

L E V I T I C U S

# CALLLED

*Walking with a Holy God*

*LifeGroup Studies*

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# CALLED

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The Hebrew title to the book of Leviticus is *vayiqra* 'And he called...'. This comes from the first word of the book 'The LORD called to Moses...' Through Moses, the Lord calls his people to costly worship (Ch 1), Holiness (Ch 10), to be Atoned (Ch 16), to Love of Neighbour (Ch 19), and to All of Life Worship (Ch 23). The reason for this is that he wants to walk among them and be their God, and for them to be his people (Lev 26:12)

In the same way, The LORD calls to us at Figtree, who have been atoned by the blood of Jesus, to walk with him. Leviticus provides an immense resource of wisdom about what this could look like in the Christian life today. My prayer is that it will deepen our understanding of worship, holiness, the atonement, love of neighbour, and rest.

## Here's some tips for studying Leviticus with your group:

- **Remember:** God is calling his people to an 'all of life' worship of him. Jesus simplifies this to Love of God, and Love of Neighbour. If you're ever stuck as a group wondering 'what on earth is being talked about?' consider whether it is meant to be an act of love of God, love of neighbour, or a symbolic reminder that every part of a person's life is in some way meant to be given over to God.
- **Don't be afraid to look for the principles and push into application questions.** A big fear of doing this series is that we just learn lots of 'knowledge' about Levitical practices, but don't consider what *significant* principles underpin them. I hope the questions lead this well, but it will take time understanding the passage to see God's heart behind these practices which are culturally foreign to us.

Any questions at all just ask :)

**Pete Lenehan**

## SERIES OVERVIEW

DATE	THEMATIC	EXEGETICAL
5 May	Misconceptions, Overview Why are we doing this? Sacrifices/Offerings	Called to Costly Worship  Leviticus 1
12 May	Clean/Unclean	Called to Holiness  Leviticus 10
19 May	Atonement/Nature of Sin	Called to be Atoned  Leviticus 16
26 May	Are We Consistent?  Two Types of Cloth	Called to Love of Neighbour  Leviticus 19
2 June	All of Life Worship	Called to Rest  Leviticus 23

# STUDY 1 | COSTLY WORSHIP

## LEVITICUS 1 & ROMANS 12:1-2

### Engaging the Study:

- When people think of Leviticus, what comes to mind?
- What questions do you have (if any) about this book that you would like us to look at over the coming weeks?
- When you think of 'worship', what comes to mind?
- When you think of 'sacrifices/offerings', what comes to mind?

**Optional:** Watch [Bible Project Leviticus Summary](#) (approx. 8 minutes)

[bibleproject.com/explore/video/leviticus](https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/leviticus)

**Pray:** Lord, there are some difficult things to understand in your word! We pray for insight and understanding and that you would help us consider what sacrificial worship looks like. Challenge us in our own lives as we reflect on what you called your people to do long ago. Help us to live lives of sacrificial worship today for our Lord Jesus. Amen.

### Read: Leviticus 1 & Romans 12:1-2

#### Context:

- God's people are still at Mt Sinai
- **Chapters 1-7** look at offerings and sacrifices to God. There are 5 offerings: 1) Burnt, 2) Grain, 3) Fellowship, 4) Sin, 5) Guilt. Burnt and Grain offering were usually provided together. Sin and Guilt were often done together. After these, a Fellowship offering may also be done as it was symbolic of fellowship restored with their creator God; enjoying a meal with him!
- These offerings are different to the Day of Atonement offering (Leviticus 16). We'll look in more detail at the Day of Atonement in Study 3.

### Questions for discussion:

1. What are some of the details you noticed or were confused by?
2. God makes provision for various 'degrees' of sacrifice (e.g. Bull, Goat, Bird). What does this tell you about our God?
3. The people are to 'lay their hand' on the head of the animal, what do you think was the purpose of this?
4. What do you think is the purpose of these sacrifices?
5. The sacrifices are highly involved, with the worshipper responsible for cleaning the animal to be sacrificed. Do you think we are 'involved' enough in worship today? What should 'involved' worship look like?
6. How do we feel about having an innocent animal sacrificed? How does this shape how we feel about the sacrificial death of Jesus?
7. How does this offering/sacrifice shape your understanding of what God's people were called to?
8. There are five offerings described in Leviticus 1-7. What do you think this teaches us about worship of God?

