

Leviticus Outline

combining

David Dorsey's

The Literary Structure of the Old Testament: A Commentary on Genesis – Malachi
and

John Sailhamer's

The Pentateuch as Narrative: A Biblical-Theological Commentary

Introduction: The English title of the book comes from the Greek OT *Levitikon*. It is not so much about the Levites but rather for the Levites (or as some Jewish scribes referred to it as *The Priest's Manual*). The Hebrew title is *Wayyiqra* ("And He called"). The phrase "*Yahweh said to Moses*" occurs @ 35x in the book.

This book takes place during the 30-day period between Ex. 40:17 and Num. 1:1. There are 17 N.T. quotes from Leviticus, including: 9x in the Gospels, 1x in Acts, and 7x in the Epistles.

Leviticus is a continuation of Exodus. Its central theme is Holiness.

1) **Sacrificial regulations (Leviticus 1–10)**

- **introduction:** Yahweh speaks to Moses from the tabernacle (1:1)

a) **sacrificial regulations (1:2–7:38)**

i) **instructions for the people (1:2–6:7 [1:2–5:26])**

- begins: *speak to the Israelites and say to them*

(1) whole burnt offering (1:2–17)

(2) grain offering (2:1–16)

(3) peace offering (3:1–17)

(4) sin offering (4:1–5:13)

(5) guilt offering (5:14–6:7 [MT 5:14–26])

ii) **instructions for the priests (6:8–7:36 [6:1–7:36])**

- begins: *give Aaron and his sons these instructions*

(1) whole burnt offering (6:8–13 [MT 6:1–6])

(2) grain offering (6:14–23 [MT 6:7–16])

(3) sin offering (6:24–30 [MT 6:17–23])

(4) guilt offering (7:1–10)

(5) peace offering (7:11–36)

iii) **climactic conclusion to sacrificial instructions (7:37–38)**

b) **dedication of priests for sacrifices and tabernacle work (8:1–9:24)**

i) assembly and priests' consecration ceremony (8:1–36)

ii) priests begin their ministries by supervising the sacrifices (9:1–22)

iii) Yahweh's approval: his fire consumes the sacrifices (9:23–24)

c) **concluding narrative: sin and death of two priests: Nadab and Abihu (10:1–20)**

i) What happens when someone deliberately refuses to follow God's Word about the sacrifices?

- 2) **Purity regulations (Leviticus 11–18)**
- a) **main collection of ritual purity laws (11:1–16:34)**
- i) ritual impurity from eating or touching the carcasses of animals classified as repulsive (*šeqeš*) to eat (11:1–47)
 - (1) Water Animals (11:9–12)
 - (2) Flying Creatures (11:13–23)
 - ii) ritual impurity from (repulsive) childbirth discharges (12:1–8)
 - iii) ritual impurity from (repulsive) “leprosy” on skin and fabrics (13:1–59)
 - iv) rectification of ritual impurity from (repulsive) “leprosy” on skin (14:1–32)
 - v) ritual impurity from (repulsive) “leprosy” on walls of house (14:33–57)
 - vi) ritual impurity from (repulsive) bodily discharges (15:1–33)
 - vii) Day of Atonement, when all ritual impurity is rectified (16:1–34)
 - (1) This chapter is the theological center of the book.
- b) **additional—and more serious—purity laws (17:1–18:30)**
- i) offensive behavior in eating sacrifices (17:1–16)
 - ii) offensive moral behavior that defiles (*tāmē*), including incest, adultery, child sacrifice, homosexual behavior, bestiality, and any other “detestable practices” that have “defiled” the Canaanites—because of which “the land is vomiting them out”; and if Israel does these same things, the land will likewise “vomit them out” (18:1–30)
 - (1) Introduction (18:1–5)
 - (2) Defilements of the Canaanites (18:6–30)
- 3) **First section of laws pertaining to moral holiness (Lev. 19:1–26:46)**
- a) **moral holiness of people in everyday life (Lev. 19)**
- Sabbath theme: *observe my Sabbaths and respect my sanctuary* (19:30)
 - prohibition against making *idols* (19:4)
 - kindness to *slaves, aliens, poor, disadvantaged* (19:10–15, 20–22, 32–34)
 - theme of *crops*: planting, reaping, and leaving for the poor (19:9–10, 19, 23–25)
- b) **serious violations of moral holiness requiring death (*môt yûmāt*) (Lev. 20)**
- cursing parents, adultery, incest, etc.
 - *any Israelite or alien*
- c) **priestly holiness (Lev. 21–22)**
- *eating* of holy sacrifices
- i) Regulations for Priests: First List (21:1–15)
 - ii) Regulations for Priests: Second List (21:16–24)
 - iii) Regulations for Priests: Third List (22:1–33)
 - (1) Things that Profane a Priest (22:1–9)
 - (2) Persons Not Authorized to Eat the Sacred Offering (22:10–15)
 - (3) Priestly Offerings (22:17–25)
 - (4) Time Periods of Offerings (22:26–33)

- d) **CENTER: seven holy times in calendar**—all involving priestly sacrifices at tabernacle (Lev. 23): Sabbath, Passover, Firstfruits, Weeks, Trumpets, Day of Atonement, Tabernacles
 - e) **Priests' tending of lamps** (Lev. 24:1–9)
 - *eating* holy bread from table
 - f) **serious violations of moral holiness** requiring *death* (*môt yûmât*) (Lev. 24:10–23)
 - blasphemy, murder
 - *same law for the alien and native*
 - g) **moral holiness in people's everyday lives** and during the sabbatical year and year of Jubilee (Lev. 25:1–26:2)
 - Sabbath theme: *observe my Sabbaths and respect my sanctuary* (26:2)
 - prohibition against making *idols* (26:1)
 - kindness to *slaves, aliens, poor, disadvantaged* (25:6–55)
 - theme of *crops*: planting, reaping, and leaving for the poor (25:3–22)
 - i) Sabbath Year (25:1–7)
 - ii) Jubilee Year (25:8–55)
 - (1) Real Estate (25:8–34)
 - (2) Debt (25:35–55)
 - **interlude**: covenantal blessings and curses (Lev. 26:3–46)
 - i) Introduction (26:1–2)
 - ii) General Statement of Purpose (26:3–13)
 - iii) Warning of Results of Disobedience (26:14–39)
 - iv) Hope for the Future (26:40–45)
- 4) **vows and modifications**, because of timing of Jubilee (Lev. 27)
- a) Persons Dedicated to the Lord (27:1–8)
 - b) Animals Dedicated to the Lord (27:9–13)
 - c) Houses Dedicated to the Lord (27:14–15)
 - d) Inherited Land Dedicated to the Lord (27:16–21)
 - e) Purchased Land Dedicated to the Lord (27:22–25)
 - f) Prohibition of Dedication of Firstborn Animals (27:26–27)
 - g) Procedure for Total Devotion to the Lord (27:28)
 - h) Procedure for Total Devotion of a Person to the Lord (27:29)
 - i) Procedure for Tithes from the Produce of the Land (27:30–31)
 - j) Procedure for Tithes from the Livestock (27:32–34)