

4. Summary of content

Chapters 1-10 – Sacrifice/worship of God

Before they started toward the Promised Land, God prescribed for Israel in great detail how He desired that they worship Him through a system of offerings centered around animal sacrifices in the Tabernacle (later the temple). God is holy and demands that those who worship Him also be holy. “Holiness” carries the idea of purity, separation from sin and being different. (Lev. 15:31; Lev. 18:1-5)

In chapters 1–5 God provided for five different offerings, the first three of which were voluntary, pointed toward God, and were designed to insure personal dedication and complete surrender to God. These first three were the burnt, grain and fellowship offerings. The fellowship offering could come in one of three forms — thank, vow or free will. All of these centered on worship and recognition of who God is. The sacrifices were not made to “save” but as a means of maintaining fellowship with holy God. Significantly, the only offering where the participant could eat part of the sacrifice was the fellowship offering.

The last two offerings focused on sin, guilt and forgiveness. They were compulsory and were called the sin and guilt offerings (see chart of Old Testament Sacrifices near Leviticus 4, in the NIV/NASB/KJV. In other Study Bibles look for related charts, articles, study notes, etc.). These were supposed to provide forgiveness for unintentional sins. Both of these involved a blood sacrifice. In addition, the guilt offering required restitution to the one avenged.

5 different offerings: Presented in 1-5 with rules further explained in 6-7

1. *Burnt Offering*: Atoned for the sin of the individual and made them acceptable to God (1:4-5)
 - a. Size of offering doesn't matter, both accomplish the same.
2. *Grain Offering*: Usually accompanied either burnt offering or peace offering seeking God's favor in their request
 - a. 2:11-13 Offering salt with the offering
 - i. Salt is a preservative, indicating the enduring nature of God's covenant.
3. *Peace Offering*: Symbolizes a communion meal between God and the offeror. (only one with a portion set aside for the offeror)
 - a. *Three types*: thanksgiving, vow, and freewill.
 - b. Fat reserved: Why? It is the best portion to be given to God

- c. Blood is reserved: Why? **Atonement (Lev. 17:11-12)**
- 4. *Sin Offering*: Offering to cleanse in order to amend the broken relationship with the Lord
 - a. Due to either:
 - i. Unintentionally doing something prohibited
 - ii. Failing to do something required
 - b. The more authority person had, the more required
 - c. Parallels aspects of offering on Day of Atonement. Why are both of these sacrifices offered?
- 5. *Guilt Offering*: Similar to the sin offering but more focused on repairing relationship with the LORD and making repayment for sin.
 - a. *5:1-6 illustrates just how fragile our cleanliness is.*
 - b. *5:17-35 ensures the cost of atonement is not out of reach*
 - i. *reveals the sacrifice itself is merely symbolic and representative of the faith behind it.*
- 6. Three of these deal specifically with sin: Burnt, Sin, and Guilt offerings. In these three we see a foreshadow of Christ who is the fulfillment of all:
 - a. **Burnt: Worshipper identifies with the animal by laying on the hands (we will see this later), kills it, and the smoke ascends symbolically as a pleasing aroma to God.**
 - i. Animal is to be without Blemish (Lev. 1:3)
 - I. 1 Peter 1:19
 - ii. The sacrifice is a “pleasing aroma to the LORD” (1:9, 17)
 - I. Ephesians 5:2
 - b. Sin:
 - i. The whole animal is not sacrificed, but remains are burned outside of camp.
 - ii. Focused on cleansing: blood is used to cleanse the sanctuary

1. Indicates that the person's sin doesn't just affect them personally but it affects the whole people.
2. Where is God's temple for His people today? **In our hearts.**

a. *Heb. 10:22*

c. *Guilt*: Sometimes referred to as the reparation offering.

i. It focuses on the need for sin's guilt to be repayed.

ii. **Isaiah 53:10** "offering for Guilt same word as in **Lev 5:15**"

