



Christianity is not a
religion, it's a relationship
with God through Christ.

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Why should we study the Old Testament?

But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it ¹⁵ and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶ All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness (2 Tim 3:14-16)

Leviticus in story of Salvation History

- Creation, Fall, Babel and the Flood
- Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph
- Enslavement in Egypt, Exodus under Moses
- Promised Land, Judges and the call for a King
- Saul, then David and the Kingdom United
- Solomon, then Rehoboam and the Kingdom Divided
- Assyria conquers Israel / Babylon conquers Judah
- Return under Ezra and Nehemiah and then Silence

Context

- 10 weeks after Red Sea – arrive at Sinai (Ex 19:1)
- Law declared and Tabernacle construction begun
 - Ex 16-40 = 9 months
- Tabernacle erected 1st day of 1st month (Ex 40-17)
- Numbers begins 1st day of 2nd month (Num 9:1-5)
- About a year after the Red Sea
 - Leviticus records the events of one month

Context

- God made a three part covenant w/ Abraham
 - But aren't we under the New Covenant?

28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise. (Gal 3:28-29)

Abrahamic Covenant at the time of Leviticus

- Land – coming soon – Book of Joshua
- Seed – from 70 (Ex 1:5) to 605,000 (Num 2:32)
- Blessing – blessed and a blessing to the world
- How are they blessed & how do they bless others?
 - Being a people who live with a Holy God in the midst
 - Living a life that reveals God is in their midst
 - Obedience + purity in contrast to rebellion + sinfulness

Does any of this sound familiar?

Leviticus

- Name of the book in the Hebrew Bible
 - וַיִּקְרָא (way yiq rā) “and He called”
- *The LORD called Moses and spoke to him from the tent of meeting, saying...*(Leviticus 1:1)

The LORD spoke to Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the tent of meeting...(Numbers 1:1)

Well, it looks like Leviticus gets the job done!

Structure

- First half climax - the Day of Atonement (Chap 16)
 - Right relationships restored between God and nation
- Second half climax - the Year of Jubilee (Chap 25)
 - Right relationships restored among the people
- Vertical and Horizontal
 - Is all of this is pointing to the Cross?
 - No, but it sounds good doesn't it?

Symmetry



1-7

8-10

11-15

16-17

18-20

21-22

23-27

Ritual
Sacrifices

Priest
Ordination

Ritual
Purity

Day of
Atonement

Moral
Purity

Priest
Qualification

Ritual
Calendar

Adapted from "The Bible Project"

1 Peter 1:14-18

14 ...do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance...be holy, for I am holy."... 17 And if you call on him as Father...conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile, 18 knowing that you were ransomed ...with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.

1 Peter 1:16 - *“Be holy as I am holy”*

- Leviticus 11:45
- Leviticus 19:2
- Leviticus 20:7
- Leviticus 20:26
- Leviticus 21:8

- Live a life testifying that Holy God is in your midst

Important concepts

- Holy: קֹדֶשׁ (*qa-dosh*) / ἅγιος (*ha-gi-os*)
 - “Set apart” - but this is tied up in God’s identity
 - Completely unique, powerful, beautiful and good
- *Clean* versus unclean...here is what we know:
 - Unclean common cannot connect w/ the Holy
 - Clean common can...
- How does the unclean common become clean?
 - Blood of a Sacrifice

Why would a good God develop sacrifice?

- God's plan was to live in communion with Man
 - But Adam sinned
- Exodus ends w/ the Tabernacle's construction
 - God plan - live w/ Israel, but they sinned (Golden Calf)
- All of this is pointing forward...
 - God is still planning to live with Man
 - Can an infinitely holy God live w/ sinful man?
 - Yes, through a sacrifice of infinite value

Common misperceptions

- Sacrificial system
 - Not a means of buying favor, but of receiving grace
- *Practical obedience to the law*
 - Not achieving, but of living out distinctness

Does any of this sound familiar?

How does Israel maintain relationship w/ God?

- God himself provides the means - by His grace
 - Relationship established by God's redeeming grace
 - Could only be sustained by God's forgiving grace
- But Israel must respond to God's grace
 - Obedience
 - Living out His purpose for them

Does any of this sound familiar?

What do we do? Israel was called to...

- Recognize and respond in obedience
 - *“Grace is not opposed to effort, but to earning”*
 - Not achieving, but of living out distinctness
- Live a life that demonstrates God is in our midst
 - Purity is not about following arbitrary rules
 - Not just for teenagers
 - But showing the world we are unique / different
 - “Set apart” for God and His purposes

Recognize...

- God is Holy
- God has a right to tell us what is right and wrong
- Our sin cost Him His Son
- Holiness is not a private affair
 - World suffered by not seeing the difference in Israel
 - Let's not make the same mistake!

Respond....

- Repent and believe the Gospel (Mark 1:14)
- Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins... (Acts 2:38)
- ...confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart... (Romans 10:9-10)

Live a life that shows God in our midst

...present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.² Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind...

(Romans 12:1-2)

Jesus did...

14 Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. 15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.

(Hebrews 4:14-15)

What would that look like?

History of sacrifice

- First example of sacrifice?
- Second example?

- Sin creates a “debt”
 - Punishment for a crime does not help the victim
 - It helps the criminal realize there has been a wrong
 - The one who forgives absorbs the pain / loss

How do we have relationship w/ God?

- God establishes our relationship – regeneration
- God enables our relationship – justification
- God maintains our relationship – sanctification

Regeneration – “Dry bones” (Ezekiel 37:7-10)

⁴ But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved (Eph 2:4-5)

¹³ And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him... (Col 2:13)

You must be born again (John 3:7)

Justification – Romans 3:23-25

²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵ whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith.

Sanctification – Romans 8:28-30

28 And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. 29 For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. 30 And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

But I am not that bad, am I?