

# LEVITICUS INTRODUCTION

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Leviticus 1–27

Without Blood, There is no Remission of Sin

These studies are designed for believers in Jesus Christ only. If you have exercised faith in Christ, then you are in the right place. If you have not, then you need to heed the words of our Lord, Who said, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten [or, uniquely-born] Son, so that every [one] believing [or, trusting] in Him shall not perish, but shall have eternal life! For God did not send His Son into the world so that He should judge the world, but so that the world shall be saved through Him. The one believing [or, trusting] in Him is not judged, but the one not believing has already been judged, because he has not believed in the Name of the only-begotten [or, uniquely-born] Son of God.” (John 3:16–18). “I am the Way and the Truth and the Life! No one comes to the Father except through [or, by means of] Me!” (John 14:6).

Every study of the Word of God ought to be preceded by a naming of your sins to God. This restores you to fellowship with God (1John 1:8–10). If there are people around, you would name these sins silently. If there is no one around, then it does not matter if you name them silently or whether you speak aloud.

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**Preface:** The book of Leviticus lists the kinds of sacrifices which God requires, the clean and unclean animals, as well as the purification of women, leprosy, a number of laws (some dealing with sexual immorality; some dealing with outlaws religious practices; some dealing with the interactions between neighbors; some dealing with slavery); holy days, feast days, the Sabbaths and a promise of both blessing and cursing, depending upon the choices made by the people of God. There is only one significant section of narrative, and that records the deaths of Aaron’s two oldest sons. Leviticus is clearly a book separate from Exodus and Numbers.

Leviticus also clearly shows us that the Jews of the current day are not following the Torah of God. Some portions of Leviticus they follow religiously; other portions they all but ignore (no doubt, I could be challenged on this). Blood sacrifices are absolutely necessary, required by Y<sup>h</sup>owah, the God (Elohim) of the Jews.

Leviticus 17:11 [For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it \[the blood\] for you on the altar to make atonement for your souls, for it is the blood that makes atonement by the life.](#)

When it comes to Judaism today, about the only generality that could be made is, it is a bloodless faith.



Introduction	<b>The Book of Leviticus—a Visual Summary</b> (a graphic)
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**Introduction:** The book of Leviticus is a rather difficult book to study and teach simply because the ceremonial aspect of it. The first seven chapters deal with the various sorts of animal sacrifices and what they are for, followed by 3 chapters of narrative, followed by 5 chapters on what is clean and what is not (there is more going on in those chapters than just that). There are a great many of other ceremonial chapters which follow.

In any case, the big picture is, all of these rituals look forward to Jesus Christ and His death on the cross on our behalf.

Let me quote from p. 127 of Barthel's *What the Bible Really Teaches: The contents of the Book of Leviticus are so dry and technical that the ability to read a passage from it served as the standard test of literacy in the Middle Ages. This was particularly important because priests, or persons claiming to be priests, who were accused of serious crimes were allowed to go free if they could successfully invoke the "benefit of clergy"—that is, if they could read through a line or two of difficult liturgical Latin without stumbling over too many of the words.*<sup>4</sup>

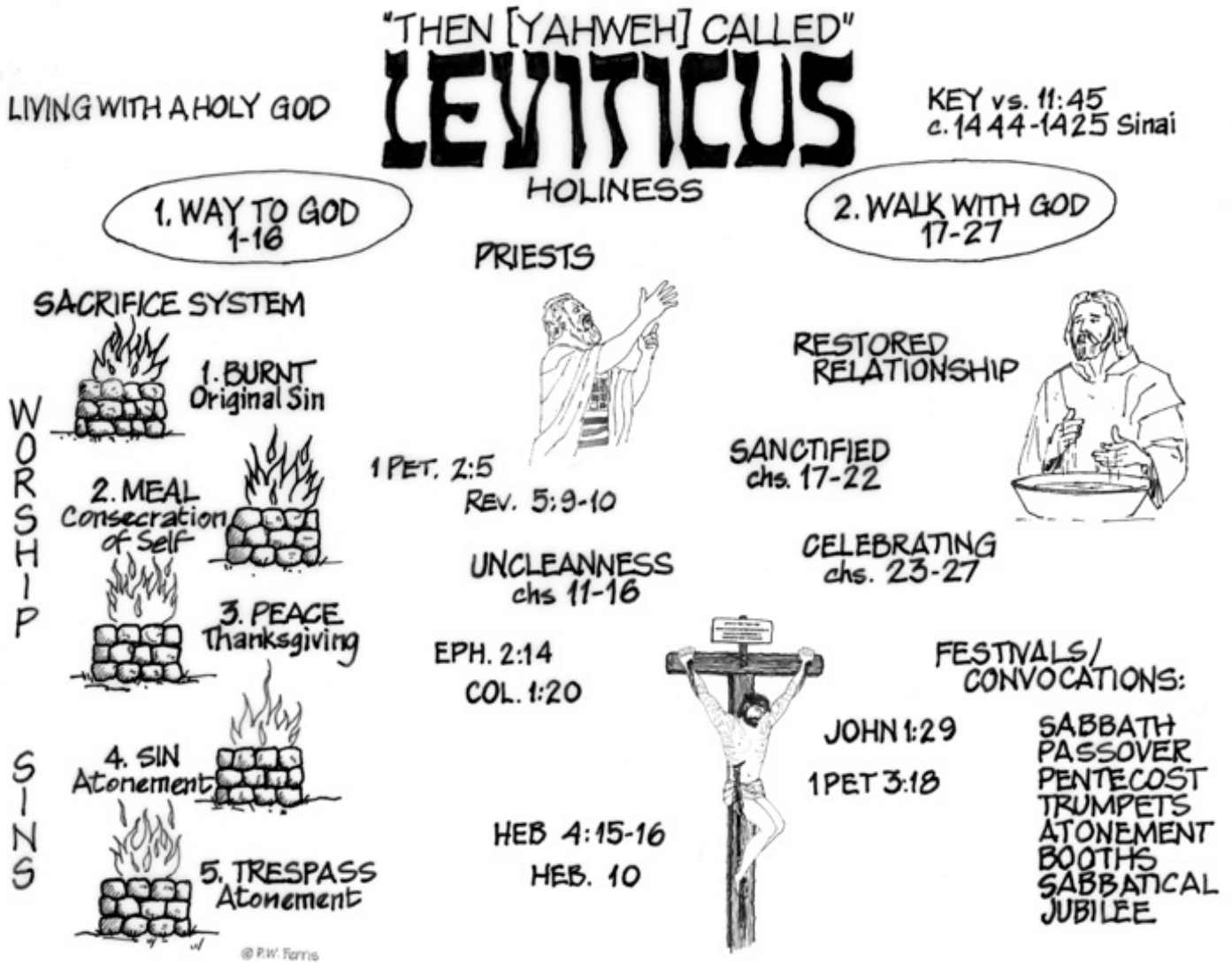
The introduction to Leviticus in *The New American Standard Study Version* says, on the other hand, *Leviticus is today the least appreciated portion of the Pentateuch.*

