

Episode: Promised Land Series No. 08

Narrator: Nadab

Primary Scriptures: Leviticus

Story Summary: Offerings and regulations

Location: Mount Sinai

Time: c. 1526 BC Birth of Moses

c. 1446 BC The plagues and exodus

c. 1445 BC. The Ten Commandments

Suggested Memory Scriptures: Leviticus 8:36; 9:24; 12:7-8

Except for chapters 8-10, *Leviticus* primarily consists of God's instructions to Moses about how the Israelites and their priests should conduct themselves in worship activities. It seems that the bulk of these instructions were given in the 1-2 months after the completion of the Tabernacle but before the Israelites' departure from Sinai.¹

Although the instructions given to the Israelites are no longer directly relevant to Christians today, there are many lessons to be inferred. God wants to live among his people, and provides a way to do that. God insists that he is worshipped in the manner he desires, not in the manner his people choose. God wants his people to be set apart and to be identified as his people.

As you read through the multitudes of instructions in these chapters, you will not doubt become thankful that your relationship with God does not depend on minutely keeping these hundreds of instructions.

Leviticus 8 tells of the intricate instructions given for the ordination of Aaron and his sons. Moses was careful to follow the instructions exactly. The last verse of the chapter indicates that Aaron and his sons got the message: "Aaron and his sons did everything the Lord commanded."²

Leviticus 9 tells of the beginning of the ministry of the priests, Aaron and his sons. God was so pleased with the excellence of their actions that he sent down fire to consume the sacrifices in front of the joyous people.

Leviticus 10 tells of the willful disobedience of two of Aaron's sons in the manner of offering a sacrifice. The Scriptures are plain about the results of their doing so: the Lord kills the two sons. The Lord continues by insisting that the surviving sons and Aaron take even greater care in how they behave and worship.

¹ Numbers 1:1, 10:11

² Lev. 8:36

Discussion Questions:

1. Do you think Leviticus 1:1 is a continuation from Exodus 40:38?
2. What are some reasons you should read *Leviticus*?
3. Most of the first seven chapters of *Leviticus* are detailed instructions about giving offerings to God. What might that tell you about your offerings to God?
4. Chapters 8 and 9 describe the details of how Aaron and his sons are supposed to perform their duties. Chapter 10 describes the deaths of Nadab and Abihu because they purposefully did not perform their duties exactly. Why didn't God punish Aaron and his other two sons for not performing their duties exactly? (Lev. 10:16-20)
5. Why might the Lord have separated animals into clean and unclean categories?
6. *Leviticus* contains many ordinances about dealing with skin diseases and other health issues. Why might that have been?
7. According to Leviticus 17:14, why shouldn't the Israelites eat or drink blood?
8. Why might Leviticus 18 have been written?

5. In some cases it might have prevented illnesses, i.e. eating pork in a hot environment. In some cases, it appears some animals were just classified that way from at least the time of Noah (Genesis 7:2-8). 6. They did not understand germs and how diseases were communicated. God was certainly protecting the health of his people. Also, as they travelled, they would be exposed to new diseases and new environments, so they needed to know what to do to stay healthy. 7. Because life of every creature is in its blood. 8. The Israelites could not have known how genetic defects could occur or the damage they could do. Also, social taboos were sure to be developed, so God was giving them good guidelines to go by.

Application Questions:

1. Leviticus 10 tells an odd story about the deaths of Nadab and Abihu. It is not clear exactly how, but they purposely violated the instructions about sacrificing. Would you behave differently if you knew God would immediately and severely punish you whenever you purposefully disobeyed him?
2. Leviticus 18 comes from a time when families typically consisted of the original father and mother and their children. How would you modify Leviticus 18 for modern times?

Application Questions for Teens:

1. Would most of the laws of behavior that God gave the Israelites been fulfilled if they had just followed Leviticus 19:2? Would that verse keep you from thinking that you have a list of rules you must follow?
2. Sometimes, obeying God has very unexpected results. Boaz followed the teaching of Leviticus 19:9. What happened because of it? (he met Ruth, married her, and became an ancestor of Jesus).
3. What do you think about Leviticus 19:28? What about the verse before it? How should we interpret these verses in a modern context?