

Study guide for the book of Leviticus:

We need to remember as God freed the Israelites out of Egypt, they were freed physically from Egypt but Spiritually they needed to be as well. The Egypt was still in them even though they were physically freed. Yahweh, the Lord gave His people His word to set them apart as Holy. He gave Moses His word so between God and His people they could have fellowship and be together. God doesn't want to be separated from any of His children, but because of their sin we see the Lord in the most holy place with the veil separating Himself and His holiness from the sinful people of Israel.

1. What does this word Leviticus even mean?

- "Leviticus" is the Latin transliteration of the Greek *Leuitikon*, which means "connected to those from the tribe of Levi." The name Leviticus reflects the importance of a group of priests from Israel's tribe called the Levites, or the Levitical priesthood. The Levites are given a unique priestly role to offer sacrifices and care for the tabernacle, where God chooses to dwell among his people. However, the book of Leviticus includes instructions for the Levites and teaching for all Israel about how to live as partners and friends of God—as a kingdom of priests and holy people ([Exod. 19:6](#)). As such, the people are set apart by God for the purpose of blessing all the families or nations of the Earth (see [Gen. 12:2-3](#))." (Bibleproject.com)

2- breakdown of the book of Leviticus.

- **Chapters 1-7 = Leviticus 1-7: Sacrifices and Feasts**
- discuss the 5 main types of ritual sacrifices. Two of these sacrifices (grain and fellowship offerings) were done so that the Israelites could do these for God in a way of saying thank you to God, showing gratitude. The other three were Burnt, Purification, and Restitution. "The other three were different ways of apologizing to God. As an Israelite offered up the lifeblood of an animal, they would acknowledge that their sin had created more evil and death in God's good world. And to make it clear that God would rather forgive a person than destroy them, this animal would symbolically die in their place and "atone" for or, more literally, "cover" their sin. Through these rituals, the Israelites were constantly reminded of God's grace but also of his justice and the seriousness of evil and its consequences. The second set of rituals ([Lev. 23-25](#)) lays out the seven annual feasts of Israel: the feasts of Passover, Unleavened Bread, First fruits, Pentecost, Trumpets, Day of Atonement, and Tabernacles. Each of these feasts retold a different part of the story

of how God redeemed Israel and led them through the wilderness on the way to the promised land. By celebrating these feasts, Israel would remember who they were and who God was to them.

What are these 7 feasts and what do they mean?

► 1. Burnt Offering

- The **burnt offering** was a voluntary sacrifice in which the entire animal was consumed on the altar, symbolizing complete surrender to God and atonement for sin (Leviticus 1:3). It expressed the worshipper's devotion and satisfied God's justice, making fellowship possible between a holy God and a sinful person. Spiritually, it foreshadows Christ's total self-offering to accomplish God's will and glorify Him (Ephesians 5:2) without bearing the sins of others directly.

► 2. Grain (Meal) Offering

- The **grain offering** was a tribute of flour, oil, and sometimes frankincense, with a portion burned on the altar and the rest eaten by priests (Leviticus 2:2). It expressed **thanksgiving and gratitude** for God's provision and covenant care. The offering symbolized the worshipper's acknowledgment of God's grace and the dedication of the best of their produce. In typology, it represents Christ's sinless life and perfect humanity, offered to God as a pleasing aroma (John 1:29; Leviticus 2:1-2),

► 3. Peace Offering

- The **peace offering** was optional and emphasized **fellowship and communion** with God. Portions of the sacrifice were given to the priests, the worshipper, and sometimes friends, culminating in a shared meal (Leviticus 3:11). It included three types:
 - **Thanksgiving Offering**: given in gratitude for blessings received.
 - **Wave Offering**: priest's portion waved before God as a sign of dedication.
 - **Votive Offering**: given in fulfillment of a vow or voluntary worship.
This offering typologically points to the believer's peace with God through Christ and the fellowship enjoyed with Him (Psalm 85; Luke 10:5-6),

► 4. Sin (Purification) Offering

- The **sin offering**, better translated as **purification offering**, addressed **unintentional sins and ceremonial uncleanness** (Leviticus 4:2-3). Its purpose was to cleanse the tabernacle and the people, maintaining God's presence among them. Spiritually, it prefigures Christ's atoning work, which cleanses humanity from sin and restores fellowship with God.

► 5. Guilt (Reparation) Offering

► The **guilt offering** focused on **restitution for wrongs committed**, emphasizing the damage caused by sin (Leviticus 5:16). The worshipper not only sought forgiveness but also made full restitution, often with an additional percentage. This offering highlights accountability and the need to repair relationships, pointing forward to Christ's ultimate reparation for humanity's sins (Hebrews 10:1-18)

► Summary

► Together, these five offerings provided a structured way for the Israelites to approach God, express devotion, seek forgiveness, and maintain fellowship. They also serve as **types and shadows of Christ's work**, illustrating His sacrifice, sinless life, fellowship with believers, purification, and ultimate atonement. While no longer required today, they remain a profound insight into God's holiness, justice, and grace

- Chapters 8-15= **Leviticus 8-15: The Path to Purity and Holiness**

- In chapters 8-10, Aaron and his sons are first ordained as priests to enter God's presence on Israel's behalf, while the matching section ([Lev. 21-22](#)) outlines the qualifications for being a priest. Priests were called to the highest level of moral integrity and ritual holiness, as they represent the people before God and then represent God to the people. As the book of Leviticus progresses, we find out why the holiness of the priests matters so much.