In working through the exegesis of this book, I have found it to be one of the more poorly translated books of the Bible (in the KJV as well as in most other translations, a conspicuous exception being *Young's Translation*). There are very different Hebrew words which are translated alike; there are a host of Hebrew words which could be translated uniformly, yet the translators unnecessarily give them a variety of different translations. It is as though the translators picked the least qualified team to handle Leviticus. I feel it is one of the most neglected portions of God's word myself. For those who carry a red-letter edition of the Bible, note that Leviticus is spoken to Moses directly from Y<sup>e</sup>howah Elohim, the revealed member of the Godhead, Who is also Jesus Christ. In other words, almost all of Leviticus should be in red letters.

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<sup>4</sup> p. 127.

The Book of Leviticus—a Visual Summary (a graphic); from Bethel Seminary; accessed January 12, 2021.



One question I had, early on, as a believer, was, why is the information so scattered in the Law? Why would we go to 5 different passages to study burnt offerings; why is the Great Day of Atonement found in 4 or 5 places?

### Why does the Torah seem disorganized?

1. The general answer is, the Torah is not disorganized; it only seems that way at times.
2. There are two chief ways of organizing things: in categories and by topic.
3. So, God took all of the primary kinds of offerings and put them all together in the first 7 chapters of Leviticus. That is organized. However, not every single thing we should know about burnt offerings is found in those first 7 chapters. There is the history of the burnt offering (see Genesis); there is the future for burnt offerings (see Hebrews); and there are related topics (who offers them when; what about uncleanness, are there various applications of the burnt offerings?).
4. God's system of theology is very complex. I have been studying the Bible for nearly 50 years. In the past 25 years, I have spent 3–5 hours per day studying the Scriptures, and I still feel like I am just getting started. I recently listened to the Assyrian Crisis by R. B. Thieme, Jr. (about a 70 lessons treatise) and I am convinced that Bob may have been the only person ever who could have done that study. I know for damn sure I couldn't have.
5. The human body is a good example of God's ability to make things complex. Doctors must have specialties, and some specialize in very specific diseases, on very specific portions of the body, on very specific age groups, on very specific functions of the body. There is no single book which covers any medical topic perfectly (although a few of them, I understand, come pretty close).
6. As any writer of a textbook (medical or otherwise) can tell you, organization is key; and that there is not a single way to organize any particular topic.
7. So the basic answer is this: even if I was the greatest authority on the Torah in existence, it is so complex that, I could, certainly, reorganize it; but the end result would not necessarily be more organized than God's approach (being somewhat inferior to God, my reorganization would also be inferior).
8. It is the complexity of God's thinking—even when it is brought down to our level (as the Bible does)—that a person can spend a lifetime in the Scriptures and never feel as though he has fully understood all of it.
9. Teachers and commentators and other writers certainly can take various topics in Scripture, and reorganize them and then present their reorganization of them. As an example, many people have taken the Life of Christ, as taught in the 4 biographies of Jesus, and reorganized these into a single, chronological narrative. Some have done this in a 5 or 10 page chart; and others have done this by teaching 1000+ lesson study of it.
10. The worship system put forth in the Torah is very complex and interrelated. There is not really a beginning point and an ending point when it comes to the Law of God.
11. So, the short answer to the question above is, the Torah is not disorganized; but there are alternative ways of organizing it and presenting it.

Over the years, I have learned to appreciate God's organization of His Word.

**Chapter Outline**

**Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines**

**General content:** The name *Leviticus* implies that this book is predominantly the rules and regulations which are part and parcel to the operation of the Levitical priesthood; however, this is only partially true. First of all, when those of the priesthood are addressed, as in Leviticus 1–9, 21–22 and 23, it is not the entire tribe of the Levi's but those who are descended directly from Aaron. Not even Moses's sons were considered. Furthermore, the remainder, which is the bulk of the book, is directed toward all Jewish believers of that time (and all believers in



Israel for the next several centuries). As we will see, these are not just a collection of old, unimportant, antiquated laws, but the regulations will have a two-fold purpose to believers today: (1) An outline of holiness and correct behavior is presented; (2) the future of Israel is predicted throughout several chapters of this book (particularly Leviticus 23); and, (3) a complete Christology is given in OT shadow form (particularly in the sacrifices and the feast days). When we exegete this book, it will be clear that the true Author knew exactly what would occur on the cross and revealed this to the people of Israel in shadow form. The images and the parallels are too great in number for this to all be a happy coincidence. And considering that we have a Greek translation of the entire Old Testament preceding the writing of the New Testament by at least 100 years, this indicates that Leviticus could not have been written after our Lord suffered on the cross. It is my personal opinion that throughout the Old Testament we have our Lord's suffering revealed in shadow form, enough so that anyone who would be positive toward God's Word could be saved by the revealing of the gospel and the regeneration of their souls. In such cases, they may not be able to verbalize just exactly what it was that took them from death to life, however God redeemed them with their one decision of positive volition toward the work of Christ on the cross.

One of the difficult topics in this book is the various offerings the people of Israel are supposed to make. There are burnt offerings, peace offerings, votive (vow) offerings, sin offerings, guilt offerings. When considering these offerings from the standpoint of, *what do they represent?*, they are fairly easy to understand. Each set of offerings presented (found chiefly in Leviticus 1–7) represent various aspects of the person and work of Jesus Christ (His work specifically referring to his spiritual death on the cross, dying for our sins). What is difficult is, ascertaining exactly how these offerings were understood by the people of God and by the priesthood. For many years, even with some study, I have simply assumed that these are various sets of disjoint offerings. What I mean is, there would be times that peace offerings would be made; times when burnt offerings are made; but I simply thought of these offerings as being different, as what they represent is different. The more that I study this material, the more overlap I find. Fortunately, you will not have to depend upon me for bringing the next animal to the Temple to have its throat cut, as that is no longer done (we do not need to continue to present the *type*, if the *antitype* has come). That is, I no longer need to bring before God a burnt offering of a lamb (for instance), because Jesus, the Lamb of God, Who takes away the sin of the world because He offered Himself up on the cross to pay for our sins. The burnt offering of a lamb represents Jesus and His work on the cross; but we do not have to have the representation now that the reality is here.

