

Preachers' Gatherings 2017

Preaching Leviticus

Booklet 2
Sermon Outlines

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The teaching of Leviticus is like an X-Ray
plate of our salvation

It tells its inner story by means of images

There are five options suggested:

- 1 Preach the whole book.
- 2 Headings with an asterisk* on Page 2 provide one series of 8 sermons, which will match the 8 in Nigel Barge's 'Hearing the Word' booklet.
- 3 **Headings in Bold** give two series of 7 sermons each, see Contents below.
- 4 Four or five sermons on ch. 25, Jubilee.
- 5 An exploration of slavery.

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(Booklet 1 provides The Vision, The Remit, The Resource, Summary of chapters, Précis, Introduction, Structure and Theology, Appendix: 'The Christian and the laws in Leviticus', Recommended Commentaries)

Possible sermon series

1 The whole book

- * **Ch.1** **Burnt offering (+ ch. 6)**
 - 2 Grain offering (+ ch. 6)
 - 3** **Fellowship offering (+ ch. 7)**
 - 4.1 - 5.13 Sin offering (+ ch. 6)
 - 5.14 – 6.7** **Guilt offering (+ ch. 7)**
 - 6.8-7.21 Regulations about the above
 - 7.22-38 No fat or blood; the priests' share
- * **8** **Ordination of Aaron and sons**
- 9** **Priests begin their ministry**
- 10 Deaths of Nathan and Abihu
- * **11** **Clean and unclean food**
 - 12 Purification after childbirth
 - 13 Regulations about skin diseases and mildew
 - 14 Cleansing from same
 - 15 Discharges that make unclean
- * **16** **The Day of Atonement**
 - 17 Centralise worship; do not eat the blood
 - 18** **Unlawful sexual relations**
- * **19** **Range of laws built ✓ 10 commandments**
 - 20 Punishments of sins esp of ch. 18
 - 21 Regulations for priests about holiness
- * **22** **Regulations for priests about sacred offerings**
- 23** **The Feasts: Sabbath, Passover, Weeks,**
 Trumpets, Day of Atonement, Tabernacles
- 24** **Oil and bread for the Lord; blasphemer**
- * **25** **Sabbath and Jubilee years**
- * **26** **Covenant - obedience → fruitfulness**
 - disobedience → punishment
- 27 Redeeming what is the Lord's

Review sermon. Sacrifices, holiness: the grace of Christ and the Christian life

* Matches the selection in *Hearing the Word*, by Nigel Barge

Bold = series of 14, in 2 sets of 7

2. Eight sermons

(Same studies as 'Hearing the Word')

No.	Chapter	Theme
1.	Ch. 1	Burnt offering
2.	Ch. 8	Ordination of Aaron and sons
3.	Ch. 11	Clean and unclean food
4.	Ch. 16	The Day of Atonement
5.	Ch. 19	Range of laws built √ 10 commandments
6.	Ch. 22	Regulations for priests about sacred offerings
7.	Ch. 25	Sabbath and Jubilee years
8.	Ch. 26	The Covenant and the believer

3. Two sets of 7 sermons (+ Review)

1.	Ch.1	Burnt offering
2.	Ch.3	Fellowship offering
3.	Ch.5.14 – 6.7	Guilt offering
4.	Ch.8	Ordination of Aaron and sons
5.	Ch.9	Priests begin their ministry
6.	Ch.11	Clean and unclean food
7.	Ch.16	The Day of Atonement
8.	Ch.18	Unlawful sexual relations
9.	Ch.19	Range of laws built √ 10 commandments
10.	Ch.22	Standards for the Priesthood
11.	Ch.23	The Feasts: Sabbath; Passover to Tabernacles
12.	Ch.24	Oil and bread for the Lord; blasphemer.
13.	Ch.25	Sabbath and Jubilee years
14.	Ch.26	Covenant - obedience → fruitfulness - disobedience → punishment
15.	Review sermon:	Sacrifices, holiness: the grace of Christ and the Christian life

4. Short series on ch. 25, Jubilee

v. 1-22	God's earth: don't rape it	<i>Christian ecology</i>
v. 23-34	God's possessions: don't claim them	<i>Christian economics</i>
v. 35-55	God's poor: don't oppress them	<i>Christian equity</i>
v. 10 with Isaiah 61 and Luke 4 v.14-21	God's Kinsman: don't reject Him	<i>The Christian's freedom.</i>

5. Exploration of types of slavery, *i.e.* 25.35-55 with Philemon.

It will be exciting if our people catch the change, through the course of Leviticus, of God's relation with his people: and those factors which enable that change –

- (1) **Absolved by him.** Justification, an act of his grace (ch.1-16)
 - sacrifice brings forgiveness, 1-7
 - the Mediator brings reconciliation, 8-10
 - cleansing makes it safe to approach him, 11-15
 - full atonement covers all, 16

- (2) **Living for him.** Sanctification, a work of his grace (ch. 17-27)
 - holy living expresses our gratitude, 17-20
 - godly leadership provides morale, 21 & 22
 - regular worship brings him honour 23-27

Of course this is a simplification. For example, the sacrifices both involve and declare not only the absolution but also the consecration to God of the participants (1. 13). But it is a true picture, and so New Testament.