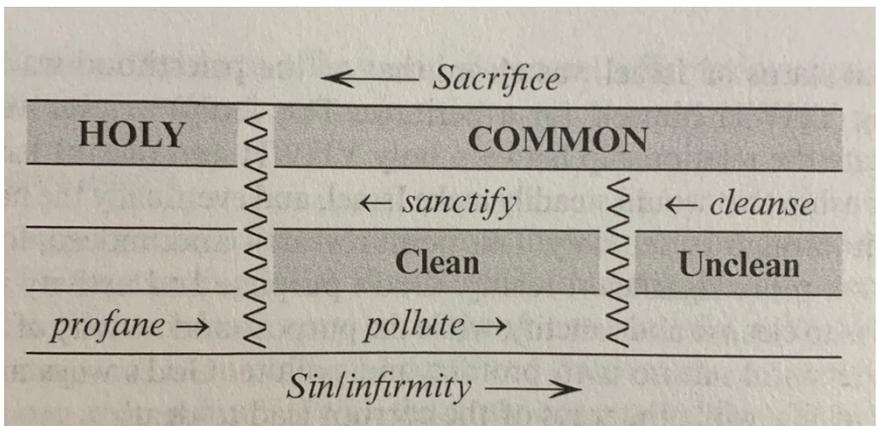
All of these offerings were designed to remind the worshippers of the holiness of God, the fact that sin had to be dealt with, and that for forgiveness a substitute blood sacrifice was needed. Chapters 6–7 detail the rules related to the various offerings. **Heb. 13:15-16**, and **Ro. 12:1**, describe New Testament "sacrifices" for Christians.

Further in chapters 8 and 9, God validated the Aaronic priesthood as the only officially recognized priests. They, too, had to be cleansed and holy to function before God in the tabernacle as they represented the people before God with regard to sin.

In chapter 10, the deaths of Nadab and Abihu demonstrated that God was serious about being holy before Him.

1. **Nadab and Abihu**: (Read 9:22-24)

- a. God commands them to differentiate between holy and common, clean and unclean **Lev. 10:10-11**



- b. Acts 5:1-11 Ananias and Sapphira
 - i. Narrative parallels:
 - ii. Theological Parallels

Chapters 11-27 – Sanctification/walk with God

In these chapters various instructions were given with regard to clean and unclean things and how Israel was to live a holy life that would set them apart from the other nations. It was a call to holy living. The regulations in chapters 11–15 were primarily for health and hygiene reasons and to disassociate Israel from the sinful, cultic practices of the nations around them. They were for protection and purification. These regulatory aspects related to unclean food, etc. and were rescinded and were rescinded and made obsolete by Christ (See **Eph. 2:14-18; Col. 2:13-15; Heb. 9:9-10**).