Hebrews 10:10–14 **And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, He sat down at the right hand of God, waiting from that time until His enemies should be made a footstool for His feet. For by a single offering He has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.** (ESV; capitalized)

Bearing that in mind, it would still be nice to have some clarity when it comes to these various classifications of offerings made before God.

The name of this book is quite the misnomer. The tribe of Levi is mentioned twice by name in the same passage (Leviticus 25:32–33). The Levites were to help out the priests, but they themselves were not the priesthood. Again, the priesthood, as we have seen, is a very small subset of the Levite tribe—those who are descended from Aaron.

L.S. Chafer once remarked in his great *Systematic Theology* that the gospel and every aspect of the gospel is more clearly revealed in the New Testament than it is in the Old. Let me explain why: God would use Satan to take our Lord to the cross. The betrayal and brutality that our Lord faced, the courts which tried and convicted our Lord, and the suffering which He endured prior to the cross were things that He endured at the hand of Satan. Satan put our Lord on the cross. Had He known what He was actually doing, Satan would have in any way

possible tried to prevent Jesus Christ from going to the cross. However, in his scheming to place Jesus Christ under the greatest of human suffering, he inadvertently placed out Lord on the cross whereupon our Lord paid for our sins in full. Satan's greatest act of evil up until that time resulted in the salvation of billions of lost members of the human race. Satan fell into God's plan because, even though millions upon millions of people were saved prior to the cross by believing in Jesus Christ as revealed by the animal sacrifices and the holy days, that information was revealed to them by the Holy Spirit, as the natural man cannot receive the things of the Spirit. God the Holy Spirit never revealed the gospel to Satan and that is how God took the greatest acts of evil and transformed it into blessing for all of the human race. We are fortunate beyond our ability to express in words that our God has turned cursing into blessing, which is the story of every Christian's life.

When the unbeliever is faced with the Mosaic Law, many of them have a difficult time making differentiations, something which any law ought to do. For instance, if you quote a passage about homosexuality being wrong from Leviticus, you might find yourself being told off for eating shellfish. There are graduations regarding the law, as there well should be, and to treat everything which is condemned in the Law of Moses as being equivalent is foolish. A person, for instance, who commits a homosexual act is condemned to capital punishment. A person who eats or touches and unclean thing offers up an appropriate sacrifice. Surely, you can see that these acts are different and God does not view them the same way.

One might also gather from this disparity in punishment that the laws about uncleanness should be considered in a much different way than other laws (such as, laws against murder, stealing, etc.).

**Important Quotations:** (1) And Y<sup>e</sup>howah spoke to Moses, saying; (2) You will be holy [or, set apart] because I am holy; (3) I am Y<sup>e</sup>howah Elohim, the one taking you out of Egypt. These several verses help set the theme for Leviticus. God makes a distinction between the Jews and the surrounding Gentile nations. God has severed them from the Gentiles, just as we as believers are distinguished and separated from the unsaved world. Once man is redeemed (Leviticus 1–16), then his life should reflect God's holiness and perfection. The latter portion of Leviticus is God speaking to Israel explaining how to distinguish themselves from the degenerate Egyptians from whom they were removed; and from the Gentiles in whose midst they would soon find themselves.

## Outline of Leviticus:

### Part One: the Approach to Y<sup>e</sup>howah (Leviticus 1–16)

- I. Regulations Concerning Animal Sacrifices (Leviticus 1–7)
  - A. Burnt offerings (Leviticus 1)
  - B. Tribute offerings (Leviticus 2)
  - C. Peace offerings (Leviticus 3)
  - D. Sin offerings (Leviticus 4)
  - E. Guilt offerings (Leviticus 5:1–6:7)
  - F. Participation of priests in offerings (Leviticus 6:8–7:35)
  - G. Summary (Leviticus 7:36–38)
- II. Narrative (Leviticus 8–10)
  - A. The consecration of Aaron and his sons (Leviticus 8)
  - B. Aaron offers sacrifices to Y<sup>e</sup>howah (Leviticus. 9)
  - C. Aaron's sons, Nadab and Abihu, sin against God and are executed (Leviticus 10)
- III. The Clean versus the Unclean (Leviticus 11–15)

- A. Which animals may be used as food (Leviticus 11)
- B. The cleanness of childbirth (Leviticus 12)
- C. Leprosy (Leviticus 13)
- D. Cleansing that which is leprous (Leviticus 14)
  - 1. The leper (Leviticus 14:1–32)
  - 2. A leprous house (Leviticus 14:33–57)
- E. Various discharges (Leviticus 15)
  - 1. Menstrual uncleanness (Leviticus 15:1–10)
  - 2. Men with a discharge (Leviticus 15:11–17)
  - 3. Men and women (Leviticus 15:18–33)
- IV. The Great Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16)

**Part Two: Holiness to Y<sup>e</sup>howah**  
(Leviticus 17–27)

- I. Laws Pertaining to the Sons of Israel (Leviticus 17–20)
  - A. Proper procedures for sacrifices (Leviticus 17:1–9)
  - B. Prohibitions against the eating of blood (Leviticus 17:10–16)
  - C. Prohibitions against immoral and incestuous relations (Leviticus 18)
  - D. Prohibitions against idolatry (Leviticus 19:1–8)
  - E. Being set apart in behavior (Leviticus 19:9–37)
  - F. Penalties for violating God's laws (Leviticus 20)
- II. Law Pertaining to the Priesthood (Leviticus 21–)
  - A. Regulations to avoid profaning oneself (Leviticus 21:1–16)
  - B. Limitations on qualification for the priesthood and operation in the priesthood (Leviticus 21:17–22:16)
  - C. Acceptable offerings from the priests (Leviticus 22:17–33)
  - D. Regulations concerning the Sabbath and the religious feasts (Leviticus 23:1–25)
    - 1. Unleavened bread (Leviticus 23:5–8)
    - 2. First fruits (Leviticus 23:9–14)
    - 3. Weeks (Leviticus 23:15–22)
    - 4. Trumpets (Leviticus 23:23–25)
    - 5. The Day of Atonement (Leviticus 23:26–32)
    - 6. Tabernacles (Leviticus 23:33–43)
- III. Responsibilities of the Priesthood (Leviticus 24:1–12)
- IV. Penalties Outlined for Certain Violations of the Law (Leviticus 24:13–23)
- V. The Sabbatical Year (Leviticus 25:1–7)
- VI. The Year of Jubilee (Leviticus 25:8–55)
- VII. Blessings Which Accompany Obedience (Leviticus 26:1–13)
- VIII. Penalties Which Accompany Disobedience—the Outline of Israel's Future (Leviticus 26:14–46)
- IX. Appendix: Vows and Determinations of Value (Leviticus 27)

Scotfield groups these chapters slightly differently, and I provide his outline due to its brevity, an attribute of Scotfield's for which he was legend:

- I. The Offerings (Leviticus 1–7).
- II. Consecration of Aaron and His Sons (Leviticus 8–10).
- III. Law of Cleanliness and Holiness (Leviticus 11–15, 17–22).
- IV. The Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16).
- V. Laws Regulating the Personal Relationships of the Redeemed People (Leviticus 18–20).



