

“Purity Personified”

The Book of Leviticus

February 26, 2012

**What was your preparation for church like this morning...
and what will your walk look like this afternoon & throughout the week???**

Intro: Leviticus should be read as a **“continuation” of Exodus** (particulars Within the Tabernacle) to particulars in Worship, followed by particulars in one’s Walk

Leviticus helps us understand the sacrificial & atoning death of Christ on the cross!

NOTE: Leviticus is NOT a “handbook of rituals for priests” – it’s a holy book of relationship for the people...

No intended “handbook” for priests would leave out details on:

Instruments required for the animal sacrifices...

Where the priests were to stand during the rituals...

Liturgical words during the extended ceremonies...

VIDEO: “Hey Haters”

Between Exodus & Leviticus... How “particular” has God been about His Holiness & ours???

50+ time in Leviticus alone... “I am the Lord your God... I am Holy”

Leviticus is a biblical account of “comings & goings”

1. **Comings...** **FOR (repentance & praise)**
2. **Goings...** **IN (repentance & praise)**

How important is “purity” and fidelity within your marriage/relationship???

Now consider this... the “professing Church” is the “professing Bride” of Christ...

If YOU’RE worthy of purity... How much MORE is HE???

If purity matters to you.... How much MORE do you think it matters to God?

Do word study on “whore” and “whoring”

***** The cross of Christ is the doorway to holiness**

Combine Gal. 2:20; Rom. 12:1-3; 1 Jn 2:6; Matt. 7:21-23

Leviticus = 1). **Way to Worship**...(fearful repentance) 2). **Walk of Worship**...(faithful praise)

Purity is about BOTH the “WHO” and the “HOW!”

*** Challenge: It is like teaching newlyweds “How to be a good spouse” when they don’t really love the one they are married to...

Major themes:

Holiness (of God and His people) & the context of the covenant relationship

“Rituals instruct Principles”

Leviticus rituals instruct on principles of:

1. **God’s Holiness**
2. **Human Sinfulness**
3. **Substitutionary Atonement**
4. **Required Repentance**

Leviticus rituals accomplished:

1. **Cleansing/Renewed Fellowship**
 - **Between sinner and God**
 - **Between sinner and other sinners**

VIDEO: Francis Chan – “Walking vs. Talking”

CRITICAL POINT = Find Jesus in EVERY aspect of the rituals, principles, & illustrations...

Lamb of God to take away the sins of the world: John 1:29-34

Jesus calls Himself the good shepherd who lays down His life for His sheep: John 10:1-21

“Once for ALL sacrifice” of Christ on the cross: Romans 5:6-11 & Hebrews 10:10,12

Day of Atonement ceremony foreshadows the cross: Hebrew 9-10; cf. Lev.16

New Testament parallels O.T. “ritual sacrifices” w/ N.T. “spiritual sacrifices” such as:

1. Generous & cheerful giving - Phil.4:18
2. Worship, praise, thanksgiving - Heb. 13:15-16; cf. Ps.50:13-14
3. Prayer - Revelation 5:8 & 8:3-4
4. Evangelism - Romans 15:16-17; cf. Isaiah 66:20
5. Selfless service to/in Christ (even unto death):
 - Romans 12:1-2
 - Phil. 2:17
 - 2 Tim. 4:6
 - Rev. 6:9

Sabbath / Sabbatical Year / Year of Jubilee

The Sabbath principle proves the Israelite’s holiness was not a by-product of their “rituals” but in their trusting “relationship” with the One true God.

By the time Jesus came the practical and humanitarian benefits of the Sabbath had been obscured, if not eliminated by the legalism of Judaism (Matt. 12:1-4; Mark 7:1-13)

Lev. 25:1-7 = the land had a Sabbath as well.... God knows best!

The poor and less fortunate benefited by being fed from the land when the owners did not intentionally farm it for profit...

