OLD TESTAMENT · THE LAW · BOOK 3 OF 66

Leviticus

Ye shall be holy: for I the LORD your God am holy (19:2)

27	Moses	c. 1445 B.C.	Holy
Chapters, 859 Verses	Author	At Mount Sinai	Sacrifice, Priest, Holiness

STRUCTURE

The Book in Four Parts

Leviticus has two halves: **the way to God** by sacrifice and priesthood (1–16), ending with the Day of Atonement, and **the walk with God** in holiness (17–27).



Each bar shows that part's share of the 859 verses.

I 1–7 · 172 verses

The Offerings

Burnt, meat, peace, sin and trespass offerings.

II 8–10 · 80 verses

The Priests

Aaron and his sons consecrated; fire from the LORD; Nadab and Abihu.

III 11–16 · 238 verses

Atonement

Clean and unclean, leprosy, and the Day of Atonement.

IV 17–27 · 369 verses

Be Ye Holy

Holy living, the feasts, the jubile, blessings and curses, and vows.

WHERE AND WHEN

One Month at Mount Sinai

Leviticus has no journey. Israel stays camped before Mount Sinai while the LORD speaks from the tabernacle.

EXODUS 40:17

The Tabernacle Set Up

First month, second year after the exodus

1:1

The LORD Calls

He speaks out of the tabernacle of the congregation

27:34

In Mount Sinai

Every law given at Sinai

NUMBERS 1:1

The Next Month

Second month: Israel is numbered

> *"And the LORD called unto Moses, and spake unto him out of the tabernacle of the congregation."*
>
> Leviticus 1:1 (KJV)

LEVITICUS 1–7

The Five Offerings

Each offering showed a different side of coming to God. The first three were "a sweet savour"; the last two dealt with sin.

1 1; 6:8–13

Burnt Offering

All burned on the altar: complete surrender to God. A bullock, sheep, goat, or birds for the poor.

2 2; 6:14–23

Meat Offering

Fine flour, oil, frankincense and salt, with no leaven: thanks for God's provision.

3 3; 7:11–34

Peace Offering

Shared by God, the priest and the worshipper: fellowship and thanksgiving.

4 4:1–5:13; 6:24–30

Sin Offering

For sins "through ignorance," by priest, congregation, ruler or common people.

5 5:14–6:7; 7:1–10

Trespass Offering

For wrongs that could be repaid: restore it and add a fifth part more.

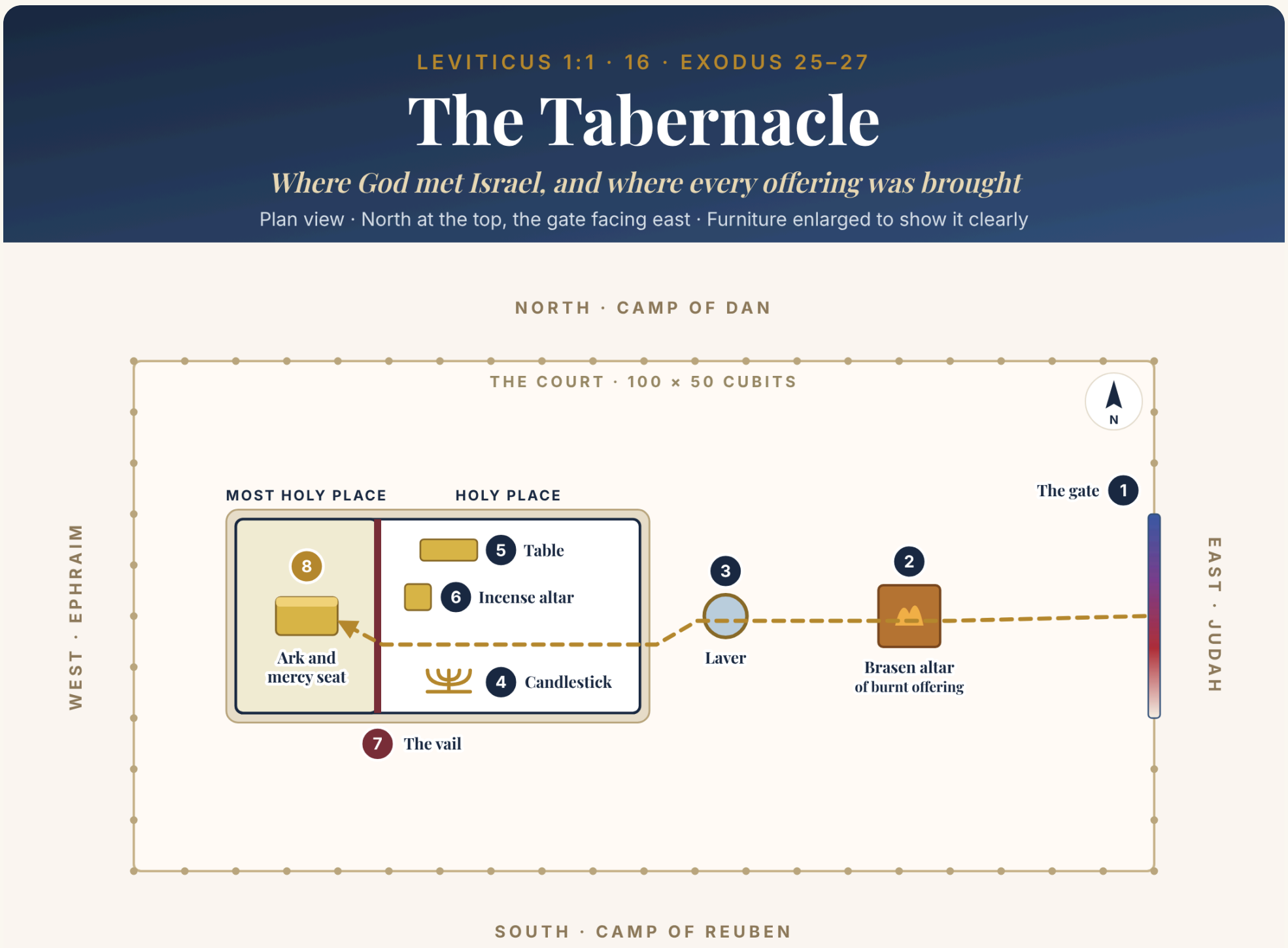
> *"And he shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt offering; and it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him."*
>
> Leviticus 1:4 (KJV)

