



Overview for Leviticus

Author: Commonly accepted to be Moses

Time Period Covered: Approximately 1446 B.C. – 1444 B.C.

Date Written: Approximately 1444 B.C. – 1410 B.C.

Setting: Mount Sinai

Central Passage: “For I am the LORD your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I am holy: neither shall ye defile yourselves with any manner of creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. For I am the LORD that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy.” (Leviticus 11:44-45)

Prominent Characters: Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, Ithamar

Objectives: (1) An instruction book for the priests and Levites, detailing their duties and the way to approach God by sacrifice, and (2) Instructions on how to walk in holiness before God by separation from ungodly nations

Comments: It is easier to understand the message of Leviticus when we see the progression of the first books of the Bible. Genesis includes the account of Abraham’s call and the role of his descendents in the covenant God made with Abraham. Exodus tells of the deliverance of Abraham’s descendents, the Children of Israel, from Egypt’s bondage and the establishment of God’s covenant with them at Mount Sinai. In addition, Exodus covers the construction of the Tabernacle and describes the worship to be conducted in it. In Leviticus, we find specific instructions given to the priests and to the Children of Israel that they might know how to perform the worship demanded by God at Mount Sinai. The book is devoted to instructions for holy living.

In Exodus, God speaks from Mount Sinai and the book closes with the account of the Tabernacle’s dedication, and the Glory of God filling it. In Leviticus, God speaks to His people from the Tabernacle, the place where He has chosen to dwell among them.

Among other things, Leviticus reveals how a man can approach a holy God. The word “holy” occurs over eighty times in this book. Since man is unable to

atone for his own sins, a mediatorial system was established to provide access to God. Thus, the role of the sons of Aaron as priests becomes important.

The original Hebrew title, *Wayyigra*, means “and he [God] called.” Our English title, *Leviticus*, was given to the book because it is concerned with the Levitical system of worship and is based on the Greek translation, *Levitikon*, or “pertaining to the Levites.”

While Moses is credited as being the author, it is notable that twenty of the twenty-seven chapters begin with, “and the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,” or words close to that. This reminds us of the book’s divine authorship.

We gather from Exodus 40:17 and Numbers 1:1 that the giving of the statutes of this book and the events written in it, occurred between the time of the erection of the Tabernacle in the first month of the second year after Israel’s departure from Egypt and the first day of the second month of the same year.

The book can be divided into two main sections. Section 1 deals with how a sinful people approach a holy God and includes Leviticus 1:1 — 16:34. This section also gives instructions for sacrifices (Leviticus 1:1 — 7:38), consecration of the priests (Leviticus 8:1 — 10:20), identification of activities that defile a person (Leviticus 11:1 — 15:33), and explanation of the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16).

Section 2 deals with communion with God and instructions regarding how the people were to live before Him and is comprised of Leviticus 17:1 — 27:34. Included in this section are the social and ceremonial laws (Leviticus 17:1 — 25:55), the promised blessings and curses (Leviticus 26:1-46), and God’s instructions concerning vows and offerings (Leviticus 27:1-34).

Although the book is made up of laws, it includes incidents of what happened when people or priests obeyed or disobeyed God’s laws. Punishment was quick for those who rebelled against God, but He also made a promise for those who would obey Him: “And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people. I am the LORD your God, which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, that ye should not be their bondmen; and I have broken the bands of your yoke, and made you go upright” (Leviticus 26:12-13).

Timeline

Joseph dies 1805 B.C.	S L A V E R Y I N E G Y P T	Israel camps at Mt. Sinai 1444	Judges begin to rule 1375	United Kingdom under Saul 1050
		Ten Commandments given 1445	Moses dies, Canaan entered 1406	
		Exodus from Egypt 1446		

Outline

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A complete amplified outline of this book is available on our website at www.apostolicfaith.org.*

- I. The way of access to God (1:1—16:34)
 - A. By sacrifice (1:1—7:38)
 - B. By priestly ministry (8:1—10:20)
 - C. By ceremonial purity (11:1—15:33)
 - D. By annual atonement (16:1-34)
- II. The way of fellowship with God (17:1—27:34)
 - A. By separation unto holiness (17:1—22:33)
 - B. By observing religious feasts (23:1-44)
 - C. By obedience in worship and reverence (24:1-23)
 - D. By observing the Sabbath Year and Jubilee (25:1-55)
 - E. By heeding God's promises and warning in the land (26:1-46)
 - F. By keeping vows and paying tithes (27:1-34)