Deuteronomy will expand on the Sabbatical laws... (Deut. 15:2-18)

Year of Jubilee is the culmination of the Sabbatical Year principle.... Every 50th year

Impact of Sabbath/Sabbath Year/Year of Jubilee:

- Improve social/economic equality
- Strengthening covenant “community” via:
 - a. Giving thanks to God for past provisions
 - b. Trusting God for provision during the fallow year
 - c. Cultivating forgiveness in remission of debts
 - d. Reducing slavery – respects humans as God’s creation
 - e. Champions generosity as a standard of life
 - f. Raises humanitarian ties to godly stewardship

*** NOTE: Jeremiah 25:8-14; Chronicles 36:17-21 = Jerusalem fell and the dispersion to Babylon took place as a direct result of the neglect of the sabbatical laws and related covenant requirements. Compare Chronicles 36:21 with Leviticus 18:28)

Ch..1-10 = Preparation to come before a Holy God.... (How to approach God?)

Daily

Quiet Time

Bible Reading

Prayer

Sunday Worship

Relational ministries...

Ch.11-27 = How to apply holiness to daily living

1 Thessalonians 4:7 *“For God has not called us for the purpose of impurity, but in sanctification.”*

1 Corinthians 3:17 *“If any man destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him, for the temple of God is holy, and that is what you are.”*

VIDEO: Wake Up Church!

NOTE: the sacrificial system was ONLY for unintentional & ignorant sins... Obstinate, premeditated, and unrepentant sins were for the most part beyond the power of the sacrificial system to expiate (cf. Number 15:27-31 & Ps.51:16-17)

NOTE: Leviticus ch.10 forces one to consider just how serious God takes Purity in “Particulars” Aaron’s two younger sons, Nadab & Abihu, were killed by God for bringing “strange” (a.k.a. different) fire into the worship experience.

*** Does purity of God’s priests, people, & processes matter???

NOTE: Read Acts 5:1-11... direct parallel of Ananias & Sapphira to Nadab & Abihu!!!

Critical observation = Purity of heart in priests, people, & process is to be non-negotiable!

Clean / Unclean... key to notice... while being “unclean” required separation from God and the worship environment (due to the holiness of God)... Don’t miss this... Rituals for restoration were provided by God. HOWEVER... anyone who defiantly remained unclean was barred from the faith community (cf.17:16)

Laws of ritual purity also distinguished Israel for her neighbors...

**CRITICAL DISTINCTION: Jesus put an end to the laws of ritual purity...
Jesus called for PURITY of the HEART:**

- Mark 7:14-23
- Matthew 15:17-20
- Romans 14:14
- Ephesians 2:11-21
- Titus 1:15

Term **“scape-goat”** comes from **Leviticus**... see “the goat to Azazel” in ch.16... = ceremony where the sins of the people are said to be transferred to the goat which is then sent out into the wilderness (away from the Tabernacle), back to the wilderness (which metaphorically represents death and the origin of sin).

Leviticus 17-26 is known as the “Holiness Code” in many theological circles...

*** Family life (especially sexual relations):	ch.18
*** Holy living (combining ethical & civic issues)	ch.19
*** Penalties for false worship, sorcery, sexual sin	ch.20
*** Priestly living	ch.21
*** Laws on punishments	ch.24

NOTE: Holy living is the fruit of a life committed to truth in love, lived out in faithful obedience.
Read Psalms 15:2; 24:3-4...

READ: **Leviticus 17:11** = **“BLOOD in SACRIFICE”**

“For the life of an animal resides in the blood: I have assigned it to you to make expiation on the alter, for your lives, because it is the blood that makes expiation by the life.”

See also: **Hebrews 10:4** = *“For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sin.”*

NOTE: the mere mechanical application of a sacrificial ritual did not then (nor does it today) guarantee God’s forgiveness.... He did, and still does, look at the heart behind the behavior...