The Tabernacle Where God Met Israel

DIAGRAM

The Tabernacle Where God Met Israel

Every offering in Leviticus was brought to the tabernacle. The numbers on the plan match the cards below, from the gate on the east to the mercy seat.



The way in on the Day of Atonement
Once a year, the high priest alone, with blood (16:2, 14)

The vail
Rent from top to bottom when Jesus died (Matthew 27:51)

"And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat."

EXODUS 25:22 (KJV)

BibleStudyForAll.com · Scripture from the King James Version

1 EXODUS 27:16

The Gate of the Court

One way in, on the east side, facing the camp of Judah.

2 1:5; 6:13

The Brasen Altar

The altar of burnt offering, where every sacrifice was offered; its fire never went out.

3 8:6; EXODUS 30:18–21

The Laver

A basin of brass where the priests washed before they served.

4 24:1–4

The Candlestick

Seven lamps of pure gold, kept burning before the LORD continually.

5 24:5–9

The Table of Shewbread

Twelve loaves, one for each tribe, set out fresh every sabbath.

6 4:7; 16:12–13

The Altar of Incense

A golden altar before the vail; its sweet incense rose before the LORD.

7 16:2

The Vail

The curtain before the most holy place, opened only on the Day of Atonement.

8 16:14–15

The Ark and the Mercy Seat

Where the blood of atonement was sprinkled, and where God appeared in the cloud.

The court was 100 cubits long and 50 wide (about 150 by 75 feet); the tabernacle 30 cubits by 10 (Exodus 26–27). When Jesus died, "the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom" (Mark 15:38).

Priests for the People, Clean and Unclean

LEVITICUS 8–10

Priests for the People

Aaron and his sons stood between a holy God and the people, offering the sacrifices and teaching God's law.

1 8:6–13

Washed, Clothed, Anointed

Moses washed them, dressed Aaron in the holy garments and poured the anointing oil on his head.

2 8:22–24

Ear, Thumb and Toe

Blood on the right ear, thumb and great toe: hearing, working and walking for God.

3 8:33–35

Seven Days

They stayed at the door of the tabernacle day and night for seven days.

4 9:22–24

Fire from the LORD

The glory of the LORD appeared, and fire consumed the offering on the altar.

5 10:1–3

Strange Fire

Nadab and Abihu offered fire He had not commanded, and died before the LORD.

6 10:10–11

Teachers of the Law

To put difference between holy and unholy, and teach Israel all the statutes.

> *"I will be sanctified in them that come nigh Me, and before all the people I will be glorified."*
>
> Leviticus 10:3 (KJV)

LEVITICUS 11–15

Clean and Unclean

These laws taught Israel every day that God is holy and that His people must be set apart from what defiles.

11

Food

Beasts that part the hoof and chew the cud; fish with fins and scales; certain birds and insects.

12

Childbirth

A burnt offering and a sin offering; the poor brought two turtledoves or pigeons (Luke 2:24).

13–14

Leprosy

The priest examined it; the leper dwelt "without the camp" until he was healed and cleansed.

15

The Body

Washing and waiting until even, that Israel "die not in their uncleanness" (15:31).

> *"For I am the LORD that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy."*
>
> Leviticus 11:45 (KJV)

In the New Testament God declared all meats clean (Mark 7:19; Acts 10:15), but the lesson remains: "Be ye holy; for I am holy" (1 Peter 1:16).

