

# LEVITICUS – PART 2

One of the most unread books in the Bible

## Levites & Sacrifices

# Bible Study Aims

To present the “big picture” about:

- **GOD**
  - Character, Vision, Mission, Values
  - Strategy (Way)
    - CREATION
    - REDEMPTION
    - SANCTIFICATION
    - RESTORATION
    - GLORIFICATION
- **MANKIND**
  - ROLE – Worship & Service
  - WAY, TRUTH, LIFE



# PART 1 - REMINDER

## PART 1: SACRIFICES

### HOLY SACRIFICES TO A HOLY GOD

(all about Public Worship)

## **OFFERINGS – SESSION 1 OF 3 ([Leviticus 1-7](#))**

To maintain fellowship ([Leviticus 1-3](#))

Burnt offering ([Leviticus 1](#))

Grain offering ([Leviticus 2](#))

Peace offering ([Leviticus 3](#))

To restore fellowship ([Leviticus 4:1-6:7](#))

Sin offering ([Leviticus 4:1-5:13](#))

Guilt offering ([Leviticus 5:14-6:7](#))

Further regulations for the offerings ([Leviticus 6:8-7:38](#))

**PART 2:**  
**HOLY LIVING BEFORE A HOLY**  
**GOD**

**PRIESTS – SESSION 1 OF 2 ([Leviticus 8-10](#))**

Moses consecrates Aaron and his sons ([Leviticus 8](#))

Aaron and his sons begin their priesthood ([Leviticus 9](#))

Nadab and Abihu ([Leviticus 10](#))

- Remember, in this book, God establishes specific laws for His people that would set them apart as a kingdom of priests with whom God dwells.
- If the entire nation is to be a holy priesthood, then the priests of this nation are called to an even greater level of holiness. So, Leviticus sets out even more stringent requirements for the Levite priests. In Chapters 6-10 and 21-22, God lays out laws of purity for the priests, such as avoiding all dead bodies, limitations on marriage, prohibition on “imperfect” priests, and stringent requirements for the family of priests. To emphasize the seriousness of these stipulations, when they failed this, often they were killed, as were Aaron's sons, Nadab and Abihu (10:1-3)

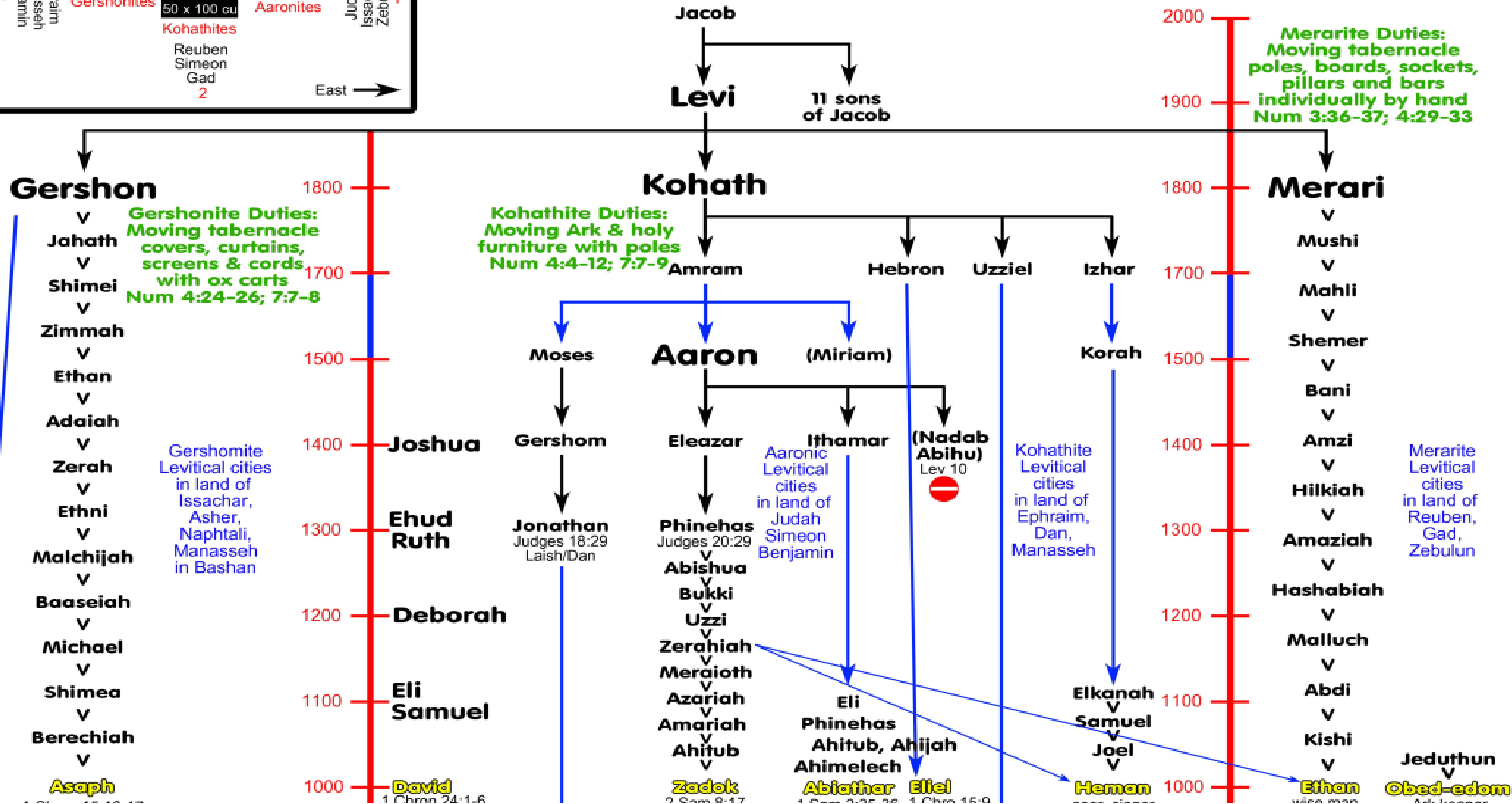
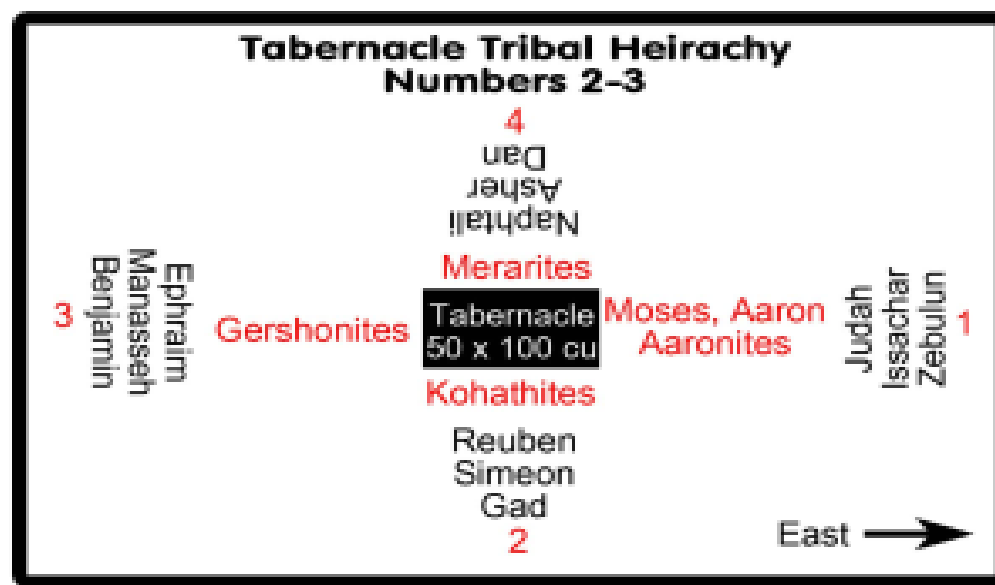
# Tabernacle Tribal Heirachy Numbers 2-3