Amos 5:21-27

*“I hate, I despise your religious feasts; I cannot stand your assemblies. **22** Even though you bring me burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them. Though you bring choice fellowship offerings, I will have no regard for them. **23** Away with the noise of your songs! I will not listen to the music of your harps. **24** But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream! **25** “Did you bring me sacrifices and offerings forty years in the desert, O house of Israel? **26** You have lifted up the shrine of your king, the pedestal of your idols, the star of your god[**c**]— which you made for yourselves. **27** Therefore I will send you into exile beyond Damascus,” says the LORD, whose name is God Almighty.*

NOTE: Leviticus shares: **“I am the LORD”** and **“I am holy”** over **50 times!**

VIDEO: P. Washer: Hands/Sacrifice/Salvation

DEMONSTRATION: (“Hands On”)

1. **Hand on Head of “stuffed animal” sacrifice**
2. **Hand on Head of Christ on Cross..... banging in nails!**

Let’s Pray!

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Leviticus is a biblical account of “comings & goings”

3. Comings... FOR (repentance & praise)
 - A. Our condition before “coming” to the LORD
 - B. Our pre-requisite requirements before “coming” to the LORD
 - C. How we ultimately find ourselves one-day “coming” to the LORD
4. Goings... IN (repentance & praise)
 - A. Notice that before our “coming,” God’s “going” to His children happens first
 - B. One’s “going” for God is not guaranteed just because we’re in the church/crowd
 - C. Our “going” and growing purity matters immeasurably to God!

2 Corinthians 2:16 quotes Leviticus 26:11

THINK ABOUT: How important is “purity” and fidelity within your marriage/relationship???

Now consider this... the “professing Church” is the “professing Bride” of Christ...

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Do word study on “whore” and “whoring”

Read Ezekiel 33 & Isaiah 30:15

*** Share “fear of the Lord” verses in Proverbs

*** “Separate from the world”

*** The cross of Christ is the doorway to holiness

*** Romans 12:1-3 is the picture of holy living!

*** Combine Galatians 2:20; Rom. 12:1-3; 1 John 2:6; Matt. 7:21-23

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Leviticus:

Ch.1: v.1 v.4-5 v.10

1 The LORD called to Moses and spoke to him from the Tent of Meeting... 4 He is to lay his hand on the head of the burnt offering, and it will be accepted on his behalf to make atonement for him. 5 He is to slaughter the young bull before the LORD, and then Aaron's sons the priests shall bring the blood and sprinkle it against the altar on all sides at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting... 10 "If the offering is a burnt offering from the flock, from either the sheep or the goats, **he is to offer a male without defect.**

Ch.2: v.1 v.3 v.11-13

1 "When someone brings a grain offering to the LORD, his offering is to be of fine flour. He is to pour oil on it, put incense on it... **3** The rest of the grain offering belongs to Aaron and his sons; it is **a most holy part of the offerings made to the LORD** by fire... **11** "Every grain offering you bring to the LORD must be made without yeast, for **you are not to burn any yeast or honey in an offering made to the LORD by fire. 12 You may bring them to the LORD as an offering of the first-fruits, but they are not to be offered on the altar as a pleasing aroma. 13** Season all your grain offerings with salt. **Do not leave the salt of the covenant of your God out of your grain offerings; add salt to all your offerings.**

Ch.3: v.1-2 v.6 v.16-17

1 "If someone's offering is a fellowship offering, and he offers an animal from the herd, whether male or female, he is to **present before the LORD an animal without defect. 2 He is to lay his hand on the head of his offering and slaughter it** at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting. Then Aaron's sons the priests shall sprinkle the blood against the altar on all sides... **6** "If he offers an animal from the flock as a fellowship offering to the LORD, **he is to offer a male or female without defect... 16** The priest shall burn them on the altar as food, an offering made by fire, a pleasing aroma. All the fat is the LORD's. **17** "This is a lasting ordinance for the generations to come, **wherever you live: You must not eat any fat or any blood.**"

Ch.4: v.1-6 v.11-14 v.22-23 v.27-30 v.35

1 The LORD said to Moses, 2 "Say to the Israelites: 'When anyone sins unintentionally and does what is forbidden in any of the LORD's commands— 3 "If the anointed priest sins, bringing guilt on the people, he must bring to the LORD a young **bull without defect as a sin offering for the sin he has committed. 4** He is to present the bull at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting before the LORD. He is to lay **his hand on its head and slaughter it** before the LORD. **5** Then the anointed priest shall take some of the bull's blood and carry it into the Tent of Meeting. **6** He is to dip his finger into the blood and sprinkle some of it seven times before the LORD, in front of the curtain of the sanctuary.