*Study continues on the next page...*

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# STUDY 1 | COSTLY WORSHIP

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## LEVITICUS 1 & ROMANS 12:1-2

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9. There is both continuity, and discontinuity, between the Old and New Covenants. What do you think is 'continuous' for us today? What do you think is 'discontinuous'? Why?
10. Worship involved giving the 'best' to God. Do you think we give our best to God as we worship him? What stops us?
11. We can see God's people were called to a costly worship of their Lord by whole offerings to him. What kind of sacrifices do you think God might be calling us to make?
12. How are we to offer ourselves as 'living sacrifices' today? How does Leviticus deepen our understanding of what God calls us to in Romans 12:1-2?

# STUDY 2 | HOLINESS OF GOD

## LEVITICUS 10

### Engaging the Study:

- When you hear the word 'holy' what comes to mind?
- What ideas do you think our world/society has about 'holiness'?
- "Death is too extreme a punishment for sin". Discuss.

**Optional:** Watch Bible Project [What the Idea of "Holiness" Means in the Bible](#)

[youtu.be/l9vn5UvsHvM](https://youtu.be/l9vn5UvsHvM)

**Pray:** Lord, as we learn about your holiness, we pray that we would be moved and challenged by this. Lord, these are some confronting words in your scripture. We pray that you would have us learn what you want about your character, holiness, justice, and goodness. Amen.

### Read: Leviticus 10

**Optional Reads: Acts 5:1-11; 1 Peter 1:13-16; Hebrews 4:14-16.**

**Context:** God has given very specific instructions for how the priests are to approach him in Chapters 8-9. The priests themselves need to be atoned by the blood of a sacrifice from 'top to toe' (8:23). They have a significant responsibility in being mediators of the people God with God himself. It's in this context that Nadab and Abihu directly defy God in Chapter 10 and want to approach him on their own terms.

### Questions for Discussion:

1. When we talk about 'holiness' what do you think this means?

2. We read fire came out from the presence of the Lord and consumed them, and they died before the Lord' (Lev 10:2). Why do you think this occurred?
3. Read V.16-18 - We read that Moses is angry with Eleazar. Why?
4. Read Aaron's reply in v.19. Moses is 'satisfied' with this. Why do you think Eleazar was able to 'disobey' yet Nadab and Abihu were killed for their disobedience?
5. What do you think this teaches us about the reason for Nadab and Abihu's death?
6. God says "'Among those who approach me, I will be proved holy; in the sight of all the people I will be honoured.'" Lev 10:3. How do think this works out in today's world?
7. Big Picture Question: There are several of these kinds of events throughout scripture (e.g. Ananias and Sapphira, Sodom and Gomorrah, Sin of Achan). Why do you think these occur? Do you think these people's 'sin' was worse than anyone else in the bible? What do you think is the point of their deaths being recorded in scripture?
8. When you read about the deaths of Nadab and Abihu, what reaction do you have? When you read about the death of Jesus the Son of God, what reaction do you have?

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## STUDY 2 | HOLINESS OF GOD

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### LEVITICUS 10

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9. Overall, this encounter emphasizes the dangerousness of God's holiness. What comfort is there for Christians in this passage? How is God's dangerous holiness a good thing?
10. Read Hebrews 4:14-16. How does knowing the story of Nadab and Abihu deepen your understanding of what it means to approach God with confidence?

**Pray** Father, thank you for your incredible grace towards us. We pray that as we continue to reflect on this part of your word, that you would help us to grasp something of what it means that you are a holy God. Amen.

# STUDY 3 | DAY OF ATONEMENT

## LEVITICUS 16

### Engaging the Study:

- How do you think wrongs should be righted in our world?
- 'Rehabilitation should be the only response to wrong'. Discuss.
- 'Punishment should be the only response to wrong'. Discuss.
- What does the group know about the atonement in the bible?

**Optional:** Watch Bible Project [How God Deals with Evil Without Destroying Humanity](#)

[youtu.be/G\\_OIRWGLdnw](https://youtu.be/G_OIRWGLdnw)

**Pray:** Lord, as we explore this deep truth that you have solved the problem of our sin, we pray that we would never take this for granted, but would be amazed at your justice, love, and compassion for us.

