

Leviticus

Objectives of this lesson

1. Trace the development of God's program from Eden, through Exodus and Leviticus, to Jesus.
2. Explain the significant connection between the end of Exodus and the purpose of Leviticus
3. Explain the various ways in which the book of Leviticus points the ancient Israelite forward to better realities.

Some key terms

Burnt, grain, peace, sin & guilt offerings, atonement, yom kippur, scapegoat, substitute goat, First fruits, Pentecost, cherubim

Introduction to Leviticus

Occasion

When we use the word “occasion” in this course I’m talking about *the circumstances which gave rise to the writing of a book*. That is, no book was ever written in a vacuum. None of the biblical authors simply aspired to some kind of 21st century notion of fame and decided to write a book.

The big question to which Leviticus is actually the answer can be found at the very end of Exodus. After spending the entire book on the story of God rescuing his bride from Egypt (chapters 1-18), his marriage covenant with her (19—24) and his “moving in” to live with his people in the tabernacle (25—40) the book ends with the curious statement that “Moses could not enter the Tent of Meeting because the glory of the LORD filled it” (40:35). This is really an unexpected, and frankly strange, development. If the whole purpose of the book was for God to develop an intimate relationship with his people and he went through all the trouble to move into the neighborhood, then why on earth would he slam the front door when people came over to visit? Not even Moses, his apparently *favorite* person in the nation, can enter the tabernacle! Of course, God *does* want people and priests to “come over to his house”, but the key is to do it in the right way and, as we shall see, Leviticus



instructs Israel exactly how she can approach God and in this way takes us on the next stage of our journey for which Exodus merely laid the groundwork.

Date

Since Israel left Sinai (where the instructions for this book were delivered) only fourteen months after the exodus (Numbers 10:11), it seems that the book was probably written as soon as the events occurred.

Structure

The book seems to divide into two major sections: How Israel is to approach God (1–17) and how she is to walk before Him (18–27). The first half of the first section (1–10) comes to a dramatic end when Aaron's sons die violently, but there is very little literary break evident between chapters ten and eleven. This seems to indicate that the theme of how to approach God continues and reaches its climax in chapters sixteen and seventeen. A major literary break occurs then as Moses gives an extended introduction to the last section of the book in 18:1-5.

Leviticus 1–17: How to Draw Close to the God of the Universe

This major section explains how the ancient Israelites would be able to bridge the gap between themselves and God in order to experience the fellowship that all parties wanted.

Leviticus 1–10: The role of sacrifices and priests in drawing close to God

In order to come to the tabernacle to experience fellowship with God each Israelite had to come with the right *sacrifice* and needed the help of the right *priest*. This section explains the nuances of both major requirements.

Leviticus 1–3: The options for those who were in fellowship

Anyone who wanted to come to God's house could do so; she just had to bring the right "gifts." If you were already in fellowship with God you could bring one of three sacrifices that are, conveniently enough, outlined in the first three chapters of the book respectively. Before we talk about those, however, I want to first explain the notion of *sacrifice*. In our world, where we are so mindful of the sacrifice of Jesus for our sin, we almost always connect the idea of sacrifice with *atonement for sin*. While this is often the case it isn't *always* the case. The root meaning of the word *sacrifice* concerns "the surrender of something prized or desirable for a greater good." We can speak of the "sacrifice of praise" (Heb 13:25) or the sacrifice of Mary's perfume on Jesus' feet and use the word in this general (non-sin-related) sense. This is the sense in which we should understand these three sacrifices in Leviticus 1–3. They are gifts, which the offeror

brings out of respect for God and to communicate a special message of devotion to him. (The next chapters, 4—6, deal with offerings for sin and forgiveness.)

Leviticus 1: The burnt offering

The first offering, which an offeror could bring, is called the burnt offering because, unlike the others, this offering is completely burned up on the altar. The offeror would put his hand on the head animal to express identification with it, symbolically giving his whole life as an expression of gratitude to God. The first lesson the Israelite nation would learn is that if they desired an intimate friendship with God then they had to be “all in.” One could not experience friendship by offering *parts* of one’s life; rather, a life-abandoning level of commitment was necessary in order to know God.

Additionally, we’ll notice that there are 3 different “sub-options” within chapter one: one could bring a bull, or a goat, or even a small bird. The difference between these options was clearly one of expense. The wealthy could afford a huge bull, while the poor could spare only a small bird, but the message is clear that God does not show favoritism. He wants fellowship with all classes of people and provides enough options to make it happen.