- VI. Law Regulating the Priesthood and the Seven Great Feasts of the Hebrew Calendar (Leviticus 21–23).  
 VII. Additional Laws, Promises, and Warnings (Leviticus 24–27).

I have decided to place this chart in the Introduction, so that it is near the beginning of the book and easy to find. You can refer back to this chart to see where we have been, to gain context, and to see where we are going.

The first section (Leviticus 1–7) of Leviticus are direct instructions by God to Moses.

### Chapter by Chapter Descriptions for the Book of Leviticus

Chapter	Brief Description
God speaks to Moses from the Tabernacle.	
1	Large livestock burnt offering; burnt offering from the flock of lambs or goats; burnt offering of birds.
2	The grain offering to be offered with the meat offerings.
3	Peace offering from the heard; peace offering from the flock.
4	Offerings for unknown sins.
5a	Trespass offerings.
5b	Guilt offerings.
6a	General laws about the burnt offering, the grain offering, and the sin offering.
6b	Priests and the burnt offering; priests and the grain offering; priests and the sin offering.
7a	More laws about the trespass offering, the sin offering, and the peace offering.
7b	Fat and blood may not be eaten.
7c	The portion of the offerings for Aaron and his sons.
Narrative:	
8	The actual consecration of Aaron and his sons.
9	The ministry of the priesthood is begun; Aaron's first offerings.
10a	The deaths of Nadab and Abihu (Aaron's sons).
10b	Conduct required of the priests.
God speaks to Moses and Aaron.	
11	Clean and unclean animals.
12	The purification of women.
13	Laws and regulations for leprosy.
14a	The ritual for cleansing lepers.

## Chapter by Chapter Descriptions for the Book of Leviticus

Chapter	Brief Description
14b	Cleansing a house occupied by a leper.
15b	Laws and regulations concerning bodily discharges.
16	God commands Moses concerning the Great Day of Atonement.
17a	The proper place for sacrifices.
17b	Laws and regulations against eating blood.
18	Laws and regulations concerning sexual immorality.
19	Ritual regulations; interactions with your neighbor and society in general; restrictions and some prohibited acts.
20	Child sacrifice prohibited, consulting the dead, honoring one's parents, various sorts of sexual immorality, remaining differentiated to God.
21	Regulations for priests.
22	Offerings, uncleanness, interactions with resident foreigners, general commands concerning animal sacrifices.
23	Holy days and feasts.
24a	Proper care for the lamp and bread of Presence in the Tabernacle.
24b	The blasphemous woman; general principles of law.
25a	The Sabbath Year and the Year of Jubilee.
25b	Lending to the poor; laws about slavery; redemption of the poor man.
26	The promise of blessings; the stages of national discipline.
27	Redeeming property and persons dedicated to God.

There are only two sections of narrative in the book of Leviticus: Leviticus 8–10 and a short section in Leviticus 24. The beginning and end of many chapters have a short amount of narration, such as, *the Lord spoke these words to Moses*.

Because there is very little narrative in the book of Leviticus, how it was composed is not really clear. Did God speak all of these things to Moses and then he wrote them down in this order? Or are these laws and regulations from several meetings; and their order may or may not be sequential.

### Is Leviticus sequential? Did this book come from God speaking only to Moses?

In Leviticus 1:1, God speaks to Moses from the Tabernacle. In Leviticus 4:1, God speaks to Moses, but no other information is given. In Leviticus 6:1, God speaks to Moses once again, but no other information is given.

## Is Leviticus sequential? Did this book come from God speaking only to Moses?

At the end of Leviticus 7, the laws of that chapter are summarized, and we are told that these are laws given when God had commanded Israel to offer up oblations (= qorban) in the desert-wilderness of Sinai.

Leviticus 8 begins with God speaking to Moses, but only 2 verses of God's words are recorded. The rest is narrative, and that narrative continues to the end of Leviticus 10 (there are 3 places in these chapters where God's words are given, which words occupy less than a single verse, 2 verses and 3 verses).

God speaks to Moses in Leviticus 12:1 14:1 17:1 18:1 19:1 20:1 21:1, 16 22:1 23:1, 9, 23, 26, 33 24:1, 13 27:1. No other information is given.

God speaks to Moses and Aaron in Leviticus 11:1 13:1 14:33 15:1. No other information is given.

The most information given is found in Leviticus 16:1–2a where God speaks to Moses about the deaths of Aaron's two eldest sons.

Also, Leviticus 25:1 *And the LORD spoke unto Moses on Mount Sinai, saying,...* (Niobi Study Bible)

At the end of many of these chapters, there is often a short amount of narrative (usually a verse), which might say something like *and so Moses did*; or, *and so Moses spoke these words to Aaron*; or, *and so Moses spoke these words to the people*.

However, the final verse in Leviticus 27 reads: *These are the commandments which the LORD commanded Moses for the children of Israel on Mount Sinai.* (Niobi Study Bible)

Given the information above, Leviticus could have been information given to Moses on a variety of occasions; and how and when he wrote all of these things down is unclear.

Leviticus could represent God speaking to Moses in the Tabernacle on several occasions; and sometimes when Aaron was present. However, Leviticus 27:34 would have to be massaged. That would not be difficult because the sons of Israel were *never* on Mount Sinai (apart from a few individuals on a very lower portion). This could also indicate that they were simply near to Sinai.

There is no pressing reason why we need to know this information about Leviticus. Did some of this come to Moses previously when on Mount Sinai? Did all of it come to him in the Tabernacle? It does not really matter all the much.