The Day of Atonement and Holy Living

LEVITICUS 16

The Day of Atonement

The holiest day of Israel's year: the tenth day of the seventh month. On this one day the high priest went within the vail.

1 16:4
Holy Linen
Aaron washed and put on plain linen garments.

2 16:6, 11
A Bullock for Himself
First the high priest made atonement for himself and his house.

3 16:7–10
Two Goats
Lots were cast: one goat for the LORD, one for the scapegoat.

4 16:12–15
Within the Vail
Incense, then blood sprinkled upon the mercy seat and before it.

5 16:20–22
The Scapegoat
Israel's sins confessed over the live goat, sent away into the wilderness.

6 16:27
Without the Camp
The bodies of the sin offerings burned outside the camp.

> *"For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the LORD."*
>
> Leviticus 16:30 (KJV)

LEVITICUS 17–22

Be Ye Holy

Holiness is not only for the tabernacle. Chapter 19 shows it in the field, the home, the market and the courtroom.

17:11
The Blood
"The life of the flesh is in the blood": given on the altar to make atonement.

19:3
Home
Fear thy mother and thy father, and keep My sabbaths.

19:9–10
The Field
Leave the corners and gleanings for the poor and stranger.

19:13
Work
Pay the hired servant before morning.

19:32
The Aged
"Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head."

19:35–36
Business
Just balances, just weights: no cheating.

LEVITICUS 19:18
The Second Great Commandment
"Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the LORD." Jesus said this is "like unto" the first (Matthew 22:39).

LEVITICUS AT A GLANCE · PART 5 OF 5

The Feasts, the Jubile, Christ in Leviticus and Key Themes

LEVITICUS 23

The Feasts of the LORD

Seven yearly feasts, plus the weekly sabbath, set Israel's calendar around remembering and rejoicing before God.

1 23:5
Passover
1st month, 14th day: the night of the exodus.

2 23:6–8
Unleavened Bread
Seven days without leaven.

3 23:10–14
Firstfruits
The first sheaf of the harvest waved before the LORD.

4 23:15–21
Weeks
Fifty days later: the wheat harvest (Pentecost).

5 23:24–25
Trumpets
7th month, 1st day: a memorial of blowing of trumpets.

6 23:27–32
Day of Atonement
7th month, 10th day: "ye shall afflict your souls."

7 23:34–43
Tabernacles
7th month, 15th day: seven days in booths, rejoicing.

The spring feasts point to Christ: "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us" (1 Corinthians 5:7), and He is "the firstfruits of them that slept" (1 Corinthians 15:20). The Spirit was poured out at Pentecost, the feast of weeks (Acts 2:1).

LEVITICUS 25

The Sabbath Year and the Jubile

Time itself belonged to the LORD, and so did the land.

25:2–7
Every Seventh Year
The land rested: no sowing or pruning.

25:8–12
Every Fiftieth Year
The trumpet sounded on the Day of Atonement: the jubile.

25:13, 39–41
Liberty
Land returned to its family; Hebrew bondmen set free.

> *"And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof."*
>
> Leviticus 25:10 (KJV)

Jesus read in Nazareth that He was sent "to preach deliverance to the captives … To preach the acceptable year of the Lord" (Luke 4:18–19).

LOOKING FORWARD

Christ in Leviticus

The book of Hebrews explains Leviticus: the sacrifices and the priesthood were a shadow, and Christ is the substance.

HEBREWS 10:4, 10
The Perfect Sacrifice
"we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all"

HEBREWS 4:14
The Great High Priest
"we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God"

HEBREWS 9:12
The Day of Atonement Fulfilled
"by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us"

HEBREWS 10:19–20
The Vail Opened
"boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way"

JOHN 1:29
The Lamb Without Blemish
"Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world"

HEBREWS 13:12
Without the Gate
"Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate"

"Without shedding of blood is no remission" (Hebrews 9:22): Leviticus 17:11 is the reason, and the cross is the answer.

BIG IDEAS

Key Themes

Holiness
God is holy, and His people must be holy.
11:44–45; 19:2; 20:26

Sacrifice
Sin is forgiven through the blood of a substitute.
1:4; 4:20; 17:11

Atonement
God provides a covering for sin and cleansing.
16:30, 34

Priesthood
A mediator stands between God and the people.
8–9; 16:32–33

God's Presence
The LORD dwells and walks among His people.
9:23; 26:11–12

Clean and Unclean
A daily lesson in separation from sin.
10:10; 11:47

Love Thy Neighbour
Holiness shows in justice and kindness to others.
19:9–18, 33–36

Worship and Feasts
The year is ordered around remembering God.
23:2, 4

Covenant Faithfulness
Blessing for obedience; mercy for those who confess.
26:3–13, 40–45

KEY VERSE

"Speak unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say unto them, Ye shall be holy: for I the LORD your God am holy."

Leviticus 19:2 (KJV)