

Introduction to Leviticus

Leviticus 20:22-27

Read Leviticus 20:22-27

1.) Common (Mis)Conceptions of Leviticus

- A.) "A Difficult Book to Understand"
- B.) "An Irrelevant Book"
- C.) "A Severe or Harsh Book"
- D.) "A Virtually Unknown Book"

2.) The Truth About Leviticus

- A.) Leviticus is Good News
- B.) It Answers Burning Questions:
 - i.) How can a Holy God dwell in the midst of His people?
 - ii.) How will Israel be a holy nation?

"It is good news for sinners who seek pardon, for priests who need empowering, for women who are vulnerable, for the unclean who covet cleansing, for the poor who yearn for freedom, for the marginalized who seek dignity, for animals that demand protection, for families that require strengthening, for communities that want fortifying and for creation that stands in need of care. All these issues, and more, are addressed in a positive way in Leviticus."— Derek Tidball

- C.) The Preliminary Sketch of The Masterpiece
- D.) The Author: Moses
- E.) Part of a Historical Narrative.
- F.) Contains Few Imperatives or Statements of Fact.

3.) Special Issues of Leviticus

A.) Accommodation: The Lord Communicates His Values to us in a Way that We Can Understand, By Using the Cultural Realities That Exist in our Society

B.) Which Laws Apply Today?

- i.) Laws express the Values of the Lawgiver
- ii.) The Lord's character is perfect and constant
- iii.) Directly Apply The Commands Repeated in the NT; The rest communicate values to inform our ethics.

C.) Penalties:

- i.) The Harshest Penalties are Associated with Treason Against God, the King
- ii.) The Israelites depended on their covenant relationship and sin fractured that relationship.

D.) Ritual: identifies a person, time or event as being unique.

*"Most broadly speaking, **a ritual identifies a person, time or event as being unique in someway.** A birthday celebration identifies that a person is one year older. Wearing black can identify that it is a time of mourning. A graduation ceremony identifies that students have finished a course of study...Significantly, the more important the person, time or event, the more elaborate the ritual tends to become. Going on a first date may involve buying flowers or a meal, while getting married may involve the purchase of many flowers, food for our closest family and friends, the presence of fancy clothes and special music, and so on." —Jay Sklar*

E.) Sacrifices

"For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins." (Hebrews 10:4)

"Atoning sacrifice in the Old Testament may be compared to writing a check. The purpose of the check was to cover the debt of sin...The Lord in his grace received the check and declared the debt paid, graciously assuring forgiveness to the offeror. But he did not cash it... In the grand scheme of things, it is not possible for the lifeblood of an animal to fully ransom the lifeblood of a human...So, why did the Lord receive it as payment at the time? Because he knew that there would one day be money in the account to cover the debt: Namely, when Jesus gave his lifeblood as the perfect and final ransom for the lifeblood of sinners. Stated differently, the atoning sacrifices of the Old Testament were pointers to a much greater atoning sacrifice to come, one that would be enough to cover the debt fully and finally. What must not be missed is that it is the one who has been sinned against who covers the debt for the sinner: 'But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.'" —Jay Sklar

4.) The Theology of Leviticus

A.) It's a Book About Holiness

B.) A **Statement**: God is Holy.

A **Command**: Be Holy.

A **Promise**: I am the Lord who makes you holy.

"Holiness, then, is a statement about God, a command to his people, and a promise concerning his Spirit. The summons of Leviticus leaps across the yawning cultural divide and the intervening centuries to call us once again to holy living. Christian believers, no less than Israel, are called to be holy and to pursue holiness in every dimension of their lives. Like Israel, we too have been set free, by Christ, but not so that we might continue to live in sin or with indifference to God; rather, we have been set free to be holy." —Derek Tidball

Hebrews 9:11-14