

# Leviticus

## Chapters 1 – 7

Moses instructed the people:

As a sign that you are asking God for forgiveness,  
put your hand on an animal's head  
as you sacrifice it to the Lord.

Dear God, please forgive my sins

## Chapters 8 – 10

Moses followed God's instructions  
and ordained Aaron and his sons as priests.

Moses washed them, put special clothing on them,  
anointed their heads with chrism  
and offered a special animal sacrifice on their behalf.

Then Aaron lifted up his hands towards the people  
and blessed them.

A flame from the Lord consumed the offering on the altar.  
The people shouted for joy and fell on their knees.

But later on when two of Aaron's sons  
offered unauthorized fire,  
a fire from the Lord consumed them.

Moses then said:

"God expects the highest standard from priests."

Dear God, please bless and protect all priests

## Chapters 11, 12

The people were told which animals were "clean" and which were "unclean".

Only "clean" animals were allowed to be eaten.

Regulations were also made for when a woman had a baby: a lamb or two turtledoves or two young pigeons were to be offered as a prayer for mother and baby.

Dear God, please give me a clean heart

## Chapters 13 – 15

Instructions for hygiene:

People with skin diseases, suspected leprosy, boils and burns should be carefully examined and isolated if necessary.

The clothing and homes of people with leprosy should be put out of use.

During and after seminal or illness discharges and menstruation, people should show extra concern for hygiene.

Dear God, please help me take good care of my health

## Chapters 16, 17

Instructions for the annual Day of Atonement:

Once a year Aaron or his successor must wear special vestments and enter the sanctuary past the veil.

Then he is to offer two goats to pray for atonement for the whole community of Israel.

One goat will be sacrificed in the Temple; the other is to be set free to go out into the desert - a symbol of the people's sins being carried away. (*this story gives us the English word: "scapegoat"*)

Dear God, please forgive us, and help us to forgive others

## Chapter 18

Do not marry a close relative.

Do not have sex during time of menstruation.

Do not practise sodomy.

Do not have sex with an animal.

Dear God, please help us to respect the gift of sex

## Chapter 19

God's words through Moses:

"Be holy, for I, the Lord your God, am holy.

Honor your father and mother.

The Sabbath must be a holy day.

When you collect from harvest or vine,  
leave something for the poor and the stranger.

Be just, honest and truthful in your relationships.

Do not let hatred live in your heart."

Dear God, please help me live according to your sacred word

## Chapter 20

People should be put to death

- for child sacrifice
- for cursing parents
- for unlawful sex between men and women
- for sodomy
- for sex with an animal
- for being a necromancer or magician.

Dear God, please help me to avoid what is wrong

## Chapters 21, 22, 23

God's words through Moses:

"Regard the priests as holy, for they offer holy sacrifice.

Keep the sacred festivals:

- every Sabbath

- the Passover and the feast of Unleavened Bread
- the First Sheaf
- the Feast of Weeks
- the first day of the seventh month
- the Day of Atonement
- the Feast of Tabernacles."

Dear God, thank you for special worship days and seasons

### Chapters 24, 25

God's words through Moses:

"Every seventh year your land is to have a rest,  
a sabbath for the Lord.

Every fifty years will be a Year of Jubilee:

no sowing, no harvesting, a time for freeing slaves."

Dear God, please help us understand and keep your word

### Chapters 26, 27

God's words through Moses:

"If you keep my commandments, I will bless you in every way:

- you will have rain at the right time
- the earth shall give its produce
- your land will know peace
- you will be fruitful and multiply
- I will be in your midst: I will be your God  
and you shall be my people.

But if you ignore my words and break my commandments:

- you will have no peace
- there will be no rain
- the earth shall not yield its produce
- sickness and pestilence will afflict you
- you will be scattered among the nations."

Dear God, please help us to keep your commandments