

“Leviticus”

The Book of Holiness

by Stef Schagen

OT Survey, OT 500
Professor: Dr. Jordan Scheetz
Tyndale Theological Seminary
3 December 2009

Leviticus, the third book of the Pentateuch, is part of a set of divine speeches starting in Exodus 25:1 and ending in Numbers 10:10 regarding the Tabernacle, God's holy Presence in the midst of His people, who were likewise called to holiness (Lev.19:2). It is a divine message through Moses revealing God's explicit rules for worship (Ch.1-16) and holy living (Ch.17-27).¹ Because God is holy, the people must be holy (11:44-45, 19:2, 20:26).² Because God was in their midst in the Tabernacle, the people had to deal with sin and impurity to maintain His Presence (26:11-12, 20:22-26, 15:31-33).³ Theologically grounding the aspects of "holiness-sin-atonement" at the core of the God-man relationship,⁴ preparing the Israelites for worldwide priesthood,⁵ Leviticus also foreshadows Christ's coming priesthood (Hebr.9:11-28)⁶ and Law-fulfilment (Matt.5:17-18), and the Church likewise called to be a holy nation and royal priesthood (1Peter 2:9).⁷

In Leviticus, "spiritual holiness is symbolized by physical perfection" Sacrifices, therefore, needed to be "without defect" (eg. Lev.1:3), perfect priests "without deformity" (eg. Lev.8-10) and bodily states, such as a woman's hemorrhage after birth (Ch.10), sores, skin diseases, burns and baldness (Ch.13-14), man's bodily discharge and a woman's monthly period (Ch.15:19-33), touching dead corpses (Ch.11:24-40), eating unclean food and other

¹ John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary/Old Testament*. (Colorado Springs: Cook Communications Ministries, 1983/2004), Leviticus by F. Duane Lindsey, pp. 163, 164.

² Gordon J. Wenham, *The Book of Leviticus* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1979), 16.

³ Walvoord, 164.

⁴ John E. Hartley, *Word Biblical Commentary, Leviticus 1-27* (Dallas, TX: Word Books, Publisher, 1992), IX.

⁵ S.H. Kellogg, *The Book of Leviticus* (Minneapolis: Clock and Clock Christian Publishers, 1978), 20.

⁶ Edwin H. Palmer (ed.), *The NIV Study Bible*. (Grand Rapids: The Zondervan Corporation, 1985), note on Leviticus 17:11, 168.

⁷ Pierce and Washabaugh, *The Interpreter's Bible* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1981), pp. 7-9.

Allen P. Ross, *Holiness to the Lord, A Guide to the Exposition of the Book of Leviticus*. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), 16, 18.

ceremonial duties, all signified physical lack of perfection symbolizing spiritual defects breaking man's wholeness before God.⁸

The book's Hebrew title, "wayyiqra",⁹ "and He called", is taken from 1:1, while the title "Leviticus" is derived from the Septuagint ("*Leuetikon*") via the Vulgate ("*Liber Leviticus*"¹⁰), "relating to the Levites"¹¹ in charge of the sacramental system.¹² But Leviticus is more than a priestly manual for service in God's Tabernacle. All Israelites were called by God to worship and holiness, not only priests.¹³ The book of Leviticus is God's call to holiness, but where holiness is required, atonement is necessary.

Part 1: Laws of the Sacrifices (Ch. 1-7)¹⁴; "A Manual of Sacrifice".¹⁵

In *Exodus 25-40* Yahweh gave directions for the building of His sanctuary among His people affirming the covenant.¹⁶ In *Leviticus 1-10* He gave rules and regulations for how He wanted to be worshipped: through sacrifices and ordained priesthood.¹⁷ Part 1 poses the question: How do sinful people relate to their holy covenant God? Chapters 1-7 provide the answer: through the rituals of the sacrifices.¹⁸ These are sacramental acts making "atonement" (Hebrew: "*kippēr*", "to atone, to rub, to cover, to wipe clean, to efface", eg. Lev.1:4), which

⁸ NIV Study Bible, *Leviticus*, Themes.

⁹ Hartley, XXX.