Leviticus 2: The grain offering

In most of the world the foundation of one’s diet is grain. Only in recent times in the wealthier, industrialized nations has meat become a daily expectation. We even see this reflected in the scriptures where God says that “man shall not live on *bread* alone.” Because of this, grain, and grain products such as bread and cakes come to easily symbolize that which sustains life. When an offeror would choose to bring a grain offering it would be because he wanted to acknowledge that God was the sustainer of life and express gratitude to him for it. The flip side of this truth is that when people fail to honor him as God, they also fail to give thanks (Rom 1:21). Gratitude is not an option; rather, it is the evidence that we are thinking rightly about God.

Leviticus 3: The fellowship offering

The fellowship offering is sometimes called a peace or meal offering because it symbolized all three of these concepts. The offeror would actually be able to enjoy some of the meat from the offering as the basis of a meal actually consumed at the tabernacle in God’s presence as a symbol of the “peace” that he now enjoyed with God. Chapter 3 simply outlines what the offeror can bring, while chapter 7, which focuses upon the same sacrifice from the priest’s perspective, fills out the meaning with a description of how the meal can be eaten. The meal would not be enjoyed in the actual presence of God, since only the High Priest could enter the Holy of Holies and that just once a year, but it was a step, especially for the common people, to be able to enjoy a meal at least very near the presence of God, in the courtyard of the Tabernacle. My mind races forward to the last supper and the incredible story of how John reclined on Jesus’ chest and I’m always amazed at the intimacy of his posture and Jesus’ own comfort level with John as they enjoyed the meal together. Clearly, that is the definition of an intimate meal with God and admittedly in the book of Leviticus the person who enjoyed the meal offering out in the courtyard sort of in

God's presence isn't there yet. But he was experiencing a *much closer* relationship than he could have ever dreamed of when just 18 months before this he was sweating to make bricks for Pharaoh.

Summary

Ch	Offering	Meaning
1	Burnt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The person who wants a deep walk with God must be wholly committed to him. God wants to experience fellowship with all people regardless of economic advantage
2	Grain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The appropriate attitude with which one must approach God is gratefulness for life, while acknowledging that he alone is the sustainer of life.
3	Meal/ Peace/ Fellowship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When the relationship with God is functioning as it should (the state of "shalom") then there is deep fellowship, celebrated over a meal together.

As you can see from this summary table, the average Israelite would have learned a great deal about how to appropriately approach a relationship with God. One had to be wholly committed to him if he expected any kind of relationship. Reflection upon how only Yahweh alone was the sustainer of life and that gratefulness was the only rationale response was foundational too. And, the peace that comes from a well-functioning relationship with God indeed ought to be celebrated over a good meal.

Leviticus 4–5: The options for those who were **not** in fellowship

These two chapters differ from the first three in that they begin, and continue, with this kind of statement:

The LORD said to Moses, "Say to the Israelites: 'When anyone sins unintentionally and does what is forbidden in any of the LORD's commands— (4:1-2).

Because of this we know we're in a new category of how those who have sinned should renew their fellowship with God. Two specific kinds of offerings are mentioned in these chapters: the *sin offering* and the *guilt offering*. If you simply looked at the names you might conclude that the sin offering was given when one sinned and the guilt offering when one needed relief from excessive guilt, but the text points us in a different direction. Some sins that we commit basically only affect 1) *God and us*, while others spill over and affect 2) *our neighbors*. For the former

category a *sin offering* would be appropriate, but for the latter, the *guilt offering* was required. We glean this insight from the unique commands given in Leviticus 6:2-5:¹

If anyone sins and is unfaithful to the LORD by deceiving a neighbor about something entrusted to them or left in their care or about something stolen, or if they cheat a neighbor, 3 or if they find lost property and lie about it, or if they swear falsely about any such sin that people may commit— 4 when they thus sin and realize their guilt, they must return what they have stolen or taken by extortion, or what was entrusted to them, or the lost property they found, whatever it was he swore falsely about. He must make restitution in full, add a fifth of the value to it and give it all to the owner on the day he presents his guilt offering.

