scripture is profitable for God's people to use in developing godly lives. Jesus said that we should live by every word that

God has given us (Matt 4:4), and that includes Leviticus. The Book of Leviticus explains five basic themes that relate to the life of holiness: a holy God; a holy priesthood; a holy people; a holy land; and a holy Savior. . . . Our English word "holy" comes from the Old English word halig which means "to be whole, to be healthy" What health is to the body, holiness is to the inner person.

- Question, who are we as New Testament saints of God?

Peter writes in 1 Peter 2:9-12 - *But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy. Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.*

> LEVITICUS overview outline:

*Chapters 1–7 – The Offerings (Dedication)*

*Chapters 8–10 – Consecration of Aaron and His Sons (Mediation)*

*Chapters 11–22 – Holiness in daily life (Separation)*

*(Chapter 16 – The Day of Atonement)*

*Chapter 23 - Seven great Feasts of the LORD (Consecration)*

*Chapters 24-26 - Laws and prophecies for the Promised Land (Ratification)*

*Chapter 27 – Dedication & Devotion*

- LEVITICUS in-depth outline:

I. HOLY OFFERINGS — 1-7

1. *Laws for the worshipers — 1:1-6:7*
2. *Laws for the priests — 6:8-7:38*

II. A HOLY PRIESTHOOD — 8-10; 21-22

1. *Consecration — 8-9*
2. *Admonition — 10*
3. *Qualification — 21-22*

III. A HOLY NATION — 11-17

1. *Clean and unclean food — 11*
2. *Childbirth — 12*
3. *Diseases and defilement — 13-15*
4. *The Day of Atonement — 16-17*

IV. A HOLY LAND — 18-20, 23-27

1. *Immorality — 18*
2. *Idolatry — 19*

3. *Capital offenses* — 20
4. *Annual feasts* — 23
5. *Blasphemy* — 24
6. *Sabbatical Year* — 25
7. *Blessings and cursings* — 26-27

***PICTURE OF THE BRAZEN ALTAR BEFORE THE TABERNACLE***



> **LEVITICUS CHAPTER 1 – “An Burnt Offering to the LORD”**

**(v1-3) Let us understand the burnt-offering past and how it is found in Christ:**

**(1) The *burnt offering* typifies Christ offering Himself without spot to God in delight to do His Father's will even in death.**

**(2) The *burnt offering* is atoning because the believer has not had this delight in the will of God.**

**(3) The *burnt offering* is substitutionary (Leviticus 1:4) because Christ did it in the sinner's stead. But the thought of penalty is not prominent. ; Hebrews 9:11-14; Hebrews 10:5-7; Psalms 40:6-8; Philippians 2:8.**

- The emphatic words Leviticus 1:3-5 are "burnt-sacrifice," "voluntary," "it shall be accepted for him," and "atonement."

> In this chapter we will discover that there are five creatures acceptable for sacrifice: The *bullock, or ox; sheep and the goats; turtle-doves or young pigeons; each pointing to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and His great sacrifice for our salvation!*

(v1-3) The *bullock, or ox*, typifies Christ as the patient and enduring Servant

(1 Corinthians 9:9; 1 Corinthians 9:10; Hebrews 12:2; Hebrews 12:3 "obedient unto death" ; Isaiah 52:13-15; Philippians 2:5-8). His offering in this character is substitutionary.

(v4) The laying on of the offerer's hand signified acceptance and identification of himself with his offering. *In figure it answers to the Christian's faith accepting and identifying himself with Christ* (Romans 4:5; Let us read **Romans 6:1-11**).

(v5-9) This speaks of how the priest where to perform their duties of the burnt offering. Notice the *sweet aroma to the LORD*, we read in Ephesians 5:1-7 - *Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma. But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore do not be partakers with them.*

(v10-13) These verses speak of the burnt offerings of the *sheep and the goats*. The *sheep, or lamb*, typifies Christ in unresisting self-surrender to the death of the cross (Isaiah 53:7; Acts 8:32-35). The *goat* typifies the sinner and, when used sacrificially, Christ, as "numbered with the transgressors"; (Isaiah 53:12; Luke 23:33 and "made sin," and "a curse"; (Galatians 3:13; 2 Corinthians 5:21) as the sinner's substitute.

(v14-17) The burnt-offering of the *turtle-doves or young pigeons* is naturally a symbol of mourning innocency (Isaiah 38:14; Isaiah 59:11; Matthew 23:37; Hebrews 7:26) and is associated with poverty in Leviticus 5:7 and speaks of Him who for our sakes become poor (Luke 9:58) and whose pathway of poverty which began with laying aside "the form of God," ended in the sacrifice through which we became rich (2 Corinthians 8:9; Philippians 2:6-8). The sacrifice of the poor Man becomes the poor man's sacrifice (Luke 2:24).

> **LEVITICUS CHAPTER 2 – “SWEET AROMA GRAIN OFFERINGS”**

(v1—16) This *meal* or *grain offering* was sweet aroma and a freewill offering. It was made up of (1) fine flour, oil and frankincense; (2) Unleavened cakes or wafers of fine flower and oil; (3) green heads of grain.

