

## Winchester Evangelical Church

### Bible Study 3 - Leviticus

*Key Words* : Holiness and Atonement

*Key Verse* : Leviticus 17:11 - **For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one's life.**

*Message* : Access of Redeemed to God only through Blood  
Holiness of Redeemed imperative

The title of the book was given by the editors of the Septuagint Bible, the Greek translation - 'Things concerning Levites'. - **Even though the Levites are only mentioned briefly in 25:32-33 - and this refers to house purchases in the cities of the Levites.**

The Hebrew title is 'wayyiqra' which means 'And he called'. Note the opening words: (1:1) **The Lord called to Moses and spoke to him from the tent of meeting.** This name is more in keeping with the contents of the book. - i.e. God's call to the Redeemed to access, commune and worship in his presence, and to holiness of body and soul.

All the instructions in this book were given less than a month after the construction of the Tabernacle (as in the book of Exodus), between the first month of the year and the second month of the year following the exodus from Egypt.

Dr J.I. Packer wrote: **Considered as embracing the history of one month only, this may claim to be the most remarkable book in the Old Testament.**

This book is for God's chosen people - a redeemed people. It shows how God is to be approached and worshipped.

Genesis - Man ruined  
Exodus - Man redeemed  
Leviticus - Man worshipping

We have seen how the book opens. - **The Lord called to Moses** - There are only two other books begin in this way: Numbers and Joshua. The words, **The Lord called to Moses and spoke to him** indicates the communication that follows is to be of first rate importance.

One Bible scholar has pointed out that in Leviticus, **The Holy Spirit is not once named, though referred to in all the other books of the Pentateuch, because all here relates to Christ, and it is the Spirit's work to glorify Christ.**

No other book in the Bible contains so many direct messages from God as these - 'The Lord spoke', 'The Lord said', 'The Lord commanded'. They appear 56 times in the book.  
'I am Jehovah' 21 times; 'I am Jehovah, your God' 21 times; 'I am' 3 times; and 'I Jehovah do' twice.

The word 'Holy' appears at least 87 times and 'Atonement' occurs at least 45 times.

The questions asked in this book are:  
How can a sinful man approach a holy God?  
How is he to gain access to God?

**Who is to decide this question?**

The answer is that God alone must determine how? This book declares that even his redeemed ones can only gain access to Him, with its consequent privilege of communion and worship, on the basis of sacrifice through shedding of blood.

One of the surprises of the book is its insistence on the holiness of the body, as well as that of the soul. This book teaches that the redeemed must be holy, because their Redeemer is holy - (19:2) **Speak to the entire assembly of Israel and say to them: "Be holy because I, the Lord your God, am holy."**

The overall theme is the **Holiness of God**.

## **Section one - Chapters 1 - 10**

Because of God's holiness the access of the redeemed to God can only be secured on the basis of sacrifice through blood shedding (17:11) **For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one's life.**

- A) The Five Offerings - each represents a distinctive aspect of the one offering of our Lords Jesus Christ.
- Burnt offering - **Old life condemned, burnt up in the fires of God's judgement.**
  - Grain offering - **New life offered up to God**
  - Sin offering - **Recompense paid for my sins**
  - Guilt offering - **My guilty stains cleansed**
  - Peace offering - **Once the old life is condemned, the new life offered to God, recompense is paid and my guilt is cleansed, then peace is secured - In Hebrew thought, 'peace' indicated complete well-being and harmony, not just absence of war.**
- B) The Law of the Offerings - details as to the order and arrangement of the offerings **listed above.**
- C) The Priesthood - chapters 8-10
- Call (v1-5) - **Aaron and his four sons - Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar**
  - Cleansing (v6) - **They had to be washed with water - made clean**
  - Clothing (v7-13) - **Aaron as High Priest, and his sons as priests to help him - special clothes to set them apart**
  - Atonement (v14-29) - **Bull for sin offering, Ram for burnt offering, Ram for ordination offering along with unleavened bread from the bread that was put before the Lord daily**
  - Anointing (v30) - **Anointing oil and the blood from the altar sprinkled on Aaron and his sons and their clothing**
  - Food (v31-36) - **Eat the ordination offering and the ordination bread - not to leave the Tabernacle for seven days**
  - Ministry (chapter 9) - **This was the start of their ministry. They had to make offerings for themselves, and then for the people**
  - Failure (chapter 10) - **Nadab and Abihu took their censers and burnt incense in them. God immediately sent fire on them which killed them. All that was left were their censers We are told that it was 'strange' or 'unauthorised' fire. Based on what God told Aaron in chapter 10:9 about not drinking alcohol before entering the Tabernacle it is likely that his sons were drunk. God also told Moses in 16 :1-2 that the priests could not go into the Most Holy Place, behind the curtain, whenever they liked. Aaron's sons were possibly trying to go in there, as well, while drunk. In chapter 10 this is the only time in Leviticus that God speaks directly to Aaron. He usually speaks through Moses.**

## **Section Two - Chapters 11 - 27**

Because of God's holiness, the holiness of both body and soul of the redeemed is both imperative and compulsory.

- A) Laws of Purity - Holy people must have:

Pure Food (chapter 11) - Clean and unclean animals - though no reason is given for what is clean or unclean. It was obedience to God.

Pure Bodies (chapters 12-14) - After childbirth, leprosy, etc.

Pure Homes (chapter 14) - Unclean houses

Pure Habits (chapter 15) - Bodily discharges

Constant Resort to the Blood (chapter 16) - The Day of Atonement and sacrificial offerings

B) Sundry Laws - Holy people must have:

Pure Worship (chapter 17) - Sacrifices should be made at the Tabernacle and not anywhere the people liked - to prevent sacrifices to other gods

Sacred Regard for Blood (chapter 17) - Not to eat blood as it is the life of the animal

Pure Morals (chapter 18) - Various prohibited relationships with close relatives

Pure Customs, Clothing, etc. (chapters 19-26) - Keeping the feasts and the sacrifices pure by offering the right things at the right times - keeping holy

C) Laws Concerning Vows - Chapter 27 - Making vows of an offering to God, whether animal, house or other property. The priests will value it and accept it. If it is to be redeemed by the offerer then he must pay the value plus a fifth to God. - Tithes to the Lord are holy

First verse : Leviticus 1:1 - The Lord called to Moses and spoke to him from the tent of meeting.

Last verse : Leviticus 27:34 - These are the commands the Lord gave Moses at Mount Sinai for the Israelites.