Notes for 14 sermons (2 x 7) + Review

Series 1

Sermon 1 Ch. 1 and 6.8-13 The Whole Burnt Offering.

Rationale for inclusion: to get the hang of sacrifice opens our understanding of the cross, of Isaiah ch. 53, of the whole of Leviticus.

Ch. 1: Burnt offering: commonest, performed every morning and evening. Also whenever you wanted to, man or woman. Only an unblemished male – costly to save us (Jesus, Eph.5.2!). Moving. The rite:

- Hand lay, with prayer (16.21). ‘This animal is me ... a sinner.’
- He slaughters; priests sprinkle blood against altar; accepted to make atonement for sin. Appeases God’s wrath, makes peace with Him (v. 4).
- He washes inner part and legs; priest puts them on the fire. All but the skin is burnt, an offering by fire, an aroma pleasing to the Lord. = responsive consecration.

A twofold, combined significance:

1. It’s to make atonement (4): //Jesus, Heb.10.8-10, Mark.10.45, Eph.5.2, 1 Peter 1.18f. An atonement to trust.
2. It’s to give God pleasure (9): we give him gifts, representing ourselves, from thankful hearts. Heb.13.15f, Eph.4.18, 1 Peter 2.5, Rom.12.1 & 2.

Application: contrast with Bertrand Russell “I’ll die for my own sins, thanks”

ch. 2 grain or cereal offering. A tribute to our Lord, restates peace with God (v. 2, 9, 16). + salt reaffirms covenant with him (Num.18.19).
Our parallel = Rom.12.1-3

Sermon 2 Ch. 3 and 7.11-21. The fellowship or peace offering.

Rationale for inclusion: ‘It can be easy to assume there was no room for spontaneous praise under the old covenant. This would be a false assumption, however, because God has always been delighted to receive special offerings from those whose hearts have been set apart to serve Him.’ (Ligonier).

Intro. Learning to say thank you. Wanting to thank someone who’s been marvellous to you. Wanting to give presents to someone you fall in love with. Wanting time with them.

The peace offering, like others, → pleasing aroma to the Lord. Always needs blood, // Jesus. But unlike some,

- bring one when you feel like it. 7.12ff lists 3 reasons: in confession, as free will offering or to fulfil a vow. Hannah’s lavish offering when she dedicated Samuel to the Lord is an example of a peace offering given to commemorate the payment of a vow (1 Sam. 1:21–28). Psalm 22:22–31 was probably part of the liturgy.
- Eat some yourself, burn some, give some to the priests. It’s festive, and in community.

The rite: bring, lay hand, probably explains special reason for bringing, kill, sprinkle blood. Then ‘eat before the Lord, rejoice how he has blessed’ (Dt.12.7): family and community feast. If for confession – be done with it that day (great!). If for other purpose – keep some for tomorrow too.

Exact meaning of the word (*sh^elamim*) uncertain but traditionally linked with shalom. Hence the offering = ‘thank You God for the salvation and healing you bring.’

One Christian parallel: the Lord’s Supper. 1 Cor.11.25. Others: special giving, special time with, maintain a sense of debt, special season hospitality with food and celebration. ‘Being at peace with God is a special occasion indeed and worthy of celebration with a great feast. The spontaneous expressions of gratitude portrayed in Israel’s peace offerings remind us that we should never forget or take lightly the peace we have with our Lord. Being called and justified, each time we think on the truth that Christ has brought us peace with God we should be moved to praise Him and to declare the good things He has done for us to others. Do you

view peace with God as a cause for perpetual joy?' (Ligonier ministries on Lev. 3)

ch. 4.1 – 5.13 the sin or purification offering. Compulsory. Sprinkle blood on altar or veil. It is for inadvertent offences (4.1-35) or sins of omission (5.1-13). Purifies the place of worship and the worshipper. Lady Macbeth. 1 John 1. 7-9, Heb.9.14, Rom.8.3 !!

Sermon 3 Ch. 5.14 – 6.7 & 7.1-10 The guilt or reparation offering

Rationale for inclusion: ‘God has provided ways through the paralysis of guilt.’ (Brueggeman, ‘Finally,’ p.23 quoted in Tidball p.87).

Intro: Such a relief. For when we have defrauded God or others.

What animal? Only a ram or male lamb. Blood against the altar. Priests could eat the cooked flesh.