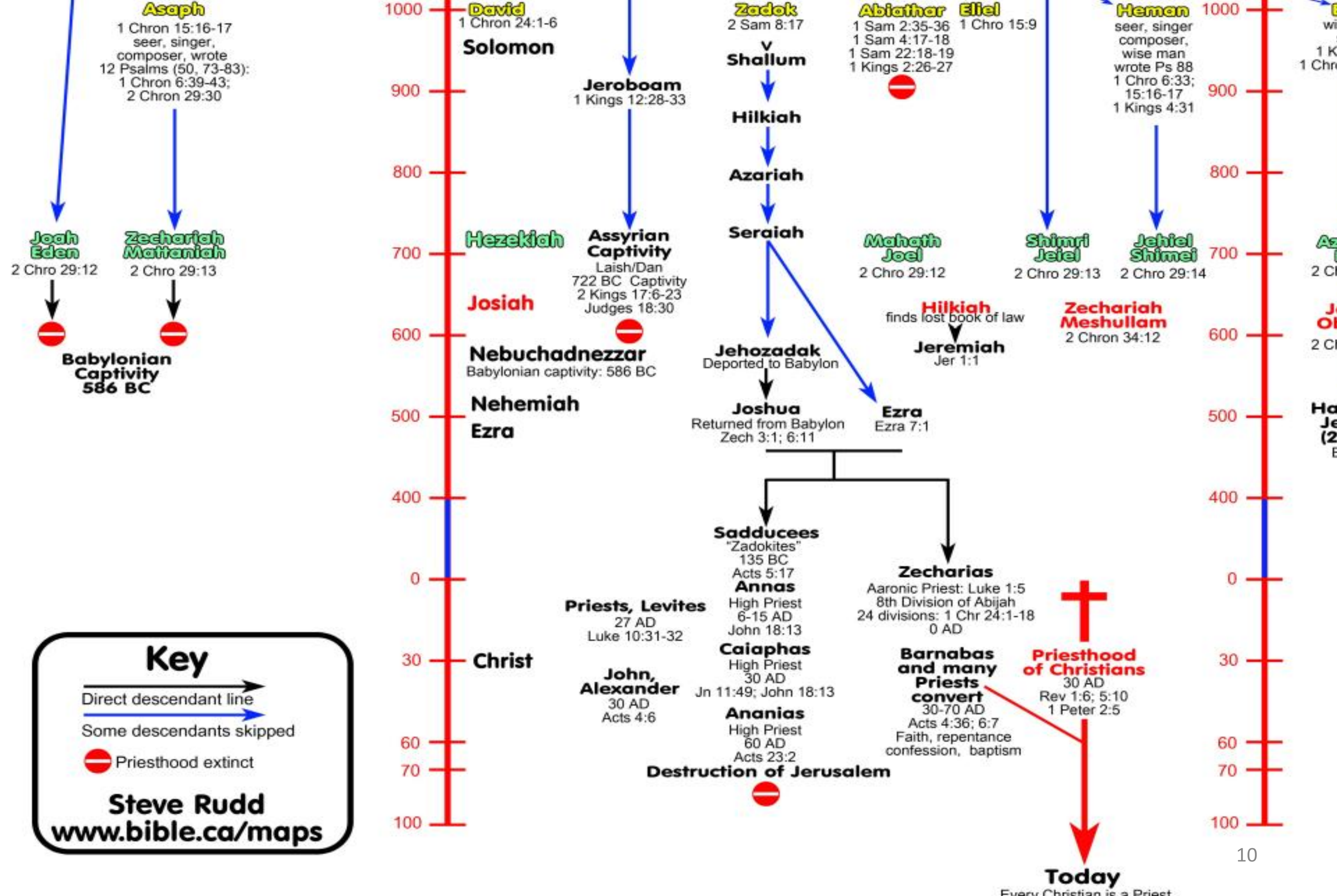




# The Levitical Priesthood

Ex 6:16-20  
1 Chron 6:1-30







- Definition: A priest is one authorized to perform the sacred rites of a religion, especially a mediator between man and God." (Webster)
- The origin of dedicated priests is uncertain.
- Melchizedek, King of Salem was a priest of God (Gen. 14:18)
- Moses' father-in-law, Jethro, was priest of Midian. (Exodus 4:1)
- There were priests among the Israelites when they came out of Egypt. (Exodus 19:22, 24)
- There were false priests who served false gods:
  - Priest of Midian (Exodus 18:1)
  - Priests of On (Genesis 41:45)
  - Priests of Dagon (1 Samuel 5:5)
  - Priests of the high places (1 Kings 12:32)
  - Priests "of them that are no gods." (2 Chronicles 13:9)
- At Mount Sinai, God designated Aaron and his descendants to serve as priests. (Exodus 28:1, 44; 30:30; 40:13-15; Numbers 3:3)
- All priests were Levites, but not all Levites were priests.
- Only those designated could perform priestly duties.
  - Not other Levites (Numbers 16:1-3; 1-10; 10:1-3)
  - Not even Moses or his descendants (1 Chronicles 23:13)
  - Not anyone other than Aaron and his descendants (Numbers 16:40)



## QUALIFICATIONS FOR PRIESTLY SERVICE:

- Must be a male (Exodus 28:1)
  - Must be a descendant of Aaron (Exodus 28:1) with a documented lineage.
  - Must be between 30 and 50 years old. (Numbers 4:3)
  - Must be unblemished (not lame or blind). (Lev. 21:16-23)
  - Must have a proper marriage. (Leviticus 21:9, 14)
    - Not married to a harlot.
    - Not married to a divorced woman.
    - Not married to a widow other than a priest's widow. (Ezekiel 44:22)
    - The high priest must marry a virgin of his own people.
  - Must have no uncleanness (leprosy, etc.). (Lev. 22:3-9)
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- Must have an untrimmed beard with well trimmed (but unshaved) hair. (Ezekiel 4:20; Leviticus 21:5)
  - Must be properly dressed. (Exo. 28:1-4; Ezekiel 44:17-19)



## ■ DUTIES OF THE PRIEST

- Teach the people. (Leviticus 10:8-11)
- Serve as judges to resolve controversy. (Deut. 21:5)
- Offer sacrifices. (Exodus 29:38-42)
- Assess impurity. (Leviticus 13-15)
- Burn incense. (Exodus 30:7-8)
- Bless the people. (Numbers 6:22-27)
- Bless God (Deuteronomy 10:8)
- Keep the tabernacle. (Numbers 3:38; 4:16)
- Take care of the altar (Leviticus 6:8-13), the lamps, and the showbread (Leviticus 24:1-9)
- Prepare the holy things for each days journey. (Num. 4:5-15)
- Continue the sacred fire. (Leviticus 6:12-13)
- Blow the trumpets. (Numbers 10:1-10)

## ■ THE HIGH PRIESTS

- Also called the chief priest. (2 Chronicles 19:11)
- God's leader over the priests.
- Aaron served as the first High Priest. (Exodus 40:12-13)
- Aaron's son, Eleazer, replaced him as High Priest when he died. (Numbers 20:26-28)
- The position of high priests continued through the time of Christ (Matthew 26:3 and apparently to the time of the destruction of the temple by the Romans in 70 A.D.