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- After Aaron's family is ordained ([Lev. 8-9](#)), two of the sons waltz right into God's presence and flagrantly violate the rules. They are consumed by God's holiness on the spot. This story is a haunting reminder of the paradox of God's holy presence—its pure goodness can become dangerous to those who rebel and insult God's holiness. This is why it's important that Israel's priests become holy, as well as all of the people of Israel. This is what the next inner sections are all about. Chapters 11-15 are about the ritual purity required of the Israelites, while chapters 18-20 are about their moral purity. Here is what's underneath all this purity and impurity language. Because God is holy and set apart, the Israelites need to be in a state of holiness themselves in order to enter his presence, which was called being "clean" or "pure." God's presence was off-limits to anyone who wasn't in a holy state, which was called being "unclean" or "impure." An Israelite could become impure in a few ways: contact with reproductive body fluids ([Lev. 12](#); [Lev. 15](#)), having a skin disease (Lev. 13a, 14a), touching mold or fungus ([Lev. 13b](#), 14b), or touching a dead body ([Num. 19](#)). For the Israelites, these were associated with mortality and the loss of

life, which gets us to the core symbolic idea here. You become impure when you're contaminated by touching death, which is the opposite of God's holiness whose essence is life. Now, simply being impure was not sinful or wrong. Touching those things is a normal part of life. Impurity was a temporary state that lasted a week or two and then was over. What was wrong was to enter into God's presence with symbols of death and impurity on you. The last way of becoming impure was eating certain animals. The kosher food laws are found in this section as well ([Lev. 11](#)). There have been many theories about why certain animals were considered impure and off-limits, like to promote hygiene (no bats or slugs) or to avoid cultural taboos (pigs or octopus), but the text isn't explicit about any of these reasons. The only thing that's clear is the basic point—these animals were a set of cultural symbols to remind them that God's holiness was to affect all areas of their life.

Leviticus 16-27: A Call to Live Differently

The corresponding section is about Israel's moral purity ([Lev. 18-20](#)). They were called to live differently than the Canaanites. They were to care for the poor instead of overlooking them. They were to have a high level of sexual integrity, and they were to promote justice throughout their land.

At the center of the book ([Lev. 16-17](#)) we find a long description of one of Israel's annual feasts, the Day of Atonement. Not every Israelite's sin and rebellion would be accounted for through individual sacrifices, so once a year, the high priest would use two goats to represent all the unacknowledged sins of the entire nation. One goat would be sacrificed as a purification offering to atone for the sins of Israel. The other animal was called the scapegoat. The priest would confess the sins of Israel and symbolically place them on this goat and cast it out into the wilderness. Again, it's a powerful symbol that illustrates God's desire to remove sin and its consequences from Israel so that they can live together in peace.

What is atonement? 7 key truths about atonement every Christian should know

The Bible's teaching on atonement runs deep — but it never runs cold. Here are [seven truths for everyday faith](#):

1. Atonement is God's initiative, not ours. We did not seek God — He sought us. "In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his

Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10). Atonement begins in the heart of God.

2. Atonement requires a substitute. The consistent biblical pattern is that an innocent life is given in place of the guilty. Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29).

3. Atonement involves real payment for real sin. This is not a legal fiction or a polite arrangement. Sin carries a real penalty, and Jesus bore it. "He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree" (1 Peter 2:24).

4. Atonement is once for all. Unlike the Old Testament sacrifices that were repeated endlessly, Christ's sacrifice was offered once and never needs to be repeated (Hebrews 10:10). It is finished.

5. Atonement covers all sin — past, present, and future. There is no sin too great, no past too dark, no failure too frequent. "The blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). All means all.

6. Atonement restores relationship. Atonement brings you home to the Father, doing much more than simply canceling a debt. Through atonement, you are not merely forgiven; you are welcomed, accepted, and adopted (Ephesians 1:5).

7. Atonement changes how we live. When you truly grasp that God gave everything to bring you near, it transforms the way you treat others, handle guilt, and walk through suffering. Grace received becomes grace extended.

What atonement means for your everyday faith

Atonement is a living reality that goes far beyond theological debate. It is the ground you stand on every single day as a follower of Jesus. Understanding **what atonement means in the Bible** changes the way you pray, the way you deal with guilt, and the way you approach God.

When shame whispers that you are too far gone, atonement says: *the blood of Jesus has already answered for that*. When anxiety tells you that God is angry with you, atonement says: *His wrath has been fully satisfied at the cross*. When you stumble again into the same sin you have confessed a hundred times, atonement says: *come boldly to the throne of grace* (Hebrews 4:16).

