

- 1 Be concise.** Please share your thoughts and answers, but be considerate so that others will have time to share their answers also. Be charitable and kind. Be willing to share with the group, but do not try to dominate the conversation. Use the time after the class to find help with any personal issues or problems you may be confronting in your life.

“Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires.”

(James 1:19–20)

- 2 Be thoughtful with your answer.** Consider your words. Do not simply regurgitate what you have always heard. We have the tendency to speak in “Christianese” — words that only people who grew up on the pews would understand. Think about how your words will be heard by others. Will they understand what you are saying? Is what you are about to say going to be useful for the building up of the faith of others? Or will your words be confusing, cause hurt, or worse, damage someone’s faith? Speak without harshness or anger, but with kindness and humility.

“Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.”

(Ephesians 4:29)

- 3 Rely on the scriptures for truth.** It is easy to rely upon conventional, worldly wisdom as truth. Bible study is about seeking God’s answers for our lives, not dispensing the advice of the world. We must consider that our natural answers may be the wrong answers if they are not founded on God’s word.

“For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength.”

(1 Corinthians 1:25)

This is a booklet to aid you in your personal study of this book. Read through the text first, discovering God's precious truths for yourself. Write down the main point of each section of text in the space provided. Use the margins on each side of the text and the backside of the page to make notations of the truths you discover and passages you do not understand. When you believe you have seen all there is in text, read and answer the questions in the booklet pertaining to that section of text. The questions are not an exhaustive list of things to look for in the text. The questions are to help you consider the points that the author was trying to convey to his audience. Be prepared to share your findings in class.

Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord. (Hebrews 12:14 ESV)

The writer of Hebrews tells us that we must strive for holiness because without it we will not see the Lord. Holiness is critically important, therefore, to the life of Christian. But how do we strive for holiness? What does holiness look like in our lives? If I asked you to take me to the book that instructs us about holiness, which book would you direct me to? The book about how to be holy is one of the most neglected books in the scriptures: Leviticus. The book is poorly named because the book is misunderstood. The name of the book has contributed to the bad rap this book has received. The book is not about the Levites. It is not a book to the priests. Very few commands are given to the priests or the Levites. If you look at the first two verses of the book, the Lord calls Moses to the tent of meeting and gives him instructions to speak to the people, not to the priests. If you turn to the last sentence of the book you will see that these are the commandments given to the people of Israel on Mount Sinai. This is a book to the people.

A better name for this book is "Holiness." The word "holy" occurs 92 times in the book. The other word to describe this book is "Atonement" which occurs 51 times in the book. In fact, the word atonement is found in almost every chapter (1,4,5,6,7,10,12,14,15,16,17,19,23,25). So what is the function and purpose of this book? The book of Exodus concludes with the completion of the construction of the tabernacle. Notice in Exodus 40:34-38 the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. Further, throughout all their journeys, we see God in their midst and traveling with them, as the cloud of the Lord was on the tabernacle by day, and fire was in it by night. Exodus ends with God desiring to dwell with his people. God has come down and is with his people. But there is a natural problem with this picture. How can the holy Creator God be with his sinful people? How is it possible for God to be with us without his wrath consuming us for our lack of holiness?

This is the function of the book of Leviticus. The book is not a bunch of monotonous rules and senseless commands that are meaningless today. Rather, the book is teaching how we can remain with God who has come down to us. How can we dwell with a holy God? This changes everything about how we read this book. This is not a book of rules, but an invitation to join ourselves in fellowship with God. Leviticus is not a burden but a blessing. How are we to live in relationship to the Lord and reflect his holy character to the watching world? This book is the answer for God's people. The overwhelming answer from the book of Leviticus is atonement. Atonement is the means by which we can be holy so that God can dwell with his people.

Let us take a moment to look at an overview of the book of Leviticus to see how this book shows how we can dwell with a holy God. Fill in the outline below with a view toward holiness. What does each section show the people about the holiness of God and the holiness of the people.

OUTLINING LEVITICUS:

_____ (Leviticus 1-7)

_____ (Leviticus 8-10)

_____ (Leviticus 11-15)

_____ (Leviticus 16)

_____ (Leviticus 17-27)

These are the directions for living as a holy nation. I want us to see that Leviticus is not a burden and should have never been understood to be a burden. The book of Leviticus is a life preserver, informing us how to live with a holy God and not be consumed because of our sinfulness. The laws of Leviticus were given as directions for how the Lord’s holy people worship him in grateful obedience and love.

