

Bible Challenge 2018

Week 5: January 28-February 3

Outline of Leviticus

Leviticus 1-7: Manual of Sacrifice
Leviticus 8-9: The Ordination of Aaron and his Sons
Leviticus 10: The Execution of Nadab and Abihu
Leviticus 11-15: Manual of Cleanliness Codes
Leviticus 16: Manual for the Day of Atonement
Leviticus 17-24: Manual of Holiness
(Leviticus 24:10-23: The Blasphemy of Shelomith's son)
Leviticus 25-26: Manual for the Practice of Redemption
Leviticus 27: Manual for Devoting Things to the Lord

Like many of the Old Testament book names, we have inherited the Greek translation of the text, printed in the 4th century BC. In Hebrew, the title of the book is *Wayyikera*, meaning, "And He Called." In Greek, the name of the book is *Leuitikon*, meaning, "Of the Levite," and indeed, that is largely what this book addresses — Levitical and priestly laws that governed the holiness and life of the people of Israel.

Unlike Christian circles, where the book is rarely read, the Jewish children were taught from Leviticus chapters 1-8 as one of their primary reading texts. It is a book that illustrates the nature of our sin and the uncleanness that it brings into our lives. Leviticus also contains more of the direct words of God than most other books of the Bible, with the phrase, "And Yahweh said" showing up 37 times in 27 chapters.

Given its nature, one can break this book into a series of manuals that guided the people and the priests in their faithful walk. Mixed in with those rules there are two narrative accounts, yet, note how these narrative accounts not only illustrate the section of the scripture in which they are contained, but also remind us of the seriousness with which our God takes his worship as well as the life of his people. It is a book we ought to read more often if we are to be reminded of the seriousness with which we ought to take God's worship as well.

Manual of Sacrifice

This manual covers the sacrifices of the Burnt Offering, the Grain Offering, the Peace Offering, the Sin Offering, and then the Guilt Offering, but then we find the language repeating itself. This is not because someone was being redundant, but the first focuses on the offerings of the people and the second deals with the offerings for the Priests (with the addition of a Food Offering). There are some nuances between the two, but the principle is the same: sinners need to be forgiven. At the end of this section, there is a summary statement to wrap the section up.

The Ordination of Aaron and his Sons

In chapter 8, we enter into the first of the narrative sections, beginning with the ordination of Aaron and his sons. This includes cleansing sacrifices and a seven day process for ordination and a final offering by Aaron on the eighth day, followed by an offering for the people and a blessing upon the people. Notice again the emphasis that God places on the worship of his people and of the behavior of his priests. This was not a service casually carried out, but God expected everything to be done in a specific manner to honor Him.

The Execution of Nadab and Abihu

Given the intentional detail with which God instructed Aaron and his sons, one should have expected that Nadab and Abihu (the eldest sons of Aaron and thus newly ordained) would have taken more care in their task of lighting the altar of incense. What should have been done is that the coals from the offering would be taken to light the incense. These two priests bring in what is referred to as "strange fire" or "alien fire." We do not know exactly what this meant, probably that they acquired the coals from elsewhere than the altar...essentially, the coals were alien to the Tabernacle and God meets their strange fire with holy fire, burning these men to ashes (though not their ceremonial clothing!).

These men had even been on the Mount Sinai with Moses and Aaron (Exodus 24:1-9) and had been called out by God to be priests (Exodus 28:1), yet they threw away every privilege they were given when they disobeyed God's command. Again, God takes his worship seriously, and his response is a clear set of expectations on his worshippers ("By

those who draw near to be I will show myself as holy; and before all the people, I will show my glory.")

The uncles of these men carry their charred remains out in their clothes (the clothes were holy and sanctified even if the men in them were not). Further, God instructs Aaron not to mourn for his sons, but to continue the sacrifice and worship as they had been called to do. Such is the legacy of those who would bring their own ends into worship and not serve God's ends.