Having therefore, brothers, boldness to enter into the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by the way which he dedicated for us, a new and living way, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh, and having a great priest over God's house, let's draw near with a true heart in fullness of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and having our body washed with pure water,

— **Hebrews 10:19-22** Copy

Because of atonement, you do not tiptoe into God's presence hoping He will tolerate you. You walk in with confidence — not confidence in your own goodness, but

confidence in the finished work of Christ. The curtain has been torn. The way is open. You are welcome.

What is the difference between atonement and forgiveness?

Forgiveness is the result of atonement, but they are not the same thing. Atonement is the means — the sacrifice that pays for sin and satisfies God's justice. Forgiveness is what flows from that sacrifice. Think of it this way: atonement is the medicine, and forgiveness is the healing. Without atonement, there is no basis for God to forgive, because His justice must be upheld. Through the atoning death of Jesus, God can be both perfectly just and perfectly merciful at the same time (Romans 3:26).

Why did atonement require blood sacrifice?

The Bible teaches that "the life of the flesh is in the blood" (Leviticus 17:11) and that God gave blood on the altar to make atonement for souls. Blood represents life — the most valuable thing a creature possesses. The shedding of blood communicates that sin is not trivial; it costs life itself. God was not being arbitrary or barbaric. He was showing, in the most vivid terms possible, the seriousness of sin and the costliness of grace. Every Old Testament sacrifice pointed to the ultimate sacrifice — the life of God's own Son, freely given.

Is atonement the same as redemption?

Atonement and redemption are closely related but emphasize different aspects of what Christ accomplished. Atonement focuses on the removal of sin and the satisfaction of God's justice through sacrifice. Redemption focuses on the liberation of the sinner — being bought out of slavery to sin and set free. Both happen at the cross. Jesus atoned for our sin (paid the penalty) and redeemed us (purchased our freedom). Together, these truths paint a complete picture: our debt was paid, and we were set free.

Can I lose my atonement or salvation?

The Bible teaches that Christ's atoning work is complete and eternal. Hebrews 9:12 says He secured "an eternal redemption" — not a temporary one. Believers are sealed by the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:13-14), and Jesus Himself promised, "I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand" (John 10:28). Your standing before God rests on Christ's finished work, not on your daily performance. That said, genuine faith produces ongoing repentance and growth. If you are worried about your salvation, that very concern is often evidence of the Spirit at work in your heart.

How do I apply the atonement to my life today?

You apply the atonement by faith — believing that Jesus died for your sins and trusting Him as your Savior and Lord. Romans 3:25 says God put Christ forward “as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith.” Practically, this means resting in the finished work of the cross instead of trying to earn God’s favor through good works. It means confessing sin honestly, knowing forgiveness is already secured. It means approaching God in prayer with confidence, not fear. And it means extending the same grace to others that you have received from God.

The doctrine of atonement is not meant to stay in your head — it is meant to settle deep into your heart and change the way you live. Today, take a moment to sit with this truth: the God of the universe saw you in your sin, loved you anyway, and paid the highest price imaginable to bring you home. You do not have to earn it. You do not have to deserve it. You simply receive it. If this article has encouraged you, share it with someone who needs to hear that they are not too far gone. And if you are still wrestling with guilt, doubt, or distance from God, bring it to Him honestly in prayer — the way has already been opened through the blood of Jesus.

The book concludes ([Lev. 26-27](#)) with Moses calling on Israel to be faithful to all the terms of the covenant. He describes all the blessings of peace and abundance that will result if Israel obeys the laws. He also warns them that if they are unfaithful and dishonor God’s holiness, it will result in disaster and ultimately exile from the promised land.

To see how Leviticus fits into the story of the Torah, it’s helpful to look at the first sentence of the next biblical book, Numbers: “The Lord spoke to Moses in the tent” ([Num. 1:1](#)). He made it inside! In other words, now that the symbolic rituals of Leviticus are being practiced, Moses can enter God’s presence on behalf of Israel. Despite their failures, God has provided a way for their sin to be covered, and they can now live with God in peace. From this perspective, the book of Leviticus is a powerful expression of God’s holy and gracious mercy.

Finally, the definitions of the 5 offerings made-

Leviticus describes five major offerings—burnt, grain, peace, sin (purification), and guilt (reparation)—each serving a unique role in restoring and maintaining fellowship with God.

1. Burnt Offering

The **burnt offering** was a voluntary sacrifice in which the entire animal was consumed on the altar, symbolizing complete surrender to God and atonement for sin (Leviticus 1:3). It expressed the worshipper's devotion and satisfied God's justice, making fellowship possible between a holy God and a sinful person. Spiritually, it foreshadows Christ's total self-offering to accomplish God's will and glorify Him (Ephesians 5:2) without bearing the sins of others directly.

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Summary

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What we must never forget is that our Lord has done all things in His word for a purpose and on purpose, to foreshadow the coming of the Messiah. Christ fulfilled everything in the Law Luke 24:45!