

1. AUTHOR

Q. What do you know about *Leviticus* [From Greek via Latin, Latin for ‘Of Levites’]?

- *Mark 1:44* [Jesus:] *See that you say nothing to anyone, but go, show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded [in Leviticus 14], ...”* ESV

A. Author: Moses. Leviticus is the third and central part of the ‘*Book of Moses*’ ca. 1400 BC. It is not mainly narrative, but regulations. This may sound dry, but it contains vitally important concepts and ‘symbols’.

2. ONE KEY THEME - **HOLINESS**

3. KEY VERSE(S)?

- *19:1-2* *And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,*
² *“Speak to all the congregation of the people of Israel and say to them,*
*‘You shall be **holy**,*
for I the LORD
your God
*am **holy**.”* ESV

One command; two reasons. **Q.** What are they? **A: Command:** _____

Reason 1: _____

Reason 2: _____

Q. “But, how shall we be **holy**?” **A.** _____

4. TEXTUAL STRUCTURE OF LEVITICUS

LEVITICUS		
Chapters	Content ¹	
1-7	Day-to-day (repetitive) offerings/sacrifices ⁵ for the people to stay holy	1. Burnt offering ²
		2. Grain offering ³
		3. Fellowship/peace offering ²
		4. Sin offering ²
		5. Guilt offering ²
8-10	Priests ordained for their holy service	
11-15	‘Clean’ ⁴ and ‘Unclean’ symbols of holiness ⁶	
16	Yearly Day of Atonement, at the centre ⁷ , promising access to the holy God, one day ...	
17-25	Laws of holiness	
26	Promises contingent upon holiness	Blessings ⁸ : peace, fruitfulness ...
		Curses ⁹ : War, exile ...
27	Promises ¹⁰ to be made by God’s holy people	Vows
		Dedications
		Tithes

NOTES ON TABLE:

The whole book¹ is regulations for making the people **holy**² and keeping them 'clean'⁴ so that they may worship and thank³ the **holy** God, and remain his **holy**² people.

There are two kinds of behaviour: **clean**⁴ and unclean.

There are two kinds of people: **clean**⁴ and unclean.

We can only become **clean**⁴ and stay **clean**⁴ through sacrifice⁵ (blood offerings).

'Cleanness' symbolises **holiness**⁶.

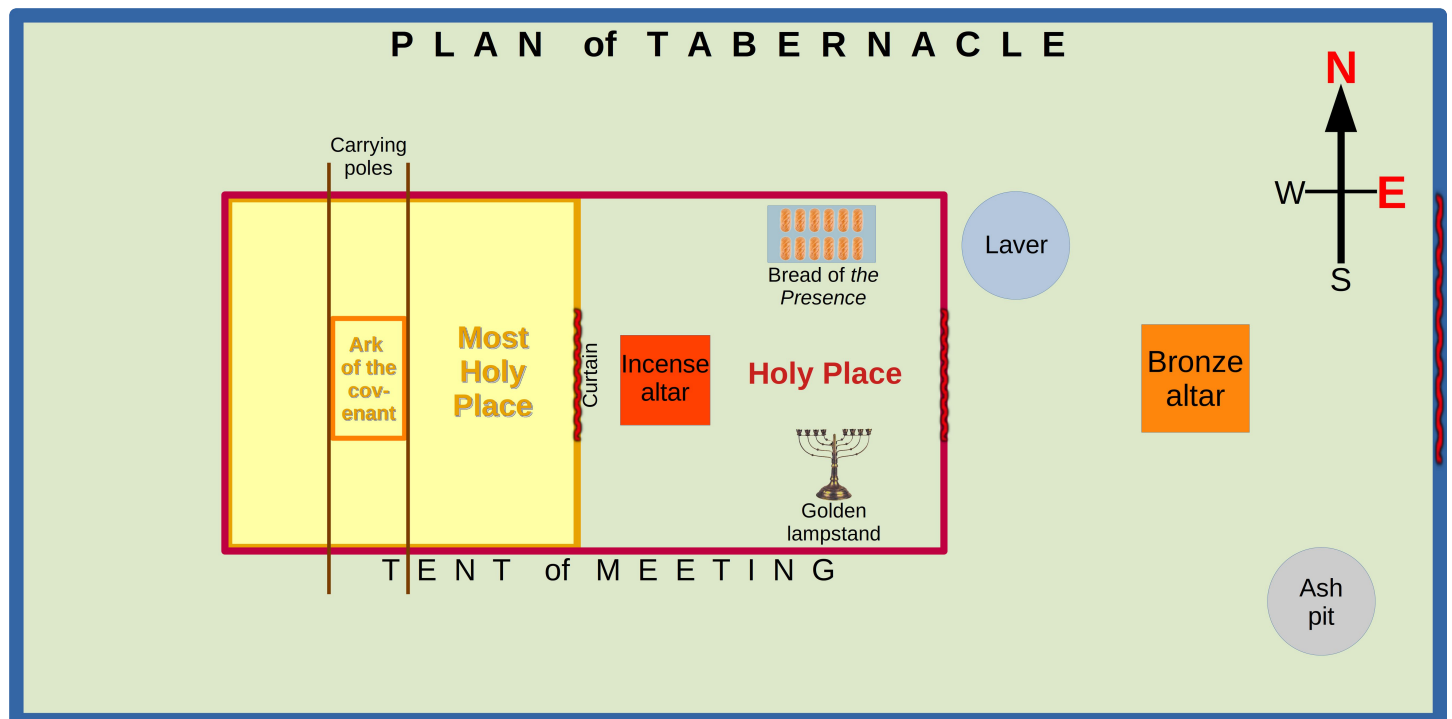
- *Leviticus 10:10 You are to distinguish between the **holy** and the common, and between the unclean and the **clean**, ...* ESV (See also Hebrews 9:9)

