

Leviticus

Leviticus receives its name from the Septuagint (the pre-Christian Greek translation of the OT) and means "relating to the Levites." Its Hebrew title, is the first word in the Hebrew text of the book and means "And he [i.e., the Lord] called." Although Leviticus does not deal only with the special duties of the Levites, it is so named because it concerns mainly the service of worship at the tabernacle, which was conducted by the priests who were the sons of Aaron, assisted by many from the rest of the tribe of Levi. Exodus gave the directions for building the tabernacle, and now Leviticus gives the laws and regulations for worship there, including instructions on ceremonial cleanness, moral laws, holy days, the sabbath year and the Year of Jubilee. These laws were given, at least for the most part, during the year that Israel camped at Mount Sinai, when God directed Moses in organizing Israel's worship, government and military forces.

Theological Themes

Leviticus is a manual of regulations enabling the holy King to set up his earthly throne among the people of his kingdom. It explains how they are to be his holy people and to worship him in a holy manner. Holiness in this sense means to be separated from sin and set apart exclusively to the Lord for his purpose and for his glory. So the key thought of the book is holiness.

Outline

The subjects treated in Leviticus, as in any book of laws and regulations, cover several categories:

- The Five Main Offerings (chs. 1-7)
 - The Burnt Offering (ch. 1)
 - The Grain Offering (ch. 2)
 - The Fellowship Offering (ch. 3)
 - The Sin Offering (4:1;5:13)
 - The Guilt Offering (5:14;6:7)
 - Additional Regulations for the Offerings (6:8;7:38)
- The Installation and Ministry of Aaron and His Sons (chs. 8-10)

- The Ordination of Aaron and His Sons (ch. 8)
- The Ministry of the Priests (ch. 9)
- The Death of Nadab and Abihu and Attendant Regulations (ch. 10)
- The Distinction Between Clean and Unclean (chs. 11-15)
 - Clean and Unclean Food (ch. 11)
 - Purification After Childbirth (ch. 12)
 - Regulations for Skin Diseases (13:1-46)
 - Regulations for Mildew (13:47-59)
 - Cleansing from Skin Diseases (14:1-32)
 - Cleansing from Mildew (14:33-57)
 - Discharges That Cause Uncleaness (ch. 15)
- The Annual Day of Atonement (ch. 16)
- Holy Living (chs. 17-26)
 - Eating Blood Prohibited (ch. 17)
 - Unlawful Sexual Relations (ch. 18)
 - Various Laws for Holy Living (ch. 19)
 - Punishments for Sin (ch. 20)
 - Regulations for Priests (21:1;22:16)
 - Acceptable and Unacceptable Sacrifices (22:17-33)
 - The Annual Feasts (ch. 23)
 - Rules for Oil and Bread in the Tabernacle (24:1-9)
 - Punishment for Blasphemy (24:10-23)
 - The Sabbath and Jubilee Years (ch. 25)
 - Covenant Blessings and Curses (ch. 26)
- Regulations for Offerings Vowed to the Lord (ch. 27)