When needed? (1) When significant sin against God: sacrilege 14-16, or disobedience, 17-19 (NIV violation; AV trespass: ma'al). Used of adultery, idolatry, Achan's sin (Joshua 7.1), against holy things. Latter = used of the priest's portion or anything dedicated to God: land, money, animal, house.

What reparation? Restore to the priest what they have been deprived of, + 20%.

(2) Also when needed: (6.1ff), both when you wrong you neighbour and when you falsely deny same. Even here atonement is provided for, given confession (Num.5.6-8) and full restitution + 20%.

What a relief! We have all fallen short in holy things and told lies to our neighbour. Even these things are provided for in God's mercy.

The good news: The Lord made his Servant's death a guilt offering, Isaiah 53.10. And when *you* (yes: MT on Isaiah 53.10) make His life a guilt offering he sees another son or daughter of his, Is. 53.10.

Note the reparation called for. Zacchaeus Luke 19. Matt. 5.23f. And accept people's apologies: Matt. 6.12 forgive us as we forgive...

6.8 – 7.38 Instructions about various offerings. We see it from the point of view of the person performing the sacrifices. Don't let the fire of the burnt offering go out. ‘Kindle a flame on the mean altar of my heart’

Sermon 4 Ch. 8 The ordination of Aaron.

Rationale for inclusion: introduces the theme of the mediator who represents God to the people and the people to God. Says so much about Jesus.

Leviticus has two main divisions: entering into fellowship with God (ch. 1-16), and remaining so (ch. 17-27). The people of Israel have been rescued from slavery in Egypt, made God's people, and for the whole of Lev. are camped at the foot of Mt Sinai. If we could have taken a drone's eye view of the camp we would have seen tribes camped to N, S, E and W around a large central screened courtyard. In it, in the open air, an altar: probably with smoke still rising from the morning burnt offering. Near one end, a tent or Tabernacle. 2/3 of this was the Holy Place where priests went daily to trim the lamp and pray. At its far end, the Most Holy Place or Holy of Holies which only one man entered, and he only once a year. For God had made it in a special way his very dwelling place. To show that, for the 38 years of their wilderness wanderings, He made his Presence visible by a pillar of cloud by day, and fire by night, rising above the holy of holies. It must have been very awful, a bit fearful.

Those sacrifices were right for then, and expressed a fundamental truth about what is needed for people to be forgiven and for God to be reconciled to us. They were a picture of what Jesus would do for us. They've been likened to an X-Ray plate: they told the inner story of Jesus' atoning death by means of a picture.

So, what is needed so that people who think and do bad stuff may walk in fellowship with Almighty God (amazing thought!)? First, forgiveness – hence the sacrifices of ch. 1-7. Secondly a mediator, a safe middleman between God and us, a conciliator, to present those sacrifices acceptably to Him. God gave them one in the appointment of the High Priest. This is the theme of ch. 8-10. Let's follow chapter 8 and see what happened.

- 1) **He had to be washed.** Read 8.1-6. That washing symbolically washed away his inner contamination. Aaron had recently made the golden calf. He came to his ordination dirty, guilty, spiritually contaminated. So the first step in the regulations is a thorough wash: a requirement of a person about to become High Priest. And do you remember Jesus' first action as he came forward to be our saviour? Matt.3.13-17 read. Jesus came to be washed: a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. As John the Baptist protested, 'No! I need to be baptised by you.' Jesus didn't need personally to be baptised for the forgiveness of sins. But *he was fulfilling the Law*. The Law says the first step in becoming High Priest is, you must be

washed. Jesus was so committed to being our HP, he kept every detail of the Law. There IS a negotiator between God and humanity, the man Christ Jesus!

2) **He had to be clothed**, endued with the tools or ministries of his work. Read 8.7-9.

- a) The Ephod. If we look at Ex.28.9-12 (read): the Ephod had the names of all 12 tribes on its shoulder straps ‘as a memorial before the Lord.’ The HP shouldered the weight of their burdens and reminded God daily about them. And so we read in Heb.7.25 that Jesus fulfils this work of the HP: he ever lives to make intercession for us. As soon as we become believers, we are on Jesus’ prayer list. Do you let Jesus carry the weight of your burdens? (Illustration: me dropping the car battery because I wanted to do it all myself, declined help). Let Jesus share that burden! Talk it through with him, hand it over, ask his help, say Yes Please.
- b) The breastpiece. This is what Ex. tells us us: read Ex.28.17a, 29a. It tells of Jesus’ ministry to us. Your name is written on Jesus’ heart! Urim and Thummin enabled HP to guide. Jesus always ‘bears the means of making decisions for his people over his heart before the Lord.’ Do you avail yourself of this ministry of Jesus?
- c) The gold head-plate. I find this so exciting, and comforting. Read Ex.28.36-38. The plate was on the HP’s forehead ‘and he will bear the guilt involved in whatever the Israelites give God: on his forehead continually so that they will be acceptable to the Lord.’