Covenant blessings⁸ accompany holiness, curses⁹, unholiness.

Covenant promises¹⁰ usually go both ways: people → God and God → his people.

Leviticus 16 is at the centre⁷ of the book in terms of both location and importance.

5. HOLINESS CENTRED ON THE TABERNACLE



Hebrews provides a commentary on Leviticus: We can only become **clean** through blood sacrifice (see also Leviticus 17:11):

- *Hebrews 9:22 Indeed, under the law [i.e. Leviticus] almost everything is **purified** with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.* ESV

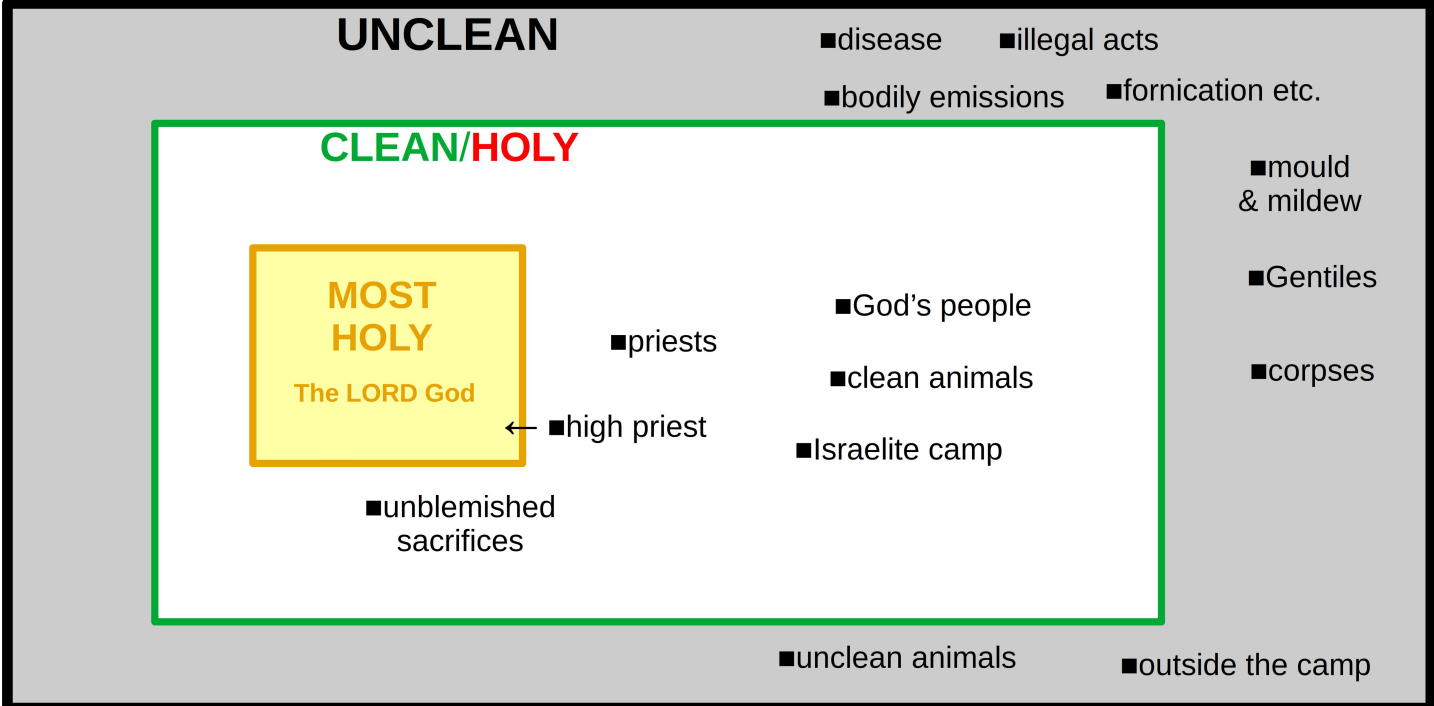
💡 Suggestion: (At home, not now!) Read Hebrews first, then Leviticus, then Hebrews again.

