

Leviticus

A handbook for the priests and Levites outlining their duties in worship, and a guidebook of holy living for the Hebrews.

***The Lord said to Moses, “Speak to the entire assembly of Israel and say to them:
‘Be holy because I, the Lord your God, am holy. – Leviticus 19:1-2***

Throughout the book of Leviticus the Israelites were camped at the foot of Mt. Sinai. It was time to regroup as a nation and learn the importance of following God as they prepared to march toward the Promised Land. God’s people were to worship him with their lives; so were established the purity laws (11-15), rules for daily living concerning family responsibilities, sexual conduct, relationships, worldliness (18-20) and vows of dedication (27).

Chapters 23-25 of Leviticus emphasize celebration. The book gives instructions for the feasts. These were to be occasions in which the people would celebrate and remember what God had done, give thanks to him, and rededicate lives to his service.

WORSHIPING A HOLY GOD (1:1 – 17:16)

Instructions for the offerings (1-7)	God provided specific directions for the kind of worship that would be pleasing to him. These instructions taught about the nature of God and helped develop a right attitude toward worship. Through the offerings God’s people learned of the seriousness of sin and the importance of bringing their sins to God for forgiveness.
Instructions for the priests (8-10)	
Instructions for the people (11-15)	
Instructions for the altar (16)	

LIVING A HOLY LIFE (18:1 – 27:34)

Standards for the people (18-20)	God gave clear standards for living a holy life to the Israelites.
Rules for the priests (21-22)	They were to be separate and distinct from the pagan nations around them. In the same way, all believers should be separated from sin and dedicated to God.
Seasons and festivals (23-25)	
Receiving God’s blessing (26-27)	

The Offerings: Instructions for five types of offerings were given. The Israelites made these offerings in order to have their sins forgiven and restore fellowship with God. The substitutionary death of Jesus made these offerings no longer necessary.

He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. - 1 Peter 2:24

<i>Offering</i>	<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Significance</i>
Burnt offering (Lev. 1)	To make payment for sins in general	Showed a person’s devotion to God
Grain offering (Lev. 2)	To show honor & respect to God in worship	Acknowledged that all we have belongs to God
Fellowship offering (Lev. 3)	To express gratitude to God	Symbolizes peace and fellowship with God
Sin offering (Lev. 4)	To make payment for sins of uncleanness, neglect, or thoughtlessness	Restored the sinner to fellowship with God; showed seriousness of sin
Guilt offering (Lev. 5)	Payment for sins against God & others.	Reconciliation with God & compensation to injured person

Themes found in the book of Leviticus

Worship: Seven feasts were designated religious and national holidays (23). God’s rule about worship set up an orderly, regular pattern of fellowship with him. They allowed for celebration, thanksgiving, reverence, and rededication.

Health: Civil rules for handling food, disease and sex were taught (11-15; 18). Israel was to be different from surrounding nations. God was preserving Israel from disease and community health problems.

Holiness: Holy means “separated” or “devoted”. God removed his people from Egypt; now he was removing Egypt from his people. He was showing them how to exchange Egyptian living and thinking for his ways (18-27).

Levites: The Levites and priests instructed the people in their worship (21-22). They were the ministers of their day. They also regulated the moral, civil, and ceremonial laws and supervised the health, justice, and welfare of the nation.