¹⁰ Hartley, XXX.

¹¹ R.K. Harrison, *The Tyndale Old Testament Commentary, Leviticus* (Downer's Grove: InterVarsityPress, 1980), 13.

¹² Walvoord, 163.

¹³ Wenham, 3.

¹⁴ Main sections adopted from Ross, pp.5-7, and Pierce and Washabaugh, 3.

¹⁵ Clifton J.Allen, *The Broadman Bible Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1970), 8.

¹⁶ Ross, 19.

¹⁷ NIV Study Bible, Title.

¹⁸ Ross, pp. 18-19.

is a work of God, not of man, intended to forgive, not to cover up sins without repentance (Jer.18:23, Ps.78:38).¹⁹ The Hebrew sacrifices were not merely human inventions to offer something to an unknown deity like Gentile practices, nor did they spring from an effort to appease divine hostility,²⁰ but rather were divinely instructed by Yahweh specifically,²¹ not to satisfy a need in God but a need in Israel:²² to restore the covenant relationship and keep God's Presence possible.²³ Though a gift of worship, they were motivated and directed by divine covenant values like devotion, fellowship, atonement and compensation,²⁴ but not an outward form but an act of inward faith.²⁵

Without a sacrifice, one had no divine audience. Sacrifice is the essence of "true worship".²⁶ Divinely instituted, rituals needed to be performed according to divine standards to approach the Holy One rightly.²⁷ God demanded perfect animals (eg. Lev.1:3).²⁸ Five main offerings were instructed, grouped in two: those *with* a sweet aroma and those without. The sweet aroma "Burnt Offering" (Lev.1), "Meal/Grain Offering" (Lev.2) and "Peace/Fellowship Offering" (Lev.3) were *made* in and *celebrated* communion, the "Purification/Sin Offering" (Lev.4) and "Reparation/Guilt Offering" (Lev.5) without aroma *prepared* for communion.²⁹

¹⁹ Pierce, 14.

²⁰ Walvoord, 164, and Broadman, 8.

²¹ NIV Study Bible, Themes.

²² Broadman, 8.

²³ Walvoord, 166.

²⁴ NIV Study Bible, Themes.

²⁵ Walvoord, 164.

²⁶ Ross, 73.

²⁷ Walvoord, 166.

²⁸ NIV Study Bible, Themes.

²⁹ Ross, 79.

The “*Burnt Offering*” mentioned first was God’s divine way to deal with guilt and sin,³⁰ to be accepted, working atonement through substitution, life through the death of life by bloodshed.³¹ Placing the hand on the animal’s head indicated the worshiper identifying himself with the animal as his substitution, symbolically transferring his sin and legal guilt on the animal. The slaughtering and burning on the altar as a ransom signified God’s acceptance, individually and on the Day of Atonement collectively, taking away God’s wrath from the sinner. This offering, which predicted Christ’s dying on the cross to work atonement,³² was burned completely signifying complete surrender as a sacrifice completely belonging to God of which neither priest nor worshiper consumed any portion.³³ *The Meal/Grain Offering* mentioned next and often following the first³⁴ signified dedication after acceptance and a grateful expression of being in divine possession, as well as recognition of God’s bountiful provision.³⁵ This bloodless sacrifice is a declaration of first loyalty, signified by bringing first-fruits.³⁶ *The “Peace/Fellowship Offering”* was a joyful celebration of restoration to divine relation, the all high in Israel’s worship. This was eaten in God’s Presence by everyone in the courtyard, though the best was burnt as a sacrifice indicating God was one’s highest and foremost loyalty.³⁷ It signified Christ’s bloodshed (Col.1:20) and the making of peace (Eph.2:14).³⁸ *The “Purification/Sin Offering”* dealt with sin and defilement of life, intentional

³⁰ Walvoord, 166.

³¹ Ross, pp. 85-87.

³² Walvoord, 166.

³³ Ross, pp. 85-87.

³⁴ Walvoord, 172.

³⁵ Ross, pp. 98-99.

³⁶ Walvoord, 177.

³⁷ Ross, pp. 110-112.

