

Exodus Study and Discussion Questions

Lesson Seven: Sinai: Priesthood and Holiness – Leviticus 1-15, 17-22, 24, 26-27

Leviticus 1-7: Offerings

- 1) From Leviticus 1:3, 2:1, 3:1, 4:1-3, and 5:15, list the names of the five primary types of sacrifices made by the Israelites, noting which two were obligatory and specifically for expiation of sin. (Expiation can be defined as the act of making amends or reparation for guilt or wrongdoing. Atonement is an act of public expiation.) **The Burnt Offering, the Cereal (Grain or “Meat”) Offering, the Guilt Offering, the Sin Offering, the Peace (Fellowship) Offering.** The Sin and Guilt Offerings were obligatory and made expiation for sin. (The Burnt Offering also included the element of atonement, but like the Grain and Fellowship Offerings, it was primarily an act of voluntary worship and dedication.)
- 2) Read about and summarize at least one of the five sacrifices:
 - a) Leviticus 1 with 6:8-13 **Burnt Offering**: This voluntary offering could be a bull, sheep, goat, or bird, but the animal had to be without defect. The worshipper laid hands on it (possibly, though not stated, while confessing sin), then slaughtered, skinned, divided and washed the animal. The priest sprinkled some of the blood on the altar and then burned the entire offering.
 - b) Leviticus 2 with 6:14-23 **Cereal Offering** (also known as a Grain or “Meat” Offering): This, too, was a voluntary offering, and usually accompanied an animal sacrifice (Numbers 15:1-16). If the grain was made into a cake or wafer, it was to be mixed with oil and salt but contain no yeast or honey. A portion of the cakes or wafers was burned; the priest ate the remainder. If the offering consisted of crushed, roasted, new grain, oil and incense were poured on them.
 - c) Leviticus 3 with 7:11-36 **Fellowship (or Peace) Offering**: This was the third type of voluntary offering and consisted of an animal from one’s herd or flock. According to Leviticus 7:12-16, this offering was given as an act of thanksgiving or as the result of a vow. The family bringing the offering shared a meal from portions of it. Like the Burnt Offering, the worshipper laid hands on the animal’s head (indicating atonement was made by substitution), then slaughtered, skinned, divided, and washed the animal. The priest sprinkled some of its blood on the altar. Only the innards and fat were burned. After “waving” the breast, the priest was given the breast and the right thigh to eat.
 - d) Leviticus 4:1-5:13 with 6:24-30 **Sin Offering**: This offering was required for the unintentional breaking of any of the Lord’s commands. If the sin was that of the priest or the entire community, a bull without defect was offered. If it was the sin of a community leader, a male goat was offered. For a commoner, a female goat or lamb was offered (a common person too poor to afford this could substitute two doves or two pigeons; the most poor in the land could substitute fine flour). As with the animals in the other offerings, the worshipper laid hands on its head, then slaughtered, skinned, divided, and washed the animal. The priest sprinkled its blood in the altar and burned choice portions. The remainder of the ritual varied, according to the occasion for the offering and the type of animal presented.
 - e) Leviticus 5:14-6:7 with 7:1-10. **Guilt Offering**: This offering was mandatory for the misuse or neglect of things belonging to God or to one’s neighbor, requiring restitution. A ram was to be presented. The worshipper laid hands on its head, slaughtered, skinned, divided, and washed it. The priest sprinkled its blood on the altar. A portion of the meat was burned and a portion eaten by the priest.

- 3) Record your thoughts about the cost of a sacrifice, in consideration of Leviticus 1-7, Exodus 12:3, 6, and 2 Samuel 24:24 (the Exodus verses tell of the worshipper's relationship to the lamb, in the specific context of the Passover sacrifice). Then read Hebrews 10:5-18 and tell why we no longer offer animal sacrifices. What can you offer the Lord this week in gratitude for what He has done for you? **Sacrifices required the loss of an animal, an important asset. It also meant loss of time that might otherwise be used conducting business. In the case of the Passover sacrifice, the family cared for the lamb as a pet for four days prior to the sacrifice, making the sacrifice much more personal. Jesus gave His own life as the final sacrifice. His was the only sacrifice truly capable of atoning for sin. (All prior sacrifices pointed ahead to His, Romans 3:25). Personal sharing**

Leviticus 8-10: Priesthood God's instructions about the priests' garments and consecration are recorded in Exodus 28-29. Leviticus 8-10 tells of the occasion of their ordination.