Perhaps this is especially comforting to those in full time Christian service, but we are all serving God in all we do. And here in the gold plate is a symbol of a ministry of Jesus: he takes on himself all the shortfall and sin in what we do for Him so that what reaches God is perfect. Be comforted! Our Lord Jesus takes away the unworthiness of what we offer God. God accepts it totally, he sees no shortfall, no sin. Wow.

The HP was (1) washed ... (2) endued with ministries to the people ...

3). He had to be anointed. Read 8.10-12, 30. He was anointed twice, to emphasise its importance. Aaron was called to this work, set aside for it, and was anointed with oil and (we may presume) by the Holy Spirit. And what happened when Jesus was baptised? – let’s read again Matt.3.16,17. ‘As soon as Jesus was baptised, he went up out of the water. *Heaven was opened* and he saw the Holy Spirit coming down like a dove on him. And a voice from heaven said ‘this is my Son whom I love; I am pleased with him.’ Father, Son and Holy Spirit united to save us. And Jesus told us what he was anointed for, in Luke 4 quoting Isaiah 61:

- To bring good news to the needy
- To comfort and heal the broken hearted
- To set the inhibited and limited free

So we know this work of Jesus is full of Holy Spirit power. It is work we can trust.

4). He had to sacrifice. In Aaron's case, both for himself (8.14, 18 read) and then for the people (9.15, 16 read). First a sin or purification offering to cleanse away their moral guilt and spiritual contamination, then the whole burnt or ascension offering that combined general atonement and their consecration to God.

There were four elements to the sacrifices: God, the sinner, their sin and the sacrificial animal. The worshipper would lay their hand on the animal's head, a symbol of transferring their sin to it and of saying 'this animal is me: representing me before You.' It was kosher-killed and the HP sprinkled blood on the four horns of the altar, and splashed blood against its sides: proof that a death had been died for those sins.

- Why death: because 'without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin'
- Why not? Because of God's arrangement with humankind: 'on the day you eat of it (forbidden fruit), death will enter.'
- So the way to deal with sin is by way of a death for it.

That is why Jesus stood in for us in dying: to atone for our sins. 'Christ loved us and gave his life for us as a sweet-smelling offering and sacrifice that pleases God' (Eph.5.2).

Therefore we can say to God, looking at the Cross, 'this lamb is me: let him represent me before You.'

The awesome outcome: as the HP blessed them the glory of God fell, the people fell on their faces and they shouted for joy (Ex.9.23, 24).

Now of course the earthly Tabernacle and the OT High Priest were but temporary provisions till Jesus came. Then 'when Christ came as High Priest, he went through the greater and more perfect Tabernacle that is not part of this creation. He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves. He entered THE Most Holy Place, God's very Presence, once for all, by his own blood: cleansing our consciences to serve the living God ... so that we may receive the promised, eternal inheritance' (Heb.9.1-15).

Application. Beloved in the Lord, you have such a High Priest, a conciliator, a safe middleman, beside the Father. Let us then approach his throne with confidence, for mercy and grace to help us in times of need. Let's not just know this is available; let's do the approaching.

Looking back, we see in Lev. ch. 8 so much about Jesus the Mediator, our wonderful High Priest: baptised to represent us, endued to

- Carry our burdens
- Pray for us
- Bear our failures,

Anointed by the Holy Spirit to liberate us, and who gave his life for our full pardon. What a great Saviour.

Note. There is so much about Jesus in Lev. 8 it seems to me best to stand as a sermon on its own. But the priests were commissioned into service at the same time, and it is able to be also a sermon (a second one?) about our vocation as a royal priesthood:

- 7 x 'as the Lord commanded.' When we obey his word, we may expect to enjoy receiving his promises. John 14.23
- Washing: we need cleansing. Titus 3.4-6
- Clothing: we need equipping, v. 7-9.
- Anointing: we need empowering, v. 10-13.
- Dedicating: we need consecration, v. 14-30 → Peace offering of oil and blood. We are Spirit-filled, blood-bought on ear and hand and foot.
- Feasting in fellowship with God, v. 31
- Waiting: time with God to get it right, v. 32-36.

Special lesson:

The thoroughness of our salvation. The sacrifice, washing, clothing and anointing picture God's provision of acceptance, cleansing, justification, sanctification and commissioning into His service.

Sermon 5 Ch. 9. The priests begin their ministry; the glory of the Lord appears.

Rationale for inclusion: what is my daydream, my secret fantasy? – for it is at the importance to a person of their expectations, that they are vulnerable. What do we really want to be the result of our Christian service?

Intro. The weightlessness of God in our day (D. Wells, ‘God in the wasteland’). Isn’t the glory of God as the result of our priestly service – kavod, his weight/worth/value – the great need of our time and the great desire of our hearts? And here God promises via ministry to show priest and people his glory (v. 4, 6): and does so (v. 23,24). Worth opening our hearts to.

