

## LEVITICUS

# The Story of Redemption

*Thoughts and Comments*

**"I am the Lord your God,  
who brought you out of the  
land of Egypt, that you  
should not be their slaves.  
And I have broken the bars  
of your yoke and made you  
walk erect."**

**Leviticus 26:13**

*favorite verse*

## LEVITICUS 4

## But I Didn't Mean To

Leviticus 4 begins with the instructions for offering a sacrifice for unintentional sins. We like to think that as long as our motives are right, everything should be fine. But the truth is that, even if our intentions were right (although, human motives are complex and rarely ever completely pure) and we sin, that sin is still an offense to a holy God and requires a sacrifice.

It is more evidence of how much we need a Savior. Even our best efforts can be tainted with sin and even one sin against an infinite God is an infinite Sin. We need Jesus!

## LEVITICUS 1

## A Pleasing Aroma

We are told that the burnt offerings bring a pleasing aroma to the Lord. We see this phrase repeated in the New Testament:

"Live a life filled with love, following the example of Christ. He loved us and offered himself as a sacrifice for us, a pleasing aroma to God." (Eph 5:2)

"For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing." (2 Cor 2:15)

Christ was the ultimate sacrifice. The sacrifice to end all Old Testament sacrifices. Any time we offer ourselves and sacrifice time, resources, and our talents to the Lord, it is pleasing to him.

We share the 'aroma' of the Gospel with others, pointing them to Christ.



## LEVITICUS 8

# Ears, Thumbs, and Toes

When Aaron and his sons were consecrated, Moses took blood from the bull and put some on their right ears, right hands, and big toes of their right feet.

This is a very specific description. What was the significance of this?

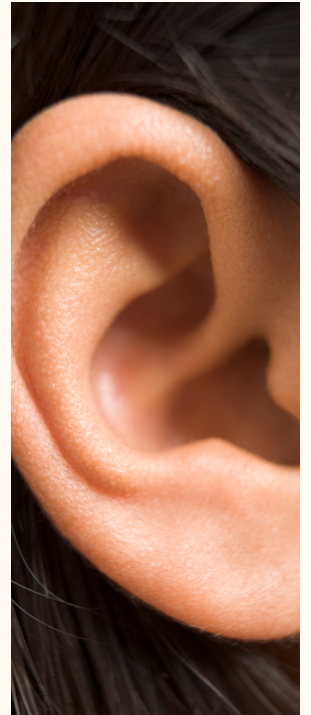
The right side of the body was a sign of strength.

The body parts symbolized that they were consecrating their entire body, their entire being to service and obedience to the Lord.

Their ears- for listening and heeding the voice of God.

Their thumbs- hands of service to do the work of God

Their toes- for walking in holiness and truth, the ways of God.



It is also significant to us because we read in 1 Peter 2:9 that we are now a priesthood. We are called to commit our entire selves to the voice, commands, work, and ways of the Lord.

As Romans 1 says: we offer our bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God. This is our spiritual act of worship. (see also Hebrews 7:11-26)

---

## LEVITICUS 11

# Eat This, Not That

This chapter can be confusing. It dictates what animals can be eaten and what cannot. At first it seems rather arbitrary. It is based on the cloven-feet and chewing cud, scales and fins, winged creatures that don't walk on four legs. What does it matter?

The differences between these animals is that animals that didn't conform to normal boundaries of animals represented lack of wholeness and integrity.

Many of the animals forbidden were also associated with pagan sacrificial animals. There is a lot of study that can be done into clean and unclean animals and what were allowed to be sacrificed!



## LEVITICUS 12

# Post-Partum Isolation?

As a woman and a mother who has given birth three times, it's hard to read passages like this that say that a woman after childbirth is considered unclean for several days.

I am glad that this law no longer applies to us today! But the reason for this command was not that giving birth is a bad thing, but because of the discharge of blood that occurs in childbirth. The loss of blood leads to death. It is 'less than whole.' God's laws of uncleanness had to do with imperfections. God is a perfect God and so things that symbolized imperfection or incompleteness were deemed unclean.

I also read a commentary that said that it brings attention to our sinfulness. A new sinner is born.

As to why the time spans were double if you had a girl instead of a boy, I'm not sure if there is a definitive answer. One commentary suggested that girl babies were generally smaller and so it allowed more time for the mother to feed the baby. Being 'unclean' actually relieved the mother of many social obligations so in one sense it was like a maternity leave.



## LEVITICUS 13

# Leprosy

Leprosy is a bacterial infection that if untreated can cause paralysis of hands and feet. It leads to nerve damage that can cause injuries to the person because of lack of feeling. Severe cases leads the body to reabsorb the fingers or toes.

In biblical times it was thought to be highly contagious, but we know now that it is hard to spread and is easily treated. Actually 95% of humanity has natural immunity to it. However the stigma remains and those with leprosy are often ostracized from society. India and Brazil have 73% of new cases of the disease.

Lepers in the Bible experienced intense separation from community and even the temple. They were deemed unclean. Yet Jesus healed them and invited them into fellowship with him. I love the visual picture of Jesus cleansing us from our sin-- a disease that separates us from fellowship with God. Thank you, Jesus, for healing us!

# Abominations

Emphasis on 'nations.' God commands sexual purity of his people. He lists a whole bunch of ways one can practice sexual immorality. These were all practices done by the surrounding nations. God wanted his people to be distinct from the world. This would be a very prominent way to do it.

This is one of the passages used to show that homosexuality is not God's design. It also shows that people during this time were not unaware of homosexuality. Male with male, female with female, and a whole host of things in between, were common.

