

## LEVITICUS

We come now to the training manual of the Pentateuch, the book of Leviticus. The very name of the book suggest the subject matter: the Levites and priests in their service in the tabernacle as this service relates to the people of Israel. It is a manual to be used by the priests to instruct Israel relative to the laws which God had given.

In Genesis, we saw the beginnings and the fall of man. In Exodus, we saw man lifted up from bondage and redeemed. In Leviticus we see man brought into the presence of God, worshiping at the tabernacle. The altar of sacrifice, the character and construction of the Tabernacle, and the institution of the priesthood are set forth in Exodus. The book of Exodus concludes by saying (Exodus 40:17-38). All things were ready. Leviticus is a continuation of the book of Exodus. The tabernacle is complete, the glory of the Lord was there, and now it was time to instruct them concerning their worship. In this book we see the wisdom of God as he gave his people laws which would not only benefit their lives, but would enable them to be holy as God is holy. God shows his people that the way to continuing fellowship is by Sacrifice and Separation from Sin. The book teaches the awfulness of sin, how it alienates man from God, and how sacrificial blood is necessary to man's reconciliation.

It is interesting that twenty of the twenty-seven chapters begin with "And the Lord spake unto Moses saying..." In fact, no other book in the Bible affirms inspiration so frequently as Leviticus. Some 38 times the text asserts that the Lord spoke to Moses or Aaron.

Two verses are said to be the key verse in this book (17:11; 19:2). The key word.. "holy" found 94 times, "atonement" is found 49 times. "I am the Lord your God" is found 21 times. The key chapter is chapter 16, the day of atonement. The key thought: That our holy God has appointed a way by which sinful man can come into His presence by means of sacrificial blood. The relationship is sustained only when the whole life is holy. The theme of the book is holiness, because God is holy.

The question is, how can a sinful man approach a holy God. God gave the answer... man can gain access to God only on the basis of sacrifice through the shedding of blood (Lev. 17:11; Heb. 9:22,28).

The purpose of the book of Leviticus. (1) To show that God is holy and man is sinful and must continually return to God for cleansing and forgiveness. (2) To show how a sinful people can approach a holy God. (3) To provide the law of approach to God in acceptable worship. (4) To keep Israel a holy nation.

### I. Laws concerning sacrifices. (1-7).

#### A. The law of the burnt offerings. (Chap. 1)

1. The entire flesh was burned on the altar.
2. It signified the complete dedication of the individual or nation to God.

#### B. The law of the Meal(Meat) offerings (Chap 2)

1. Fine flour with oil and frankincense, . . . salt could be used, but no leaven.
2. These were always offered with the blood sacrifice.
3. Priest ate part of this offering.
4. Being the produce of man's labor, it suggested his gratitude for God's provisions.

#### C. Peace Offerings (Chap. 3)

1. An unblemished ox, sheep or goat of either sex.
2. Only the fatty portion and blood were given to God.
3. The flesh was divided between the priest and the worshiper.
4. It signified communion with God.
5. Christ's sacrifice brought us peace (Eph. 2:16ff).

#### D. Sin Offering (Chap. 4)

1. The fat, the kidneys, and the caul were burned.
2. The priests ate the remainder or else burned it without the camp.
3. Sins committed in ignorance were atoned for by this sacrifice. This was an acknowledgment of