- 4) The priests interceded with God for the people by offering their sacrifices. What does Leviticus 10:10-11 add about the priests' responsibilities? **The priests were to be capable of distinguishing between the holy and the common, the clean and the unclean. They were also to teach the Israelites all the Lord's commands. Their roles included that of a judge, a student, and a teacher.**
- 5) After reading Leviticus 10:1-3, reread Exodus 24:9-11 and recall the special privilege Nadab and Abihu had experienced. According to Acts 5:1-11, what equivalent event occurred at the outset of the new era sometimes called "The Church Age"? Can you suggest why God acted as He did on these particular occasions (see Leviticus 11:45)? **Nadab and Abihu not only enjoyed the special privilege of priesthood, on a previous occasion, they had had the unique experience of "seeing God" (Exodus 24:9-11). Thus, they should have feared Him all the more, but they failed to do so and God put them to death. Similarly, at the onset of another era in which God and His people would relate to one another according to new revelation (the "Church Age"), God swiftly put to death Ananias and Sapphira for dishonesty. In both instances, God made an example of these individuals, to deter others from regarding Him and His commands too lightly. Perhaps the immediacy and severity of His judgment sufficiently awed these generations of God-worshippers, so that they remained holy (Leviticus 11:45), and the revelation they received was not snuffed out before it could be passed on. It was imperative that these generations received, grasped, practiced, and passed on what they knew.**
- 6) Read Leviticus 9:1-7 and 23-24. What occurrences surrounded the magnificent appearing of the "glory of the Lord"? What can we learn from this about personally encountering God today? **The appearance of the "glory of the Lord" was preceded by sacrifices made for atonement and time spent in God's presence. Moses and Aaron's blessing seemed to be the signal for the "glory of the Lord" to appear. Fire from the Lord consumed (accepted) the offerings. The people rejoiced and worshipped the Lord (prostrated themselves). Dealing with sin and spending time with God are prerequisite to experiencing God personally. When one experiences God in a personal way, the fire of the Holy Spirit inflames us with joy and an intense desire to worship Him.**

Leviticus 11-15: Purifications

- 7) Skim through Leviticus 11-15. In just a few words list the kinds of practical, everyday issues that are addressed. **Purity is addressed in the following practical, everyday issues: food (chapter 11), childbirth (chapter 12), skin, fungal diseases, and mildew (chapters 13-14), and bodily discharges (chapter 15).**
- 8) Read Leviticus 11:44-45. How does the principle in these verses summarize the reason God demanded purity in everyday living (see also Exodus 19:5-6 and Leviticus 15:31)? **The principle "be holy as I am holy" and the fact that Israel was to represent God among the nations explain the extreme cautions the Israelites were to take in everyday living.**

- 9) While in our current New Testament age God's people do not live under obligation to the civil and ceremonial laws of Moses, has skimming through these chapters given you a sense of the depth of your own sin and offense against our Holy God? Read Colossians 1:21-22 and Hebrews 10:19-22. What should motivate us to live holy lives today (see John 17:18, 2 Corinthians 9:15, Philippians 2:15-16, Colossians 3:17, and Hebrews 12:28-29)? **Our offense to God not only results from our specific sins but from our general "unclean" condition (Romans 5:12, 18-19). Today, believers should live holy lives out of gratitude for what God has done and because we take our responsibility to represent Christ seriously.**

Leviticus 17-22: Holiness Code Leviticus 17-27 is sometimes referred to as the Holiness Code. It is a collection of laws covering practical matters.

- 10) Leviticus 17 addresses the sacredness of blood, a principle God had communicated immediately after the Flood (Genesis 9:4). According to Leviticus 17:10-12, why is blood sacred? **Blood is sacred because it symbolizes life and was used to make atonement for life.**
- 11) What do Leviticus 18:3-4, 24, 27, 30; 20:23-26; and 22:32 have to say about God's reason for giving these specific laws to His people? What was at risk? **The Lord was concerned about the temptation His people would face to live by the standards of the Egyptians and the Canaanites. God told them they must not follow the detestable practices of these other groups. If God's people did not follow His ways, they were at risk of losing their distinctness as His representatives. They were to be holy because the One they represented is Holy.**
- 12) Skim over Leviticus 19. What impresses you? Leviticus 19 is full of laws that encourage us to "love our neighbor as ourselves" (19:18, 34). Loving principles are taught: fairness and justice, respect for the elderly, no partiality or favoritism, leaving food for the poor and aliens, and honest business practices. God is concerned with more than just conformity to a code; He is concerned about our true, inner character.

Leviticus 24, 26-27: Holiness Code

- 13) Read the story in Leviticus 24:10-23. How does this account illustrate the principle underlying the Holiness Code? Is the sin involved one that is common today? **The laws in the Holiness Code are interrupted by the account of a "blasphemer of the Name," who was stoned at the Lord's command. The story clearly illustrates God's seriousness about holy living. The sin of profaning God's name is not taken seriously in many cultures today, sometimes not even by God's own people!**
- 14) Skim Leviticus 26. What is the general principle? **Leviticus 26 spells out the "Deuteronomic Principle," that obedience to God leads to blessing, while disobedience leads to cursing.**
- 15) Holiness is not only an Old Testament principle. Read Hebrews 12:14 and 1 Peter 1:15-16. Is there an area of your life that you need to ask the Lord to make holy? What steps will you take? (You will not be asked to share your answer unless you volunteer to do so.) **Personal sharing**

(Leviticus 16, 23 and 25 will be covered in the next lesson on "Special Observances".)