11 But the hide of the bull and all its flesh, as well as the head and legs, the inner parts and offal— **12** that is, all the rest of the bull—he must take outside the camp to a place ceremonially clean, where the ashes are thrown, and burn it in a wood fire on the ash heap. **13** "If the whole Israelite community sins unintentionally and does what is forbidden in any of the LORD's commands, even though the community is unaware of the matter, they are guilty. **14** When they become aware of the sin they committed, the assembly must bring a young bull as a sin offering and present it before the Tent of Meeting.

22 "When a leader sins unintentionally and does what is forbidden in any of the commands of the LORD his God, **he is guilty. 23** When he is made aware of the sin he committed, he must bring as his offering a male goat without defect.

27 "If a member of the community sins unintentionally and does what is forbidden in any of the LORD's commands, **he is guilty. 28** When he is made aware of the sin he committed, he must bring as his offering for the sin he committed a female goat without defect. **29** He is to lay his hand on the head of the sin offering and **slaughter it** at the place of the burnt offering. **30** Then the priest is to take some of the blood with his finger and put it on the horns of the altar of burnt offering and pour out the rest of the blood at the base of the altar.

35 He shall remove all the fat, just as the fat is removed from the lamb of the fellowship offering, and the priest shall burn it on the altar on top of the offerings made to the LORD by fire. In this **way the priest will make atonement for him for the sin he has committed, and he will be forgiven.**

Ch.5: v.1-7 v.10-11 v.13-19

1 "If a person sins because he does not speak up when he hears a public charge to testify regarding something he has seen or learned about, **he will be held responsible.**

2 "Or if a person touches anything ceremonially unclean—whether the carcasses of unclean wild animals or of unclean livestock or of unclean creatures that move along the ground—even though he is unaware of it, he has become unclean and is guilty.

3 "Or if he touches human uncleanness—anything that would make him unclean—even though he is unaware of it, when he learns of it he will be guilty.

4 "Or if a person thoughtlessly takes an oath to do anything, whether good or evil—in

any matter one might carelessly swear about—even though he is unaware of it, in any case when he learns of it he will be guilty.

5 *“When anyone is guilty in any of these ways, he must confess in what way he has sinned* **6** *and, as a penalty for the sin he has committed, he must bring to the LORD a female lamb or goat from the flock as a sin offering; and the priest shall make atonement for him for his sin.*

7 *“If he cannot afford a lamb, he is to bring two doves or two young pigeons to the LORD as a penalty for his sin—one for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering.*

10 *The priest shall then offer the other as a burnt offering in the prescribed way and make atonement for him for the sin he has committed, and he will be forgiven.*

11 *“If, however, he cannot afford two doves or two young pigeons, he is to bring as an offering for his sin a tenth of an ephah of fine flour for a sin offering. He must not put oil or incense on it, because it is a sin offering... **13** In this way the priest will make atonement for him for any of these sins he has committed, and he will be forgiven. The rest of the offering will belong to the priest, as in the case of the grain offering.”*

14 *The LORD said to Moses: **15** “When a person commits a violation and sins unintentionally in regard to any of the LORD’s holy things, he is to bring to the LORD as a penalty a ram from the flock, one without defect and of the proper value in silver, according to the sanctuary shekel. It is a guilt offering. **16** He must make restitution for what he has failed to do in regard to the holy things, add a fifth of the value to that and give it all to the priest, who will make atonement for him with the ram as a guilt offering, and he will be forgiven.*