## ■ DUTIES OF THE HIGH PRIEST

- Direct the work of the priests & Levites. (Numbers 3:4)
- Inquire of the Lord. (Judges 20:28)
- Consecration of the priests. (Exodus 29:1-37)
- Maintain the golden candlestand with its fire. (Lev. 24:1-4)
- Burning incense daily (Exodus 30:7-8), and in a special way on the Day of Atonement. (Leviticus 16:2, 12-13)
- Offering sacrifices on the Day of Atonement. (Hebrews 5:1; Leviticus 23:6, 11, 15, 20)

**Leviticus 8:1-36** *Aaron and sons: Anointed along with the altar.* Moses interrupts his recitation of laws to report the ordination of Aaron and his sons as priests. After being clothed with priestly garments, Aaron and his sons—along with the Tabernacle and altar—were anointed with oil. A bull and ram were killed as a sin and burnt offering for Aaron and his sons. The ram's blood was smeared on the priests' right earlobes, their right thumbs, and their right big toes. A "wave offering" (see exposition on <sup>§</sup>[Exodus 29:1-28](#)) was presented next. As a final act of consecration, Moses sprinkled blood and oil on Aaron and his sons.

The consecration ceremonies were to last for seven days, during which time Aaron and his sons were to remain inside the Tabernacle.

**Leviticus 9:1-24** *At the first sacrifice: He raises his hands, and the fire falls.* As the priests began their ministry, Moses commanded the people to bring their various offerings to the altar, so that God's glory might be seen. Aaron provided the example by sacrificing a calf for his own sin. Then he blessed the people, the glory of God appeared, and the fire fell from heaven and consumed the offering (see [1 Kings 18:38](#)).



**Leviticus 10:1-7** *Their apostate fire brings his angry fire.* Two of Aaron's sons, Nadab and Abihu, offered unauthorized fire before the altar. Fire from God immediately consumed both of them. God permitted Israel to mourn the deaths of these two apostates, but forbade Aaron and his remaining two sons, Eleazar and Ithamar, to do so. As God's representatives, they were to identify themselves with his wrath.

**Leviticus 10:8-11** *"No drinking while on duty."* Following the death of Nadab and Abihu, God told Aaron that, on pain of death, no priest was to drink wine or strong drink when going into the Tabernacle. This was to help them "distinguish between what is holy and what is ordinary."

**Leviticus 10:12-20** *Their uncle is upset, till their father explains.* After reviewing some of the priestly duties with Aaron and his remaining sons, Eleazar and Ithamar, Moses became angry concerning how his nephews had conducted the sin offering. Aaron explained that they were not deliberately disobeying God, but were afraid because of what had just happened to their brothers. Moses seemed satisfied with that explanation.

**ORDERLY LIVING – SESSION 1 OF 2 ([Leviticus 11-15](#))**

Uncleanness from food ([Leviticus 11](#))

Uncleanness from childbirth ([Leviticus 12](#))

Uncleanness from diseases ([Leviticus 13-15](#))

[Leviticus 11:1-47](#) *A special diet for a special people.* After the events of [Leviticus 8-10](#), the recitation of laws continues with a list of permitted and forbidden foods—designated here and elsewhere in Scripture as "clean" and "unclean" animals. The Israelites could eat any animal with cloven hooves that chewed its cud, or any fish that had fins and scales. 20 birds were listed that could not be eaten. If someone touched an unclean animal, he was to wash his clothes and quarantine himself for 24 hours. (see exposition on [§Deut. 14:3-21](#)) These regulations were given to keep the Israelites clean. God was holy, and he wanted his people to be holy. While the dietary laws are no longer in force ([Acts 10:9-16](#); [Mark 7:19](#)), God still wants his people to be holy (see [1 Peter 1:16](#), which quotes [Leviticus 11:44](#)).

- Chapter 11 deals with laws regarding eating animals of land, sea, and air [which are “clean” and “unclean”]
- Chapter 12 deals with cleansing after childbirth
- Chapters 13 and 14 deal with the subject of leprosy. The term not only includes a number of skin diseases, but even types of mold and fungi appearing on garments and in houses.
- The 15th chapter of Leviticus relates to sexual pollutions associated with various secretions and issues.


# Unclean Food Under Old Testament Law

## LEVITICUS 11:1-47

- Camel (4)
- Coney (5)
- Rabbit (6)
- Pig (7)
- Water creatures having  
no fins or scales (10)
- Eagle (13)
- Ossifrage (13)
- Osprey (13)
- Vulture (14)
- Kite (14)
- Raven (15)
- Owl (16)
- Night hawk (16)
- Cuckoo (16)
- The little owl (17)
- Cormorant (17)
- Great owl (17)
- Swan (18)
- Pelican (18)
- Gier eagle (18)
- Stork (19)
- Heron (19)
- Lapwing (19)
- Bat (19)
- Winged creatures with  
four jointed legs (23)
- Weasel (29)
- Mouse (29)
- Tortoise (29)
- Ferret (30)
- Chameleon (30)
- Lizard (30)
- Snail (30)
- Mole (30)

## DEUTERONOMY 14:1-21

- Camel (7)
- Coney (7)
- Rabbit (7)
- Pig (8)
- Water creatures having  
no fins or scales (10)
- Eagle (12)
- Ossifrage (12)
- Osprey (12)
- Glede (13)
- Kite (13)
- Vulture (13)
- Raven (14)
- Owl (15)
- Night hawk (15)
- Cuckoo (15)
- Hawk (15)
- The little owl (16)
- Great owl (16)
- Swan (16)
- Pelican (17)
- Gier eagle (17)
- Cormorant (17)
- Stork (18)
- Heron (18)
- Lapwing (18)
- Bat (18)
- Flying insects that  
swarm (19)
- Anything that died  
a natural  
death (21)
- A goat in its  
mother's milk (21)

 "This is the law of the animals and the birds and every living creature that moves in the waters, and of every creature that creeps on the earth, to distinguish between the unclean and the clean, and between the animal that may be eaten and the animal that may not be eaten." Leviticus 11:46-47

**Leviticus 12:1-8** *Uncleanness from childbirth.* Though Scripture portrays childbirth as joyous, because of the Fall it also marks the birth of a sinner ([Psalm 51:5](#)). Therefore, the new mother was considered ceremonially unclean. If the child was male, the uncleanness lasted for seven days, the baby was circumcised on the eighth day, and the mother's time of purification would continue for another 33 days. If the baby was female, the time of uncleanness and purification was doubled.



**Leviticus 13:1-46** *Uncleanness from leprosy.* Anyone suspected of having leprosy was to be brought to the priest for a diagnosis (see [Matthew 8:1-4](#)). Procedures were given for determining whether or not a sore was leprous. A leper had to live outside the camp and make his condition known whenever he went out in public. If the diagnosis was uncertain, the person was quarantined for seven days for a closer examination.

**Leviticus 13:47-59** *Mildew on clothes.* Regulations were also strict concerning "infectious mildew" on clothing ([Leviticus 13:47](#)). If the mildew did not fade or disappear after washing, the clothes were to be burned.

**Leviticus 14:1-32** *Ceremonial cleansing of healed lepers.* If the leper recovered, the priest would kill a clean bird and dip a living bird in its blood, sprinkling this blood seven times on the cured leper. The leper would then wash his or her clothes, bathe, and fulfill other prescribed rituals.