### Chapter Outline

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

The commentary text in this section comes from the **Redeemer of Israel**. Unfortunately, this author is a Mormon, which is a cult of Christianity. Some Mormons are saved; some are not. A great many of their doctrines are spurious and even blasphemous. That being said, there have been contributions of cults in some realms which have actually been good. Armstrong's Church of God was a cult under its founder Herbert W. Armstrong and later under Gardner Ted Armstrong (the son). I think the two split at some point and went different directions; and I have heard that the Church of God went full-on traditional at some point. Regardless of their background (and they were a cult), they put out excellent material on evolution. The Jehovah's Witnesses, also a cult, put out some good material on evolution.

At times, these various cults actually make some good observations (for instance, concerning *Christian* holidays like Christmas and Easter); but often making a poor application of some of their accurate observations.

I make such remarks, at the same time warning you not to be ensnared by Mormon's, Jehovah's Witnesses or other cults. For those interested in such topics, I would recommend Walter Martin's *Kingdom of the Cults*; available on [Amazon](#) and many other places (there are apparently many versions of this, just as there are many versions of Josh MacDowell's books). Personally, I read a great deal of cultic literature when I was first saved, having no idea which way to go and ended up under R. B. Thieme, Jr.'s ministry (which is orthodox and not a cult). One of my friends at a taper's church was very enthusiastic about this book. Once I personally zeroed in on spiritual growth, I lost interest in the various cults. I found them as a point of interest and might watch a special on this or that one; but never spent much time learning about them.

The Types of Offerings (a graphic); from the [Redeemer of Israel](#); accessed February 29, 2024.

A type is something that represents spiritual truth through symbolic means. A similitude is something



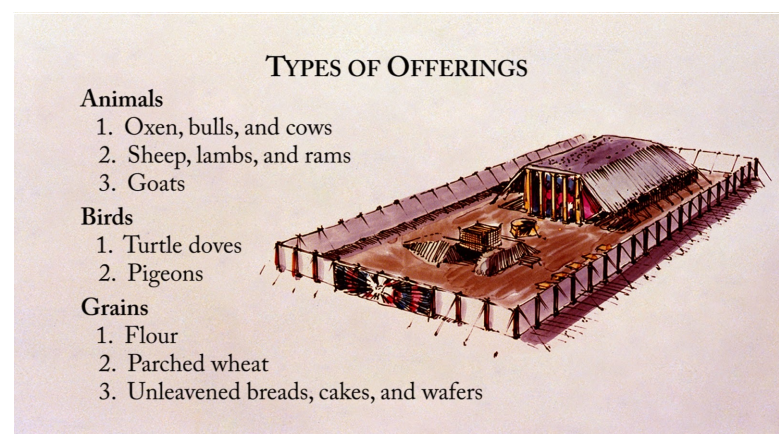
similar to something else. Thus, the animal offered as a sacrifice was a type of Christ. It represented Christ symbolically, and the offering of the animal was in similitude, or similar to the future sacrifice of Jesus on the cross.

The Mosaic ordinance of sacrifice consisted of two categories of offerings: one the voluntary offering, which is the burnt offering, the peace offering, and the meat or cereal offering; and two the obligatory offering, which was the sin offering, and the trespass offering.



There were essential elements that were common to both categories: a sacrifice or offering, an offerer, the place of the offering, the act of laying on hands, a priest, the salt, the fire, and the blood.

Before examining each of the offerings, it will prove helpful to look at the significance of each element. By doing so, an appreciation of the prophetic spirit which undergirded the law of sacrifice can be developed. This in turn will provide a background to understanding the offerings themselves.



The offerings fall into three divisions: one, animals of the flock or herd, two, certain birds, and three, grains or products made of grain. The later called meat offerings were also offered with olive oil and frankincense.

To be acceptable as sacrifices the animals had to meet specific criteria: first, they had to be one of those that God had declared to be clean and which could be used as food, second, they had to be domesticated, and third, they had to be free from physical flaws. The grains had to be either ground into flour, which in turn could be used to make breadstuffs, roasted, or parched.

These criteria were necessary so that the offering might serve as a proper symbol not only for the Savior, but also for the offerer himself. It is usual to see the sacrificial animal as a type of the Lord, the lack of bodily faults representing the purity of life the Savior lived. This indeed is as it should be, but it must also be remembered that the law was designed to teach not only about the Savior, but also how the individual could benefit from the atoning sacrifice and gain eternal life.<sup>5</sup>

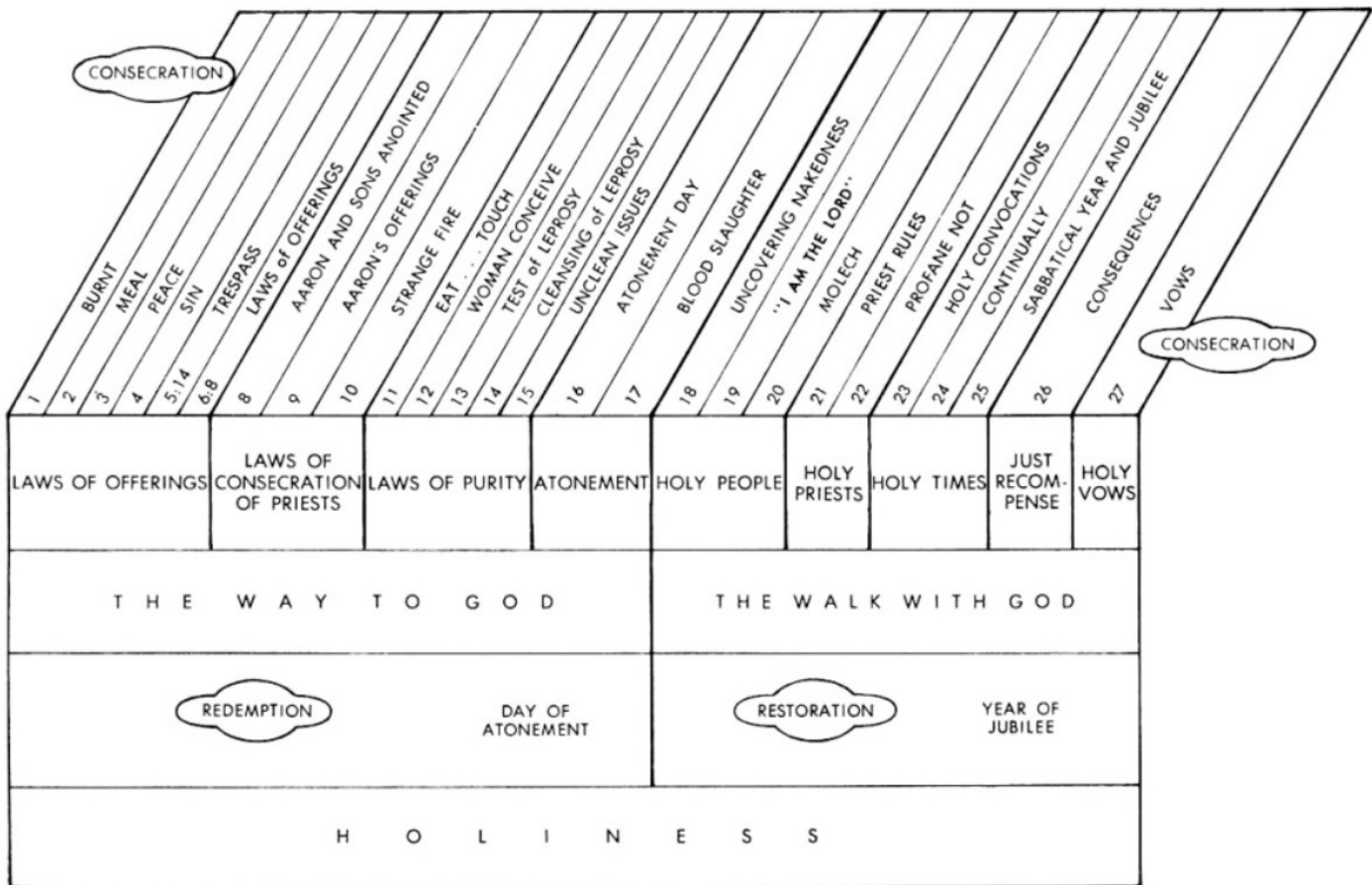
It is unfortunate. There is some good material on this page as well as some misleading information (the author connects the sacrifices to personal works or effort on the person of the offerer, and such a connection is never made in the Scriptures).