The offerings involved.

- Sin offering, defilement removed. For Aaron – a calf! Reversing the golden calf guilt: it’s the only place a calf is specified.
- Burnt offering: sin, guilt and God’s anger wiped out. Rom.3.25
- Cereal offering. We offer ourselves and our work to God. Rom.12.1f
- Peace (fellowship) offering. Fellowship meal // Lord’s Supper. The distance of Ex.40.35 was being reduced.

Special lessons

1. Good news! Lord wants us to know him and his blessings, John 1.12-14
2. Here’s the Christian life! Celebrating God’s cleansing, mercy, pardon and favour with great joy (Deut.12.7), feasting on cereal, oil, boiled beef and roast lamb together. John 6.35 & 51, 1 Cor. 1.30, → Lev. 9.22-24 the glory of God appearing.

Application. Until Titus 2.13 comes true in the life to come, we sing Glory and bow to him as weighty.

ch. 10. Aaron’s sons make strange fire and die. Contrast 9.6 with 10.1: they acted as they chose. Cp Ananias and Sapphira, Acts ch. 5. ‘Cosy God’ not true! In worship don’t ask ‘What do I want?’ Ask ‘Is God being glorified here? Luke 12.48, 1 Peter 4.17, James 3.1. Lord make us ever terrified to be hypocrites.

Sermon 6 Ch. 11 Clean and unclean foods.

Rationale for inclusion: the importance of being separate from all that is unclean. Embracing the call to distinctiveness even when we do not always understand the Lord's reasons.

Note the 7-fold structure of formal homiletical exposition

Text: Lev. Ch. 11

Explanation: Context = steps to fellowship with God. Content = clean and unclean foods.

Relevance: God cares who may come into his presence, and the distinctiveness of his people is important to him, 11.44f.

Proposition: So let us see carefully what he said on that to them then, and open ourselves to what it says to us now.

Divisions: 1. On what basis did the Lord divide foods into clean and unclean?

2. Why?

3. So what, in our lives?

Development

1. *On what basis* did the Lord divide foods into clean and unclean? Structure of Lev. 11: there are two lots of 3 sections (Lev. Likes threes) (*I'd be sprinting through this, just give the feel*):
 - (a) Definitions of clean and unclean:
 - 1-8 land creatures: 2&3 edible, 4-8 inedible: unclean
 - 9-12 water creatures: 9 edible, 10-12 inedible: detestable
 - 13-23 flying creatures: 13-19 inedible birds, 20-23 insects detestable and edible
 - (b) Pollution by animals and its treatment:
 - 24-28 land creatures
 - 29-45 swarming creatures
 - 46, 47 summary.
2. *Why?* So they might become like God, 44f. As he distinguished between them and others, so they were to distinguish between some foods and others. Separate from all that He says defiles, for they are God's as others are not, and on the same basis. We can't explain it, we just believe him: it is just by his free choice and say-so, Deut.7.6-8.
3. *So what, for our lives?* The details of Lev. 11 were for them, then. All foods are clean, Mark 7.19. But there is a principle here. God cares who comes

into his presence. Moral and spiritual defilement are a barrier, Mark 7.20ff, 1 Cor.6.15-20.

So we are shown, here, ‘spiritual truth from symbolic action’ (✓ *Tidball’s discussion ad loc*). The NT clean / unclean distinction is not nutritional (Mark 7.19), nor racial (Acts 10. 34, 35), but moral (Mark 7.20ff). The implications are all over the NT but for example:

- Gal.5: not 19ff but 22f
- Col.3: not 5ff but 12ff

We too obey just because the Lord says a thing rather than because we always understand his reasons.

Application: / illustration.

- Purity ‘rests on faith in Christ’s awesome grace, manifest in his blood shed on the cross’ (Tidball p. 157). Apply and invite.
- But that doesn’t let us off the hook. If our faith hasn’t changed our behaviour, it hasn’t altered our destiny. ‘Do not offer the parts of your body to sin as instruments of wickedness. Offer yourselves to God and the parts of our body as instruments of righteousness’ (Rom.6.13).
Illustration: recent events in Lewis. Clean/unclean and God’s reputation.

(ch. 12-15 bodily discharges and fungal infections. 12 and 15 go together (bodily discharges) and 13 and 14 (skin diseases and mildews). N.B. these are not sinful (see Booklet 1). But their NT//: As any uncleanness separated them from God, so does moral uncleanness persisted in, in our lives.

There is a city bright; closed are its walls to sin

Nought that defileth, nought that defileth

Can ever enter in

- *Mary Deck*

There is cleansing in Jesus; keep short accounts.)

Sermon 7 Ch. 16 The Day of Atonement.

Rationale for inclusion. Ch. 16, the way of full atonement covering even everything not resolved by the other sacrifices, is the heart of Leviticus and of the Gospel.