**Leviticus 14:33-57** *Mildew in houses.* "Infectious mildew" in houses ([Leviticus 14:34](#)), or dry rot, was also viewed with great concern. The house was first to be emptied. If evidence of mildew was seen on a wall, that wall was to be removed and the other walls scraped. If the mildew disappeared, a ceremony of cleansing was performed, just as for a cured leper. If the signs continued, however, the entire house was destroyed.

**Leviticus 15:1-33** *Sexual uncleanness.* Any genital discharge caused a man to be ceremonially unclean, along with any object or person he touched. The ceremonial cleansing lasted seven days, beginning with the man washing his clothes and bathing in running water, and ending with an offering. In the case of women, the prescribed cleansing depended on whether or not the discharge was due to her menstrual period ([Leviticus 15:19](#)).

**OFFERINGS – SESSION 2 OF 3 ([Leviticus 16-17](#))**

Day of Atonement ([Leviticus 16](#))

Rules for sacrificing and eating meat ([Leviticus 17](#))

[Leviticus 16:1-34](#) *The Day of Atonement*. While various sacrifices were prescribed for various individual sins, the tenth day of the seventh month was a special day for Israel: On that day the high priest would enter the Most Holy Place and atone for the sins of the entire nation.

Aaron was not to enter the Most Holy Place except on the Day of Atonement. Before entering, he was to offer a sin offering and burnt offering for himself, then bathe and properly clothe himself (preachers need to be saved and cleansed too!).

Two goats were selected by lot, the one to be sacrificed as a sin offering and the other to serve as a "scapegoat." Aaron was to sprinkle the blood of a bull and goat seven times on the mercy seat, then lay hands on the scapegoat and confess all the sins of Israel. The scapegoat was then led outside the camp and released in the wilderness, symbolically carrying away the sins of the people.

As the priests performed the ceremonies of atonement, the people were to spend the day in quiet self-examination and humility, commemorating God's cleansing from sin. The Day of Atonement (Hebrew *Yom Kippurim*) cleansed Israel from all their sins; the word *all* occurs nine times in [chapter 16](#) in this regard. But the forgiveness lasted only until the next Day of Atonement ([Hebrews 10:3-4](#)). Yet it looked forward to Christ's once-for-all sacrifice of himself ([Hebrews 7:20-28](#); [Hebrews 10:11-14](#)). [Isaiah 53:6](#) depicts Jesus as the scapegoat who bears away the sins of all who believe in him.

- Chapter 16 describes the regulations for the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) and details the provision God has made for dealing with all sin in His people, whether known or unknown.
- It was the one day of the year when the high priest would actually enter the holy of holies, dressed not in his garments of beauty and glory but in simple white linen undergarments, which spoke of humility and weakness.
- It was and remains the only day of commanded fasting on the Jewish calendar. Modern Jews still regard Yom Kippur as an important day of fasting, soul searching, and righting wrongs - yet they offer no sacrifice for sin.



- There he offered incense for himself, the blood of a bull for his priestly household and finally, the blood of a goat as a sin offering for the people.
- The blood of this sin offering had to be sprinkled on the mercy seat, which was the lid to the ark of the covenant

- According to Jewish tradition, it was on the Day of Atonement that the high priest - and only the high priest - could pronounce the name of God, the sacred Tetragrammaton YHWH.
- When he entered the Holy Place with the blood of the goat set apart to the LORD, he would utter the name. He was the only one, and that was the only time, when the name could be uttered, and the high priest was to pass on the exact pronunciation of the name of God to his successor with his dying breath.

- Upon the head of a second living goat, known as the “scapegoat” all the sins of the people were confessed and symbolically placed, and the goat was led away into the wilderness.
- This was a perfect demonstration of atonement under the Old Covenant, before the completed work of Jesus on the cross. Sin could be put away, but never really eliminated. The sin-bearing goat, bearing the sin of Israel, was alive somewhere but put away.

- Every year, year after year, this atonement had to be made, showing it was never completed.
- In contrast, Jesus provided a finished work: *“For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.”* (Heb 9:24-28)

# Preparations for Entry

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<sup>3</sup> Aaron shall enter the holy place with this: with a bull for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering.

<sup>4</sup> He shall put on the holy linen tunic, and the linen undergarments shall be next to his body, and he shall be girded with the linen sash, and attired with the linen turban (these are holy garments). Then he shall bathe his body in water and put them on. (Leviticus 16:3-4)

# Preparations for Entry

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<sup>5</sup> And he shall take from the congregation of the sons of Israel two male goats for a sin offering and one ram for a burnt offering. <sup>6</sup> Then Aaron shall offer the bull for the sin offering which is for himself, that he may make atonement for himself and for his household. (Leviticus 16:6)

# The Pair of Goats

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- 7 And he shall take the two goats and present them before the LORD at the doorway of the tent of meeting.
- 8 And Aaron shall cast lots for the two goats, one lot for the LORD and the other lot for the scapegoat.
- 9 Then Aaron shall offer the goat on which the lot for the LORD fell, and make it a sin offering. (Leviticus 16:7-9).

# The Pair of Goats

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<sup>10</sup> But the goat on which the lot for the scapegoat fell, shall be presented alive before the LORD, to make atonement upon it, to send it into the wilderness as the scapegoat.  
(Leviticus 16:10).







# The Place of Mercy

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<sup>14</sup> Moreover, he shall take some of the blood of the bull and sprinkle *it* with his finger on the mercy seat on the east *side*; also in front of the mercy seat he shall sprinkle some of the blood with his finger seven times.  
(Leviticus 16:14).

# The Place of Mercy

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<sup>15</sup> Then he shall slaughter the goat of the sin offering which is for the people, and bring its blood inside the veil, and do with its blood as he did with the blood of the bull, and sprinkle it on the mercy seat and in front of the mercy seat. (Leviticus 16:15).



# The Presence of One

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<sup>17</sup> When he goes in to make atonement in the holy place, no one shall be in the tent of meeting until he comes out, that he may make atonement for himself and for his household and for all the assembly of Israel. (Leviticus 16:17).

# The Passing of the Goat

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<sup>21</sup> Then Aaron shall lay both of his hands on the head of the live goat, and confess over it all the iniquities of the sons of Israel, and all their transgressions in regard to all their sins; and he shall lay them on the head of the goat and send *it* away into the wilderness by the hand of a man who *stands* in readiness. (Leviticus 16:21).

# The Passing of the Goat

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<sup>22</sup> And the goat shall bear on itself all their iniquities to a solitary land; and he shall release the goat in the wilderness.  
(Leviticus 16:22).



**Leviticus 17:1-16** *Rules for sacrificing and eating meat.* To offer up animal sacrifices at any place except the Tabernacle was considered murder, resulting in excommunication for the guilty party ([Leviticus 17:1-9](#)). Excommunication was also the penalty for eating blood, because the life of the flesh is in the blood, and it is the blood that makes atonement for sin ([Leviticus 17:10-14](#)). The penalty was less severe if the person unknowingly consumed the blood of an animal that had died a natural death or had been killed by another animal ([Leviticus 17:15-16](#)).

**ORDERLY LIVING – SESSION 2 OF 2 ([Leviticus 18-20](#))**

Laws of sexual morality ([Leviticus 18](#))

Various laws and penalties ([Leviticus 19-20](#))



- Scholars often refer to chapters 17—26 as the Holiness Code.
- Leviticus 17—26 has been called the Holiness Code because of the frequency of the occurrence of the phrase, attributed to Yahweh: *'You shall be holy because I am holy.'*
- One other phrase is characteristic of these chapters: *'I am Yahweh'* (sometimes *'I am Yahweh your God'*)."

- Chapter 17 deals with the sanctity of blood
- Many are offended by the amount of blood involved in the Old Testament sacrifices, but by this means God is telling us that the basis for holiness is a life given up, that we can never be holy on the basis of our natural life.
- The Israelites were forbidden to eat blood but must remember that it is the symbol of life and the constant reminder of the need for atonement.

- Chapter 18 deals with laws of sexual morality
- The New Testament writers restated the laws on incest (cf. 1 Cor. 5:1-5), adultery (cf. Rom. 13:9), idolatry (cf 1 Cor. 10:7-11; Rev. 2:14), and homosexuality (cf. Rom. 1:27; 1 Cor. 6:9). They are binding on us who live under the New Covenant.

# God's summation of all deviant sexual practices:

- *“Defile not ye yourselves in any of these things: for in all these the nations are defiled which I cast out before you: And the land is defiled: therefore I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it, and the land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants. Ye shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgments, and shall not commit any of these abominations; neither any of your own nation, nor any stranger that sojourneth among you: (For all these abominations have the men of the land done, which were before you, and the land is defiled;) That the land spew not you out also, when ye defile it, as it spewed out the nations that were before you. For whosoever shall commit any of these abominations, even the souls that commit them shall be cut off from among their people. Therefore shall ye keep mine ordinance, that ye commit not any one of these abominable customs, which were committed before you, and that ye defile not yourselves therein: I am the LORD your God. “(Lev 18:24-30)*

- Chapter 19 is a section of general ethical prescriptions and has been called the highest development of ethics in the Old Testament.
- This chapter contains quotations from or allusions to all ten of the Ten Commandments
- In essence this chapter clearly teaches that God's people must conform to his holiness by keeping his commandments (the letter of the law), by dealing with others in love (the spirit of the law), by living according to the standards of separation in the world, and by demonstrating kindness and justice to others

- Chapter 20 deals with punishments of severe (in the sight of God) crimes
- To enforce the standards for purity, Leviticus gives certain prescribed punishment. The death penalty is required for child sacrifice, consulting with spirits, cursing parents, for adultery and homosexuality, and for intercourse with animals.
- We must understand that in Christ, though these penalties are mitigated, and opportunity is given for repentance and forgiveness, nevertheless the deeds are as wrong today as they were in Old Testament times

- All the people were to maintain holiness before God, but the priests had higher standards because of their privileges in relationship to God. Moses explained these higher regulations in chapters 21-22.
- The priest must avoid all personal defilement, especially keeping himself from all contact with the dead. In his marriage he must not impair his ministry, nor could he serve if he had physical defects in his own body.

**Leviticus 18:1-30** *Laws of sexual morality.* Sexual relations were prohibited with close relatives, with the same sex, and with animals. The Canaanites practiced such things, and that was one reason why God was using the Israelites to drive them out of the land ([Leviticus 18:24-25](#); see [Canaanites](#)). The reward for observance of these prohibitions would be continuance of life ([Leviticus 18:5](#); see [Luke 10:28](#); [Romans 10:5](#)). The punishment for disobedience would be expulsion from the land, just as the Canaanites were being expelled ([Leviticus 18:28](#)).



**Leviticus 19:1-37** *Various laws and penalties.* Laws were given concerning obedience to parents, keeping the Sabbath, offering sacrifices in the proper manner, providing for the poor, not cheating employees, not seeking revenge, and not following heathen customs and religious rites.

The Israelites were to "be holy because I, the LORD your God, am holy" ([Leviticus 19:2](#); [Leviticus 11:44](#); see [1 Peter 1:15-16](#)). They were also told to "love your neighbor as yourself" ([Leviticus 19:18](#); see [Mark 12:31](#)).

**Leviticus 20:1-27** *The penalty for pagan perversions.* Excommunication was the penalty for serious sexual sins. Death by stoning was the punishment for devil worship, child sacrifice, sorcery, and various sexual sins. God called upon his people to be separate from the other nations and, again, to "be holy because I, the LORD, am holy" ([Leviticus 20:23](#), [26](#)).

**PRIESTS – SESSION 2 OF 2 ([Leviticus 21-22](#))**

Regulations for priests ([Leviticus 21:1-22:16](#))

Rules for sacrificing ([Leviticus 22:17-33](#))

**Leviticus 21:1-22:16** *Regulations for priests.* Rules and requirements were given for priests, including special rules for high priests. As with the animals sacrificed, the priests had to be free of physical defects. A deformed member of the priestly family could partake of food from the tabernacle ([Leviticus 21:22](#)) but could not perform priestly duties.

**Leviticus 22:17-33** *Rules for sacrificing.* Animals presented as sacrifices had to be clean ([Leviticus 11:1-47](#)) and in prime condition, with no visible defects. The animal could not be sacrificed until it was eight days old. The mother and its offspring could not be killed on the same day.

**OFFERINGS – SESSION 3 OF 3 ([Leviticus 23-25](#))**

Weekly Sabbath ([Leviticus 23:1-3](#))

Passover, Festival of Unleavened Bread ([Leviticus 23:4-8](#))

Festival of Firstfruits ([Leviticus 23:9-14](#))

Festival of Harvest (also called Pentecost) ([Leviticus 23:15-22](#))

Festival of Trumpets ([Leviticus 23:23-25](#))

Day of Atonement ([Leviticus 23:26-32](#))

Festival of Shelters ([Leviticus 23:33-44](#))

Offering of oil and bread ([Leviticus 24:1-9](#))

Blasphemy ([Leviticus 24:10-23](#))

Seventh year Sabbath ([Leviticus 25:1-7](#), [18-22](#))

Fiftieth year Sabbath (Jubilee) ([Leviticus 25:8-17](#), [23-55](#))

## FEASTS

<b>FIRST COMING</b> (PAST)	{	<b>PASSOVER</b>	15th of first month
		<b>FIRSTFRUITS</b>	3 days later
		<b>PENTECOST</b>	50 days later

<b>SECOND COMING</b> (FUTURE)	{	<b>TRUMPETS</b>	1st of seventh month
		<b>DAY OF ATONEMENT</b>	10 days later
		<b>TABERNACLES</b>	15-22 days later

<b>REST</b>	<b>SABBATICAL</b>	every 7th day
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<b>RELEASE</b>	<b>JUBILEE</b>	every 50th year
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Passover	Spring Feasts	Deliverance from Egypt
Unleavened Bread		Removal of impurities of old life
First Fruits		Promise of new life to come
Pentecost		Holy Spirit (giving of the Covenant)
Trumpets	Fall Feasts	New Civil Year
Atonement		Atonement for the Nation
Booths		God dwelling with His people

- Chapter 23 introduces the seven annual feasts, which are rich with symbolic and prophetic significance.

# The Christian Meaning Of The Jewish Feasts



FEAST	CHRISTIAN EVENT	KEY CONCEPT
Passover .....	Crucifixion of Jesus .....	Justification
Unleavened Bread .....	Burial of Jesus .....	Sanctification
First Fruits .....	Resurrection of Jesus .....	Glorification
Harvest .....	Descent of Holy Spirit .....	Power
Interval of 3 Months .....	Current Age of the Church .....	Church Kingdom
Trumpets .....	Gathering of the Church (?) .....	Rapture
Day of Atonement .....	Second Coming of Jesus (?) .....	Jewish Remnant
Tabernacles .....	Inauguration of the Millennium .....	Earthly Kingdom

## Eschatology of Israel's Feasts (Lev. 23)

	<u>Date</u>	<u>Length</u>	<u>Feast</u>	<u>Significance (Past)</u>	<u>Typology (Future)</u>
1.	Weekly	1 day	Sabbath* (Shabbat)	Reminder of: • Creation rest of God • Deliverance from Egypt Sign of Mosaic Covenant (Exod. 20, 31; Deut 5)	Millennial rest (Heb. 4:1-11)
2.	1-14 (Nisan)	1 day (Read Song of Songs)	Passover*† (Pesach)	Redemption from Egypt by blood of the sacrificial lamb (Exod. 12)	Redemption from sin by Christ's death as Lamb (1 Cor. 5:7b)
3.	1-15 to 1-21 (Nisan)	7 days	Unleavened Bread*†	Separation/break from dependence upon Egypt to dependence upon God	Separated life of the redeemed for God (1 Cor. 5:7a, 8)
4.	1-16 (Day after Harvest Sabbath)	1 day	Firstfruits (barley sheaf ceremony)	Anticipation of God's <i>future</i> material provisions -begins grain harvest	Resurrection of Christ (1 Cor. 15:20)
5.	3-6 (Sivan)	1 day (Read Ruth)	Pentecost† (Shavuoth) (Weeks) (Harvest)	Thanksgiving for God's <i>past</i> material provisions -ends grain harvest (Deut. 16:9-12)	Coming of the Holy Spirit to complete Christ's resurrection (Acts 2)

## Eschatology of Israel's Feasts (Lev. 23)

	<u>Date</u>	<u>Length</u>	<u>Feast</u>	<u>Significance (Past)</u>	<u>Typology (Future)</u>
—	Spring-Summer	no feasts	—	Enjoyment of the harvest	Church Age
6.	7-1 (Tishri)	1 day	Trumpets (New Year) (Rosh Hashanah)	Preparation for national redemption and cleansing on Day of Atonement	Rapture (1 Thess. 4:13f.) Revelation (Matt. 24:31) —Kingdom preparation
7.	7-10 (Tishri)	1 day	Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur)	National repentance and cleansing from sins of the people (Lev. 16)	National repentance of Israel in the Tribulation (Rom. 11:26-27)
8.	7-15 to 7-21 (Tishri)	7 days (Read Eccles.)	Tabernacles*† (Booths/Tents) (Succot) (the Lord) (Ingathering)	Anticipated fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant (Neh. 8)	Actual fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant —Kingdom (Matt. 17:4)
9.	7-22 (Tishri)	1 day	Shemini Atzeret (Simchat Torah)	"8th Day of Assembly" "Rejoicing in the Torah"	

**Leviticus 23:1-44** *Divinely appointed days*. This chapter outlines procedures for Israel's Sabbath and yearly festivals:

The Sabbath, the seventh day of each week, was to be Israel's day of rest ([Leviticus 23:1-3](#)).

Passover began at twilight on the 14th day of the first month; the Festival of Unleavened Bread began the next day and continued for seven days ([Leviticus 23:4-8](#)). Passover commemorated Israel's deliverance from Egypt; the Festival of Unleavened Bread recalled the haste with which they had left Egypt (see exposition on [Exodus 12:1-20](#)).

On the Festival of Firstfruits a sheaf of the first grain from the harvest was brought as a gift to the Lord ([Leviticus 23:9-14](#)). This festival took place the day after the Sabbath following Passover.

The Festival of Harvest (Greek *Pentecost*) occurred 50 days after the Festival of Firstfruits; it marked the end of the harvest season and was to include a second grain offering ([Leviticus 23:15-22](#)).

The Festival of Trumpets was observed on the first day of the seventh month and was announced by the loud blowing of trumpets ([Leviticus 23:23-25](#)).



# The Passover 23:4-5

- The first of the prescribed feasts was the Passover, occurring in the spring of the year, on the fourteenth day of the first month (Nisan).
- Passover was meant to commemorate Israel's deliverance from Egypt, and with the sacrifice of the lamb for each family, show how the blood of the lamb averted the judgment of God for each Israelite family.
- The feast of Passover clearly presents Jesus as our Passover (1 Corinthians 5:7), the Lamb of God who was sacrificed, and whose blood was received and applied so the wrath of God would

# Feast of Unleavened Bread 23:6-8

- The day after the Passover marked the beginning of the seven-day Feast of Unleavened Bread (vv. 6-14; cf. Num. 28:16-25).
- This was one of the three feasts that all the adult males in Israel had to attend along with the feasts of Firstfruits and Tabernacles (Exod. 23:17; Deut. 16:16).
- Its central feature was the exclusion of all leaven (a symbol for sin). This feast reminded the believing Israelite that he needed to live a clean life since God had redeemed him by the blood of the Passover lamb (cf. 1 Cor. 5:6-8; Gal. 5:9).



- The feast of Unleavened Bread points to the time of Jesus' burial, after His perfect, sinless sacrifice on the cross, during which He was received by God the Father as holy and complete (the Holy One who would not see corruption, Acts 2:27), perfectly accomplishing our salvation.

# The Feast of Firstfruits 23:9-14

- Concurrent with the feast of unleavened bread was the feast of first fruits, which came on the day after the Sabbath after Passover.
- This would place it on a Sunday and therefore it was an anticipation of the resurrection of Christ, the "first fruits from the dead." (1Cor. 15:20).
- The Feast of Firstfruits included the presentation of firstfruits of the spring barley harvest in the Promised Land. The Israelites also offered a lamb, flour, and wine, all representative of God's provisions of spiritual and physical food and drink for His people.

- The feast of Firstfruits relates to the resurrection of Jesus, who was the first human to receive resurrection; He is the firstborn from the dead (Colossians 1:18) and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep . . . Christ the firstfruits, afterwards those who are Christ's at His coming. (1 Corinthians 15:20, 23)

# The Feast of Pentecost 23:15-22

- Fifty days after the feast of Firstfruits, at the completion of the wheat harvest, Israel was to celebrate the feast of Pentecost (also known as Feast of Weeks) by bringing a new grain offering to the LORD; and by waving two loaves of leavened bread unto the LORD.
- God sent the Holy Spirit to indwell believers permanently on Pentecost, which was the birth of the Church (Acts 2).

- Since each of the four feasts relevant to the first coming of Jesus saw their prophetic fulfillment on the exact day of the feast: Jesus was actually crucified on the Passover (John 19:14). His body would have been buried, and His holy and pure sacrifice acknowledged by God the Father during the Feast of Unleavened Bread following, and He would have risen from the dead on Firstfruits, the day after Passover's Sabbath. Additionally, the church was founded on the actual day of Pentecost.
- Thus, many scholars take this logic one step further...

- Interestingly, between the first set of four feasts and the second set of three feasts, there is a significant time gap - almost four months, which was a time of harvest in Israel.
- Many scholars believe this points prophetically as a time of “harvest” for the Church, “*until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.*” (Romans 11:25)
- If this is true, scholars further postulate that the second group of the last three feasts relate to events connected with the second coming of Jesus

# The Feast of Trumpets 23:23-25

- During the seventh month (Tishri) of Israel's religious calendar three festivals took place.
- The Jews celebrated the Feast of Trumpets (Rosh Hashanah) on the first day of this month.
- Its central feature was the loud blast of trumpets.
- After the Babylonian captivity the Jewish civil year began on this day. Thus Rosh Hashanah became Israel's New Year celebration.



# Is there a connection???

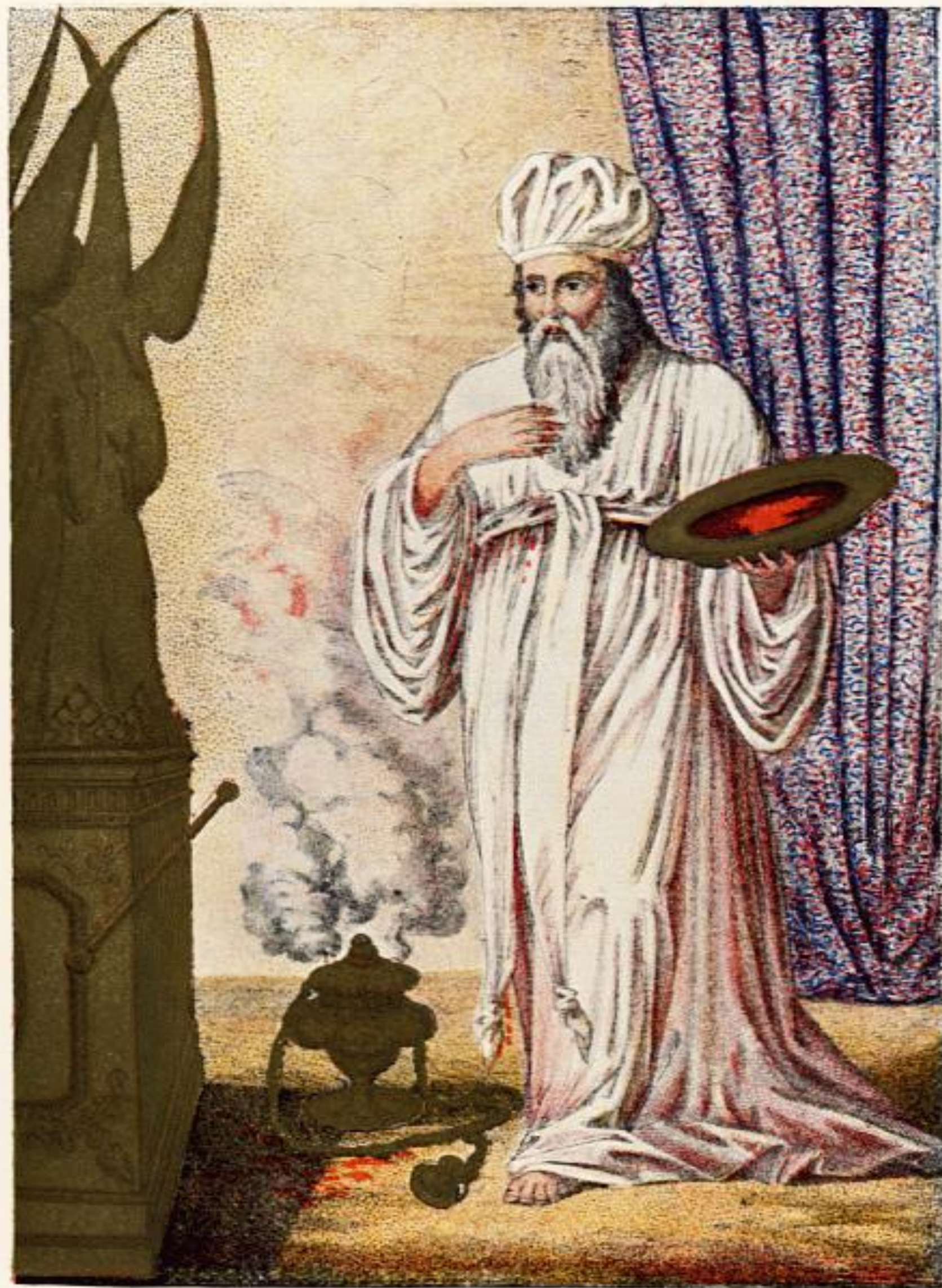
- A trumpet will sound calling Christians to meet the Lord in the air (1 Cor. 15:52; 1 Thess. 4:16-17).
- It will also assemble the Israelites and herald the Day of the Lord when God will again resume His dealings with His people Israel in Daniel's seventieth week (Jer. 32:37).
- Thus, some scholars believe The feast of Trumpets speaks of the ultimate assembly of God's people at the sound of a trumpet - the rapture of the Church (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17),  
and of the gathering of Israel for the special

- Immediately following the Feast of Trumpets begins the seven Days of Affliction (also known as the "The Days of Awe"), in anticipation of the Day of Atonement.
- Many suggest this is prophetic of the Tribulation

# The Day of Atonement 23:26-32

- The Day of Atonement was observed on the tenth day of the seventh month (Tishri).
- This day was a fast rather than a feast.
- The people were to "humble" or "deny" themselves (v. 29), which involved fasting and abstaining from their normal pleasures and comforts (cf. 16:29). God permitted no ordinary work on this day (vv. 28, 30-32).











- Since this was the only day the High Priest was allowed to enter the Holy of Holies and see God “face-to-face” ...and because this is a time when the hearts are humbled...scholars theorize this the day of the Lord’s return

# The Feast of Tabernacles 23:33-44

- The Feast of Tabernacles began on the 15<sup>th</sup> of the seventh month
- It commemorated the Israelites' journey from Egyptian bondage to blessing in Canaan.
- Its other names were the Feast of Booths and the Feast of Ingathering.
- The people built booths out of branches and lived under these for the duration of this eight-day festival as a reminder of their life in the wilderness.
- They presented many offerings during this holiday (Num. 29:12-38).
- It was the only festival in which God commanded the Israelites to rejoice, and it revolved around the harvest of grapes and other fall field products. (Lev 23:40)



- Since this feast starts with a Sabbath and ends with a Sabbath (periods of rest) and it is a “joyous” time, many scholars associate it with the establishment of the Millennial Kingdom in Israel.
- Also, the Feast of Tabernacles is specifically said to be celebrated during the millennium (Zechariah 14:16-19).

- Leviticus wraps up with several regulations for maintaining the covenant relationship.
- God's says in effect, "trust me, I know what is best for you."

**Leviticus 24:1-9** *Burning the lamps and baking the bread.* Each morning and evening Aaron was to supply the golden lampstand with fresh oil and trim its wicks. Every Sabbath he was to place the 12 loaves of holy bread in two rows on the gold table (see exposition on [§Exodus 25:23-30](#)), mix the loaves with incense, and burn them with fire.

Various pagan religions down through the ages have involved the offering of food to gods. But since God does not need food ([Psalm 50:12-13](#)), the holy bread had a primarily spiritual focus. While it was primarily spiritual, however, the holy bread could also be used to meet the physical needs of priests ([Leviticus 24:9](#)). Later, David and his men would use it to meet their own physical needs ([1 Samuel 21:2-6](#)), and still later Christ would cite David's action as an example of the proper relationship between law and compassion ([Matthew 12:1-4](#)).

**\_\_Leviticus 24:10-16, 23\_\_**

**Leviticus 24:10-16, 23** *When he cursed God, they killed him.* During a fight a young man blasphemed God's name. At God's command the witnesses stoned him (Leviticus 24:23).

**Leviticus 24:17-22** *An eye for an eye: Harsh but necessary.* The "eye for eye, tooth for tooth" principle of restitution was necessary to maintain order in society. It was also a restraint against the excessive punishments typical of the ancient Near East. See exposition on <sup>§</sup>[Matthew 5:21-48](#).

[Leviticus 25:1-34](#) *Respect for the land: "Give it a regular rest."* The Israelites were to work their land for six years, then allow it to lie fallow the seventh year. God reassured them that if they would obey this command, he would provide them a bumper crop during the sixth year.

Each 50th year was to be the Year of Jubilee, a time of rejoicing. The land was to remain idle and was to be returned to its original owners. Any land sold could be redeemed by the original owner until the jubilee year, when it would automatically return to him. This was to remind Israel that the land actually belonged to God, and they were only "foreigners and tenants," not permanent landowners ([Leviticus 25:23](#)).

[Leviticus 25:25-28](#) introduces the law of the "kinsman redeemer" (or "family redeemer," see [Ruth 2:20](#)), which protected the property of the poor (see exposition on [Deut. 25:5-10](#)).

**Leviticus 25:35-55** *The poor: Servants, not slaves.* Israel was to care for its poor, lending them money without interest. When they hired fellow Israelites, they were to treat them as working servants and not as slaves. If a poor Israelite sold himself to a rich foreigner living among them, he had the same rights as if he were working for a fellow Israelite.

Slavery in Bible times was a social and economic institution not unlike in postbiblical times. Israelites could become slaves voluntarily, for financial security or to repay a debt to a fellow Israelite ([Leviticus 25:39](#)); or involuntarily, as God's way of punishing their disobedience ([Jeremiah 5:19](#); [Jeremiah 17:4](#)). Voluntary slaves could eventually earn their freedom. Enslavement of foreigners by Israelites was always involuntary, either by capture ([1 Samuel 17:9](#)), purchase from a slave market ([Leviticus 22:11](#); [Leviticus 25:44](#); compare [Ezekiel 27:13](#)), or birth to a slave ([Genesis 17:23](#); [Leviticus 22:11](#)).

The Bible never condoned slavery, but it recognized slavery as an economic reality and sought to regulate its practice. Israelite servants were eligible for release after six years of service ([Exodus 21:2-4](#); [Deut. 15:12-18](#)), and at the Year of Jubilee even if they hadn't served six years ([Leviticus 25:40](#)). If a man



**OFFERINGS**

**PRIESTS**

**ORDERLY LIVING**

**OBEDIENCE**

**REDEEMPTIVE GIVING**

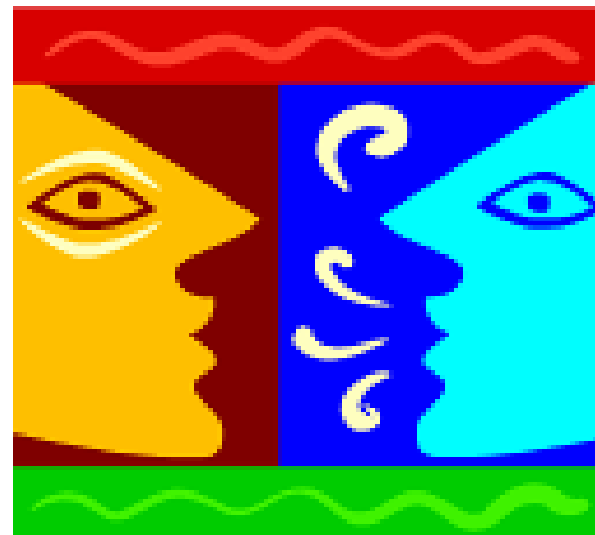
## **OBEDIENCE AND DISOBEDIENCE – SINGLE SESSION ([Leviticus 26](#))**

**Leviticus 26:1-13** *The glorious results of obedience.* In return for obedience to his law, God promised regular rains, bumper crops, and loaded-down fruit trees. He would remove all savage beasts, permitting the people to dwell safely in the land. Five of them would chase 100 of their enemies, and 100 would defeat 10,000.

The prophet Amos, writing when Israel had become a disobedient nation, foretold a restoration of these promises if Israel would repent (compare Leviticus 26:5 and Amos 9:13).

**Leviticus 26:14-46** *The grievous results of disobedience.* Disobedience would result in plagues, terror, drought, wild animals killing children and cattle, terrible famine, defeat, and scattering among the nations. But if, after their disobedience, Israel would come back to God, he would fulfill his promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and restore the nation. (See exposition on [<sup>s</sup>2 Chron. 36:15-21.](#))

# Can Morality be Legislated?



# If you walk in My statutes and keep My commandments... (26:3)

- I will give you rain
- The land will yield its produce
- The trees of the field will bear fruit
- You will eat your food to the full
- I will grant you peace
- You will chase your enemies
- I will make you fruitful and multiply you
- I will dwell with you

# If you do not obey Me and carry out all these commandments... (26:14)

- I will appoint over you a sudden terror, consumption and fever
- You shall sow your seed uselessly
- You shall be struck down before your enemies
- Those who hate you shall rule over you
- You shall flee when no one is pursuing

If, after these things, you do not obey me... (26:18)

- I will punish you seven times more
- I will break down your pride of power
- Your strength will be spent uselessly
- Your land will not produce its produce
- The trees of the land will not yield their fruit



If, then you act with hostility toward Me  
and are not willing... (26:21)

- I will increase the plague seven times
- I will let loose among you the beast of the field
- They shall bereave you of your children and destroy your cattle

If, by these things you are not turned to Me... (26:23)

- I will strike you seven times
- I will bring upon you a sword
- I will strike you with a pestilence
- Your bread shall be rationed

If, in spite of this, you do not obey Me...  
(26:27)

- I will punish you seven times more
- You shall eat the flesh of your sons and daughters
- I will cut down your high places
- I will lay waste your cities
- I will make the land desolate
- I will scatter you among the nations and you will perish among the nations

If they confess their iniquity or if their uncircumcised heart becomes humbled... (26:40-41)

- I will remember My covenant
- I will remember the land
- I will not reject them to destroy them
- I will remember for them the covenant with their ancestors

**OFFERINGS**

**PRIESTS**

**ORDERLY LIVING**

**OBEDIENCE**

**REDEMPITIVE GIVING**

## **REDEMPTION OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS – SINGLE SESSION ([Leviticus 27](#))**

**Leviticus 27:1-29** *"What if I give it, then need it back?"* Finally, guidelines were given for the person who gave a tithe or special offering and then needed to redeem it. Because all Israelites and their possessions were God's by right (Leviticus 25:23; see exposition on <sup>§</sup>Exodus 13:1-16), they were not to take their tithes and offerings lightly (Leviticus 27:10, 33). Monetary amounts were assigned for various cases, with the amounts being suited to the giver's age, gender, and ability to pay.

**Leviticus 27:30-34** *"But remember, a tenth belongs to God."* The final verses of Leviticus deal specifically with the redemption of tithes. Moses reminded the people that a tenth of everything—including money, crops, and livestock—belongs to God.



# 6. PRINCIPLES

# Themes fulfilled in the New Testament

- All Christians are holy, 'saints' in most English translations - called by God to be his people just as ancient Israel had been (Col. 1:2; 1 Pet. 1:2; 2:9-10; cf. Exod. 19:5-6).
- this state of holiness must find expression in holy living (Col. 1:22; 1 Pet. 1:15).
- Sanctification is expressed through obedience to the standard of teaching (Rom. 6:17-19), just as in Leviticus through obedience to the law.
- Peter urges his readers to make the motto of Leviticus their own: 'Be holy, for I am holy' (1 Pet. 1:16).
- The imitation of God is a theme that unites the ethics of Old and New Testaments (cf. Matt. 5:48; 1 Cor. 11:1).