- The Bible Exposition Commentary says, “Since grain represents the fruit of our labor, the meal offering was one way for the Jews to dedicate to God that which He had enabled them to produce. The frankincense that was burned with the memorial portion represents prayer (Ps 141:2; Rev 5:8), a reminder of the petition "Give us this day our daily bread" (Matt 6:11). But the meal offering was not presented alone; it accompanied one of the sacrifices that involved the shedding of blood. Our hard work can never purchase salvation or earn the blessing of God; for apart from the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness of sin (Heb 9:22). But those who have been saved by faith in the shed blood of Christ may dedicate to the Lord what He has enabled them to produce.

This offering represents Jesus Christ as the *Bread of Life* (John 6:32), the perfect One who nourishes our inner person as we worship Him and ponder His Word. This explains why God laid down such strict conditions for the offerer to meet before the meal offering would be accepted. The offering had to be accompanied with *oil* (Lev 2:1-2,4,6,15), either poured on it or mingled with it, a picture of the Holy Spirit of God, who was given to Christ without measure (John 3:34). It also had to include *salt* (Lev 2:13; Matt 5:13), which speaks of our Lord's purity of character. Jesus compared Himself to a grain of wheat (John 12:23-25), and He was crushed ("fine flour") and put through the furnace of suffering that He might save us from our sins.

*Leaven* (yeast) and *honey* were prohibited from being included in the meal offering (Lev 2:11). The Jews would associate leaven with evil because of the Passover rules (Ex 12:19-20; see Luke 12:1; 1 Cor 5:8), and certainly there was no sin in Jesus Christ. Honey is the sweetest thing nature produces, but our Lord's perfect character was divine and not from this world. The fact that yeast and honey both ferment may also be a factor.

> **LEVITICUS CHAPTER 3 – “THE PEACE OFFERING”**

- The Peace Offering is a sacrificial offering also called a heave offering and a wave offering. This was a bloody offering presented to God. Part of the offering was eaten by the priest (representing God's acceptance) and part was eaten by the worshiper and his guests (non-officiating priests or Levites and the poor, Deut 12:18; 16:11). Thus, God hosted the meal, communing with the worshiper and other participants. This sacrifice celebrated covering of sin, forgiveness by God, and the restoration of a right and meaningful relationship with God and with life itself (Judg 20:26; 21:4).

**There were three kinds of peace offerings:**

(1) thank offerings in response to an unsolicited special divine blessing; (2) votive (vowed) offerings in pursuit of making a request or pledge to God; and (3) freewill offerings spontaneously presented in worship and praise.

(from Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary)

- In the New Testament, peace often refers to the inner tranquility and poise of the Christian whose trust is in God through Christ. This understanding was originally expressed in the Old Testament writings about the coming MESSIAH (Isa 9:6-7). The peace that Jesus Christ spoke of was a combination of hope, trust, and quiet in the mind and soul, brought about by a reconciliation with God. Such peace was proclaimed by the host of angels at Christ's birth (Luke 2:14), and by Christ Himself in His SERMON ON THE MOUNT (Matt 5:9) and during His ministry. He also taught about this kind of peace at the Lord's Supper, shortly before His death (John 14:27 - *Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.*)

Believers enjoy peace with God through Jesus Christ, their eternal Peace Offering, Paul writes in Romans 5:1-3 - *Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.*

**> LEVITICUS CHAPTER 4 – “THE SIN OFFERING”**

(v1-35) The sin offering (4:1-5:13; 6:24-30) had to be brought to the Lord no matter who the sinner was; and the higher the sinner's position in the nation, the more expensive the sacrifice. The greater the privilege, the greater the responsibility and the consequences. If the high priest sinned, he had to bring a young bullock (Lev 4:1-12). If the whole congregation sinned, they also had to bring a bullock (vv. 13-22). A ruler brought a male kid of the goats (vv. 22-26), while one of the "common people" ("a member of the community," NIV) brought a female kid of the goats or a female lamb (vv. 27-35). A poor person could bring a dove or a pigeon, and a very poor person could bring a non-bloody sacrifice of fine flour (5:7-13).

Whatever animal was brought, the offender had to identify with the sacrifice by laying hands on it.

When the whole nation sinned, it was the elders who did this (4:15); for as leaders, they were responsible before God to over-see the spiritual life of the people. The animal was slain, and the blood presented to God.

**In the case of the high priest and the nation, some of the blood was sprinkled before the veil and applied to the horns of the altar of incense in the holy place; and the rest was poured out at the base of the altar. This reminded the nation that the sins of leaders had far greater consequences. The blood of the sacrifices brought by the leaders or the common people was applied to the horns of the brazen altar at the door of the tabernacle.**

Note that while the fat of the sacrifice was burned on the altar, the body of the sacrifice was burned in a clean place outside the camp (vv. 8-12, 21). Why? **For one thing, it made a distinction between the sin offering and the burnt offering so that the worshipers wouldn't be confused as they watched.** But even more, it reminded the people that the sins of the high priest and the whole congregation would pollute the whole camp; and the sin offering was too holy to remain in an unholy camp.

*Finally, according to Hebrews 13:10-16 -**We have an altar from which those who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat. For the bodies of those animals, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned outside the camp. Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered outside the gate. Therefore let us go forth to Him, outside the camp, bearing His reproach. For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come. Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name. But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.***

**This was a picture of our Lord Jesus Christ who died "outside the city gate... outside the camp" as our sin offering (vv. 12-13, NIV). (from The Bible Exposition Commentary)**