

LEVITICUS: Introduction

God has promised to make Israel a great nation. But what kind of nation will they be? How will they live in the land they have been promised? What traditions and behaviors and relationships will mark them as God's people? How will they know God and hear from Him despite their sin?

God began to answer these questions in the last half of Exodus while the people were at Mt. Sinai, and Leviticus continues the conversation.

Leviticus is a series of laws and regulations given to Moses for the nation of Israel concerning everything from how to celebrate specific feasts to how to handle outbreaks of certain diseases. The book can be roughly divided like this:

Leviticus 1-16 – Levitical Code

Leviticus 17-27 – Holiness Code

The Levitical Code mostly deals with specifics concerning the priests and ceremonial worship of God, and the Holiness Code focuses more on civil and ethical commands for Israelites.

Leviticus has a reputation for being the place where many people give up on their Bible read-through. Please don't quit! As you read, stay focused by watching for these ideas:

- Leviticus is a book about **holiness**. Pay attention to the way the laws and regulations in this book highlight the holiness of God as well as calling people to be holy.
- With every law you read, do not lose sight of the **cultural context**. Remember the specific people and place where these laws were given, and try to avoid applying them directly to a modern-day world.
- **Ask these questions** about laws that seem difficult: Why would God give this law? How does this law show what kind of God He is? How is this law a gift, given for the good of His people?
- **Allow Leviticus to make you thankful for Jesus!** Think about how He ultimately fulfilled the law and became the final atoning sacrifice for you.