- sin.
    - 4. Christ is our sin offering (2 Cor. 5:19-21).
  - E. Trespass Offering (5:1-6:7).
    - 1. Only a ram, without blemish to be offered.
    - 2. Only the fat, kidneys, and caul were burned.
    - 3. The priests ate the remainder or burned it.
    - 4. This atoned for sin wherein it was possible to make restitution.
    - 5. Trespass offerings provided for definite acts of willful wrong doing.
  - F. The first three offerings were used to maintain fellowship with God, while the last two were to restore broken fellowship.
  - G. The rest of Chapters 6 and all of 7 give special instructions for priests concerning various sacrifices.
- II. Installation of the Priests. (8-10)
  - A. Aaron and his sons were called to the priesthood (8)
    - 1. Their cleansing (8:6)
    - 2. The clothing of Aaron (8:7-9)
    - 3. Anointing of the Tabernacle and priests (8:10-12)
    - 4. Clothing of Aaron's sons (8:13).
    - 5. The various sacrifices were offered (8:14-29).
    - 6. Sanctification of Aaron and his sons (8:30), and the eating of the sacrifice (vss.31-32).
    - 7. Ceremonies were repeated every day for a week (8:33-36)
  - B. Aaron and His sons began their ministry (Chap. 9)
    - 1. Sacrificed for self (9:1-4)
    - 2. Sacrificed for the people (9:15-21)
    - 3. Blessed the people (9:22-23)
    - 4. Fire from heaven consumed the sacrifices (9:24).
  - C. Nadab and Abihu (Chap 10).
    - 1. Their sins appear to have been manifold.
      - a. Their incense was not lighted from the altar (16:12).
      - b. They appear to have offered the incense at a time not prescribed in the divinely appointed order of services.
      - c. Their offering of fire "before the Lord" seems to imply that they pressed "within the veil" into the Holy of Holies where none but the High Priest was allowed, and then only once a year on the day of atonement (16:1-2).
    - 2. Their punishment was instantaneous (v.2)
    - 3. Their bodies were disposed of (10:3-7).
    - 4. Various warnings and instructions were given to Aaron and his sons (10:8-21).
- III. Laws concerning cleanness and uncleanness (11-16)
  - A. Regulations on clean and unclean food. (chap. 11).
  - B. Purification of woman after childbirth (chap. 12).
    - 1. Point of interest: A lamb was to be brought for a burnt-offering.
    - 2. If they were poor, they were to bring two turtle doves, or two young pigeons. (Lk. 2:24).
  - C. Law concerning leprosy (13-14)
  - D. Purification from bodily secretions (chap. 15)
  - E. Day of Atonement (chap. 16).
    - 1. This was the most solemn occasion of the whole Jewish year. Only time admission allowed to Holy of Holies.
    - 2. The scapegoat sent away (16:21-22).
    - 3. Heb. 9:7-12
    - 4. Heb. 10:1-4

5. Heb. 10:19-22—only High Priest could enter under Old Law and only one time each year. We have continual access.
  6. Jesus offered himself once—Heb. 9;12,28; 7:27; 10:10.
  7. There are so many comparisons to be made that we just don't have to time to study all of them.
- IV. Laws of Holiness (17-20).
- A. Holiness began with their food (Chap. 17) [esp. 17:10-14..forbidden to eat blood].
  - B. Holiness in sexual conduct (Chap. 18).
  - C. Holiness in conduct toward God and man.(Chap. 19)
  - D. Punishment for ungodly action (Chap. 20)
    1. Molech worship (20:1-5)
    2. Witchcraft (20:6-8)
    3. Cursing parents (20:9)
    4. Sexual crimes (20:10-21).
    5. Exhortation to follow God's ways (20:22-27)
  - E. All of these showing that God's people were to be different from those around them.
- V. Laws concerning the Priests, Holy Days, and Festivities of Israel (21-26)
- A. Regulations for the priests (21-22)
  - B. The Holy Days and Seasons (23)
    1. The Sabbath
    2. Passover
    3. Feast of unleavened bread
    4. Feast of First fruits.
    5. Pentecost
    6. Feast of Trumpets
    7. Day of Atonement
    8. Feast of Tabernacles.
    9. Three of these were often called the Great Festivals. These were unique in that every male was expected to attend. (Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles)
  - C. Chap. 24 stresses keeping order relating to three things: Lampstand, Showbread and transgression in the form of blasphemy.
  - D. Sabbatical Year and Year of Jubilee (Chap. 25)
- VI. The conclusion.(Chap. 26)
- A. Blessings for obedience to God (26:1-13)
  - B. Punishment for Disobedience (26:14-39)
  - C. God's faithfulness affirmed (26:40-46).
- VII. Appendix: Vows and Tithes. (27).

Con: There is so much that we can learn from the book of Leviticus. The atonement is the overriding thought that we should consider. The blood of Christ (Heb. 9;28; Matt. 26:28). Have you come in contact with the blood? Are you continuing to walk with God? I John 1:7. Two points to remember: 1) Importance and necessity of acceptable worship. (2) Sin results in man's separation from God. BE HOLY!