Some counter that because we do not practice all the other laws found in Leviticus and Exodus, that this law is cultural and no longer applicable for us today. But that is not true. Many of the dietary and sacrificial and cleanliness laws were done away with specifically in the New Testament when Jesus died on the cross and when Paul declared all food clean. But laws regarding sexual relations are repeated in the New Testament affirming that they are still for us today.

Sexual purity was important to God. Throughout all of these verses about these laws he repeats the phrase 'I am the Lord.' He says 'Be holy for I am holy.' The reason for obeying these laws is because God is pure and holy and we should be too. The union of a man with a woman is representative of Christ and the church. Two separate entities coming together in their difference as one. Anything that profanes this imaging of God is an abomination.

The Israelites find out the hard way, even though God specifically warned against it, that even when you think you are only compromising a tiny bit in this area, it is a steep slope. When sin gets a foothold, it begins to work on you and becomes harder and harder to resist. By not separating themselves from the nations, they walked into sin.

Abomination is a strong word with strong connotations. It may sound harsh to us. Maybe the word sin has lost its kick. Perhaps it would be better for us to view our sins as abominations for that is what they are and we should be serious to run from them, not creep close and hope we'll be okay.

For more on the topic of homosexuality, I would first suggest Kevin DeYoung's book "What Does the Bible Really Teach about Homosexuality?" (A review of this book can be found on my website.)

---

## LEVITICUS 19

# Getting Inked

This chapter prohibits tattoos and cutting of the skin. Does that mean it's wrong for Christians to get tattoos?

The short answer is no. But the deeper answer is that our bodies are important and what we do with them matters. Everything that involves our bodies should be honoring to God.

In terms of this specific passage the word used for tattoo is not found anywhere else so what they are referring to exactly is unclear. Some speculate that many of the tattoos, body painting, or cuts on skin was directly related to pagan worship and sacrifices during that time.

It is not wrong for us to consider cultural perception of tattoos or certain types or places for tattoos and how that would affect our witness to the Lord.



---

crops. Similarly, Christ will gather all his people from all nations and tribes to celebrate his return.

Every festival is a "shadow of Christ." It's really cool that God designated these celebrations to help his people remember him and anticipate that the best was yet to come! What practices can we establish in our lives to remember God and eternity with him?

## LEVITICUS 23

# Let's Feast!

Leviticus lists out the feasts that Jewish people are to follow:

- The Sabbath
- The Passover
- The Feast of Firstfruits
- The Feast of Weeks
- The Feast of Trumpets
- The Day of Atonement
- The Feast of Booths

I found a really good ARTICLE about feasts that describe what they were and what they symbolized.

One I had always wondered about was the Feast of Booths.

Booths were 'tabernacles.' Like all the feasts, they were there for the Israelites to remember God and what he did for them, what he promises, and what they look forward to.

They dwelt in booths in the wilderness until they were brought to the Promised Land in Canaan. Similarly, the church will eventually be taken from our wilderness into the Promised Land of heaven when Christ returns.

The Feast of Booths occurs after the final agricultural harvest. There were different times to harvest different

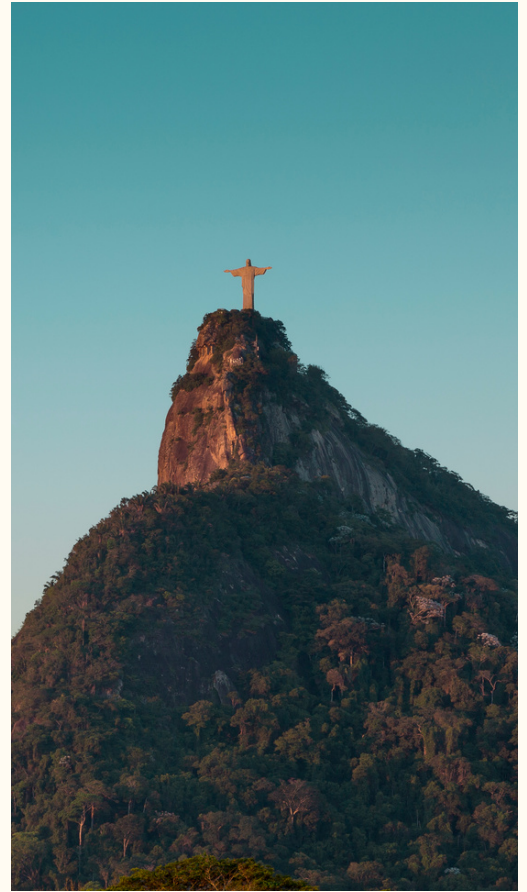
LEVITICUS 25

# Redeemed

The end of Leviticus describes the Year of Jubilee in which people are set free and property is returned. It's a time to rejoice.

After these verses are the guidelines revolving around the redemption of property. A person who steps in to help a family member is called a 'redeemer.' We see this at work in the book of Ruth when Boaz becomes Ruth and Naomi's Redeemer, restoring land and property to them.

Of course, we can't miss the obvious connection to Christ, our redeemer. Someone who steps in to pay our debts so we don't lose our inheritance? That is Jesus. And again, God designates these practices to both protect people but also to give a small taste of the glory yet to come!



---

## Looking Ahead

**I PROMISE I PLAN TO GET CAUGHT BACK UP TO DO THIS WITH WHAT WE'RE CURRENTLY READING.  
I KNOW THAT IT IS MORE HELPFUL TO READ THIS ALONGSIDE OUR READINGS, NOT IN  
RETROSPECT. BEAR WITH ME AS I KEEP WORKING AT IT!**

**[NOTE: IF YOU'RE BEHIND AND FEELING OVERWHELMED, FEEL FREE TO SKIP THE CHAPTERS YOU  
MISSED AND MOVE AHEAD TO STAY ON TRACK!]**

*Next up... Deuteronomy 10*