

# Leviticus

Leviticus contains a lot of information about the priests called Levites, and this is where the name comes from. In Exodus, God spoke out of the Mount where the people were not allowed. In Leviticus He speaks out of the Tabernacle in which He dwells in the midst of His people. The central theme in Leviticus is fellowship, and answers the question – How can a holy God have an intimate relationship with sinful man?

## **Key Words in Leviticus**

- Holiness – occurs over 90X
- Atonement – occurs over 45X

## **The Structure of Leviticus**

1. The Way to God is Sacrifice – Chapters 1-17
2. The Walk with God involves Separation – Chapters 18-27

### **I. The Way to God is Sacrifice (1-17)**

How can a Holy God that is completely just forgive sin? Isn't this contrary to His very nature? Imagine if another person was intoxicated and got into a car and hit and killed your loved ones. Then, they stood before the judge and he said – you are not guilty. I proclaim you innocent. Would we call that judge righteous? No, we would have them thrown off the bench. So, how can we worship a God like that? Proverbs 17:15 says, "He who justifies the wicked, and he who condemns the just, Both of them alike *are* an abomination to the LORD." So how can God both adequately punish sin (holy) and adequately forgive sin (mercy) at the same time. The answer is found in sacrifice! Look at the cross. Did God punish sin? Yes, because Jesus was punished for all sin. Did God forgive sinners? Yes

#### **a. Two Types of Sacrifices (1-7)**

##### Voluntary

- Burnt Offering (1) – expression of devotion, commitment and complete surrender to God
- Grain Offering (2) – recognition of God's goodness and provision
- Fellowship Offering (3) – an offering of thanksgiving for communion with God

##### Required

- Sin Offering (4) – a required confession of sin necessary for forgiveness
- Trespass Offering (5) – a required confession of sin which also required making restitution

#### **b. A Mediator (Priest) must offer the sacrifice (8-9)**

The priest must be clean (8:6), clothed (8:7-8), crowned (8:9), and anointed (8:12)

#### **c. God does not allow anything or anyone unholy into His presence (10-15)**

10 – unholy people

12 – unholy bodies

11 – unholy food

13 – unholy clothes

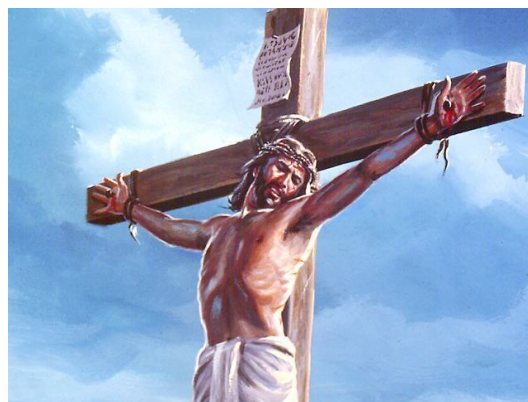
### **The Day of Atonement**

Chapter 16 is one of the most important chapters not only in Leviticus but in the entire Bible. Atonement means “to cover”. Think of as...AT ONE MENT – In order to be at one with God requires sin to be covered.

The Day of Atonement was Israel’s most important holy day, for on this day God dealt with all the sins that had not been covered during the year. The people stopped work and with a deep sense of sin sought God’s forgiveness. This is the only day that the High Priest went into the Holy of Holies. He took off his robes, dressed in plain linen garments, and went in alone. He entered the Holy of Holies and sprinkled the mercy seat 7 times with blood making atonement for himself and his family. He then took two goats to the entrance to the Holy of Holies and cast lots to see which goat would be the sacrifice for the people. He made the sacrifice, and then went in and put blood on the mercy seat to make atonement for the sins of the people. After the sacrifice was made, he released the other goat into the wilderness so that it would never be seen again.

### **Our Day of Atonement happened on the cross.**

Jesus was our Great High Priest! Jesus took off his royal robe, humbled Himself, and went alone to the cross! Jesus was spotless and without defect! Jesus was the Lamb chosen by God before the foundation of the world! Jesus as the Lamb was slain as a sacrifice! Jesus’ blood does forever cover over our sin! Jesus’ payment does mean that we are forgiven and that our sins are remembered no more!



## **II. The Walk with God involves Separation (18-27)**

- **People are to be Set Apart (18-20)**
- **Priests are to be Set Apart (21-22)**
- **Time is to be Set Apart (23-24)**
- **Land is to be Set Apart (25-27)**

### **Important Dates:**

- **Passover – 14<sup>th</sup> day of March/April** - Celebration of Israel’s redemption from death and bondage.
- **Feast of Unleavened Bread – 15<sup>th</sup> day of March/April** – 7 day celebration of communion with God after being rescued from slavery.
- **Feast of Firstfruits – around 24<sup>th</sup> of March/April** – gave best of their barley to mark the beginning of the harvest.

- **Feast of Weeks/Pentecost**—in June, 50 days after the Feast of Firstfruits – gave best of their wheat.
- **Feast of Trumpets – 1<sup>st</sup> day September/October** - This was new year's day.
- **The Day of Atonement – 10<sup>th</sup> day of September/October**
- **Feast of Tabernacles –15<sup>th</sup> day of September/October** – celebration of God's provision during the harvest and his provision while they lived in tents in the wilderness.
- **7<sup>th</sup> year Sabbath** – every 7<sup>th</sup> year they were to rest and provide for the poor.
- **Year of Jubilee** - every 50<sup>th</sup> year all land and possessions were returned to their original owner.