



LEVITICUS

HOLINESS, ATONEMENT & PRESENCE

OVERVIEW

Leviticus begins where Exodus ends: the glory of the LORD has filled the tabernacle, and the holy God now dwells among His redeemed people. The question is how sinful and frequently unclean people can approach Him, worship Him, and live in His presence. Through sacrifices, priesthood, purity laws, the Day of Atonement, commands for holy living, sacred festivals, and covenant instruction, God teaches Israel that His holiness must shape every part of life. Leviticus reveals both the seriousness of sin and impurity and God's gracious provision for atonement, cleansing, worship, fellowship, and continued life in His presence.

GENESIS AT A GLANCE

Author	Moses
Date Written	During Israel's time at Mount Sinai, after the tabernacle was erected and before Israel departed toward Canaan.
Original Audience	Israel, the redeemed covenant people gathered at Sinai, with particular responsibilities given to Aaron and the priests
Purpose	To teach redeemed Israel how to approach, worship, and live before the holy LORD dwelling among them.
Key Verse	Leviticus 19:2
Main Theme	The LORD is holy and dwells among His people, so they must approach Him according to His provision and reflect His holiness every area of life
Key People	The LORD, Moses, Aaron, Aaron's sons and the priests, Nadab and Abihu, the people of Israel
Key Places	Mount Sinai and the tabernacle at the center of Israel's camp
Key Events	Five major offerings, ordination of Aaron and his sons, clean and unclean regulations, Day of Atonement, blood and sacrifice, commands for holy living, appointed feasts, Sabbath Year and Jubilee, covenant blessings and discipline

KEY THEMES

- Holiness**
God's own holiness is the foundation of the book. Israel belongs to Him and is called to reflect His character in worship, morality, relationships, justice, sexuality, economics, and everyday life.
- Sacrifice & Atonement**
God provides the means by which sinful people may approach Him. Sacrifice, blood, cleansing, confession, and restitution demonstrate both the seriousness of sin and God's provision for restored fellowship.
- Priesthood & Mediation**
Aaron and the priests serve as appointed mediators who offer sacrifices, guard holy space, teach God's commands, and distinguish between holy and common and clean and unclean.
- Purity & Cleansing**
Clean and unclean categories regulate life near God's sanctuary. Ritual impurity is not identical to moral sin, but both demonstrate that unrestricted approach to the holy God cannot be treated casually.
- Holy Living**
Holiness extends beyond ritual. God commands justice, honesty, sexual purity, compassion for the poor, fair treatment of workers and foreigners, reverence for parents, truthful speech, and love for one's neighbor.
- God's Presence**
The LORD dwells among His people. Sacrifice, priesthood, purity, worship, ethics, sacred time, and covenant faithfulness answer: **How does a redeemed people live with the holy LORD in their midst?**

PURPOSE AND MESSAGE

Redemption brings people into relationship with a holy God, and life in His presence cannot remain unchanged. Israel did not obey in order to earn deliverance; God had already rescued them from Egypt. They were to approach Him according to His provision and reflect His holiness in every dimension of life. God provides sacrifices for worship and atonement, priests to mediate and teach, cleansing for impurity, and the Day of Atonement for the recurring sin and defilement of the nation. Yet holiness reaches beyond the sanctuary into family, sexuality, justice, compassion, business, treatment of the poor and foreigner, use of land, and love of neighbor. Leviticus therefore joins worship and life together: the holy God who dwells among His people determines both how they approach Him and how they live before Him. Its sacrificial and priestly categories ultimately provide foundational biblical language for understanding Christ's superior priesthood and once-for-all sacrifice.

KEY VERSE

"Speak to all the congregation of the sons of Israel and say to them, 'You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy'."
Leviticus 19:2