³⁸ Walvoord, pp.179-180.

or not. After the offering was brought, the sinner was declared forgiven (Lev.12:8, 4:20, 26, 31, 35). The blood of this sacrifice was applied to the sanctuary's "sancta" to cleanse it of the uncleanness and rebellion of the Israelites on the Day of Atonement (16:16).³⁹ Leviticus 5:1-13 points to Romans 3:20/Gal.3:24. It discussed the need for purification and offers alternatives for the poor.⁴⁰ For every guilt God has a solution, but every wrong must be made right if possible. This was God's intention with the "*Reparation/Guilt Offering*" of Leviticus 5:14-6:7. Defiling holy things or robbing people without acknowledging it nor repentance demands divine justice if not confessed contritely, made right properly (Matt.3:8), and atoned for divinely. The "Reparation Offering" was designed for that purpose; evidence of true repentance included full restitution.⁴¹ This sacrifice points to Christ's atoning sacrifice as guilt offering portrayed in Isaiah 53:10 to restore damage done by sin.⁴² Leviticus 6:8-7:38 is a supplementary section with additional sacrificial instructions,⁴³ such as a fire burning 24-7 to provide continuous aroma of worship with around the clock atonement available, divine priestly dressing for divine access and "sanctification in ministry",⁴⁴ the dedication of ministers and congregation after acceptance,⁴⁵ and practical theology: affirming God's forgiveness to make it more than hope, a reality.⁴⁶ This was followed by the ministry of reconciliation through the "Reparation Offering" described in Leviticus 7:1-10 and the discerning of true repentance.⁴⁷ When all is said and done, the people thank God and praise

³⁹ Ross, pp. 123-125.

⁴⁰ Ross, 138.

⁴¹ Ross, pp. 146-147.

⁴² Walvoord, pp. 182-183.

⁴³ Walvoord, 172.

⁴⁴ Ross, pp. 155-158.

⁴⁵ Ross, pp. 162-166.

⁴⁶ Ross, pp. 167-168

Him. Leviticus 7:11-21 describes instructions for bringing the voluntary, spontaneous “Peace Offering”.⁴⁸

The sacrifices restored man’s relationship with God as set apart, covering all sin, revealing God’s “principle of atonement through a “substitutionary sacrifice”.⁴⁹ Through the appointed sacrifices, God’s past deliverance would be continuously experienced by future generations,⁵⁰ impressing upon them the divine call to holiness as a set apart nation. But every sacrifice spoke of Christ’s coming atoning sacrifice.⁵¹ He was the Perfect Lamb atoning sinful man, who by faith transfers his sin and legal guilt to Him as his substitution (Rev.13:8, Rom.3:25).⁵²

Part 2: Laws of the Priesthood, Start of service (Ch. 8-10)

How will divinely instructed but human offered sacrifices ever reach a holy God? Chapters 8-10 of Part 2 provide divine answers with specific instructions: through the mediation of divinely ordained priests.⁵³ The elect tribe, Levi, was selected from the elect nation, Israel, to serve for that purpose.⁵⁴ Their anointing pointed to their divine appointing. Although God called *all* His people to holiness and instructed *all* Israelites regarding the sacrifices through Moses, He had appointed *the Levites* to approach Him in His tabernacle and perform all ceremonial duties (Ex.29:9).⁵⁵

⁴⁷ Ross, pp. 174-177.

⁴⁸ Ross, pp. 178-179, 185-186, 190-193.

⁴⁹ Walvoord, 164.

⁵⁰ Broadman, 8.

⁵¹ Walvoord, pp. 164-166, 176, 177, 180, 182-183, 183-184.

⁵² Walvoord, 166.

⁵³ Ross, pp. 18-19.

⁵⁴ William G.Heslop, *Lessons from Leviticus* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1975), 30.

⁵⁵ NIV Study Bible, Title, and Walvoord, 186.