(Lord bless this people)

Real-life intro: fisherman who lied (Waller p.49) = ‘would you be free from your burden of sin?’: everyone’s problem.

- A problem OT-answered by Lev.16: //X-Ray, inside story, by means of a picture, of Jesus.

Context: Israel camped round the central Tabernacle. D of A picks up on all sins over the year. Involved 3 sacrifices: sin-offering (expiation), scape-goat (elimination), burnt-offering (propitiation & consecration all in one).

- The stages:
 - 3-10 preparation:* right animals, garments, wash.
 - 11-19 sin-offerings:* lay hand, kill, present blood: only this day on the atonement cover itself (hilasterion as in Rom.3.25!!), Tabernacle and altar, to cleanse them (yes): v. 16, 19. Jesus presented it in THE holy of holies, Heb.9.11-14
 - 20-22 scapegoat:* both hands to lay sins, out to desert, let it go. “I’m so happy, here’s the reason why: Jesus took my burdens all away ...” Also, the chief Person from whom to remove them: from God. Hallelujah.
 - 24 burnt offering:* read 24 cp 1.3 accepted, 1.9 pleasing to God.
- Jesus’ fulfilment: Mark 15.37-39 as He died that very curtain was torn down by God, from top to bottom. God is *here*. ‘I see him lay his anger by and smile in Jesus’ face’ (Ruskin).

Recap Show relevance for that fisherman and for us. Two worshippers, which one was forgiven? ‘It is enough that Jesus died, and that he died for me.’ (“My faith has found a resting-place:” Eliza Hewitt)

ch. 17. The Lord would have us delight in Jesus’ atoning death. We will in heaven: Rev.5.6-14.

- For them: 1-9 life precious, sacrifice only here. 10-16, don’t eat blood
- For us: Acts 20.28 Jesus’ blood is precious, Heb.9.22, 1 Peter 1.19, 1 John 1.7, Rev.1.5

‘There is a fountain filled with blood drawn from Immanuel’s veins:’
William Cowper.

Series 2

Sermon 8 Ch. 18 Family health: unlawful sexual relations and child sacrifice.

Rationale for inclusion. Can love ever be sinful? A maelstrom of values is being propagated in politics, the media and education (For some examples see L. William Countryman 'Dirt Greed and Sex,' Fortress Press, rev. edn 2007). Hence the importance of including the kingdom's behaviours in respect of family and sexual integrity, among the topics included in a series on Leviticus. People need to know how to behave and why. And God's ways bring God's blessing, 18.5!

Best preacher's exploration of the law is perhaps Tidball. Sklar is also helpful. Sinclair Ferguson 'Devoted to God', BofT, has a chapter on it which I recommend highly, and an appendix on Christian's attitude to Sunday.

= part of ch. 18-20, God's will is our sanctification.

1-5 Intro: Key to 18-20 is 18.3-5: the practices of the surrounding nations offended God. His people are to be different, a visual aid of his character.

6-18 not, many close relatives: fits with what we now know from genetics.

19-23 other forbidden behaviours:

19 sex during wife's period: not a moral but a then-ceremonial blood-cleanness issue as in ch. 15

20 adultery: cp Rom.13.9 love your neighbour

21 Molech: idolatry. God's reputation.

22 homosexual practice: cp Rom.1.27, 1 Cor.6.9, 1 Tim 1.9f: because Gen.2.24 male with female to reflect image of God in marriage. And, for family health, sex there alone.

23 bestiality: crosses God-stated boundaries.

24-30 final warning: lest the land vomit you out. Thus the Babylonian exile. And the fall of the Roman empire? And soon of the hegemony and prosperity of the West?

Sermon 9 Ch. 19 Society's welfare: laws built on 10 commandments

Rationale for inclusion. See the variety: the whole of our lives under God's authority.

Key principle 19.2 be holy because he is.

Structure: the words 'I am the Lord (your God)' mark the end of each paragraph, giving 16 paragraphs in 3 sections of 4, 4 and 8 paras: religious duties (2b-10), neighbourliness (11-18), and miscellaneous duties (19-37).

Notice the 10 commandments:

1 & 2: v. 4

3: v. 12

4 & 5: v. 3, 30

6: v. 16

7: v. 20-22 & 29

8: v. 11, 13

9: v. 15, 16

10: v. 17, 18.

Our offerings to God, attitude to parents, business dealings, washing up, friendships, TV watching ...

3a because their parenthood reflects God's fatherhood

3b: Because he is special, so is his day.

4 He will accept no rivals in our affections (amazing!)

5-8 is our religion Biblical?

11, 12 business honesty

15, 16 justice in courts (Lord have mercy here in UK)

17, 18 A better way: love. Do people realise the Good Samaritan is based on Leviticus?

These are values to love.

ch. 20 punishments for crimes.

1-6, 20. Religious sins. Molech worship is high treason: YHWH is their King.