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<sup>5</sup> All of the text from this section comes from [Redeemer of Israel](#), which is a Mormon website. In no way does the inclusion of this material represent an alliance with the Mormon church or an approval of Mormon doctrines or practices. At some point, I may look to replace these with other graphics.



Precept Austin Chart on Leviticus (a graphic); from [https://www.preceptaustin.org/leviticus\\_13\\_commentary](https://www.preceptaustin.org/leviticus_13_commentary) accessed December 19, 2020.



**Authorship:** Moses was not really the author of Leviticus, except for a few short portions of it, e.g., Leviticus 9–10 and a part of Leviticus 24. Moses was God's secretary and this book was given directly from God to Moses. For those of you who have red-lettered editions of the Bible wherein all of the words of Jesus Christ are in red—most of Leviticus should also be in red. The most oft-used phrase of Leviticus is *then Y<sup>e</sup>howah spoke to Moses, saying...* (Leviticus 4:1 6:1, 8 8:1 11:1 etc.). Leviticus is a fulfillment of a promise made by God in Exodus 25:22 "And there I will meet with you, and from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony, I will speak to you about all that I will give you in commandment for the sons of Israel." See also Exodus 29:43 40:34, which tell us that the presence of Y<sup>e</sup>howah came to dwell in the finished tabernacle and the very first verse of Leviticus tells us: *Then Y<sup>e</sup>howah called to Moses and spoke to him from the tent of meeting, saying...* Essentially, what appears to be the case, is that God called Moses into the Tent of Meeting and began dictating to him, probably speaking from above the mercy seat of the Ark of the Covenant. Whether the curtain was open between Moses and the Ark is not told to us (and that God spoke from above the Ark is an educated guess, not a stated fact of Scripture).

Our Lord gave a general witness as to the inspiration of Leviticus (and to the rest of the Law in Leviticus 24:44–46: *Now He said to them, "These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are*



written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." Then He opened their mind to understand the Scriptures and He said to them, "Thus it is written that the Messiah [or, Christ] should suffer and rise again from the dead the third day."<sup>6</sup> Our Lord also said that the entirety of the Law and the prophets depend upon Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18 (Matthew 22:40).<sup>7</sup> Throughout this verse by verse study of the book of Leviticus, we will find several portions of it which are quoted authoritatively in the New Testament, another witness to their inspiration by God.

However, as God's secretary, Moses was the human author of Leviticus, and this is confirmed in the New Testament. Leviticus states this specifically in the Hebrew of Leviticus 26:46, the literal rendering of which is: **These are the statutes and ordinances and laws which Y<sup>e</sup>howah placed between Himself and the sons of Israel by the hand of Moses on Mount Sinai.** Jesus Christ said to the cleansed leper, **"Go and show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded."** (Matthew 8:4 Leviticus 14:2).<sup>8</sup> Paul writes: **For Moses writes that the man who practices the righteousness which is based on the law will live by that righteousness** (Romans 10:5; paraphrasing Leviticus 18:5).

Therefore, anyone who suggests that the human author of Leviticus was anyone other than Moses or that Leviticus is anything less than the Word of God, directly contradicts both the Old and New Testaments.

The primary reason authorship is attributed to authors other than Moses is (1) some liberal theologians do not like the idea that most of Leviticus is presented as a series of quotations from God to Moses. If authorship is laid upon someone or upon a group of people who came along much later in the history of Israel, then this as a quotation from God can be considered fanciful embellishment, thus demeaning its contents. (2) There are elements of prophecy in Leviticus: the cross and the work of our Lord Jesus Christ is foreshadowed throughout; the future history of the Jews is laid out for us in Leviticus 26; and the liberal theologian does not like the idea that God has told us centuries in advance what would occur. This is way too supernatural for them. (3) Finally, we have some laws in here dealing with sexual morality, ethical behavior and crime and punishment which are stated in absolutes (Leviticus 18–20). If these are direct quotations from God, then logically we are not allowed to do our own thing and engage in sexual immorality or unethical behavior without possible reprisal from the God of the universe. Some people despise the notion that God treats some groups of people as a cancer that should be removed; however, such a viewpoint is found in Leviticus and is expanded upon throughout the rest of the Old Testament. The NIV Study Bible comments: *During the last three centuries many scholars have claimed to find in the Pentateuch four underlying sources. The presumed documents, allegedly dating from the tenth to the fifth centuries BC, are called J (for Jahweh/Y<sup>e</sup>howah, the personal OT name for God), E (for Elohim, a generic name for God), D (for Deuteronomic) and P (for Priestly). Each of these documents is claimed to have its own characteristics and its own theology, which often contradicts that of the other documents. The Pentateuch is thus depicted as a patchwork of stories, poems and laws. However, this view is not supported by conclusive evidence, and intensive archaeological and literary research has tended to undercut many of the arguments used to challenge Mosaic authorship.*<sup>9</sup> We have covered this subject before in greater detail and for those with an interest, Josh McDowell covers the arguments in great detail in his book, *Evidence Which demands a Verdict, Vol. 2.*

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<sup>6</sup> Note that immediately after His resurrection, our Lord takes His disciples back to the Scriptures, which would become the foundation and the strength of their faith and doctrine.