Without a divinely ordained priesthood, the sacrifices found no divine acceptance.⁵⁶ Only when brought by holy priests, were sacrifices acceptable to a holy God (cf. Hebr.5:1-4). Just as perfect animals were demanded for the many sacrifices to symbolize spiritual holiness by natural perfection (chapters 1-7), so chapters 8-10 describe that the priests had to be without deformity, divinely dressed, performing by divine protocol in fulfilling their priestly duties.⁵⁷ And just as the perfect animals spoke prophetically of the perfect Lamb of God coming to fulfill a lasting Sacrifice, so the ceremonially perfect high priest of the lasting High Priest Christ would be (Hebr.5:1-4, 7:11-19).⁵⁸

The priests ministered sanctification in preparation for God's inhabitation, provided divine answers to life's dilemmas and difficulties, and mediated through prayer and sacrifice. This hierarchy of the nation's spiritual organization was reflected in the three part division of the tabernacle: the people's courtyard, the priests' holy place (tent) and the high priest's holy of holies.⁵⁹ Leviticus 8 discusses priestly consecration through rituals of "washing, clothing, anointing, sanctifying and inaugurating" making Aaron and his sons fit for service,⁶⁰ while in Leviticus 9 the sacrificial system started on command of Moses, putting into practice all that the Lord had commanded making covenant blessings active.⁶¹ Leviticus 10 describes how things go wrong when we want to minister our way. Nadab and Abihu will always be remembered as ones who disobeyed God's commandment.

⁵⁶ Walvoord, 186.

⁵⁷ NIV Study Bible, Themes.

⁵⁸ Pierce and Washabaugh, 14.

⁵⁹ Ross, 203.

⁶⁰ Ross, pp. 206-207.

⁶¹ Ross, pp. 218-219.

“Holiness is dangerous” unless we draw near to God the way He divinely commanded.⁶² Without a sacrifice and priestly mediation, we are struck by the lightning of divine judgment (cf. 2Sam.6:6,7, 1Sam.6:19, Lev.10:2). Without Christ’s atoning sacrifice and priesthood, would Jews still be sacrificing through the Levites, Gentiles excluded? The priests are appointed to teach what is holy, clear and pure (Lev.10:10-11), will the people obey?

Part 3: Laws of Purification and the Day of Atonement (Ch. 11-16)

How does the holiness of God direct and sanctify human life? Chapters 11-16 of Part 3 provide the answer with clear instructions for purity, by the laws of purification,⁶³ applied in detail to life’s major life’s areas.⁶⁴ Without God’s laws on holiness, the Israelites would not be distinctly different from neighbouring nations. Appointed to teach what is clean and unclean, holy and common (10:10-11), these chapters of God’s Law provided the priests divine instruction.⁶⁵ Man’s bodily states as signs of inward impurity⁶⁶ and the breaking of his spiritual wholeness by lack of outward perfection are discussed in these chapters.⁶⁷ Ceremonial impurity through all kinds of bodily uncleanness make the Day of Atonement necessary for all Israel (Lev.16:16).⁶⁸ A peculiar people under peculiar Law serving a peculiar God, was instructed a peculiar diet.⁶⁹ Chapter 11 covers food regulations, separating the

⁶² Ross, pp. 230-231.

⁶³ Ross, pp. 18-19.

⁶⁴ Ross, 243.

⁶⁵ Walvoord, 190.

⁶⁶ Ross, 276.

⁶⁷ NIV Study Bible, Themes.

⁶⁸ Ross, 243.

⁶⁹ Heslop, 65.

Israelites from neighbouring nations, signifying a division between a holy Israel and unholy Gentiles symbolically, making it difficult to socialize with them practically, distinguishing them in table manners at God's Table distinctively, being sanctified accordingly, preventing the Israelites to end up in idolatry.⁷⁰ Chapter 12 treats a woman's haemorrhage after giving birth signifies uncleanness because a flow of blood meant the loss of life which is incompatible with God, it's Source.⁷¹ Chapter 13 and 14 describe instructions on handling sores, burns and baldness, 15:1-18 a man's bodily discharges and 15:19-33 a woman's monthly period. One with a skin disease had to be banished from the camp where God resided in their midst, remembering Adam and Eve were expelled from God's nearness after sin (Gen.3:22-24). Only with sacrifices and after careful examination could he return to the congregation and nearness of God's Presence.⁷²