7, 8 The better way: consecration

9-21 sins against family life.

A healthy corrective to the modern balance where a man got 11 years for fixing the LIBOR rate but you get 0-3 years for rape. The danger of evaluating crimes against property more severely than crimes against the person, the exact opposite of Scripture. For we are made in God's image.

ch. 21, 22 regulations for priests and sacrifices.

Ch. 21 priests to be holy because perform sacrifices. Jesus without blemish.

Sermon 10 Ch. 22 Standards for the priesthood.

Only eat sacrifice when undefiled; and sacrificial animals to be without blemish.

Rationale for inclusion: The leader's temptation to give second best is constant. But the life lived, and tone set, by us in leadership pervades the whole fellowship.

Tidball summarises:

Service that was not admissible, 1 – 9

Don't serve when unclean

Negligence that was not permissible, 10 – 26

Beware of familiarity making us casual

Sacrifices that were not acceptable, 17 – 29

Offering God blemished, cheap sacrifice (cp Malachi)

Don't let our standards erode; don't take advantage of our position.

Only the best will do . Tidball 269

Sermon 11 Ch. 23 The rhythm of festivals through the year.

Rationale for inclusion. Article 'Who killed the weekend?' Against the enslaved spirit of our age, the joys accruing from choosing to take time from all else to acknowledge God's mercies and spend time with him.

Sabbath and giving God his day. Eric Liddell (see illustration below).

Passover and celebrate Good Friday

Unleavened bread and rejoice in Easter

Weeks and fullness of salvation in the gift of the Holy Spirit as from 1st Christian Pentecost.

Booths (Tabernacles) and rejoice to be a pilgrim

Points for meditation

1. The festivals as types of Christ. Passover=redemption.
Pentecost=ingathering ...
2. The festivals as symbolic for us. Remembrance of redemption. Joy in God. Worship. Consecration (first fruits, Jas.1.18).

Overall: Give time to celebrate the mercies of God. Rhythm of a year reflecting on God's different bounties.

Application (1) The Lord's supper. Do this to make you remember me
(2) Heb.10.23-25 encourage one another, regularly

Illustration. Someone whose life showed a healthy relationship with the Sabbath was Eric Liddell. He gave up an Olympic medal opportunity because a qualifying heat for his distance was to be run on a Sunday. Yet shortly before he died of a brain tumour in a Japanese internment camp in WWII, the camp conditions were crowded, the children had nothing to do. Liddell organised soccer games for them – on Sundays. 'Turn your foot from doing your *own* pleasure on my holy day;' and 'it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath' (Isaiah 58.13; Matt.12.12).

Sermon 12 Ch. 24 Oil and bread for the Lord ← → a blasphemer is stoned

Rationale for inclusion. The showbread is the only offering called ‘a lasting covenant.’ Our covenant with God is to be kept ever fresh, light always shining on it.

God the –

- Light of his people, 1-4 } {Isaiah 42.6 John 8.12
- Sustenance of his people, 5-9 } in Christ {Deut.8.3, John 6.33-38
- Judge of his people, 10-23 } { 2 Cor.5.10, Acts 17.31

(see next page)

Application.

1. Safeguard the ‘regular’ spiritual disciplines, 1-9. Ever acknowledge the Lord’s presence; ever entreat his favour. Prov. 3. 5 & 6.
2. Safeguard the Name, 10-23

Sermon 13 Ch. 25 Sabbath year and Jubilee year.

A very remarkable chapter. See suggestion for possible 4- or 5-sermon series on it, p. 3 above.

Rationale for inclusion. The value of seeing how scripture’s world view affects everything. The ecology of a Sabbath for the land; economics and the importance of combining equity, opportunity and compassion, limiting the rich-poor gap while giving space for entrepreneurship; God the owner of all that we have, we are only its stewards; family as God’s unit for society (so contemporary); the role of the go’el (‘kinsman-redeemer’) and Jesus’ making capital out of it, proclaiming Jubilee as his mission statement and identifying himself as humankind’s go’el.

Intro. Global warming, care of the earth, dignifying the poor, supporting families, giving the struggling a hand up, limiting the rich-poor gap: this chapter is dynamite. It also speaks of the saviour: Jesus brings Jubilee liberation to us, ‘the freedom of the Christian’ (Luther; Isaiah 61, Luke 4).

Outline of chapter

- v. 1-7 Every 7th year give the land a rest. God commits himself to there being enough to eat.
- 8-22 Every 7th 7th (49th) year, land and ‘slaves’ revert freely to their original family. Note that all follows from full atonement (v. 9)

23-38 That reversion is because God is the landowner.

