

THE BOOK OF LEVITICUS – LESSON 8

Summary of Previous Lessons

1. Lesson 1 – Leviticus is part of the historical narrative of OT Israel.
 - a. It is important to understand the historical context of Leviticus.
 - i. The lives of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.
 1. God’s promises to them to inherit the land.
 - ii. The life of Joseph and how God uses Joseph to bring his people into Egypt.
 - iii. The 430 years Israel lived in Egypt, eventually becoming slaves.
 - iv. The birth of Moses and how he was chosen to lead Israel out of Egypt.
 - v. God’s power displayed in delivering Israel from Egypt.
 - vi. The sinfulness, faithlessness and rebelliousness of the people.
 - vii. God’s mercy toward them.
 - viii. God’s judgement toward them.
 - ix. God’s covenant with them at Mount Sinai.
2. Lesson 2 – Introduction to the Tabernacle
 - a. The Altar of Burnt Offering
 - b. Bronze Laver for Washing
 - c. The Tabernacle itself
 - i. The Holy Place
 1. The Golden Table of the Bread of the Presence
 2. The Golden Lampstand
 3. The Altar of Incense (which actually was part of the Most Holy Place but for practical purposes was placed just outside of it.)
 - ii. The Curtain between the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place
 - iii. The Most Holy Place
 1. Ark of the Covenant
 - a. Two Tablets on which were written the ten commandments
 - b. Aaron’s Rod which had budded
 - c. Jar of Manna
 - d. The “Mercy Seat” covering the Ark on which were the golden Cherubim.
 - d. Defining Terms In Leviticus
 - i. Clean vs Unclean (two states that must never come into contact with each other)
 - ii. Holiness vs Unholiness
 - iii. Sanctification (to be made holy)
 1. Two aspects
 - a. God’s part in making man holy
 - b. Man’s part in keeping himself holy (obedience)
 - i. The book of Leviticus is primarily concerned with man’s contribution of holiness.

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- e. The Role of Sacrifice
 - i. Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness
 - ii. The concept of a substitute dying in place of the offender
 - iii. Three parties involved
 - 1. God
 - 2. The Priest
 - 3. The Worshipper
 - 4. You could add a 4th, the sacrificial animal
- f. The Covenant at Mt Sinai
- 3. Lesson 3 (Leviticus 1 & 2)
 - a. The Main Sacrifices of Leviticus
 - i. Sweet Savor (those offered by “worshippers”)
 - 1. Burnt Offering (aka “Whole Burnt Offering”)
 - 2. Grain Offering (aka “Cereal Offering”)
 - 3. Peace Offering (aka “Fellowship Offering”)
 - ii. Sin Sacrifices (those offered by “sinners”)
 - 1. Purification Offering (aka “Sin Offering”)
 - 2. Reparation Offering (aka “Trespass Offering, Guilt Offering”)
 - b. Detail of the Burnt Offering
 - i. The Animal
 - ii. The Ritual
 - 1. Performed by the Worshipper
 - 2. Performed by the Priest
 - iii. Purpose
 - 1. Makes atonement
 - 2. Pleases God – “A pleasing aroma”
 - 3. Assuages God’s anger at sin
 - iv. Application in the NT
 - c. Detail of the Grain Offering
 - i. The Offering
 - ii. The Ritual
 - 1. Performed by the Worshipper
 - 2. Performed by the Priest
 - iii. Purpose
 - iv. Almost always offered with the Burnt Offering
 - v. Application in the NT
- 4. Lesson 4 (Leviticus 3 & 4)
 - a. The Peace Offering
 - i. The Animal
 - ii. The Ritual