Yet, for every problem was divine provision. Every sin could be forgiven. The Israelites' failures were *also* met by God's provision, covered in the law of sacrifice and atonement.⁷³ Whereas chapters 11-15 reveal divine laws for purity, chapter 16 the necessity of the Day of Atonement.⁷⁴ *All* Israelites were regularly unclean, defiling God's holy sanctuary, His Presence among them (16:16). *Every* sin had to be accounted for or would meet divine judgment.⁷⁵ The rituals made the unclean clean and impure pure, the following blood sacrifice made the unholy holy.⁷⁶ The Day of Atonement provided God's means of reconciliation, signifying new beginnings after old trespasses.⁷⁷ It was "the climax and crown of Israel's

⁷⁰ Ross, pp. 250-251

⁷¹ Ross, pp. 266-268

⁷² NIV Study Bible, Themes.

⁷³ Ross, 18.

⁷⁴ Ross, pp. 285-312.

⁷⁵ Wenham 227.

⁷⁶ Ross, pp. 243-244.

theology of sanctification,” an important annual happening,⁷⁸ cleansing the sanctuary as warrant for God’s continued Presence.⁷⁹ Through the divinely appointed high priest Aäron the people entered God’s Presence. The blood of the sacrificed animal “was sprinkled on the mercy seat in the holy of holies” to make atonement for all Israelites, whose sins were placed on a scapegoat (Azazel) sent away to die in the wilderness, signifying the removal of sin and defilement.⁸⁰ The man taking away the goat might be someone personally in need of atonement, possibly “a criminal”, according to ancient customs of neighbouring nations.⁸¹

“The worse type of offense pollutes the sanctuary's innermost part. Only on the Day of Atonement can such an offense be purged.” It was all about “how to salve guilty consciences and deflect divine displeasure”. Though the “scapegoat-ritual” (*'äzä'zel* from *cöz*, "goat," and *'äzal*, "to go away") reflected an ancient Near East custom that might have crept into biblical theology, it was a “purely native, Israelite invention, a product of the nation's own narrative history and moral reflection”, part of the Lawgiver’s inventive Plan of redemption, in line with the Passover, possibly pointing back to the sin against Joseph (Gen.37).⁸²

*Part 4: Instructions for Holiness (Ch. 17-27), “The Holiness Code”.*⁸³

All people were called by God to be a holy priesthood (Ex.19:2, 5-6). “Faithful worshipers approach God with acceptable sacrifices” and “comply with the requirements of the holy God

⁷⁷ Ross, pp. 313.

⁷⁸ Ross, 314.

⁷⁹ Wenham, 228, and Walvoord, 195.

⁸⁰ Ross, pp. 313-314.

⁸¹ Raymond Westbrook and Theodore J.Lewis, *Who led the Scapegoat in Leviticus 16:21?* (ATLA: Journal of Biblical literature. 127, no. 3, 2008), pp. 417-422.

⁸² Carmichael, Calum M., *The Origin of the Scapegoat Ritual* (ATLA, New York: Vetus testamentum 50 no 2, 2000), pp. 167-182.

⁸³ Broadman, 46.

who sanctifies”.⁸⁴ How, then, does holiness become a lifestyle of obedience and what is it? Chapters 17-27 of Part 4 and 5 provide divine answers and moral instructions: through exhortations to holiness,⁸⁵ “God’s standard of holiness” teaching the Israelites how to be a distinct priesthood separated from neighbouring nations.⁸⁶ It addresses many diverse rules ranging from rituals and morals to festivals, covenant blessings and curses. Repetitively in this section, God states “I am the Lord [Yahweh] your God” (eg. Lev. 18:2).⁸⁷ Holiness is expressed by obedience. Leviticus 17 adds laws for sacrifice and eating meat,⁸⁸ Lev. 18-20 addresses “covenant morality” to not conform to “pagan practices” by restrictions on sexual relations and prohibition of sacrifice of children often practiced within idolatry (18),⁸⁹ laws regarding relations with neighbours practicing heavenly values to humans (19),⁹⁰ punishment upon disobedience (20), “laws for priestly and sacrificial holiness” as priests were to be living examples as spiritual leaders (21-22),⁹¹ laws regarding divine days and sacred seasons remembering God’s Presence and Provision that led from bondage to liberty (23),⁹² “ceremonial and moral regulations”, treating issues like blasphemy (24),⁹³ “special years” to

⁸⁴ Ross, pp. 391-393, 394.