- i) 23-34: ways to get it back before Jubilee (what family solidarity):
 - (1) 25-28 go'el buys your property till Jubilee
 - (2) 35-38 go'el hires you till Jubilee
 - (3) 39-46 go'el buys you till Jubilee
 - (4) 47-54 immigrant buys you till Jubilee
- ii) 54, 55 new start for all at Jubilee. 'Socialism says none shall own property; Leviticus says none shall lose property.' (R. North, *Sociology of the Biblical Jubilee*, Rome, Pontifical Bib. Inst 1954, p.175 quoted Tidball 296).

39-55 slavery. How it happened. Why reverse it: because God freed them from slavery in Egypt.

Points for meditation.

1. God's claims, His rights in the 7th and 49th years. We are not our own, 23.
2. God's bounty. What provision, what a generous spirit.
3. God's example. We too should be ready to distribute. Christian liberality. Contrast with contemporary thinking. 'Covetousness we call ambition. Hoarding we call prudence. Greed we call industry' (R.Foster, *Celebration of Discipline*, 70 & 71 quoted Tidball 294)
4. God's Son, our go'el

Application

1. Jesus our *go'el* frees us from many slaveries. Isaiah 61.1-3, Luke 4.18ff.
2. Principles from Lev. 25. The coherence of society through limiting the rich-poor gap. The family as the basis of a healthy state. Property rights as part of our worship. A slave's dignity: his labour and free status are precious.
3. Our worship and its acceptability and power are hugely determined by our lifestyle. Is. 58.6, Hos. 6.6. 'The fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and break every yoke.'

Jubilee is 'probably the most radical social and economic idea in all the Bible' (Hartley, *Word Commentary*, p. 265 quoted Tidball 299). 'Its effect was to .. rule out economic exploitation. It enshrined in law the cessation of land abuse, the cancellation of debts, the restitution of land to its original owners, the repair of the family and the termination of slavery' (Tidball 299). (*read Tidball 304.1-7*)

Sermon 14 Ch. 26 The covenant: obeyed → blessing, disobeyed → curse

Rationale for inclusion. How valuable for people to see that, like the electricity supply into our homes, being in covenant with God is an overwhelming power source. Well used its value is incalculable; abused, dangerous.

v. 1,2 The heart of the Law: God comes first. No idols. Sabbath. God's house.

v. 3-13 The blessings: agriculture, peace, God's presence

v. 14-39 The curse: disease, famine, defeat: God's discipline

v. 40-46 The possibility of restoration. Discipline, humility, confession reopen the Covenant.

A parallel for us: Rev. 2 & 3. The covenant: obeyed → blessing, disobeyed → curse, both here and hereafter. Even amidst suffering, loving him is the right thing and good for us. And there as here – the invitation to restoration when we have fallen from our first love.

ch. 27 redeeming what is the Lord's

v. 1-13 Three type of vow then

14-24 Two types of dedication to the Lord

// for us. Dedicating ourselves to him, so let's live for him. Col.3.16f, 23f,

1 Cor.10.31.

Review Sermon overleaf.

15 Sermon of review and recapitulation:

Overview of the offerings and their implications.

Rationale for inclusion. Value in standing back and seeing the overview now we've seen the detail. What blessings God has for us in Leviticus.

(show one of The Bible project videos and open for discussion of chief benefits of the series?)

Intro Leviticus is just brilliant. Wondrous sight of our Saviour. Underlines God's holiness and how to both come to fellowship with him and maintain it. The sacrifices: gives insight into the many-sided entail of sin and the many-sided achievement of Christ's death for us.

Ch.	Offering	What it achieves	NT //
1.4ff	Burnt <i>daily</i>	Appeases God's anger Expresses our surrender 2 Sam 24.25, 1 Chron. 21.26 Gen. 8.21, Lev.14.20, 16.24	1 Peter 1.18f Heb.7.27 Rom.3.25
2	Cereal/grain <i>daily</i>	Pay tribute to your Lord	Rom.12
3	peace/f'ship <i>voluntary</i> <i>when want to</i>	Celebrate peace with God and forgiveness with a fellowship meal. It's a pledge and example of being at one with God.	Lord's Supper Church feasts
4.1-5.13	Sin/purific'n <i>when known</i> <i>sin.</i>	Take away pollution lest remain defiled and insecure (18.24-30)	1 John 1.7 1 Peter 1.2
5.14-6.7	Guilt/repar'n <i>for particular</i> <i>sins</i>	Satisfaction and compensation if deprive God of his due or defraud neighbour.	Is 53.4-6,10 with 1 Peter 2.24f 'forgive us our debts'
16	Day of Atonement <i>Once yearly</i>	sin-offering; scapegoat takes it all away; guilt-offering. Dt.16.30 you will be clean from all your sins	John 19.30 'finished' <i>finished</i> work of Christ Mark 15.38; Rom.8.1-39

See the perfect balance. Free grace but not cheap grace. Always involves the commitment of both parties. In Christ, God has opened the way to cleansing (ch.1-16) and a walk with him (ch.18-27). Apply.

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