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- 1. Performed by the Worshipper
 - 2. Performed by the Priest
 - iii. The different types
 - 1. Confession
 - 2. Vow
 - 3. Free-will
 - iv. Purpose
 - v. Application in the NT
 - b. Sin Sacrifices – Purification Offering
 - i. Why call it “Purification” instead of “Sin” Offering?
 - ii. The Animal
 - iii. The Ritual
 - 1. Performed by the Worshipper
 - 2. Performed by the Priest
 - iv. The Purpose
 - 1. Covered UNINTENTIONAL SIN ONLY
 - v. Application in the NT
5. Lesson 5 (Leviticus 5)
 - a. The Reparation Offering (Trespass, Guilt)
 - i. The Animal
 - ii. The Ritual
 - 1. Performed by the Worshipper
 - 2. Performed by the Priest
 - iii. Purpose
 - 1. Focused primarily on sins committed against one’s neighbor
 - 2. Allowed for SOME intentional sin
 - 3. Required 20% or more penalty
 - b. Summary of the 5 main sacrifices
 - c. How each sacrifice symbolized Jesus
6. Lesson 6 (Leviticus 18-20)
 - a. Holiness and Sexual Behavior
 - i. Israel’s sexual morality was to set them apart from the surrounding nations
 - ii. The Judeo-Christian ethic’s influence on the world
 - iii. Illicit vs permitted marriages
 - 1. Definition of incest
 - iv. Other forbidden sexual practices
 - 1. Adultery
 - 2. Homosexuality
 - 3. Bestiality
 - b. NT sexual ethic is nearly identical to the OT

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- i. Divorce and remarriage
 - ii. LGBT movement in today's world
 - 1. Guy Hammond's ministry
 - a. Strengthenweakness.org
 - iii. The Church's role
 - 1. Not to judge the world. That's God's job. (I Cor 5:12f)
 - a. Our role is to keep the church free from sin while reaching out to the world
 - 2. Take a stand on what is right and what is wrong but without judgementalism. Homosexuality is clearly contrary to God's moral will as defined in the Scriptures.
 - 3. Become a place where those who struggle with same sex attraction but wish to learn more about God feel welcomed.
 - 4. Don't bring the world's attitude toward gay people (or anyone else) into the church.
 - iv. The real issue
 - 1. Relativism
 - 2. Who defines Right Vs Wrong? God or society or the individual?
 - c. Deliberate sin in the NT
 - i. Deliberate, willful, **unrepentant** sin is NOT covered by Jesus' blood.
 - ii. This is a HUGE topic and one that deserves its own 8-week class.
7. Lesson 7 – The Festivals (Leviticus 23)
- a. The Sabbath
 - b. The Passover
 - c. The Firstfruits
 - d. Feast of Weeks (Pentecost)
 - e. Feast of Trumpets
 - f. Day of Atonement
 - g. Feast of Tabernacles
 - h. Chanukah

What Has Impacted You the Most?

How?

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The Call to Be Holy

The OT Levitical Law Is A Call To Be Holy. So is NT Christianity.

1. The theme of Leviticus can be summarized in a single verse.

Leviticus 11:45

45 I am the Lord who brought you up out of Egypt to be your God; therefore be holy, because I am holy.

2. The call to holiness is a call to respond to the grace of God.
 - a. God saved them from the bitter bondage of Egypt. AFTER he saved them, he called them to be holy. Holiness was NOT A PREREQUISITE to being saved. Living a holy life was to be Israel's THANKFUL AND GRATEFUL RESPONSE to being saved.
 - b. The ESSENCE of holiness is to love God and to love your brother and sister. God SHOWED Israel what holiness practically meant by GIVING THEM THE LAW.

3. Two Greatest Commandments

Mark 12:28-31

28 One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, "Of all the commandments, which is the most important?"

29 "The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. 30 Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.'¹ 31 The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these."²

Jesus provides us with the essence of the OT law by quoting these two commandments from Leviticus and Deuteronomy. As Matthew recorded in his gospel Jesus summarized them further by saying...

Matthew 22:40

40 All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

All of the Levitical Law and all of the teachings of the OT Prophets were fundamentally about two things:

- Loving God
- Loving People

We can further conclude that holiness is also about two things:

- Loving God
- Loving people

¹ Deut 6:5

² Lev 19:18

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Romans 13:8-10

8 “Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellowman has fulfilled the law. 9 The commandments, “Do not commit adultery,” “Do not murder,” “Do not steal,” “Do not covet,” and whatever other commandment there may be, are summed up in this one rule: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” 10 Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.”

Love fulfills the Levitical Law and love fulfills the Law of Christ.