⁸⁵ Ross, pp. 18-19.

⁸⁶ Walvoord, 198.

⁸⁷ Ross, 330.

⁸⁸ Walvoord, 198.

⁸⁹ Ross, pp. 339-340, 347, Walvoord, 200.

⁹⁰ Ross, pp. 351-352, Walvoord, 201.

⁹¹ Ross, pp. 381, 388.

⁹² Ross, pp. 408-428, 429, 433-434, Walvoord, 205.

⁹³ Ross, pp. 439-440, 444, 447, Walvoord, 208.

remember covenant values and appointed for new beginnings (25),⁹⁴ and covenant blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience (26).⁹⁵

Through many laws, the people were called to holiness, being distinct/set apart from and completely unlike their neighbouring nations. Leviticus 19:2 states this divine call and theme of Leviticus: “Be holy, because I, the Lord your God, am holy”,⁹⁶ and then discusses neighbourly love, “an obligation to act properly towards an individual” resembling the Decalogue, social issues like justice to all without oppression, being good to the poor and resident aliens. Love is more than affection, rather “proper treatment of fellow citizens” including correcting wrong behaviour as in Matthew 18:15-20. Mixing laws on rituals, morals and criminal activities makes loving God practical behaviour towards one’s neighbour, making religion public instead of private.⁹⁷ The Israelite had to “strive for holiness”, achieved by “proper ritual” and “ethical behaviour” described in this chapter. He was not allowed to “breed different animals”, “sow mixed seeds” or wear garments of such, or enter mixed marriages (19:19),⁹⁸ indicating 100% purity and distinctness. Eating of blood, considered by pagan religions to be a way to increase life, was forbidden.⁹⁹

The exhortations to holiness end with Leviticus 26, which can be divided twofold: God’s promise of blessings on obedience and allegiance (:1-13) and of His curses on disobedience and rebellion and the refusal of warning to repentance (:14-46), custom within

⁹⁴ Ross, pp. 450-452, 456-457, Walvoord, 210.

⁹⁵ Walvoord, 211.

⁹⁶ Walvoord, 164.

⁹⁷ Joel S. Kaminsky, *Loving One’s Neighbor: Election and Commandment in Leviticus 19* (ATLA: Interpretation. 62, no. 2, 2008), 125.

⁹⁸ Jacob Milgrom, *Law and Narrative and the Exegesis of Leviticus XIX 19*. (ATLA: Vetus Testamentum 46, no. 4, 1996), 546-547.

⁹⁹ The NIV Study Bible, note on Genesis 9:4.

ancient treaties.¹⁰⁰ Though the blessings are manifold, the curses also, expressed in five stages to the point of complete exile and rejection. All came to happen in the history of Israel. Some therefore question these portions to be rather “historical reflections” than prophetic predictions at the time given. Leviticus 26 emphasizes God’s just justice demanding judgment,¹⁰¹ and His faithfulness to do as He promised.

Divine laws warned against the sins of Canaanites and Egyptians. The Israelites were to be *completely* different in lifestyle, through obedience to divine rules and requirements. “Covenant loyalty” was the people’s first responsibility.¹⁰²

*Part 5: Redemption of Vows (Ch. 27), a supplementary section.*¹⁰³

Chapter 27 is an instruction to protect people against foolish vowing, anticipating something to happen which might never occur or what one cannot make true and to which there then is no way out, which should not have happened in the first place anyway. There is no clear reason why this chapter is added, but it divinely taught the Israelites to trust in divine Provision. I end with a quote from L. Goldberg that expresses complete and actual holiness:

“No true worship can end without presenting ourselves and our substance to the Lord, Who provides all our benefits”. Our worship is also expressed in our promises. Let us make them true, and fulfil thereby God’s Law: “Whatever your lips utter you must be sure to do” (Deut.23:23).¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁰ Wenham, pp. 29-31, 327.