### Read: Leviticus 16

### Optional Reads: Hebrews 10:1-10

**Context:** We are at the heart of the book. Previously, God has explained how he can deal with 'unintentional' sins (see Sin offering 4:1, and Guilt Offering 5:14), yet the question remains: is there any grace for repentant people who have sinned intentionally? What about the sins they haven't even realised? God has spent the first few chapters calling and preparing Israel to live lives of holiness. He now makes clear what is required for the community to live in his presence and how he will deal with 'all' their sins. We will explore how atonement requires both being 'washed' and the consequences dealt with.

### Questions for Discussion:

1. 'The Lord spoke to Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron' v.1 Why do you think this opens the chapter?
2. What do you think the word 'atonement' means?
3. 'I will appear in a cloud over the atonement cover' v.2 - what do you think this might symbolise? What is the significance of this?
4. The High Priest and his household needs to be atoned for (v.11). Why do you think this is significant?
5. We read that 'things' and 'places' are 'atoned' for in v.20. Where does this fit in our understanding of atonement?
6. The vast majority of what is happening is not seen by the people, it is inside the tent. What is the significance of describing this for the people? Why do you think God wants his people to know this?
7. There are two goats for the sins of the people of Israel. The 'sin offering' (v.15) and the 'scapegoat'/'live goat' (v.21). The passage says that on the scapegoat, 'all their sins' are confessed, and sent away. What do you think this might teach us about the sins of the people?
8. How does the description of this ritual shape your understanding of Jesus' atonement?



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## STUDY 3 | DAY OF ATONEMENT

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### LEVITICUS 16

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9. We've seen that atonement is huge. It is both washing clean, and dealing with righteous anger. When you think about Jesus' atoning work on the cross, what is the main category you think about?
  
10. In response to the day of atonement, God's people are called to 'deny themselves' (v.29). Where else have we heard this call? (Hint: Matt 16:24)
  
11. What do you think it looks like for us to 'deny ourselves' today? What is the motivation for this?

# STUDY 4 | CALLED TO LOVE OF NEIGHBOUR

## LEVITICUS 19

### Engaging the Study:

- “Christians ‘pick and choose’ what to obey from the Old Testament”. Discuss.
- What do people think about these quotes?
  - “Moses is dead. His rule ended when Christ came. He is of no further service,” - Martin Luther
  - “The Law points us to Christ for our Justification, Christ points us back to the law for our Sanctification” - John Stott
  - “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfil them.” - Jesus, Mt 5:17–20.
  - “By calling this covenant “new,” he has made the first one obsolete; and what is obsolete and outdated will soon disappear.” Heb 8:13.

**Optional:** Watch Bible Project [The Purpose of the Old Testament Law of Moses in the Bible](#)

[youtu.be/3BGO9Mmd\\_cU](https://youtu.be/3BGO9Mmd_cU)

**Pray:** Lord, as we explore this call to love our neighbour as ourselves, help us to avoid the two pitfalls of ignoring this high call you have for us, but also not settling into a life of guilt and legalism. We pray this in your son’s name. Amen.

**Read: Leviticus 19**

**Optional Reads: Luke 10:25-37**

**Context:** God’s people have been atoned, and he calls them to a holy life. Leviticus 19 is bracketed by some of the most controversial passages in the book about sexual ethics (Leviticus 18 & 20). By placing this chapter in between these two, we see that the heart of God’s commands is love of our neighbour.

### Questions for Discussion:

1. Why does God want his people to be holy? (v.2)
2. There’s a LOT of seemingly random ‘laws’ here, what stands out to you? Do you notice any particular emphases or patterns?
3. As we read through these commands to God’s people, what stood out to you? What was challenging?
4. V.9 - God’s people were commanded to leave ‘gleanings’ for the poor and foreigner. How do you think this principle should play out today in our lives?
5. V.14 God wants his people to have a particular care for those with disabilities. In what way do you think this should be reflected in our lives and church today?
6. V.15 warns us against partiality to either the poor or the rich. In what ways do you think we might be tempted to show partiality to these groups? What about the ‘middle’?
7. V.17a ‘do not hate a fellow Israelite in your heart’ is contrasted with ‘rebuke your neighbour frankly’. How might these two commands be related?

