

A Sense of the Sacrifice

Chapter 3

Audio Lesson: Old Testament Survey lesson 17



Objective: to understand what the sacrifices in Leviticus mean and how they apply to us today.



Unlike the other high priests, [Jesus] does not need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people. He sacrificed for their sins once for all when he offered himself.

—Hebrews 7:27

Leviticus, this priest's manual, is divided into several sections. Chapters 1-7 tell the priests exactly what to do as they prepare sacrifices, but they also give insight into the meaning of these sacrifices. In chapters 8-10, the focus is upon the servants—the priests themselves. The instructions in this section explain what kind of men the priests were supposed to be and the standards they were supposed to keep. There are many beautiful devotional truths in these chapters for us because they are all fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

The heart of the book is found in chapters 11-22, where the “sanctification” of God's people is explained. The tent of worship and the priests who officiated there were God's statement to the whole world that the chosen people of God were a holy people because their God was holy. The emphasis in these chapters is that these people were chosen to be different.

Chapters 23-25 explain the “services.” There are many holy days in the Jewish faith, and they are documented in the first five books of the Bible. Since the priests were the ones who were to officiate during these holy days and these very sacred ceremonies, they needed instruction regarding how to do so. When you come to this section of Leviticus, ask yourself this question: What did God want the priests to remember when He instituted a holy day? Then ask yourself this question: Why did God want the priests to remember these things?

The last two chapters of Leviticus can be described as “the surrender.” Leviticus, Deuteronomy, and Joshua all conclude with an exhortation to God's people obey the laws of God and to be holy people. God's people had been delivered and saved to be different from the people around them.



1. True or false? Most people find the genealogies and sacrifice rules just as interesting and inspiring as the rest of the Bible.
2. True or false? Leviticus was useful in the wilderness but has no meaningful truth for today.
3. True or false? God wants us to remember that we are “holy” and that means that we don’t do anything wrong.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

4. When were all the priestly sacrifices fulfilled?
 - a. When the Israelites entered the Promised Land
 - b. When the temple in Jerusalem was built
 - c. When Jesus died on the cross
 - d. None of them have been fulfilled yet.
5. Why were the Israelites considered holy?
 - a. Because they were His people
 - b. Because they kept all the laws perfectly
 - c. Because God kept them far away from everyone else
 - d. Because they had studied and learned so much
6. Why did God create holy days?
 - a. He only planned to visit His people on a few special days.
 - b. He wanted them to remember what He had done for them.
 - c. He thought they needed rest.
 - d. He wanted them to be more religious than other people.

7. Why was a person who came to offer a sacrifice supposed to put his hand on the animal's head?
- a. Only the head was to be offered.
 - b. The head represented the soul of the animal.
 - c. No one really knows. The Bible does not tell us.
 - d. Symbolically he transferred his sin to the animal, which died in his place and became his substitute.

8. Read Isaiah 53:6. What does this prophecy say about our sin (choose all that apply)?

- a. It is unforgivable.
- b. All of us are sinners
- c. God will forgive our sin if we pay enough for it.
- d. God laid all our sin on Jesus and made Him the sacrifice.

“We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each one of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.”

—Isaiah 53.6

9. Why did the priests have the blood of sacrifice put on their right ear, hand, and foot?
- a. Because they deserved punishment for what they had heard, what they had done, and where they went
 - b. To demonstrate that people are half good and half evil
 - c. To remind them that what they heard, what they did, and where they went were to be holy to God
 - d. So everyone could see which men were priests

10. When a leper was healed, a priest performed a ritual in which a bird was submerged in blood and then set free. Why did he do this?

- a. Because blood was a symbol of leprosy and death
- b. Because the leper had to pay for his healing with a sacrifice
- c. To symbolize that lepers were to go as far away from camp as a bird flies
- d. To represent the Gospel – the death and resurrection of Jesus for our cleansing

11. Moses' sermons contained _____ .

- a. Teaching
- b. Exhortation
- c. Prophecy
- d. All of the above

12. Leviticus contains instructions regarding God's _____. (choose all that apply)

- a. Rules about diet and cleanliness
- b. Rules about sex and relationships
- c. Rules about the ministry of priests
- d. Military strategy
- e. Farming techniques
- f. Treating diseases
- g. Condemnation of sorcery, witchcraft and fortune telling



What does it mean for you to be “holy”— that which belongs to God? In what ways can people tell that your life is different because of your relationship with Him?



Thank God that you are one of His people, forgiven of your sins and set apart to love and serve Him. Ask Him to show you how He wants to use you for His special purposes.



Going Deeper

1. What message is God giving us when He places the book of Leviticus right after the book of Exodus? _____

2. What truth was being symbolized when the sinner was instructed to place his hand on the head of the lamb that was to be sacrificed for his sins? (Consider Isaiah 53:5,6; 1 Peter 2: 24, 25; 2 Corinthians 5:21) _____

3. Explain how the ceremony for the cleansing of a leper symbolizes the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. (Leviticus 14: 1-9) _____

4. Why did God establish so many holy days? What did these special days represent? _____

5. Why were the priests instructed to place the blood of a sacrifice on their right ear, hand and foot? What is the devotional and practical application in this for us today? _____

6. Relate all these instructions for treating diseases to what we know today about the importance of quarantine and sterilization to prevent the spread of contagious diseases. Did Moses get the jump on science by thousands of years, or did he have a revelation from God in these matters? _____

7. Do the condemnations of homosexuality and other sexual practices, along with the scathing prohibitions of sorcery and witchcraft, apply to the holy people of God today? _____