17 *“If a person sins and does what is forbidden in any of the LORD’s commands, even though he does not know it, he is guilty and will be held responsible. **18** He is to bring to the priest as a guilt offering a ram from the flock, one without defect and of the proper value. In this way the priest will make atonement for him for the wrong he has committed unintentionally, and he will be forgiven. **19** It is a guilt offering; he has been guilty of wrongdoing against the LORD.”*

Ch.6: v.1-9 v.12-20 v.23-30

1 *The LORD said to Moses: **2** “If anyone sins and is unfaithful to the LORD by deceiving his neighbor about something entrusted to him or left in his care or stolen, or if he cheats him, **3** or if he finds lost property and lies about it, or if he swears falsely, or if he commits any such sin that people may do— **4** when he thus sins and becomes guilty, he must return what he has stolen or taken by extortion, or what was entrusted to him, or the lost property he found, **5** or whatever it was he swore falsely about. He must make restitution in full, add a fifth of the value to it and give it all to the owner on the day he presents his guilt offering. **6** And as a penalty he must bring to the priest, that is, to the LORD, his guilt offering, a ram from the flock, one without defect and of the proper value. **7** In this way the priest will make atonement for him before the LORD, and he will be forgiven for any of these things he did that made him guilty.”*

The Burnt Offering**8** *The LORD said to Moses: **9** “Give Aaron and his sons this*

command: 'These are the regulations for the burnt offering: The burnt offering is to remain on the altar hearth throughout the night, till morning, and the fire must be kept burning on the altar.

12 The fire on the altar must be kept burning; it must not go out. Every morning the priest is to add firewood and arrange the burnt offering on the fire and burn the fat of the fellowship offerings on it. **13** The fire must be kept burning on the altar continuously; it must not go out.

The Grain Offering 14 "These are the regulations for the grain offering: Aaron's sons are to bring it before the LORD, in front of the altar. **15** The priest is to take a handful of fine flour and oil, together with all the incense on the grain offering, and burn the memorial portion on the altar as an aroma pleasing to the LORD. **16** Aaron and his sons shall eat the rest of it, but it is to be eaten without yeast in a holy place; they are to eat it in the courtyard of the Tent of Meeting. **17** It must not be baked with yeast; I have given it as their share of the offerings made to me by fire. Like the sin offering and the guilt offering, it is most holy. **18** Any male descendant of Aaron may eat it. It is his regular share of the offerings made to the LORD by fire for the generations to come. Whatever touches them will become holy."

19 The LORD also said to Moses, **20** "This is the offering Aaron and his sons are to bring to the LORD on the day he[**c**] is anointed: a tenth of an ephah of fine flour as a regular grain offering, half of it in the morning and half in the evening.

23 Every grain offering of a priest shall be burned completely; it must not be eaten."

The Sin Offering 24 The LORD said to Moses, **25** "Say to Aaron and his sons: 'These are the regulations for the sin offering: The sin offering is to be slaughtered before the LORD in the place the burnt offering is slaughtered; it is most holy. **26** The priest who offers it shall eat it; it is to be eaten in a holy place, in the courtyard of the Tent of Meeting. **27** Whatever touches any of the flesh will become holy, and if any of the blood is spattered on a garment, you must wash it in a holy place. **28** The clay pot the meat is cooked in must be broken; but if it is cooked in a bronze pot, the pot is to be scoured and rinsed with water. **29** Any male in a priest's family may eat it; it is most holy. **30** But any sin offering whose blood is brought into the Tent of Meeting to make atonement in the Holy Place must not be eaten; it must be burned.

Ch.7: v.1-2 v.5-11 v.15-20 v.22-38

1 "These are the regulations for the guilt offering, which is most holy: **2** The guilt offering is to be slaughtered in the place where the burnt offering is slaughtered, and its blood is to be sprinkled against the altar on all sides... **5** The priest shall burn them on the altar as an offering made to the LORD by fire. It is a guilt offering. **6** Any male in a priest's family may eat it, but it must be eaten in a holy place; it is most holy.