4. The OT Law had another purpose; to show Israel how incredibly sinful they were.

Romans 3:19-20

19 Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God. 20 Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin.

Once they became aware of sin and things that brought uncleanness, God expected them to avoid these behaviors and instead to do what was good and right. It wasn't good enough for them to KNOW the law. They had to obey it.

Romans 2:13

13 For it is not those who hear the law who are righteous in God's sight, but it is those who obey the law who will be declared righteous.

Q: How many of the Israelites were declared righteous through obedience to the law?

A: None

Romans 3:10-12

10 As it is written:

“There is no one righteous, not even one;

11 there is no one who understands,
no one who seeks God.

12 All have turned away,
they have together become worthless;
there is no one who does good,
not even one.”

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Once one realizes how sinful he/she is, you begin to realize how much you need God's grace. Unlike the Jews under the Old Covenant, we are not declared righteous by following the law. We are under a much better Covenant.

Hebrews 8:6

6 But the ministry Jesus has received is as superior to theirs as the covenant of which he is mediator is superior to the old one, and it is founded on better promises.

5. How is the New Covenant better? How are the promises better?

Romans 3:21-31

21 But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. 22 This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 and **are justified freely by his grace** through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. 25 **God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood.** He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished— 26 he did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.

27 Where, then, is boasting? It is excluded. On what principle? On that of observing the law? No, but on that of faith.

28 For we maintain that a man is **justified by faith** apart from observing the law. 29 Is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles too? Yes, of Gentiles too, 30 since there is only one God, who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through that same faith. 31 **Do we, then, nullify the law by this faith? Not at all! Rather, we uphold the law.**

That last sentence is the call to be holy because of this great salvation God has freely given us. It is the call to be SANCTIFIED, i.e. to live holy lives. God has JUSTIFIED us ("**just as if I'd** never sinned) through the blood of Jesus. Therefore we uphold the law of Christ NOT in order to be saved, but BECAUSE we are saved.

Hebrews 2:11

11 Both the one who makes men holy (JUSTIFICATION) and those who are made holy (SANCTIFICATION) are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers.

Hebrews 10:14

14 because by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever (JUSTIFICATION) those who are being made holy (SANCTIFICATION).

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One Final Thought

1. The Israelites were ABSOLUTELY FORBIDDEN from eating any blood.

Leviticus 17:10-12

10 “Any Israelite or any alien living among them who eats any blood—I will set my face against that person who eats blood and will cut him off from his people. 11 For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one’s life. 12 Therefore I say to the Israelites, “None of you may eat blood, nor may an alien living among you eat blood.”

2. What was blood’s purpose? To purify, to cleanse, to atone... How was that done?
 - a. Blood was **sprinkled** upon
 - i. The People
 - ii. The Altar of Burnt Offering
 - iii. The Altar of Incense
 - iv. The Ark, etc.
 - v. Everything was purified by blood and it was so holy it could not be eaten by the Israelites.

The prohibition of eating blood makes what Jesus said here nothing short of earth-shattering...

John 6:53-58

53 Jesus said to them, “I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. 54 Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. 55 For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. 56 Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him. 57 Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me. 58 This is the bread that came down from heaven. Your forefathers ate manna and died, but he who feeds on this bread will live forever.”

What are the implications of this?

What is Jesus’ blood cleansing if we are to symbolically drink it?

Where is it going? INSIDE OF US.

What then does Jesus’ blood cleanse?

Hebrews 10:19-22

19 Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, 20 by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, 21

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and since we have a great priest over the house of God, 22 let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, **having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience** and having our bodies washed with pure water.

Hebrews 9:13-14

13 The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkled on those who are ceremonially unclean sanctify them so that they are outwardly clean. 14 How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, **cleanse our consciences** from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!

Conclusion

Hebrews 2:1-3

1 We must pay more careful attention, therefore, to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away. 2 For if the message spoken by angels was binding, and every violation and disobedience received its just punishment, 3 how shall we escape if we ignore such a great salvation?

2 Corinthians 6:16 - 7:1

For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: “I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people.”

17 “Therefore come out from them and be separate, says the Lord.

Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you.”

18 “I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.”

1 Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.

Hebrews 12:14-15

14 Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord.