

# HEARING THE WORD



NIGEL BARGE

**Leviticus**  
**Work Book**



# Hearing the Word      Leviticus      Work Book

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Revised Edition, published by Nigel Barge, Torrance, 2017

Print version: ISBN 978-1-912209-09-5

*First issued in 2011, New Format edition, 2017 Revised July 2018*

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## Acknowledgements

I am very grateful to Phil and June Malloch, whose tireless editing, reviewing and pulling together of materials has enabled the 'Hearing the Word' resource to be shared with the church.

*Nigel Barge, September 2017*

## Scripture Quotations taken from

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## Resources

The *New Bible Dictionary* 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, published by Inter Varsity Press  
The *New Bible Commentary* 21<sup>st</sup> century edition. A one-volume commentary on every book of the Bible. IVP

[www.blueletterbible.org](http://www.blueletterbible.org)

# Hearing the Word: A Tool for Bible reading



## **LOOK** – What does it *say*?

- 1) The Text
  - a) What questions does it raise - *Who, What, When, Where, Why, How?*
  - b) What surprises you?
- 2) The Context?
  - a) the surrounding text
  - b) the Book of the Bible
  - c) the whole Bible
  - d) the place in the Bible Story



## **LEARN** – What does it *mean*?

- 1) What type of writing is it?
- 2) Answer the questions
- 3) Summarise the passage



## **LISTEN** – What is the *message*?

- 1) Which is the main point?
- 2) Which is the key verse?



## **LIVE** – How should we *respond*?

- 1) What does it show about God, (Father, Son, Holy Spirit) :
  - a) His nature and character?
  - b) His grace\*
  - c) Jesus / his salvation\*\*
- 2) What should I do?

\* God's undeserved generosity is evident throughout the Bible, and it is perfectly expressed in Jesus.

\*\* The Bible, from 'the fall' onwards, describes God's plan of salvation through his Son. Thus, *all* the Scriptures speak in some way of Jesus (Luke 24:27).

# READING ‘THE LAW’

## Bible styles

Whatever we read, we adjust to its style, sometimes without noticing. We don’t approach a newspaper, a car manual, a cookery book, a poem, a scientific report, an SMS ‘Txt Msg’ and a Shakespeare play in the same way. We take into account the purpose for which it was written and the way in which the writer uses words.

Since the Bible also has many styles – law, poetry, history, wisdom, prophecy, parables, letters and visions – we need to allow for the style if we are to discern what God is saying.

Although it contains some narrative, the main style of Leviticus is ‘Law’. To approach it correctly, keep in mind the following principles:

## What is ‘The Law’

The Scriptures use the term ‘The Law’ in different ways: -

- 1) The first five books of the Bible, often called The Pentateuch (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers. Deuteronomy) e.g:  
*Joshua 1:8 Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night so that you may be careful to do everything written in it.*  
*Luke 24:44 Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.*
- 2) The whole of the Old Testament  
This is a general use to describe the old covenant(s) e.g: Matthew 5:18  
*‘...Until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished.’*  
OR *John 12.34: The crowd spoke up, ‘We have heard from the Law that the Messiah will remain for ever, so how can you say, “The Son of Man must be lifted up”? Who is this “Son of Man”? ’*
- 3) The legal commands  
There are over 600 commands in the Old Testament, contained in Exodus 20 to Deuteronomy 33. It is this third understanding of the Law that we write about here. We seek to understand how God speaks to us through the Law and how his Word applies to us today.

## Law and Grace

Some wrongly think the Old Covenant was Law which proved ‘inadequate’, leading God to ‘introduce’ Grace through the New Covenant. The order of events shows this is **not** the case:-

- a) God made a promise to Abraham when He did not have to. That was God’s grace at work. Abraham received the gracious promise and subsequent blessings by faith (Genesis 12:2; 15:6)
- b) The Israelites were redeemed from Egypt.  
This action stemmed from God’s grace and love (Deuteronomy 7:7,8).
- c) The Law was given *after* the Israelites were freed from Egypt : *I am the Lord your God who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. You shall have no other gods before me...* (Ex 20:2).

The Law was given as an act of God’s grace. It was done in the context of His gracious promise to a people whom he had already chosen.

## The purpose of the law

- 1) To lead us to Christ

In Galatians 3:24 Paul describes the Law by using the word for the slave who had, for the time being, the task of taking children to school. *The Law was ‘put in charge’ to lead us to Christ.* It does this by showing us:

- a) our need: we are an unholy people before a Holy God.
- b) the consequence for us sinners: death and separation from God.
- c) the solution: Christ’s perfect life was sacrificed for our sins.

*See* Matthew 5:17 All the requirements of Law are fulfilled by Jesus.

- 2) To restrain sin

It encourages us to obey God and turn from sin, with the promise of blessings if we obey and cursing if we disobey. *See* Psalm 119, where the Psalmist describes the delight and blessing of living by the Law.

- 3) To encourage hope

- a) Under God’s grace we express our love for him by striving to keep his commands (1 John 5:3). When we do this we anticipate that one day, we shall be like him (1 John 3:2).
- b) The Law has a prophetic edge. It anticipates the goal that God will achieve in us through the sacrifice of His Son: we will be a righteous people. *See* Matthew 5:48 (literally) ‘*you will be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect*’

## The 'form' of the Law

In OT times, the ruler of a powerful nation might annex a smaller kingdom. The King/Emperor imposed on the latter a binding contract or Covenant, spelling out commitments on both sides. God used this type of language to lay out the relationship between Israel and himself.

At its heart, it described

- 1) Actions the subjects were required to perform (cf Leviticus 1-25).
- 2) Promises of consequences (cf Leviticus 26) for
  - a) Obedience: this would bring blessings
  - b) Disobedience: this would bring cursings. *Shortcomings* were met with limited, proportionate consequences, as distinct from *disloyalty*, which was met with a crushing response.

In the life of Israel, we see the prophets acting as God's ambassadors to remind Israel of their duties. Israel repeatedly ignored their warnings about disobedience; that led to the cataclysm of exile from the promised land. In the same way the message of John the Baptist (the prophet of the New Covenant,) was 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near' (Matt 3:2).

## The Gospel and the Law

Through Jesus, God made a New Covenant. Under this

- 1) The King himself will satisfy the requirements of his previous Covenants (The Law). Despite universal disloyalty, those who receive the King will not be cut off eternally, but enter the Kingdom. They will not enter it by trying to keep laws, since they fail, but by faith in Jesus.
- 2) His final coming to judge everyone, with the eternal consequence of Hell for those who reject Him, is postponed. In the meantime, the earthly, temporal consequences of obedience and disobedience remain, good and bad.
- 3) The eternal destiny of those who believe in Jesus is secure; but they are still subject to the temporal consequences attached to obedience to the Law. We are imperfect on earth; even as believers we still need the Law

## The consequences of obeying/disobeying the Law

Leviticus 26 shows the consequences are eternal and temporal:

- 1) Eternal.  
In the OT the consequences are described in terms of individuals being removed from the land and cut off from God's people. In the NT, they are defined as Heaven and Hell. The OT makes clear that sin can only be

removed by faith in God expressing itself in confession and the payment of a perfect life. The NT reveals that Jesus did precisely this.

## 2) Temporal

This is not a formula but the description of a principle. God does not operate as a slot machine – He is sovereign! The OT itself makes it clear that sometimes, the wicked may prosper and the godly may suffer (Jeremiah 12:1; Job 1:8). Indeed, in the NT, the only one who kept the Law perfectly was actually put to death! (1 Peter 3:18).

Jesus taught that there was no inevitable link between suffering and disobedience (Luke 13:4; John 9:3).

Under the Old Covenant the symbols of blessing are centred on material prosperity in the land that God has promised. In the New Covenant blessings are centred on peace, joy and the satisfaction of a life lived believing in Jesus Christ.

The Principle of Law and Consequence applies today in two ways:

### 1) All mankind

- a) God created everyone. If we do not live by his Law, consequences '*naturally*' result. e.g. Immorality in society leads to misery.
- b) Generosity leads to blessing for the giver.

### 2) God's Family

God will ***deliberately*** intervene and discipline his children, in love, to change their behaviour.

*See Hebrews 12:5-11; 1 Corinthians 11:32*

## Applying the Law

In the light of the above, as we read the Law, how are we to apply it to our lives today? The key to this is the New Testament. We need to read the Old and the New together, looking for ***continuity*** and seeking to distinguish between three kinds of law:

### a) Ceremonial Law - Fulfilled in Christ

i.e. a command that ***continues*** into the New Testament, but fore-shadows the crucifixion and is then *satisfied* by it. So this kind of law, having been fulfilled by Jesus, no longer applies to us, e.g:

The Day of Atonement: Leviticus 16; Hebrews 9:23-27

Circumcision: Galatians 2:11-21, Acts 15:1-29, Colossians 2:9-23

Ritual cleanliness and food laws: Leviticus 11-15 Mark 7:1-23; Acts 10: 9-15 (but cf Romans 14:1-23, consider effect on others.)

So we read, note and REJOICE!

b) Civil Law - Time bound

A command which applied to the nation of Israel, within their historical context, but is not echoed or repeated in the NT, e.g: while the issue of criminal intent still distinguishes between murder and culpable homicide, (English Law, manslaughter), the command to appoint 'cities of refuge' for those who killed a person by accident was a local remedy. (Deuteronomy 19:1-13)

So we read, note and APPLY the underlying principle.

c) Moral Law – Eternal rights and wrongs

A specific command, or one which points to a general principle, which is echoed and **continued** in the New Testament and is neither revoked nor fulfilled, e.g:

*specific* - Love the Lord with all your heart... (Deuteronomy 6:5; Matthew 22:37) Love your neighbour as yourself (Leviticus 19:18; Mark 12:31; Matthew 19:19; 22:39)

*principle* - Bring to the priest a sheaf of the first grain of your harvest (Leviticus 23:10; compare 1 Corinthians 16:2) i.e. budget for God before anything else! Do not commit adultery (Exodus 20:14; Deuteronomy 5:18; John 8:11; Mark 10:1-12)

So we read, note and OBEY.

# LEVITICUS

The book of Leviticus is a ‘Call to Holiness’ (in Hebrew, the opening words are ‘And he called’). *You shall be holy to me: for I the Lord am holy.*’ (20:26) It should be read beside the letter to the Hebrews, especially Heb 4:11 – 10:25.

Leviticus flows on from Exodus, continuing the narrative of Israel’s experiences at Mount Sinai. *You shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.*’ Exodus 19:6

In Exodus God gives

the Decalogue (10 Commandments), the Book of the Covenant and regulations with regard to the Tent of Meeting, also known as the Tabernacle. This dwelling place for the Lord has been set up in the middle of the camp. (Exodus 40)

In Leviticus God gives regulations about:

**A1** The sacrifices, chs 1-7

**B1** The Priesthood, chs 8-10

**C1** Avoiding uncleanness ch. 11-15

**D** The Day of Atonement, ch 16

**C2** Holy behaviour chs 17-20

**B2** The Priesthood, chs 21 & 22

**A2** The festivals, chs 23-27

Approaching God

enables both ↑ and ↓

Living with God

The sacrificial system that is laid out in the first seven chapters describes different offerings, each with its own significance

a) Burnt or ascension offering (Ch 1 and 6:8-13)

The word means ‘a thing going up’. The notion was that as it burned, the fire and smoke ascended to the LORD. Since the entire animal was consumed by fire (except the impure and unclean bits), it symbolised that the person offering it was totally dedicated and consecrated to God.

b) Grain or tribute offering (Ch 2 and 6:14-23)

The word means ‘gift’. It contained no blood, so it could not atone for sin. Rather it accompanied the atoning sacrifices as an expression of gratitude by those who had received atonement.

c) Peace or Fellowship offering (Ch 3 and 7:11-36)

In this the fat of the animal was burnt on the altar, the breast and leg were given to the priests and the rest was eaten by the person offering it in a

glad feast. This expressed his communion with God, who was the host (Zephaniah 1:7), and his fellow men. There were different peace offerings, emphasising thankfulness, or Vow fulfilment or just the freedom to give.

d) Sin or purification offering (Ch 4:1 – 5:13 and 6:24-30)

In this an animal was offered by an individual or congregation. The fat was burned on the altar and the rest of the animal was burnt outside the camp or consumed by the Priests to atone for known but *unintentional* sins.

e) Guilt or reparation offering (Ch 5:14- 6:7 and 7:1-10)

An animal (or for the very poor, some fine flour) was sacrificed as the sin was confessed. The fat was burned and the remainder was eaten by the priest. This removed guilt before the Lord of uncleanness from contamination caused by touching anything ceremonially unclean.

The priests were not meant to offer the five different sacrifices for everyone *all the time*. The specific times for each are described in Numbers 28-29.

So in Leviticus, a substantial foundation is laid for the coming sacrifice of Christ. God is a holy God; Israel is a sinful nation; so how can the two have a covenant relationship? Israel's sin is a barrier. God, therefore, gives explicit and detailed laws for them to obey, to keep them on the right track. But he knows they will not be able even to approach his standard of perfection; so he also gives them a wealth of ceremony and ritual, which symbolises their need for forgiveness.

Leviticus is sometimes called the old covenant priests' book. The rituals are pictures and symbols of the reality of Christ's atoning death on the cross, the 'full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice' for the sins of the whole world.

## **Authorship**

We owe the contents of the book to divine revelation given at Mt Sinai in the time of Moses (7:37,38; 26:46; 27:34)

## **Jesus and Leviticus**

- 1) Animal sacrifices were not effective (Hebrews 10:4)
- 2) Jesus is the high priest *and* the sacrifice (Hebrews 9:11-14)
- 3) The blessing to the faithful came through God's provision of the perfect sacrifice (Hebrews 11:6; Romans 5:1)

## Timing of events

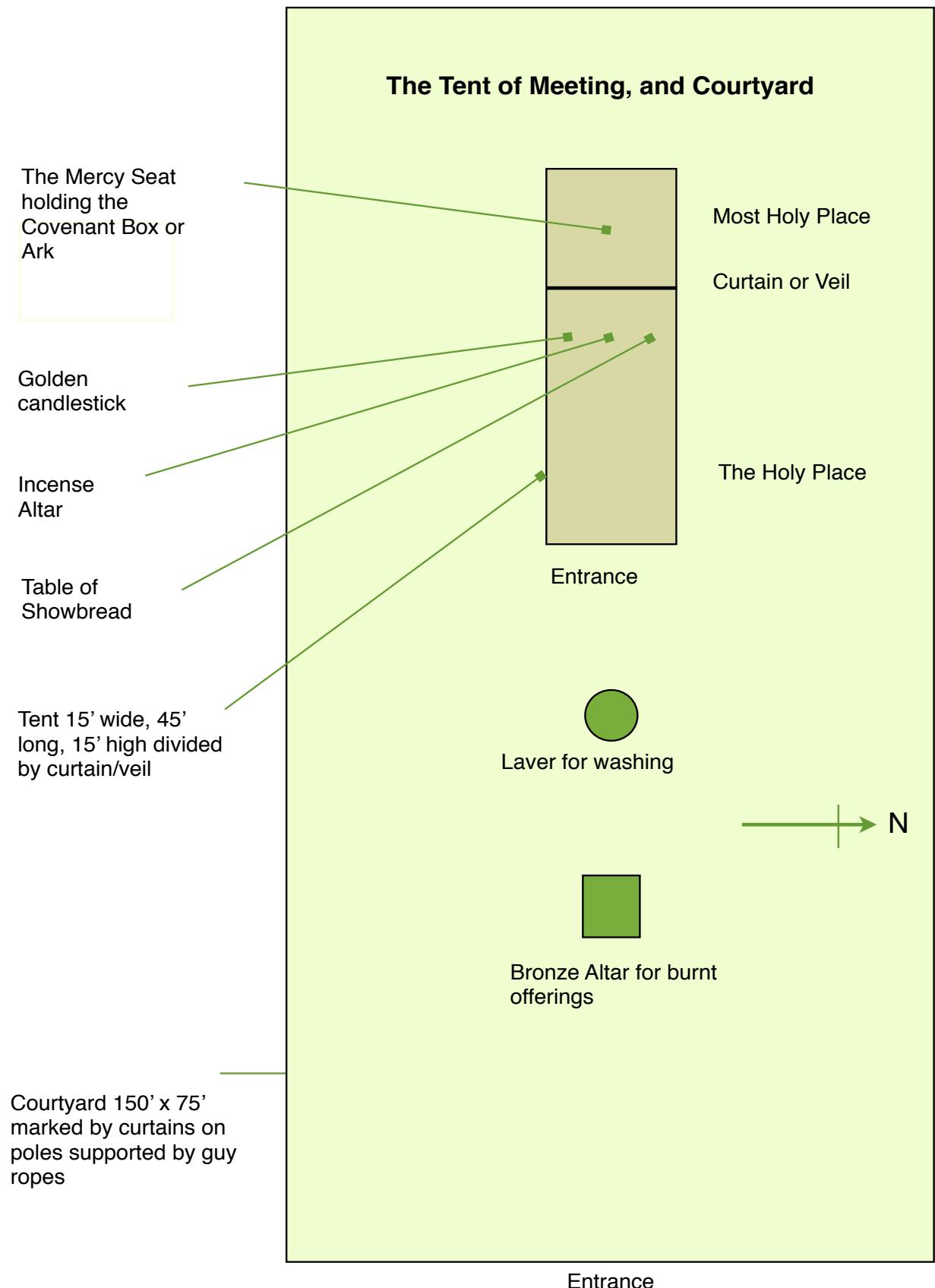
Exodus and Leviticus measure time from a new base point. It starts with Passover, the night Israel escaped from Egypt:

Day/Month/Year

<b>01 00 00</b>	Passover - Israel saved from slavery in Egypt	Exodus 12:1
<b>01 03 00</b>	Arrive at Mount Sinai	Exodus 19
	Law given	Exodus 20-39; Leviticus; Numbers 1 -6
	<i>NB 40 days twice, Moses up Sinai.</i>	<i>Exodus 24:18; 34:28</i>
<b>01 01 01</b>	Tabernacle set up	Exodus 40
<b>01 01 08</b>	sacrifices started	Leviticus 9
<b>20 02 01</b>	Set out from Sinai	Numbers 10:11

Study	Alternative Titles	Subject	WB/LG
1 1:1-17	<i>What</i> is needed? –	Living Sacrifices	10/10
2 8:1-36; 9:22 - 10:4	<i>Who</i> will present them? –	The priest	13/13
3 11:1-24, 41-47	<i>Why</i> are they needed? –	Holiness	16/17
4 16	<i>Totally</i> forgiven –	The Day of Atonement	19/20
5 19	<i>How</i> should <i>we</i> live? –	Purely before the Law	22/24
6 22	<i>How</i> should <i>priests</i> live? –	Standards for leaders	25/28
7 25	<i>Where</i> realised? –	Jubilee in Canaan	28/32
8 26	<i>Who</i> is it for?	The obedient faithful	31/36

## Sketch: The Tent of Meeting



# Study 1

# Burnt Offering

# Leviticus 1:1-17

## Background

Previously, in Exodus 25-40, God commands Moses to set up a Tent of Meeting *aka* Tabernacle, with courtyard. God now instructs Moses what is to happen at it. Leviticus 7:37 lists the different offerings to be made there.

## Word List

1 *LORD* The Hebrew word *YHWH*, now usually written ‘Yahweh’ (pronounced, Ya-Way). Explained in Exodus 3:13-14, it was never spoken aloud, out of reverence; instead a reader said *Adonai* (the Lord). Early translators, mistakenly combining the consonants of *YHWH* with the vowels of *Adonai* and using one letter *twice*, invented *Jehovah*, which is impossible.

*Moses* The man God chose to lead the Israelites out of Egypt. *See Exodus chapters 2-4.*

*Tent of Meeting* previously translated as ‘the Tabernacle’; the special tent where God met with Moses.

3 *without defect* symbol of perfection.

4 *atonement* a making ‘at one’ (from Anglo-Saxon).

5 *Aaron’s sons* Aaron (Moses’ older brother) and his sons became the first priests. They are all descended from Levi.

*altar* raised area for making sacrifices.

16 *crop with its contents* or crop and the feathers. Meaning of Hebrew word is uncertain. A ‘crop’ is a pouch in a bird’s gullet.

## Bible Connections

3 burnt offering cf Genesis 8:20 Noah sacrifices a burnt offering.  
without defect see Malachi 1: condemnation for offering blemished sacrifices; see Hebrews 9:14; 1 Peter 1:19; Christ is the perfect sacrifice

5 sprinkled blood see Hebrews 12:24, 1 Peter 1:2.

9,13,17 aroma pleasing to the LORD see Ephesians 5:2.

# LOOK

## 1) The Text

What questions does the passage raise?

What surprises or confuses you?

## 2) The Context

What other parts of the Bible – surrounding passage, individual book, whole Bible, or Bible story – might help you understand this passage?

# LEARN

## 1) How do you answer the questions the passage raises?

- 2) How do you resolve issues that surprised or confused you?
- 3) Give an overall ‘picture’ of the passage in a few sentences.

## **LISTEN**

- 1) What is the lesson or the main point?
- 2) Which verse best sums up the message of the passage? v.

## **LIVE**

- 1) What does it show about God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)?
  - a) His nature and character?
  - b) His grace?
  - c) Jesus and His salvation?

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

- 2) What should I do?

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

## Ordination of Aaron and sons

### Background

Chapters 8-10 give us the instructions for the ordination of the priests and the conduct of the tabernacle services. In Exodus 28:1 God told Moses that Aaron and his sons are to be the priests.

### Word List

2	<i>his sons</i>	Nadab, Abidu, Eleazar and Ithamar (Exodus 28:1)
	<i>garments</i>	Special garments had been made (Exodus 28)
	<i>anointing oil</i>	made to a special recipe (Exodus 30:23-25)
	<i>bread without yeast</i>	reminder of Passover (Exodus 12:14-20)
3	<i>Tent of Meeting</i>	Tabernacle, meeting place of God and his people
7	<i>tunic</i>	shirt-like garment
	<i>ephod</i>	like an apron with shoulder straps
8	<i>breastpiece</i>	square pouch with gold rings at corners, on it 12 gems engraved with names of the 12 tribes of Israel
	<i>Urim and Thummim</i>	two small objects used to find God's will
	<i>turban</i>	piece of linen wrapped around one's head
9	<i>sacred diadem</i>	gold plate with <i>HOLY TO THE LORD</i> engraved on it
10	<i>altar</i>	place of sacrifice
11	<i>consecrate</i>	dedicate someone or something for specific purpose
15	<i>horns of the altar</i>	ornamental horn-shaped decorations on upper corners
	<i>atonement</i>	here refers to purifying the altar (Ezekiel 43:20)
29	<i>Wave offering</i>	priests' portion? Meaning is unclear

### Bible Connections

8:5	<i>what the Lord has commanded to be done</i>	see Exodus 29
8:6	<i>washed with water</i>	<i>of baptism</i> see Acts 22:16
8:8	<i>Urim and Thummim</i>	see Deuteronomy 33:8,10; Numbers 27:21
8:9	<i>purify the altar</i>	see Hebrews 9:21-22
	<i>sin offering</i>	see Leviticus 4
8:18	<i>burnt offering</i>	see Leviticus 1
9:22	<i>stood down</i>	Jesus sat down see Heb 1:3; 8:2; 10:12; Eph 1:20

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Now underline the application of the Main Point.

- 2) What should I do?

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

## Clean and unclean food

### Background

Chapters 11-15 are often known as the Purity Code and give us object lessons of purity. The world is good but ‘fallen’. Realities in this fallen world include pain in childbirth, disease, mildew and mess. They are not evil; they are signs of fallen-ness, decay and death.

### Word List

1	<i>split hoof</i>	foot divided into two toes, <i>also known as cloven hoof</i> .
	<i>cud</i>	food that returns from one part of stomach (the rumen) to mouth to be chewed for a second time. Ruminant mammals are cattle, sheep, antelope, deer, giraffe and their relatives.
5	<i>coney</i>	hyrax or rock badger; similar to rabbit, no tail, bristles among fur on back
6	<i>rabbit</i>	or hare
22	<i>katydid</i>	?large green grasshopper
44	<i>consecrate</i>	dedicate
	<i>holy</i>	set apart
45	<i>out of Egypt</i>	see Exodus 6:2,6-7; 13:14

### Bible Connections

	Still relevant in NT?	
		<i>see Matthew 15:1-20//Mark 7:17-23; Acts 10:9-16, Rom 14:14,20; 1 Cor 6:13; Col 2:16, 20-22; Titus 1:15; Hebrews 9:8-15</i>
	Inner and outer cleanliness	<i>see Psalm 24:4</i>
v11	‘any kind of . . .’	echoes of created order in Genesis 1
v22	locust	eaten by John Baptist, Matt 3:4; Mark 1:6
v45	‘to be your God’	<i>see Exodus 19:5-6</i>
	‘be holy, because I am holy’	<i>see 1 Peter 1:15-16</i>

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Now underline the application of the Main Point.

# Study 4      The Day of Atonement      Leviticus 16

**Background** The Day of Atonement was to be observed annually on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the 7<sup>th</sup> month. It was a reminder that the daily/ weekly/ monthly sacrifices were not sufficient to atone for sin. All work was forbidden. Everyone had to fast. Jews today observe this as 'Yom Kippur' (but no sacrifices have been made since the destruction of the Temple AD 70)

This chapter is the **heart** of Leviticus. Read Hebrews ch 9 & 10 with it.

## Word List

1 <i>two sons...</i>	died when they disobeyed God's command. (10:1-2)
2 <i>Most Holy Place</i>	the innermost part of the tabernacle, where the Ark was kept <i>also known as</i> the Holy of Holies. <i>See page 9 above.</i>
<i>curtain</i>	divided inner part of Tent from the outer (Luke 23:45)
<i>atonement cover</i>	or Mercy Seat, the cover on the Ark
<i>cloud</i>	symbol of God's presence (Exodus 40:34-38)
3-5 <i>sin offering</i>	<i>see ch 4</i>
<i>burnt offering</i>	<i>see ch 1</i>
<i>sacred garments</i>	<i>see Exodus 28</i>
6 <i>atonement</i>	at-one-ment, restoring broken relationship
7 <i>Tent of Meeting</i>	i.e. inside the courtyard, but outside the tent itself.
8 <i>cast lots</i>	a method of random choice
<i>scapegoat</i>	Hebrew 'azazel' has several possible interpretations: a. the goat ( <i>ez</i> ) that goes away (from <i>azal</i> ) b. in order to remove cf Arab <i>azala</i> to remove c. desolate region or precipice (see v 22) d. name of a demon ( <i>azaz</i> 'to be strong' and <i>el</i> 'god')
12 <i>censer</i>	container used for burning incense
<i>incense</i>	substance giving fragrant smell when burned
13 <i>atonement cover</i>	The Ark was covered with beaten gold.
<i>Testimony</i>	stone tablets with Ten Commandments; or the Ark (i.e. the special box) containing them
29,34 <i>lasting ordinance</i>	= repeated every year cf Passover Exodus 12:14
31 <i>deny yourself</i>	= fasting

## Bible Connections with Jesus

<i>Day of Atonement and Jesus</i>	Hebrews 9
<i>Our Christian hope</i>	Hebrews 6:19-20
<i>Christ's sacrifice is once for all</i>	Hebrews 10:3,12-13,19-22
<i>Jesus, our High Priest</i>	Hebrews 7:23-28
<i>Jesus, our Righteousness</i>	Romans 3:21-26
<i>Christ's love for the Church</i>	Ephesians 5:25-27

## **LOOK**

### **1) The Text**

What questions does the passage raise?

What surprises or confuses you?

### **2) The Context**

What other parts of the Bible – surrounding passage, individual book, whole Bible, or Bible story – might help you understand this passage?

## **LEARN**

### 1) How do you answer the questions the passage raises?

- 2) How do you resolve issues that surprised or confused you?
- 3) Give an overall ‘picture’ of the passage in a few sentences.

## **LISTEN**

- 1) What is the lesson or the main point?
- 2) Which verse best sums up the message of the passage? v.

## **LIVE**

- 1) What does it show about God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)?
  - a) His nature and character?
  - b) His grace?
  - c) Jesus and His salvation?

**Now underline the application of the Main Point.**

- 2) What should I do?

**Now underline the application of the Main Point.**

## How should we live? - By His Commandments!

### Background

After ch 18 (our relationships are to be exclusive – with only the one Lord God and with only one sexual partner) ch 19 shows lots of ways in which God's people are to be distinctive from those around them. Fifteen verses flesh out Commandments 5 - 10, applying them to everyday life - the whole of our lives are under God's authority.

Verse 18 was used by Jesus and others to sum up the second half of the Commandments, offering a better way of life: 'Do not seek revenge... but love your neighbour as yourself.' (see Matthew 22:39, Mark 12:31)

### Word list

1	<i>holy</i>	set apart, distinctive
7	<i>impure</i>	Initially purity was ceremonial. Later the prophets showed it was ethical.
19	<i>decrees</i>	God's instructions for holy living (Deuteronomy 4:1-2)
23	<i>forbidden</i>	<i>lit</i> Uncircumcised!
26b	<i>divination</i>	some claimed to be able to 'discern events that are distant in time or space, so cannot be perceived by normal means,' either internally, by trance or second sight, or mechanically, from seeing patterns in things like sand or entrails (New Bible Dictionary)
36	<i>ephah</i>	22 Litres
	<i>hin</i>	3.6 Litres of liquid

### Bible Connections

2	<i>Be holy, because I am holy'</i>	<i>quoted in 1 Peter 1:15-16</i>
3,4	<i>I am the LORD your God</i>	Our covenant relationship Genesis 17:7; 26:4-5
18	<i>Love neighbour</i>	Matthew 5:43, in Sermon on the Mount. Luke 10:25-37, the 'Good Samaritan'

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## Regulations for priests about sacred offerings

### Background

Ch. 21 & 22 concern the higher standard of holiness required of *leaders*. Special reverence is due to the priesthood (ch. 21), to the food portions from sacrifices (22:1-16) and to the offerings themselves (22:17-30). These chapters cover how priests relate to family bereavement, marriage, physical defects (all in ch 21) and sacrificial animals (ch 22).

The heart of each issue is reverence for God's reputation: 21:6; 22:32. Careless or irreverent use of things consecrated to God tends to dishonour God and bring disrespect on the worship of God. All animal sacrifices were to be without defect or blemish, the most valuable, not the least; only the best is good enough for God.

In a similar way in the NT, God looks for higher standards from *Christian* leaders *see* 1 Timothy 3; Titus 1:5-16; James 3:1; 1 Peter 5:1-4.

### Word List

1	<i>Aaron and his sons</i>	the first priests, all descended from Levi.
2	<i>consecrate</i>	set apart for a sacred purpose
2,32	<i>profane</i>	treat with great disrespect
4	<i>infectious skin disease</i>	Traditionally leprosy, Hebrew word covers a variety of skin diseases
9,16	<i>makes them holy</i>	<i>or sanctifies them or sets them apart as holy</i>
17	<i>burnt offering</i>	<i>see ch 1</i>
21	<i>fellowship offering</i>	<i>or peace offering</i>
23	<i>freewill offering</i>	gifts brought freely eg Exodus 35:4-30
29	<i>thank offering</i>	an expression of thankfulness
32	<i>makes you holy</i>	<i>or made you holy</i>

### Bible Connections

1	<i>Aaron and his sons</i>	Appointed as priests <i>see</i> Exodus 28:ff; Lev 8:1ff
19	<i>without defect/ blemish</i>	Jesus was the perfect sacrifice Heb7:26-27; 914; 10:12 (Christian Leadership standards <i>see</i> Background above)

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# Study 7 Sabbath and Jubilee years      Leviticus 25

## Background

Chapters 17-25 cover *how* we should live a Holy life.

Chapter 25 sums up many themes of the book, as the people and the land are made ready to serve God. The Year of Jubilee is a special example of the Sabbath year. It reflects God's Sabbath after creation.