7 "The same law applies to both the sin offering and the guilt offering: They belong to the priest who makes atonement with them. **8** The priest who offers a burnt offering for anyone may keep its hide for himself. **9** Every grain offering baked in an oven or cooked in a pan or on a griddle belongs to the priest who offers it, **10** and every grain offering, whether mixed with oil or dry, belongs equally to all the sons of Aaron.

The Fellowship Offering 11 "These are the regulations for the fellowship offering[**a**] a person may present to the LORD:

15 The meat of his fellowship offering of thanksgiving must be eaten on the day it is

offered; he must leave none of it till morning. **16** "If, however, his offering is the result of a vow or is a freewill offering, the sacrifice shall be eaten on the day he offers it, but anything left over may be eaten on the next day. **17** Any meat of the sacrifice left over till the third day must be burned up. **18** If any meat of the fellowship offering is eaten on the third day, it will not be accepted. It will not be credited to the one who offered it, for it is impure; the person who eats any of it will be held responsible.

19 "Meat that touches anything ceremonially unclean must not be eaten; it must be burned up. As for other meat, anyone ceremonially clean may eat it. **20** But if anyone who is unclean eats any meat of the fellowship offering belonging to the LORD, that person must be cut off from his people.

Eating Fat and Blood Forbidden 22 The LORD said to Moses, **23** "Say to the Israelites: 'Do not eat any of the fat of cattle, sheep or goats. **24** The fat of an animal found dead or torn by wild animals may be used for any other purpose, but you must not eat it. **25** Anyone who eats the fat of an animal from which an offering by fire may be[b] made to the LORD must be cut off from his people. **26** And wherever you live, you must not eat the blood of any bird or animal. **27** If anyone eats blood, that person must be cut off from his people.'"

The Priests' Share 28 The LORD said to Moses, **29** "Say to the Israelites: 'Anyone who brings a fellowship offering to the LORD is to bring part of it as his sacrifice to the LORD. **30** With his own hands he is to bring the offering made to the LORD by fire; he is to bring the fat, together with the breast, and wave the breast before the LORD as a wave offering. **31** The priest shall burn the fat on the altar, but the breast belongs to Aaron and his sons. **32** You are to give the right thigh of your fellowship offerings to the priest as a contribution. **33** The son of Aaron who offers the blood and the fat of the fellowship offering shall have the right thigh as his share. **34** From the fellowship offerings of the Israelites, I have taken the breast that is waved and the thigh that is presented and have given them to Aaron the priest and his sons as their regular share from the Israelites.'" **35** This is the portion of the offerings made to the LORD by fire that were allotted to Aaron and his sons on the day they were presented to serve the LORD as priests. **36** On the day they were anointed, the LORD commanded that the Israelites give this to them as their regular share for the generations to come. **37** These, then, are the regulations for the burnt offering, the grain offering, the sin offering, the guilt offering, the ordination offering and the fellowship offering, **38** which the LORD gave Moses on Mount Sinai on the day he commanded the Israelites to bring their offerings to the LORD, in the Desert of Sinai.

Ch.8: v.1-15 v.18-19 v.21-24 v.27-28 v.30 v.33-36

Ch.9: v.1-6 v.22-24

Ch.10: v.1-11 v.16-20

Ch.11: v.1-24 v.27-29 v.32-33 v.39 v.41-42 v.44-47

Ch.12: v.1-7

Ch.13: v.1-3 v.6 v.8-9 v.13-19 v.22-25 v.29-30 v.38-42 v.45-46

Ch.14: v.1-11 v.14 v.31-35 v.39-45 v.48-50 v.52-57

Ch.15: v.1-4 v.7 v.10 v.13-14 v.16 v.18-20 v.24-25 v.28-29 v.31

Ch.16: v.1-3 v.9-10 v.17 v.20-22 v.29-34

Ch.17: v.1-4 v.7-12 v.14

Ch.18: v.1-6 v.17 v.19-26 v.29-30

Ch.19: v.1-19 v.23-28 v.30-32 v.34-35 v.37

Ch.20: v.1-16 v.18 v.22-24 v.26-27

Ch.21: v.1-3 v.5-14 v.16-20 v.22-23

Ch.22: v.1-3 v.6-7 v.9-11 v.14-15 v.19-20 v.22-23 v.27 v.31-33

Ch.23: v.1-10 v.15-16 v.18-19 v.21-24 v.27-30 v.33-36 v.39-40 v.42-44

Ch.24: v.1-6 v.8 v.11-15 v.17-20 v.22-23

Ch.25: v.1-2, 3-7, 10-11, 17-18, 21, 23-24, 28-31, 33, 35-39, 42-44, 46, 52, 54-55