¹⁰¹ Ross, pp. 466, 467-477.

¹⁰² Ross, pp. 368-369, 373.

¹⁰³ The Interpreter’s Bible, 3.

¹⁰⁴ Ross, pp. 488-489, 495.

Only when the Israelites were completely “set apart from the world, were they useful in God’s Plan to restore His blessing to the world, redemption”.¹⁰⁵ In no other book in the Scriptures, God so explicitly calls His people to be consecrated as in Leviticus (11:44-45, 19:2, 20:7, 26, 21:8,15, 22:9, 16:32). Yahweh was involved in *all* areas of the Israelites’ organization since they left Egypt: their devotion, leadership and “military forces”.¹⁰⁶ *All* of life was to be treated with a ceremonially 100% purity. God’s holiness calls His people to *fully* dedicate themselves, without reservations.¹⁰⁷ Paul exhorted the Romans to *wholly* offer up their natural bodies as spiritual sacrifices, indicating holiness being not only a spiritual state in an unseen realm, also an outward expression of the inward man (Rom.12:1). He viewed *every* believer a tabernacle destined for God’s Presence displaying His glory (1Cor.6:19-20, Eph.5:18).¹⁰⁸ The study of this book brings me back on my knees, to take God seriously in every aspect of my life, treating every minor detail as a major issue under the sanctifying magnifying glass of God’s holiness. It urges me to full Christlikeness, perfection (Matt. 5:48). I realize that being a leader means being a holy example (Lev.21:1-22:16). At the same time, I am confronted with my own weakness, and in need of God’s continual atonement in Jesus and inward circumcision. I must say that at times I feel like giving up on serving the Lord and preparing further for ministry, but I realize that I cannot hold back in being part of the divine priesthood (1Peter 2:9). The study of Leviticus urged me and burned in me a new desire to serve Him diligently.

¹⁰⁵ Ross, 18.

¹⁰⁶ The NIV Study Bible, section Title.

¹⁰⁷ The NIV Study Bible, note on 11:44.

¹⁰⁸ Wenham, 18.

Bibliography

Allen, Clifton J., *The Broadman Bible Commentary*, Nashville: Broadman Press, 1970.

Carmichael, Calum M., *The Origin of the Scapegoat Ritual*, ATLA, New York: Vetus testamentum 50 no 2, 2000.

Harrison, R.K., *The Tyndale Old Testament Commentary (Leviticus)*, Downer's Grove: InterVarsityPress, 1980.

Hartley, John E., *Word Biblical Commentary, Leviticus 1-27*, Dallas, TX: Word Books, Publisher, 1992.

Heslop, William G., *Lessons from Leviticus*, Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1975.

Kaminsky, Joel S., *Loving One's Neighbor: Election and Commandment in Leviticus 19* ATLA: Interpretation. 62, no. 2, 2008.

Kellogg, S.H., *The Book of Leviticus*, Minneapolis: Clock and Clock Christian Publishers, 1978.

Milgrom, Jacob, *Law and Narrative and the Exegesis of Leviticus XIX 19*, ATLA: Vetus Testamentum 46, no. 4, 1996.

Palmer, Edwin H., *The NIV Study Bible (Leviticus)*, Grand Rapids: The Zondervan Corporation, 1985.

Pierce and Washabaugh, *The Interpreter's Bible*, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1981.

Ross, Allen P., *Holiness to the Lord, A Guide to the Exposition of the Book of Leviticus*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002.

Walvoord, John F., and Roy B. Zuck, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary (Old Testament)*, Colorado Springs: Cook Communications Ministries, 2004.

Wenham, Gordon J. *The Book of Leviticus*, Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1979.

Westbrook, Raymond, and Theodore J. Lewis, *Who led the Scapegoat in Leviticus 16:21?*, ATLA: Journal of Biblical literature. 127, no. 3, 2008.