## Word List

1	<i>Mount Sinai</i>	<i>aka</i> Horeb, exact location uncertain. Israel reached this area in 3 <sup>rd</sup> month after leaving Egypt (Exodus 19:1).
2	<i>Sabbath</i>	from Hebrew root <i>sabat</i> , to cease.
9	<i>trumpet</i>	musical instrument, probably a ram's horn.
10	<i>consecrate</i>	dedicate for a special purpose.
	<i>jubilee</i>	Hebrew <i>yobel</i> , usually meaning musical instrument.
23	<i>aliens</i>	foreigner.
24	<i>redemption</i>	the buying back of something; freedom secured by the payment of a price.
32	<i>Levites</i>	the priestly tribe.

## Bible Connections

10	proclaim liberty	<i>see</i> Isaiah 61:1; Jeremiah 34:8; Luke 4:19
18-22	blessing in response to obedience	<i>see</i> Deuteronomy 28:8-12; Malachi 3:10
23	land belongs to God	<i>see</i> Psalm 24:1; Exodus 6:4; Deuteronomy 5:16
	aliens	<i>see</i> Abraham, Genesis 23:4; Hebrew 11:13
24	redemption of the land	<i>see also</i> Ruth 2:20; Jeremiah 32:7
32	Levitical towns, provision for the priests	<i>see</i> Numbers 35:1-15
36	No interest on loans to fellow countryman	<i>see</i> Exodus 22:25-27

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## The covenant and the believer

### Background

Obedience and disobedience both have consequences. In this chapter v1-13 highlight the rewards/blessings God gives to those who live in covenant with him, obeying his laws. Verses 14-39, however, warn us of the dangers of not obeying God and of rejecting his laws. Finally, verses 40-46 point out that mercy is always available to the penitent.

We see the same principles in the letters to the churches, Revelation ch 2-3.

### Word List

1	<i>sacred stone</i>	used by other religions in the area Exodus 23:23-24
11	<i>dwelling place</i>	<i>Lit</i> tent or tabernacle
46	<i>Mount Sinai</i>	where God gave the Ten Commandments to Moses Exodus 19:11

### Bible Connections

*See also* Deuteronomy chapter 28

1-2	Ten Commandments	<i>see</i> Exodus 20:1-17
8	Five... a hundred	<i>cf</i> Joshua 23:10, Judges 15:15; Deuteronomy 28:7; Isaiah 30:17; 1 Chronicles 12:8-15
13	Brought out of Egypt	<i>see</i> Exodus 6:6; 13:3
40-42	Confessing our sins	<i>see</i> 1 John 1:9
41	paying for sin	<i>see</i> Isaiah 40:2; 53:5-6
42	Covenant with Jacob	<i>see</i> Genesis 28:13-15
	Covenant with Isaac	<i>see</i> Genesis 26:3-5
	Covenant with Abraham	<i>see</i> Genesis 12:2-3, 13-18



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# Sharing the Word

## Use

'Hearing the Word' can be used alone, with one other person, or in a group

## Preparing for a group

Time put in alone beforehand will greatly benefit time spent together.

Work through the stages - LOOK, LEARN, LISTEN, LIVE.

Write down your own questions and answers \*

## A format

If you have 45 mins together, you might like to try dividing it up like this.

(If longer or in a large group, you can extend the times)

1) Drink, bite to eat, chat	(10 mins)
2) A Bible reading	( 2 mins)
3) A Bible study	
a. Any questions? (Whether answer is known or not!) (Don't answer any, till all questions noted!)	( 2 mins)
b. Any relevant cross references?	( 2 mins)
c. Discussion of answers	(13 mins)
d. Conclusion	(10 mins)
i. A Key verse and Main Point?	
ii. What does it show about God / Jesus?	
iii. What should I do?	
4) Sharing (Trials and joys – family, work, self)	( 5 mins)
5) Prayer	( 1 min)

## Remember!

As we gather round God's Word

- a) Listen to the views of others
- b) Make room for the novice. They can join in too when you start by listing 'Any questions'
- c) Don't let the 'knowledgeable' dominate. Encourage everyone to think for themselves.
- d) Try to include others' especially, 'seekers' in your sharing together.

\* The **process** is explained and practised in a four-hour course, suitable for all, called '**An Introduction to 'Hearing the Word'**'. Email: [office@tpc.org](mailto:office@tpc.org)

## ***“I can read the Bible for myself!”***

To show that the Bible is accessible to all,  
the Rev Nigel Barge, minister of Torrance Parish Church,  
has devised a tool called ‘Hearing the Word’.  
The Manual explains the basic principles of Bible reading,  
teaches them by means of an interactive course,  
and practices them on a single passage, Mark 10:35-45,  
Participants follow in a Workbook: *Hearing the Word - Introduction*,  
which includes the next six passages in Mark,  
so they may follow on for themselves.

As the principles apply equally to all, the course will both  
instruct the novice and refresh the ‘hardened’ Bible student!

Further Study Guides cover various genres of Bible material –  
Narrative, Poetry, Law, Letters, Prophecy etc.  
For the current list of material or to place orders, contact