Ch.26: v.1-4 v.6-9 v.12-21 v.23-25 v.27-31 v.33 v.37-38 v.40 v.42 v.44-46

Ch.27: v.1-3 v.7-8 v.14 v.16 v.22-26 v.29-31 v.34

Major themes:

Holiness (of God and His people) & the context of the covenant relationship

NOTE: "Rituals instruct Principles"

Leviticus rituals instruct on principles of:

5. God's Holiness
6. Human Sinfulness
7. Substitutionary Atonement
8. Required Repentance

Leviticus rituals accomplished:

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Jesus calls Himself the good shepherd who lays down His life for His sheep: John 10:1-21

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Day of Atonement ceremony foreshadows the cross: Hebrew 9-10; cf. Lev.16

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8. Prayer - Revelation 5:8 & 8:3-4
9. Evangelism - Romans 15:16-17; cf. Isaiah 66:20
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By the time Jesus came the practical and humanitarian benefits of the Sabbath had been obscured, if not eliminated by the legalism of Judaism (Matt. 12:1-4; Mark 7:1-13)

Lev. 25:1-7 = the land had a Sabbath as well.... God knows best!

The poor and less fortunate benefited by being fed from the land when the owners did not intentionally farm it for profit...

Deuteronomy will expand on the Sabbatical laws... (Deut. 15:2-18)

Year of Jubilee is the culmination of the Sabbatical Year principle.... Every 50th year

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- Improve social/economic equality
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 - g. Giving thanks to God for past provisions
 - h. Trusting God for provision during the fallow year
 - i. Cultivating forgiveness in remission of debts
 - j. Reducing slavery – respects humans as God’s creation
 - k. Champions generosity as a standard of life
 - l. Raises humanitarian ties to godly stewardship

*** NOTE: Jeremiah 25:8-14; Chronicles 36:17-21 = Jerusalem fell and the dispersion to Babylon took place as a direct result of the neglect of the sabbatical laws and related covenant requirements. Compare Chronicles 36:21 with Leviticus 18:28)

Ch..1-10 = Preparation to come before a Holy God.... (How do we approach God?)

Daily
Quiet Time
Bible Reading
Prayer
Sunday Worship
Relational ministries...

Ch.11-27 = How to apply holiness to daily living

Leviticus details how the Hebrew people were to live out their worship of God.

Leviticus (as well as Exodus & Numbers) highlight the nature & terms of covenant living.

Leviticus gives rules for worship & civil order.

Leviticus is a series of instructions that God gave to Moses for the express purpose of instruction.

NOTE: Leviticus is NOT a “handbook of rituals for priests” – it’s a holy book of relationship for the people...

No intended “handbook” for priests would leave out details on:
Instruments required for the animal sacrifices...
Where the priests were to stand during the rituals...

Liturgical words during the extended ceremonies...

Six major divisions in Leviticus:

- A. Regulations for making sacrifices: ch.1-7
- B. Ordination of Aaron & sons/first sacrifices in the Tabernacle: ch.8-10
- C. Laws regulating ritual purity: ch.11-15
- D. Day of Atonement details: ch.16
- E. Laws exhorting holy living: ch.17-26
- F. Laws on tithes & offerings: ch.27

NOTE: sacrifices were to be “unblemished” & “first-fruits”.... God demands our best!