*Study continues on the next page...*

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# STUDY 4 | CALLED TO LOVE OF NEIGHBOUR

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## LEVITICUS 19

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8. V.17b 'rebuke your neighbour frankly so you will not share in their guilt' - what do you think this looks like for us today? This is smack-bang next to v.18. How does it shape our understanding of love of neighbour?
9. V. 18 "Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against anyone among your people, but love your neighbour as yourself. I am the Lord." The Lord contrasts a 'grudge' with 'love our neighbour'? How does this enhance our understanding of what it means to love others?
10. V.19 What's up with these commands?
11. V.20 - We can often think of the Old Testament law as quite unforgiving. How has reading these detailed commands enhanced your understanding of what it might look like for us to love our neighbour today?

How do we pursue this without falling into legalism?

# STUDY 5 | CALLED TO ALL OF LIFE WORSHIP

## LEVITICUS 23

### Engaging the Study:

- Have you ever been on a weekend away, Christian camp, or some other intentional retreat? In what way did that affect your faith?
- How do people plan out their years, and future?

**Pray:** Lord, as we explore these festivals, and this call to rest, you gave to your people, challenge us we pray and the call you make on our lives regarding how we think about our time and how we rest in you. Amen.

### Read: Leviticus 23

### Optional Read: Leviticus 25; Mark 2:23-28

**Context:** God has given his people commands for how to live individually, yet he also gives them commands for how to live as a community and how they are to corporately worship him. Chapter 23 looks at the 'year', Chapter 25 helps God's people think about a 'lifetime' of worship and intentionally stopping to give thanks and praise to God.

"Israel's appointed feasts and festivals were unique times they would meet with God. All of the festivals combine to form an ongoing disruption to the people's lives, designed to form the way they saw and participated in the world." (Bible Project)

### Questions for Discussion:

1. All of the festivals seem to have a common element of 'rest' as the primary means of worship. Because of this, we'll focus on exploring the Sabbath today:
  - a. What do you think is the role of the Sabbath in the Christian life?
  - b. God's call to Obey the Sabbath was his fourth commandment. How do you think this shapes its importance if at all?
  - c. Jesus said to not be legalistic about work on the Sabbath (Mark 2:23-28), how should this shape how we think about it?
  - d. God calls us into his 'rest' (Heb 4:10), in what ways do you think our lives should be a demonstration of this 'rest'?
  - e. How do you think we 'rest' whilst also being people who 'strenuously contend' for gospel ministry? (Col 1:29)
  - f. The assumption in the Old Testament seems to be that God's people would work 6days/week. Do you think we "rest" too much or not enough in our modern world?
  - g. Broader society now ignores any idea of a day being set aside for Christian worship e.g. footy games, kids' sport, shopping, friends birthday parties, social events; all often scheduled on Sundays during our regular service. How do you think we should respond as Christians? How do you navigate this as a Christian personally?
  - h. Some Christians might argue we need to set aside a literal Sabbath to devote to God and rest. Others argue 'sabbath rest' should be part and parcel of how we go about our daily lives. They argue setting aside a particular day is not practical in our modern world. What do you think are the pros/cons of each position?

*Study continues on the next page...*

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# STUDY 5 | CALLED TO ALL OF LIFE WORSHIP

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## LEVITICUS 23

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2. Lev 23:9 - God wanted his people to dedicate the 'firstfruits' of their labour to him. To what extent do you think this principle should still be present in our lives today? What do you think this could look like in our lives?
  
3. Day of Atonement  
While we've already looked at the day of atonement in detail, we now read that 'Those who do not deny themselves on that day must be cut off from their people.' Lev 23:29. How do we respond to this? Why is this so serious?
  
4. Quote from The Bible Project: "These festivals combine to form an ongoing disruption to the people's lives, designed to form the way they saw and participated in the world." In what ways could we intentionally allow our lives to be 'disrupted' and remind us of worship of God?
  
5. How does this part of scripture enhance your understanding of the importance of regular services such as Easter, and Christmas, and even just regularly gathering together? What about Christian retreats?
  
6. How do we apply some of the principles we've learnt today without falling into the trap of having the 'people for the Sabbath' rather than the 'Sabbath for the people'?



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4-10 Gibsons Rd, Figtree, NSW  
connect@figtree.church | 02 4272 1322 | figtree.church



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