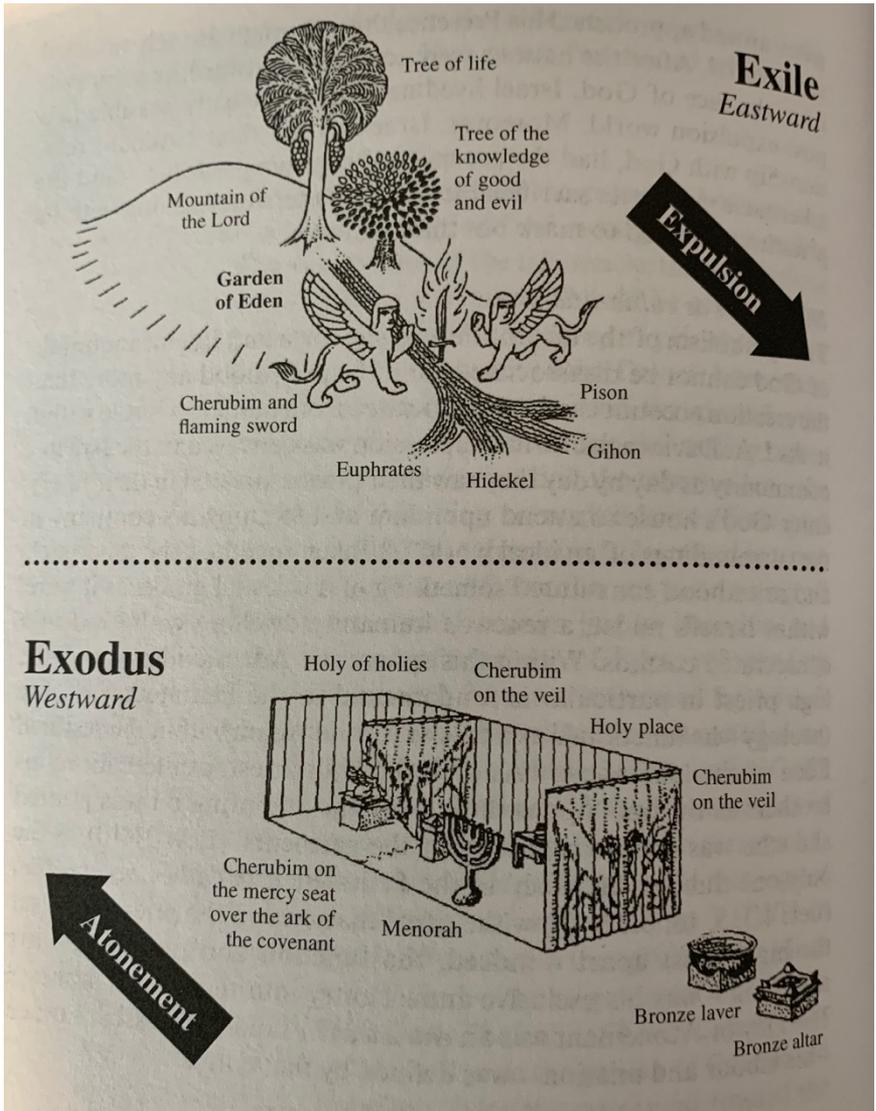
1. Ch. 11 - Clean and Unclean Animals (remember we have hints that these regulations were not fully new. Noah gathered into the ark extra clean animals for sacrifices.)
 - a. We don't fully understand the rationale behind what makes an animal clean or unclean.
 - b. It serves to symbolize the distinction between ritual cleanliness and uncleanness.
 - c. Marks a separation from the nations.
 - i. Mark 7:14-23
 - ii. Acts 11:1-18
 - d. Obeying them honors the Creator and the categories He set up
 - i. 11:44 (even if something doesn't make sense or the rationale for it is unclear, we still need to submit to the categories that God establishes).
2. Chs. 12 – 15 Further Laws on clean and unclean
 - a. The following rules are not based around the sinfulness or individual worth of the person.
 - b. They do not indicate moral failure
 - c. However, they are tied to the idea of sin in that they are a reminder of the curse of sin and its effects on creation.
3. Ch 12 Is this a denigration of women and child birth?
 - a. Not if taken in the context of the above principles.
 - b. Gen 3:15, 16, 20 – A curse upon childbirth sandwiched between two prophetic, messianic messages.
 - c. Emphasized by how many key figures of redemption have a birthing story attached to their story.
 - i. Sarah - Isaac, Rebekah - Jacob, Jochebed - Moses, Ruth - Obed, Elizabeth - John the Baptist, Mary – Jesus

4. Ch. 13 Rules on Lepers (Mark 1: 40 – 45)
5. Ch 15 – Covers biological events that are not inherently evil. Further evidence that unclean is not necessarily associated with sinful acts.
6. So, what is the overarching point to all of these cleanliness rules?
 - a. Vivid reminder of the broken fellowship due to Sin.
 - b. Is it merely about personal righteousness and right living?
 - i. Exodus 15:31 – it is a living reminder of the need to be united to God in fellowship. It is to remind us what life was like in Eden before sin and long for what it will be like when our fellowship is fully restored.

Chapter 16 details the important Day of Atonement concept where annually the high priest would enter the holy of holies to make atonement for (“cover over”) the sins of the nation. Atonement carries the ideas of substitution, transfer of sins (identification) and sacrifice! It previewed the substitutionary atoning sacrifice of Christ on the cross and provided a temporary means of dealing with sin before Christ’s death. Chapter 17 emphasizes that blood sacrifices were required to forgive sins. But as **Hebrews** points out, it is not the blood of bulls and goats that forgives sins but the blood of Christ. The blood of animals was only a temporary, symbolic substitute. God applied the blood of Christ retroactively to forgive sins covered over in the Old Covenant (see **Heb. 9:15**).