NOTE: sacrifices were to involve the sinner putting his hands on the animal’s head (connection)

NOTE: **the sacrificial system was ONLY for unintentional & ignorant sins... Obstinate, premeditated, and unrepentant sins were for the most part beyond the power of the sacrificial system to expiate** (cf. Number 15:27-31 & Ps.51:16-17)

NOTE: Leviticus ch.10 forces one to consider just how serious God takes Purity in “Particulars” **Aaron’s two younger sons, Nadab & Abihu, were killed by God for bringing “strange” (a.k.a. different) fire into the worship experience.**

*** Does purity of God’s priests, people, & processes matter???

NOTE: **Read Acts 5:1-11... direct parallel of Ananias & Sapphira to Nadab & Abihu!!!**

Critical observation = Purity of heart in priests, people, & process is to be non-negotiable!

Clean / Unclean... key to notice... while being “unclean” required separation from God and the worship environment (due to the holiness of God)... **Don’t miss this... Rituals for restoration were provided by God. HOWEVER... anyone who defiantly remained unclean was barred from the faith community (cf.17:16)**

Laws of ritual purity also distinguished Israel for her neighbors...

**CRITICAL DISTINCTION: Jesus put an end to the laws of ritual purity...
Jesus called for PURITY of the HEART:**

- Mark 7:14-23
- Matthew 15:17-20
- Romans 14:14
- Ephesians 2:11-21
- Titus 1:15

Term **“scape-goat” comes from Leviticus**... see “the goat to Azazel” in ch.16... = ceremony where the sins of the people are said to be transferred to the goat which is then sent out into the wilderness (away from the Tabernacle), back to the wilderness (which metaphorically represents death and the origin of sin).

Leviticus 17-26 is known as the “Holiness Code” in many theological circles...

*** Family life (especially sexual relations):	ch.18
*** Holy living (combining ethical & civic issues)	ch.19
*** Penalties for false worship, sorcery, sexual sin	ch.20
*** Priestly living	ch.21
*** Laws on punishments	ch.24

NOTE: Holy living is the fruit of a life committed to truth in love, lived out in faithful obedience.
Read Psalms 15:2; 24:3-4...

READ: **Leviticus 17:11** to understand the role & responsibility of **“BLOOD in SACRIFICE”**

“For the life of an animal resides in the blood: I have assigned it to you to make expiation on the alter, for your lives, because it is the blood that makes expiation by the life.”

See also: **Hebrews 10:4** = *“For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sin.”*

NOTE: the mere mechanical application of a sacrificial ritual did not then (nor does it today) guarantee God’s forgiveness.... He did, and still does, look at the heart behind the behavior...

READ: Amos 5:21-27

Leviticus helps us understand the sacrificial & atoning death of Christ on the cross!

READ: Hebrews 8:13... see the link between Leviticus & Hebrews...

READ the following texts to get a fuller understanding of biblical context:

- 1 Corinthians 5:7
- Hebrews 7:27; & 9:23-28

NOTE: Hebrews will also show you Jesus as the ultimate High Priest as well...

- Hebrews 2:17; 3:1; 7:26-28

NOTE: The New Testament consistently calls people to holy living...

- 1 Peter 1:15-16
- Mathew 5:48

NOTE: The New Testament also calls Christians to live “priestly” lives...

- 1 Peter 2:5-9

Call to holy living: Leviticus: 11:44-45; 19:2; 20:7,26; cf. 1 Peter 1:14-16

NOTE: Leviticus shares: **“I am the LORD”** and **“I am holy”** over **50 times!**

Song: “The Church” by Elevation Worship

we are the change the world is waiting for
we've got a love the world is desperate for
we will lead and take to the streets

chorus:

now's the time for us to rise
and carry hope and let love shine
and show this world that mercy is alive

now's the time for us to rise
and carry hope to hopeless eyes
and show this world that mercy is alive

verse 2:

we're not afraid. we will abandon all
to hear Your name on lips across the world
we will run in the wake of Your love

chorus

bridge:

fill our hearts with Your compassion
let our love be active here
fill our hearts with Your compassion
let our love be real... be REAL!