<sup>7</sup> Leviticus 19:18 is quoted several times in the New Testament: Matthew 19:19 Mark 12:31 Luke 10:27 Romans 13:9 Galatians 5:14.

<sup>8</sup> Our Lord in Mark 7:10 could either be quoting Leviticus 20:9 or Exodus 21:17.

<sup>9</sup> p. 2 of the NIV Study Bible.

**Time of Writing:** As has been discussed previously, Leviticus was written by Moses and not as the result of several people writing the Pentateuch centuries after these events took place. The actual time spent on Leviticus was short; just four weeks, or possibly less. The few events which took place and the dictation occurred after the erection of the tabernacle (Ex. 40:17 Leviticus 1:1) and prior to the departure from Mount Sinai two months later (Numbers 1:1 10:11). Exodus 40:17 and Numbers 1:1 place the writing between the first day of the first month of the second year and the first day of the second month of the second year. Therefore, Leviticus was written in approximately May of 1445 BECAUSE (Scofield gives a wider range, between 1450 and 1410 BECAUSE).

**Synopsis:** The bulk of Leviticus is a direct quote from Y<sup>e</sup>howah to Moses. There is only a small amount of narrative in Leviticus 9–10 and 24:10–23 (which is interspersed by directives from God). The great emphasis of the book of Leviticus is that God spoke this directly to Moses. No less than 50 times do we find this particular fact recorded in this book.

**The Title of Leviticus:** The Septuagint titled this book Levitikon (Λευιτικον) [pronounced *lyoo-IT-ee-kon*], which means pertaining to the Levites.<sup>10</sup> The Levites were descended from Levi, one of the twelve sons of Jacob. At the beginning, the Levites were not given a place in the worship of Y<sup>e</sup>howah, but Aaron and his sons were. Whenever some information was convey by God to Moses concerning the offerings or the function of ceremonial worship, we find either the phrase, *then Y<sup>e</sup>howah spoke to Moses and to Aaron saying...* (Leviticus. 13:1 14:33 15:1) or *then Y<sup>e</sup>howah spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to Aaron and to his sons..."* (Leviticus. 17:1–2 21:1 22:1, 18). Aaron and his sons are properly Levites, but they are a small subset of the tribe of Levi. The actual tribe of Leviticus is only alluded to but once in one small portion of all of Leviticus (Leviticus. 25:32–33). In other words, this title is a misnomer—it is not a good title for the book of Leviticus. The title given this book by the Jews was different. The Hebrews entitled this the same way we name most of our hymns; the first line of our hymns are often the name of the hymn and the first word in Leviticus is the Hebrew designation for this book: Wayîq'râ' (וַיִּקְרָא) [pronounced *wa-yee-q'-RAW*]<sup>11</sup> and it means *and He called*, which is a much better title for this book. From the beginning of the book until the end, it is God calling to us, particularly in Leviticus 26 with His impassioned warning to the Jews, a warning to follow them throughout their entire history.

**Least Known Linguistic Fact:** We will see a lot of similarities in the vocabulary of Leviticus and Ezekiel (and occasionally Numbers)—and more similarities than we would find in the vocabulary of the rest of the Pentateuch and Leviticus. There are some words found only in two or three of these books throughout the entirety of the Old Testament. This is due in part of subject matter, but more so because much of both books were spoken by the same person: Jesus Christ, Y<sup>e</sup>howah Elohim, the God of Israel. Furthermore, I would not be surprised if Ezekiel primarily studied Leviticus. A similarity in vocabulary does not have to mean, as some have claimed, that Leviticus and Ezekiel were written by the same person.

**Themes:** Throughout the beginning of Leviticus, we will find the sacrifice of various animals. Every one of these animals must be innocent, without spot and blemish, a picture of our Lord Jesus Christ. The sins of the Jews were transferred to these animals just as the sins of all mankind were placed upon our Lord. The shedding of their blood, which is their life, is analogous to the spiritual death of our Lord (and using this expression does not minimize the pain and sacrifice involved on the part of our Lord).

<sup>10</sup> You will note that we did not even do a very good job transliterating it, as the Greek *u* was treated as a *v*.

<sup>11</sup> I am not 100% positive about the emphasis.

Holiness plays a prominent part in the book of Leviticus. Y<sup>e</sup>howah demands perfect animals for His sacrifices, the priests must be without physical defects. Several chapters are devoted to what is clean and not clean, therefore, what is holy and what is not. The NIV Study Bible points out that just as Adam and Eve were banished from the Garden of Eden due to their sin, a person with a skin disease is banished from the camp of God, and the unregenerate man, who has not taken upon himself the covering or shield of Jesus Christ, will be banished from the presence of God forever.

Israel became God's representative here on earth, just as the church presently represents Jesus Christ here on earth in this dispensation. God demanded that they be holy, even as He is holy. The book of Leviticus, among other things, sets a standard of behavior and laws which separated or, better yet, distinguished the Jews from the heathen world around them.

Separation is a key theme of Leviticus. The Jews were not just to be separated away from the Gentiles as separation has a two-fold connotation—not only are you separated away from something, but you are separated to something else. The Jews were to be separated unto God, and this was to be revealed in their ceremonies (Leviticus. 17), their daily living (Leviticus. 18–22), their worship (Leviticus. 23–25), and their future was tied directly to their relationship with God (Leviticus. 26). When our Lord summed up the Law in one sentence, He quoted from Leviticus and from Deuteronomy: *And one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?" And He said to him, "You will love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your mind." This is the great and foremost commandment. And a second is like it: "You will love your neighbor as yourself" On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets.* (Matthew 22:35–40 Deuteronomy 6:5 Leviticus 19:18).

**Narrative Content:** The bulk of Leviticus is Law; that which is to separate the Jews from the Gentiles around them. There are regulations dealing with the ceremonial laws of Israel, such as the sacrifices, the holy days, the feasts, etc. Every ceremony in Leviticus is backed by solid reality and fraught with meaning. There are laws concerning what is clean and unclean, there are laws which deal with ethical behavior, sexual morality and the proper treatment of slaves, Gentiles, and fellow Jews. The brief portions of Leviticus which are narrative were likely episodes which occurred chronologically between the sessions of God's dictation to Moses and serve as a backdrop. We have the various sacrifices that the Jews were to make, led by their priests; and we have the responsibilities of the priests; and this is followed by the sloppiness and imprecision of Aaron's two oldest sons, who were executed by God for their lack of personal integrity in spiritual matters. We may view their transgression as minor; however, when it comes to the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, we should never be sloppy or imprecise. They were in a position of great spiritual authority and responsibility and they did not take seriously their office before the Lord. God executed them under the Law.