Manual of Cleanliness Codes

This section deals with clean and unclean animals, purification after childbirth, leprosy, and bodily discharges. The Kosher Food Laws is a part of the law that is unique to the people of Israel at least in terms of what they can or cannot eat. They were developed not to protect the Israelites from food-borne parasites (as are in pork), but they were designed to set the people apart from the other cultures of the world.

Manual for the Day of Atonement

The day of atonement, marked by sacrifices and sending a goat out into the wilderness (a scapegoat), is one of the more essential aspects of the Jewish law. It is here that the people were offered forgiveness and reconciliation with God for their sins. And, it is this that points us to Christ who, though he was the Passover Lamb, came and died for the sins of the world.

Manual of Holiness

Here again are a list of rulings. Things must be handled in this way or that way to be done in keeping with God's design for a people set apart from the world. Thus there are instructions as to how sacrifices are to be brought to God, rules against eating food with the blood still in it (the life is in the blood), rules about sexual morality, respecting parents, caring for the poor and the traveller, justice, penalties for child sacrifice and witchcraft as well as against adulterers, and then worship at the various festivals.

It is worth noting that this section of Leviticus is quoted 16 times in the New Testament and alluded to even more frequently than that. Such is just one more reason that we ought to take Leviticus seriously, for Jesus and the Apostles sure did.

The Blasphemy of Shelomith's Son

The blasphemy of Shelomith's son is an illustration of just how seriously God takes our holiness. He was the child of a Jewish woman and an Egyptian father (hence we can already see tensions) and the son engages in cursing God — blasphemy. As a result, he is put to death, cleansing the whole community from his influence.

Manual for the Practice of Redemption

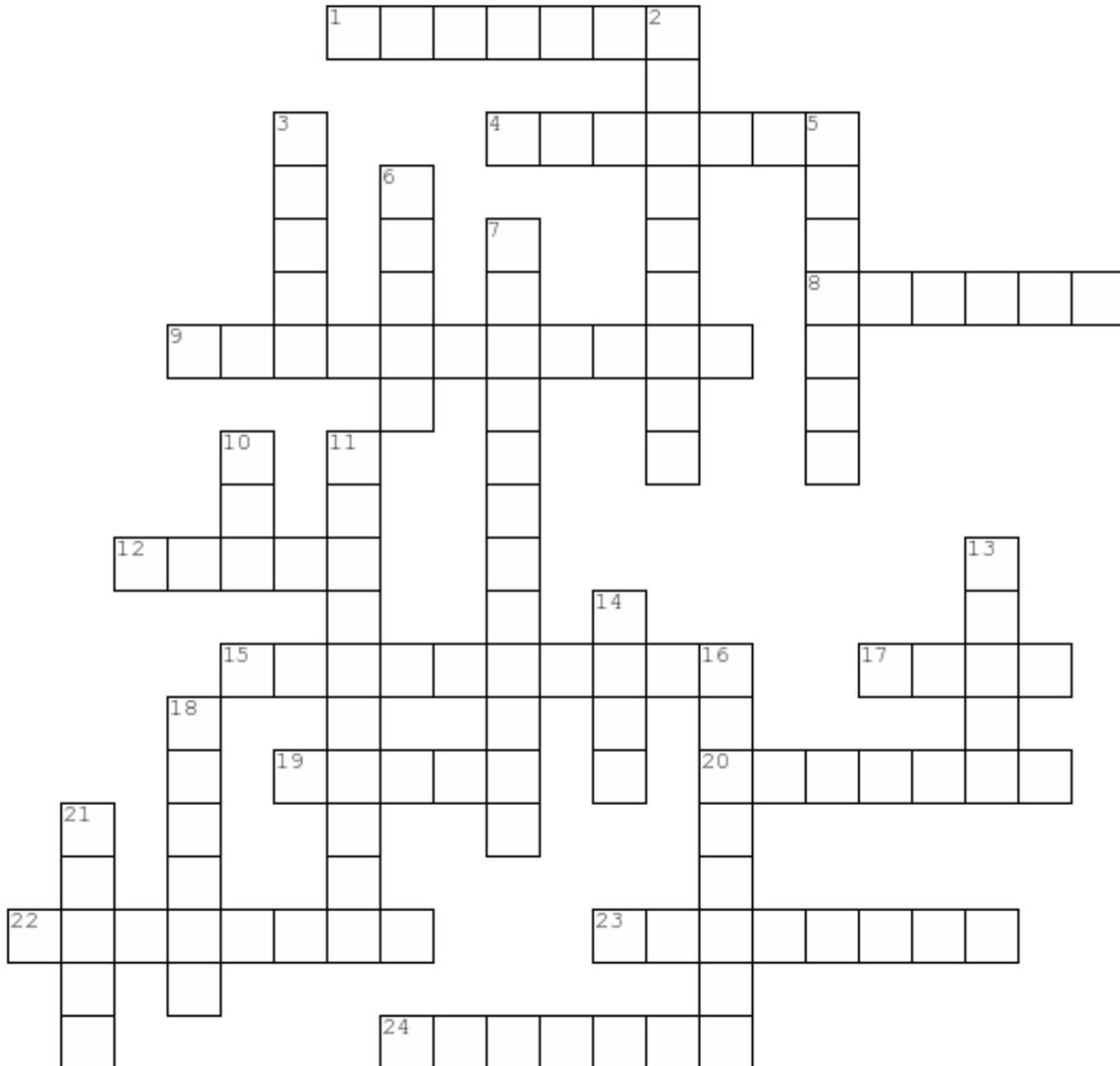
Here we move from a matter of personal holiness to community holiness. We have the principle of the Sabbatical year, that in the seventh year the fields were to be given a year of rest, laying fallow (those "volunteer" crops could still be harvested along with allowing for the poor to glean). The Year of Jubilee was in the 50th year, thus after seven cycles of rest there was an additional year of rest and all debts were forgiven, slaves were set free, and ancestral lands were returned to their respective families. God promised the people that if they did these things, there would not be hunger or famine in the land. Sadly, most were too greedy to do them, not only working themselves year in and year out, but robbing their farm hands of a much needed year of rest.