Main point: _____

Make additional notes at left and below:

- 1 How does the book of Leviticus begin? What connections are made to Genesis and Exodus?
- 2 Could the people worship God how they want? Was worship up to the personal preference of the people?
- 3 What was required of the bulls (1:3) or sheep and goats (1:10) that were brought for a burnt offering? What do we learn about God from this requirement? Does God accept anything?
- 4 What was the purpose of the burnt offering (1:4)? What do we learn about the need of the people before the Lord?
- 5 Was the worshiper directly involved with the sacrifice (1:3-6)?
- 6 What was required for worship and atonement (1:11)?
- 7 What is unique about the burnt offering (1:9,13)? What is God showing he desires of his people (cf. Deuteronomy 10:12-13; Romans 12:1)?
- 8 How was this offering received before the Lord (1:9,13,17)? Compare this to Ephesians 5:1-2 for us.

TRANSFORMATION:

How does this relationship change your relationship with God? What did you learn about him? What will you do differently in your life?

Main point: _____

Make additional notes at left and below:

The Hebrew word translated “grain offering” is a word used in a number of contexts to describe the giving of gifts (cf. Judges 6:18; 1 Chronicles 16:29; Judges 3:15). The basic meaning is a gift from a heart of thanksgiving and paying of homage. “Since the word was employed in the religious sphere, it referred to a gift given by a worshiper to his Lord” (Rooker, *Leviticus, New American Commentary*, 94). According to Numbers 28-29 the grain offering regularly followed the burnt offering.

- 1 Why would people sacrifice the grain offering? What were the people declaring to the Lord with this offering?

- 2 Was all of the grain offering given to the Lord (2:2-3, 9)?

- 3 What was prohibited from this offering (2:11)? Why? What symbolism came from this (1 Corinthians 5:8)?

- 4 What must always be included in this offering (2:13)?

In ancient Middle Eastern lands, an agreement or covenant was sealed with a gift of salt to show the strength and permanence of the contract (NLT Life Application Study Bible).

- 5 What is God’s message with the inclusion of salt in the grain offering?

TRANSFORMATION:

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Main point: _____

Make additional notes at left and below:

- 1 What is required of the animal for the peace offering (3:1-4)?
- 2 What was the peace offering placed on top off (3:5)? What is the message?
- 3 Read the following passages and write down what God was teaching regarding atonement and peace:

Ephesians 2:14-17

Romans 5:1

Romans 5:6-11

- 4 What is another unique aspect of the peace offering (3:16)?

The fat was considered the choice part of the animal. The fat represented the very best of the animal. An animal that was fat was well fed and healthy. When Israel was able to eat "the fat of the land" it meant that they enjoyed the abundance of the land (cf. Genesis 45:18). Thus, the giving of the fat of the animal represented giving God the very best.

The pagan religions also viewed the fat as choice food. Curiously, the pagans believed that eating the fat gave spiritual and sometimes supernatural boost to their lives. God is taking away all of this idolatrous material. The Israelites were not to turn the worship of God into pagan rituals. They were to look to God and give to God the very best.

- 5 Who participated in the meal from the peace offering (3:16; 7:15; 7:31)? What is the meaning of this picture? What communal meal to we share with the Lord?

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Make additional notes at left and below:

We need to take some care when speaking about the sin offering. The word translated "sin" does mean "to be mistaken, to miss the target, to lose the way, to miss the mark, to fail to reach, to wrong, offend" (HALOT). However, a woman after giving childbirth had to offer a sin offering (Leviticus 12:6-8). Obviously she has not sinned because she has given birth. She is ceremonially impure but has not committed a moral fault. Therefore, it is useful to think of the sin offering as a purification offering, either for moral faults (sins) or for ceremonial uncleanness.

- 1 What kinds of sins are being addressed in verse 2? Explain. Aren't all sins intentional? What does this mean?
- 2 Who is making atonement in 4:3-12?
- 3 What makes Jesus superior (Hebrews 7:26-28)?
- 4 Who is making atonement in 4:13-21?
- 5 Who is making atonement in 4:22-26?
- 6 Who is making atonement in 4:27-35?
- 7 Notice that God says he is forgiving the sins of the priests and the people (4:20, 26, 31, 35; 5:10, 13). How do we reconcile what God is saying here with Hebrews 10:4?
- 8 What else is required of the sinner (5:5)? What do we learn from this?

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LEVITICUS

5:14-6:7

Main point: _____

Make additional notes at left and below:

- 1 How is the guilt offering different than the sin offering? How do you know which one to offer (5:15,17; 6:2-5)?
- 2 What must also happen beside offering an animal for the guilt offering (5:16; 6:5)?
- 3 What do we learn about repentance? What should repentance attempt to do (cf. Luke 19:8)?
- 4 What was to happen first: make restitution or make the guilt offering (6:5-6)? What did Jesus say about this in Matthew 5:23-26)?
- 5 Did accidents absolve one from having to pay restitution (5:15, 17)? What does this teach us?
- 6 Look at Isaiah 53:10 about how Jesus is described. Which offering is Jesus described as by Isaiah?

Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him; he has put him to grief; when his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. (Isaiah 53:10 ESV)

TRANSFORMATION:

How does this relationship change your relationship with God? What did you learn about him? What will you do differently in your life?

Main point: _____

Make additional notes at left and below:

- 1 Who are God's directions given to in Leviticus 6:8-8:36?

- 2 What must always be burning (6:9-13)? What is the meaning?

- 3 What is the message to us (Hebrews 10:11-14)?

- 4 What is happening to Aaron and his sons in chapter 8?

- 5 How does Jesus fit this picture in Hebrews 2:17-18 and Hebrews 4:14-5:10?

- 6 Who else functions as priests before God (1 Peter 2:4-5,9; Revelation 1:5-6)?

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Main point: _____

Make additional notes at left and below:

- 1 What is happening in Leviticus 9? Why are the priests offering sacrifices (9:6)?

- 2 Describe what happens in 9:22-24. What is God's message?

- 3 Why was the worship rejected by God (10:1-3)? Explain Moses' explanation in verse 3? What do we learn from this event?

- 4 Explain verses 6-7. Why must not Eleazar and Ithamar bewail their brothers' deaths?

- 5 What else are the priests taught not to do and to do (10:8-11)?

- 6 Why was acceptable for Aaron and his remaining sons to not eat the sin offering (10:16-20)? What do we learn from this?

TRANSFORMATION:

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Main point: _____

Make additional notes at left and below:

- 1 What are the rules for what the people could and could not eat (11:1-47)?

- 2 What is God's explanation for why these food rules matter (11:44-45)?

- 3 What laws are given in Leviticus 12? Did a person sin to have to become unclean (12:2)? What do we learn about our condition before God from this?

- 4 What rules are given in Leviticus 13-14? Did this uncleanness have to do with sin or immorality?

- 5 What rules are given in Leviticus 15? Did this uncleanness have to do with sin or immorality?

- 6 What are all these laws teaching us about God?

- 7 Leviticus 11:44-45 is quoted in 1 Peter 1:13-21. What is Peter's message to Christians?

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Main point: _____

Make additional notes at left and below:

- 1 What time marker is given to us verse 1?
- 2 What was needed for the high priest to enter the Most Holy Place (16:3-5)?
- 3 What did the high priest also have to do before entering for service on the Day of Atonement (16:6)? Then who else was atonement made for?
- 4 Describe how the two goats were used to make atonement (16:7-28). What do we learn from these pictures of atonement?
- 5 What were the people to do on this day (16:29-30)?
- 6 Read the following passages that describe how Jesus fulfills the Day of Atonement imagery and write down how Jesus fulfills these pictures:

Romans 3:22-25

Hebrews 9:6-14

Hebrews 9:24-28

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Make additional notes at left and below:

- 1 What instructions were given regarding blood and what is the message (17:10-11)?
- 2 What radical statement did Jesus make in John 6:53-56? What was the response of most people?
- 3 How else were the people supposed to be holy before the Lord in Leviticus 18? What things were condemned?
- 4 What is reiterated to the people in 19:1-10?
- 5 What are the people taught to do in 19:11-18?
- 6 What is 19:19-31 teaching the people regarding holiness? What do we learn?
- 7 How were the people to teach the outsiders (19:32-37)? What do we learn?
- 8 What is described in chapter 20? What were the consequences?

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Main point: _____

Make additional notes at left and below:

- 1 Who is God teaching in chapters 21-22 (21:1)?

- 2 What is God teaching the priests in 21:1-22:16? What is being called for the priests to be?

- 3 Read Ephesians 5:25-27 and 2 Corinthians 11:2 to see the same picture applied to us.

- 4 What else must be holy and pure (22:17-33)? Read Romans 12:1 and write down the application for us.

- 5 Write down the various days the people were to keep holy in 23:1-24:9. What was each holy day and holy feast mean to the people? What are they remembering?

- 6 Leviticus 24:10-23 records the only other narrative in this book beside Nadab and Abihu in Leviticus 10. Describe what happens here. What is the sin committed and what is the consequence?

- 7 What principle is taught in 24:17-23?

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Make additional notes at left and below:

- 1 What blessing is given to the people in 25:1-7? What would God do for them?
- 2 What blessing is given to the people in 25:8-55? What would God do for them?
- 3 What blessings are described for obedience (26:11-12)?
- 4 What consequences are described for disobedience (26:14-46)?
- 5 What is God hoping the people will do through these consequences (26:18, 21, 23, 27)?
- 6 What is God trying to break within us (26:18-19)?
- 7 What does God want from the people (26:40-41)? What hope does God provide (26:44-46)?
- 8 Since God is faithful (26:44-46), what must his people be in Leviticus 27?

TRANSFORMATION:

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LEVITICUS



THE BOOK OF HOLINESS

SELF-STUDY WORKBOOK

by: Brent Kercheville