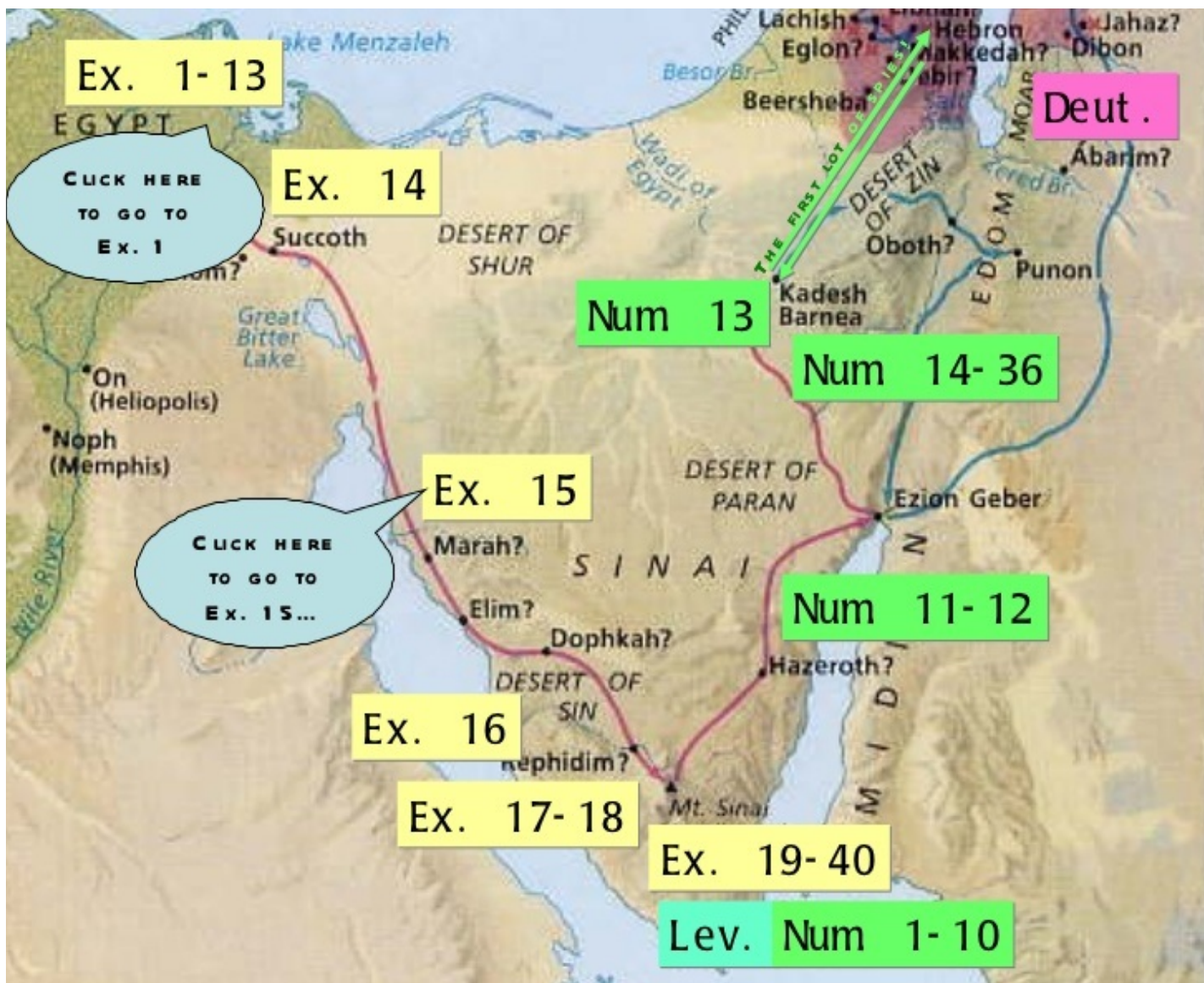
The second narrative is found in Leviticus 24:10–23 where Israel is commanded to stone a man guilty of blaspheming. All of the Jews had witnessed their deliverance at the hand of God. Only the most irreverent would take God's omnipotence lightly. His execution was demanded by God and carried out by the people.

**The New Testament View:** One of the major pitfalls of people who are involved in self-study and who begin with the Law, is that they become confused as to what God's program is. When our Lord was resurrected from the dead, He immediately began to teach the Scriptures; that is, the Old Testament (Luke 24:25–32, 44–48). Every pastor should teach the Old and New Testaments. Although the Old Testament primarily deals with the Age of Israel when Israel was under the Law, this does not mean that we should not study it. We need to know how the gospel was presented to our Old Testament brothers. It is in studying the Old Testament that we develop a full appreciation for God's Word and a much deeper understanding. What occurs in the Old Testament helps us to

fix our place today in the New Testament Church Age. Finally, we are awed by the prophecies which are found throughout the Old Testament, those which deal with our Lord's death on the cross and the future of Israel, found in Leviticus 1400 years prior to their fulfillments. It is these prophecies which aide some in solidifying their faith in God's Word, realizing that not every religious book is God's Word, but that we can determine whether it is from God or not because when He speaks, we can see that it will come to pass.

**The Location of the Sons of Israel During Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy** (a graphic); from [slideshare.net](https://www.slideshare.net); accessed June 20, 2016.





One of the fascinating things about Leviticus (and the other 3 books written by Moses), is how accurate it is in terms of diet and medicine.

Karl Butt: *In reality, entire books could be written on the Old Testament's amazing medical accuracy. Medical doctors McMillen and Stern have done just that in their extremely interesting volume None of These Diseases. Many physicians who have compared Moses' medical instructions to effective modern methods have come to realize the astonishing value and insight of the Old Testament text. As Dr. Macht once wrote: "Every word in the Hebrew Scriptures is well chosen and carries valuable knowledge and deep significance" (Macht, 1953, p. 450). Such is certainly the case in regard to the medical practices listed in its pages. Indeed, the accurate medical practices prescribed thousands of*

*years before their significance was completely understood provide excellent evidence for the divine inspiration of the Bible.*<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> From **Apologetics Press**; accessed December 20, 2020.