In addition, there were laws regarding a kinsman redeemer (providing children for a childless widow) as well as redeeming the poor from their lot. Finally, this section is closed with both blessings and cursings... the first for obedience and the latter for disobedience.

Manual for Devoting Things to the Lord

The final chapter includes instructions for making offerings to God...offerings that were over and above the required tithe of what the fields and farms produced. Ultimately, as with Cain, God does not want your leftovers, but only your first and best.

Week 5



Created with TheTeachersCorner.net [Crossword Puzzle Generator](http://TheTeachersCorner.net)

Across

1. Leviticus can be broken into a series of these for study and application.
4. Whomever turns to these people, God will cut off.
8. On this day, the baby boys are to be circumcised.
9. Sabbath is a holy _____.
12. _____ and Abihu sacrificed alien fire at the Altar of Incense.
15. This kind of bird, along with pigeons, were often offered for sacrifice.
17. Aaron was forbidden from drinking this after his sons' deaths.
19. This of a hired servant may not remain with you until morning.
20. The breastplate of the high priest contains stones, in particular the Urim and the _____.
22. 'You shall not tell _____.'
23. You shall love this person as yourself.
24. Winged ones of these are not permitted to be eaten.

Down

2. On the Day of Atonement this was driven into the wilderness bearing the sins of the people out of the camp.
3. The grain offerings of the priest should be burned and not _____.
5. This Sabbatical happens every _____ year.
6. The anointed High Priest.
7. This important spice was added to grain offerings due to its aroma.
10. Pigs cannot be eaten because they do not chew this.
11. Sacrifices must be presented at the entrance to this.
13. The people received the book of Leviticus on this mountain.
14. 'You shall be _____ to me, I am the Lord'
16. These, along with the legs of the burnt offering were to be washed and burned as a food offering to the Lord.
18. Leviticus means 'of the _____.'
21. It was not permitted to be eaten (the Life is in it).