• Hebrews 9:6-9a ... the priests entered regularly into the outer room [Holy Place] to carry on their ministry. ⁷ But only the high priest entered the inner room [Most Holy Place], and that only once a year, and never without blood, which he offered for himself and for the sins the people had committed in ignorance. ⁸ The Holy Spirit was showing by this that the way into the Most Holy Place had not yet been disclosed as long as the first tabernacle was still functioning. ⁹ This is an illustration for the present time, indicating that the gifts and sacrifices being offered were not able to clear the conscience of the worshipper. ¹⁰ They are only a matter of food and drink and various ceremonial washings – external regulations applying until the time of the new order. NIV

Q. What do we learn from Hebrews 9:6-9a (above) about what happened at the tabernacle?

6. ONE SHAPE –

The tabernacle worship and its regulations symbolised clean and unclean, holy and not.



The existence of a most holy place promised that one day the barrier between sinful humans and the holy God would be removed, but not yet (see Revelation 21:22-27).

7. GREAT EVENTS

There is not much narrative in Leviticus, but there are some significant events (over/):

- Mount Sinai – God speaks the contents of Leviticus to Moses from the tent of meeting.
- Priests ordained – to intercede between God and his people.
- Nadab and Abihu – we may only worship God as he says we can.
- Day of Atonement – access to God's **most holy place** once a year.
- A blasphemer stoned – **holy** behaviour required of God's **holy** people!

8. LEVITICUS IS PART OF THE 'THE OLD COVENANT' OR SINAITIC COVENANT

This means that nowadays we do not have to obey all the regulations (literally). In particular, all the offerings are no longer required. **Q.** Why not? **A.** _____

9. JESUS IN LEVITICUS?

Q. Where is Jesus in Leviticus? **A.** Everywhere.

Once again, as summarised usefully in the next bit of Hebrews:

- *Hebrews 9:11-14 But when Christ came as high priest of the good things that are now already here, he went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle that is not made with human hands, that is to say, is not a part of this creation. ¹² He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the **Most Holy Place** once for all by his own blood, so obtaining eternal redemption. ¹³ The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkled on those who are ceremonially unclean sanctify them so that they are outwardly clean. ¹⁴ How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, **cleanse** our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!* ESV

Q. Identify from Hebrews 9:11-14 (above) which important things from Leviticus are fulfilled for us by Christ? Underline them in the above text if you like. ☺

v11 _____ v12 _____ v13 _____

v11 _____ v12 _____ v13 _____

v12 _____ v13 _____ v14 _____

And, by the time of Jesus, the (portable) tabernacle had become a (stone) *temple*:-

- *Mark 15:37-38 And Jesus uttered a loud cry and breathed his last. ³⁸ And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom.*

10. AND NOWADAYS?

- *Hebrews 12:13-16 ... and make straight paths for your feet, ... ¹⁴ Strive for peace with everyone, and for the **holiness** without which no one will see the Lord. ¹⁵ See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no "root of bitterness"¹ springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled; ¹⁶ that no one is sexually immoral or unholy ...* ESV

11. HOMEWORK: READ LEVITICUS 16 – THE DAY OF ATONEMENT.

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¹ I.e. A root that produces sin that leads to bitter regret later. See Deuteronomy 29:18 for allusion.