You can see from this category of sacrifice that the sin has clearly affected other people and part of the method for making the sin right is to not only restore the original loss but to *add 20% more, for a person's time and trouble*. If you simply put yourself in the place of the person offended, I think you'll see and feel the rationale for the instruction. If you've ever been the "victim" of even an innocent "crime" where a family member took something that belonged to you and never returned it, you might remember your frustration: you need something and it's not there! And you look for it and look for it, and even if you find it you've wasted time and effort that you could have spent somewhere else. In a case like this even if the item is returned undamaged the "thief" has still stolen something from you—your time—and depending upon the seriousness of the thing taken perhaps a serious amount of peace of mind. The extra 20% is an effort to take that kind of personal loss seriously and is a means of recognizing the personal trouble which one's sin has caused another person. This is an attempt to rebuild the torn fabric of the community, because the intent of the law was to cultivate, and fully restore relationships.

X + 20% **Cultivating, Restoring Relationships**

Let's also imagine for a moment what this would look like in our community. Most of us are not likely to steal tangible goods from our neighbor but we might "steal" a reputation by casting a person in a bad light. I once was frustrated with a student who slept in class and even went so far as to lay her head down on the desk during my whole lecture. I was angry and probably personally insulted that a student had such little respect for my scintillating lectures so after class I told a few of my colleagues about the terrible insult. Only later did the student explain to me in the most humbling of terms, "Dr. Miller, I'm so sorry for laying my head down in your class the other day, but you see I'd been suffering from a terrible migraine for hours, but I love your class and didn't want to miss it. So, I thought, I'll at least come to class and listen to the lecture even

¹ This reference to the guilt offering is actually found in chapter 6 where each of the offerings is outlined again, except this time from the perspective of the priest. In chapters 6 and 7 we find out more details about each of the five sacrifices originally introduced in chapters 4–5.

though the bright light hurts my eyes and my head hurts so badly I can't sit up straight. Thanks, so much for understanding."

Oops. Not only had I drawn the wrong conclusion, but I also felt rebuked for my pettiness and my lack of concern for my student. So how would I offer a guilt offering today? What would "X + 20%" look like in this situation? Well, what I had taken from this student was her reputation in front of my colleagues. I had predisposed them to watch out for this "careless" student. The only proper thing to do was to go back to those same colleagues and confess my sin (the "X" part) but also to rebuild the student's reputation (the + 20% part). I would say something like, "she was such a faithful student that she came even when she felt terrible; I wish everyone was as faithful as she. I just wish *I* was as faithful a prof as *she* is a student!" Imagine what our community would be like if everyone committed just for one week to always give X + 20% back when our sin affected someone else! It would make for a community that grew stronger and closer than they ever were before—this is life-giving-instruction; this is Torah.

Leviticus 8–10: The role of the priests

Once God had explained the role of the *sacrifices*, he moved on to the role of the *sacrificers*, namely the priests. He describes their roles and their distinctive "uniforms" for service and toward the end of chapter 9 it is time to actually inaugurate the priests for their role and let them to begin to function. Chapter 9 is that first "trial run" of the new priesthood and it goes very well. The text records the result (9:23–24):

Moses and Aaron then went into the Tent of Meeting. When they came out, they blessed the people; and the glory of the LORD appeared to all the people. Fire came out from the presence of the LORD and consumed the burnt offering and the fat portions on the altar. And when all the people saw it, they shouted for joy and fell facedown.

I wish I could have seen that! Fire comes out of thin air and vaporizes a bull on the altar! The people's response is fascinating too, because they understand what this means. You see, if Moses and Aaron had simply gone into the Tabernacle, said some prayers and came out and repeated words of blessing on the people no one would have known for sure that God was listening, or even if he was listening that he liked what he heard or was even going to "back up" the words of blessing that Moses and Aaron pronounced, but with the fire they had undeniable proof of God's approval. Yes, the system was working! Yes, all the effort to build the Tabernacle and inaugurate the priests, and even all the trouble of leaving Egypt was worth it, because the relationship between God and his people was functioning as it was intended, that is, there was *shalom*!

And then in the *very next* verse (10:1–2):

Aaron's sons Nadab and Abihu took their censers, put fire in them and added incense; and they offered unauthorized fire before the LORD, contrary to his command. 2 So fire came out from the presence of the LORD and consumed them, and they died before the LORD.

