

Leviticus --- A Manual for Atonement

I. Intro.

First, a Review...

Genesis...

...Introduces a God Who Is Both:
Transcendent Creator of the Universe and
Immanent Friend of the Patriarchs.

...Begins to Profile:
God's Character,
God's Purposes, and
God's Expectations
in Relationship with Individuals.

Exodus...

...Displays God's
Transcendent Power for
Rescue of His Select People.
...Describes How They May Establish
a Community-wide Relationship
Enjoying His Presence.

Leviticus...

Requirements for Maintaining New-Found Relationship.
Costly Consequences of Careless Tampering With
the Relationship.

Leviticus: Name means relating to the Levites → worshipping God

II. Outline of Leviticus

T=Teaching, N=Narrative

- T: Regulations Sacrifices (1-7)
Whole Burnt Offering, 1
Grain Offering, 2
Peace (Fellowship) Offering, 3
Expiation, Forgiveness Sacrifices, 4-5
Sin Offering
Guilt Offering
Recap of Five Offerings (Priestly Role), 6-7
- N: Ordination of Priests, (8-10)
First Sacrifice, 8-10
First Sacrifice, Glory Descends (9)
Priests Are Prepared (With Offerings) 8-9
Sin Offerings Given, 9
For Priests
For People
Glory Appeared, Fire Fell, 9.23-24
Nadab and Abihu Perish (10)
Nadab and Abihu Are Consumed by Fire, 10
What Went Wrong (Nadab, Abihu)? (study question 1)
Prior Warning of Death, 8.35 (also 15.31)
"Incense, Strange Fire, Firepans, Before the Lord", 10.1
T: (Later) Firepan, Fire from Altar, Incense,
Beyond the Veil, Only on Day of Atonement, 16.1-2, 12.

- T: Against Wine, Strong Drink for Priests, 10.9-11
- T: Ritual Purity Laws (11-15)
 - Clean Food, 11
 - Childbirth, 12
 - Contaminated Surfaces (Skin, Houses), 13-14
 - Discharges, 15
- T: Day of Atonement (16)
 - Annual: Yom Kippur
 - Most Holy Place
 - Two Goats
 - Humble Yourselves (Fasting)
 - "...Make atonement for all their sins once every year," 16.34.
- T: Laws for Holy Living (17-26)
 - Significance of Blood, 17
 - Family Morality, Child Protection, 18
 - Loving Neighbor..., 19...
 - Calendar of Feasts, Holy Days, 23
- N: Blasphemer Stoned (24)
 - Sabbatical, Jubilee Years, 25
 - Divine Blessing, Warning, 26
- T: Laws on Tithes and Offerings (27)
 - Regulations Concerning Redemption

III. Important definitions given and theological points made.

Nature of Holiness (Qadosh)

- Separate (Qadosh)
- Non-Alloy, Unmixed (Qadosh)
- Pure (Qadosh)

Need for Holiness As God Now Dwells With Israel!

"You must keep the Israelites separate from things that make them unclean, so they will not die in their uncleanness for defiling my dwelling place, which is among them," 15.31.

"I will put my dwelling place among you, and I will not abhor you," 26.11.

The Need for Holiness

- Requirement For Dwelling With God
- "Be holy for I, the Lord your God, am holy" (5x in Lev.)

The Nature of Sin, Sin is...

- Miss the Way or Goal (Lev. 5.5)
- Guilt: Asham
- Commit an Offence, Become Guilty (Lev. 5.6)
- Profane: (Chalal)
- Polluted, Defiled, Dishonored, Treated as Common (Lev. 19.8)
- Abomination: (Tevel)
- Perversion, Violation of Nature, of Divine Order (Lev. 18.23)

Function of Sacrifice

- Expiatory Sacrifices (Primarily Guilt, Sin)
- Remove Guilt by Transferring It Away
(Substitutionary Atonement)
- The Substitute is Then Either:
 - Sacrificed (zavach, slain, not merely killed)
 - Or Dismissed (Azazel Goat, Yom Kippur)

Function of Sacrifice is Atonement

Kipper, to propitiate, make peace, cover wrong
(49x in Lev.)

What About Intentional Sins?

Most Sacrifices Solve Unintentional Sins 5.18
Otherwise: "Cut Off From People"
Yet: Relations with Slave Woman: Forgiven, 19.19ff

Time: Our Servant

- 1) A Time To Work
Six Days, Six Years
- 2) A Time To Rest
Seventh Day, Seventh Year, Fiftieth Year
- 3) A Time To Celebrate, Reflect
Passover (Pesach)
Pentecost (Shavuot)
Booths (Succoth)

The Land

Vomited Out Prior Inhabitants 18.25
Borrowed From God
"The land must not be sold permanently, because the land is
mine and you are but aliens and my tenants," Lev. 25.23
(re: Jubilee).

May Vomit Out Israelis, Too 18.28

In Case of Exile...

Provision for Restoration, 26.38-45
Upon Contrition
(No Mention of Sacrifice)

Key Verse

For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you
to make atonement...it is the blood that makes atonement for one's life.
Lev. 17.11.

IV. OT to NT Parallel

Leviticus and Hebrews

Christ, our priest
Hebrews 4.14-5.10
Christ, our sacrifice
Hebrews 9.11-10.18
Application for Original Audience

Sacrifices Taught:

The Penalty of Sin Was Death.
God Provided Reconciliation.
Application for Modern Audience

It is very serious when my sin ruptures my relationship with a
holy God. Thankfully, repair is possible through substitution of
an innocent life (atonement).

V. Leviticus (Recap)

~Outlines the requirements for maintaining Israel's new dwelling with God.

~Illustrates the costly consequences of careless tampering with the relationship.

Be Holy For I Am Holy
Lev. 11.44, 45, 19.2, 20.7, 26
Atonement in Leviticus
Another Vital Verse...

"Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins"
Heb. 9.22.