1. Day of Atonement

- a. Goes back to Nadab and Abihu (16:1-2)
 - i. Notice structure of Chapters 10-16
 - ii. Why the break between 10 and 16?
 - b. 16:2 points out that Nadab and Abihu tried to enter the Holy of Holies.
 - c. God is now going to tell them the only and proper way that a person can enter the presence of God.
2. The Tabernacle is not merely the Earthly house of God, but also the way back into fellowship with Him.
 3. Re-read Psalm 24:1-4 “Who Shall Ascend the Mountain of the Lord?”
 - a. The priest serves as Adam symbolically returning into fellowship with the Lord
 - b. He offers a sacrifice for sins to repair the relationship
 - c. Re-establishes the Covenant.



- i. Only the High Priest can enter (Hebrews 4:14)
- ii. A sacrifice is offered (Rev. 13:8)
- iii. Sins are put upon the scapegoat (2 Cor 5:21, Is. 53:6)

4. Scapegoat being sent into wilderness has significance as well.
 - a. Wilderness opposite of Eden Isaiah 51:3
 - b. Two goats: First goat goes into the Presence of the Lord (Eden) Westward in the form of an atoning blood sacrifice
 - c. Second goes into wilderness (Eastward) carrying the sins.

<i>Cosmos</i>		<i>Cultic cosmos</i>	
Humanity in relation to YHWH		Animals	Space
Holy	Priests	Sacrificial	Tabernacle
Clean	Israel	Clean	Camp
Unclean	Gentiles	Unclean	Wilderness

Hebrews 9: 11ff., 6:19

Chapters 18–27 contain further instructions on how to be separated **to** God and **from** sin in different areas of life, including immorality and homosexuality. The details of Israel’s feasts and holy days are also given (see Old Testament Feasts near Leviticus 23, in the NIV/NASB/KJV. In other Study Bibles, look for related charts, articles, study notes, etc.). Israel’s seven feasts/festivals —

- ï were a memorial to a past event
- ï celebrated a present blessing
- ï looked forward to a future fulfillment.

1. Chapter 18

- a. What textually tells us that these differ from the ritualistic cleansing rules? (18:3, 25)
- b. These are meant to separate them from the sin of non-covenant people. These sins were being committed prior to the establishment of the Sinaiic Covenant.

2. Chapter 19 Be Holy Read v. 1 (1 Peter 1; 13-25)

- a. Conforming to Gods Laws is framed in the people’s status of being clean or unclean – i.e. their ability to be in His presence.
- b. This demonstrates the right living doesn’t make them Holy, but the presence of God’s Holiness makes them righteous.

3. Read 20: 26

- a. The rules of 18 and 20 (again notice structure) aren’t merely a list of prohibited things.
- b. They are specifically meant to differentiate the Covenant People from the non-covenant people. (both in Egypt where they came from and Canaan where they were going)

4. Ch 23 Festivals: See Chart on pg. 247.
 - a. Passover (Rev. 19 and the Marriage Supper of the Lamb)
 - i. Matt 26:29
 - b. First Fruits
 - i. v. 10 “The Land that I give You”
 1. Points toward the eschatological hope of New Heavens and New Earth
 - ii. Rev. 21: 1-4, 22-27
 - iii. Isa 25:6-9
5. Ch 24: 1-9
 - a. Read Ex 31:13
 - b. v. 8 Bread is renewed on the Sabbath
 - i. Sabbath not mentioned until 16:31
 - ii. Mentioned 26 times in remainder of the book.
6. Ch 26 Blessings and Curses
 - a. 26: 40 – 45
 - i. Deuteronomy 10:12-16
 - ii. Jeremiah 4:1-4
 - iii. Jeremiah 31:31-34
 - iv. Ezekiel 36: 22-35

While all of the regulations of **Leviticus** are not applicable to Christians today, the basic concepts related to holy living are (see **1 Pe. 1:14-16**). **1 Jn. 1:5-9** is almost the New Testament equivalent of **Leviticus**.

5. Theme/purpose/applicational message

Theme/purpose

Moses recorded in **Leviticus** the revelation by Holy God at Mt. Sinai to Israel of the fact that blood sacrifice was necessary for forgiveness of sins and what God required of His people in terms of holy living.

Applicational message

Holy God demands that those who worship and fellowship with Him must themselves be holy in character and conduct.