Oops. Did you catch the irony? First, God vaporized the *sacrifice* and now it's the *sacrificers*! I don't know what they did wrong, exactly, but in the end it doesn't matter. They did something they weren't supposed to do, and the result was not only death on their part, but a serious break in this previously wonderfully, functioning relationship of mediation between God and his people. What conclusion could the people come to now? Did they think the system was broken? Did they hope for something or someone better? Imagine how good it would be to have a sinless high priest, who never sinned and could always make intercession for us!

Leviticus 11–17: The role of atonement in drawing close to God

The first ten chapters dealt with the role of sacrifices and priests in drawing close to God and those were certainly *necessary*, but now we move to the more *significant* condition—the atonement.

Leviticus 11–15: The problem: clean and unclean

Before we see the *solution* that the atonement provides in chapters 16–17 Moses wants us first to see the *problem*. After all, most people don't look for answers unless they first have questions, and Moses is setting the reader up here to appreciate the atonement (16–17) by his discussion of clean and unclean things (11–15).

Before we move through these chapters two disclaimers are necessary: 1) the rationale or meaning behind the ideas of *clean* and *unclean* are still a bit elusive. We can, however, say that the categories of *clean* and *unclean* are not identical to *sinless* and *sinful*. There is nothing inherently sinful about one's diet, for instance. If eating certain foods (pork, for example in chapter 11) really was sinful then God would have encouraged sin when he allowed Gentile Christians to eat them (Galatians). Likewise, bearing children was actually an obedient thing for Israelite families (Gen 9:2) and yet in the process they became unclean (Lev 12). In chapters thirteen and fourteen we see that certain diseases can make a person unclean and I seriously doubt that anyone was actually guilty (i.e., sinful) for getting sick! One of the best explanations for what makes a thing unclean is its association with the curse. Death, blood, disease and the pain of childbirth can all be found in these five chapters and things associated with them tend to make a person unclean. If I can summarize, what makes a person unclean isn't so much a focus on individual behavior (or sins) as much as it is the unavoidable consequence of simply living in a fallen world. This leads to the second disclaimer: 2) rather than directly correlating *unclean* with *sinful* I think we're better off seeing these regulations as a huge object lesson that helped Israelite families understand the difficulty of approaching God at the tabernacle. One could not simply assume that he could approach God at any time and in any way because he always had to wonder if there was some disqualifying thing about him that made fellowship with God very difficult. In the end it all becomes an object lesson about sin, but the lessons themselves don't directly focus on moral issues.

Even so, there is still more to be learned from the cumulative effect that these regulations had as they lead the reader and the ancient Israelite up to chapter 16. Let's now briefly work our way through these chapters and see what effect they might have had on the average Israelite family. Imagine reading these chapters with a goal of finding out whether or not you and your family would be *clean* enough to enjoy a meal offering at the tabernacle at the end of the week! Reuben and Abigail will be our imaginary, Jewish couple.

Leviticus 11: Food

This chapter outlines a distinction between clean and unclean food and this is why Jewish people don't eat pork among other things (11:1–4). In addition to the main categories, however, there are a number of specific regulations such as: all flying bugs are detestable (that's good), but those that fly AND hop, like a grasshopper, are fine (well, that's a relief: love me some good grasshopper legs, 11:21–22)! And later in the chapter we learn that if a gecko falls in a cereal bowl that the contents and the bowl have to be thrown out (11:29–38)! Abi's response? "Hmmm, I guess I don't understand this whole thing, but I really want to go to the tabernacle, and I think I can handle each of these rules. Once we get into the routine, I doubt we'll notice them very much." So far, so good.

Leviticus 12: Childbirth

In this chapter we learn that a woman is unclean after childbirth for a number of days. It is unclear why the uncleanness lasts longer for a daughter versus a son, but it is most likely the bleeding associated with childbirth that is the source of uncleanness. Note the direct statement (Lev 12:4):

Then the woman must wait thirty-three days to be purified from her bleeding. She must not touch anything sacred or go to the sanctuary until the days of her purification are over.

Abi's response? "Hmmm, the pain of childbirth is connected with the curse, so I guess I kind of understand this one, and it only happens every few years when we have a child, so we should be able to live with that." So far, so good.

Leviticus 13–14: Infectious diseases

This section evidently covers a number of diseases and issues because the topic spans infections or growths that can affect both humans and other objects. Chapter 13 focuses on what might be a form of leprosy or even some kind of rash. If the infection or disease is resolved then the person is admitted to the community once again; otherwise, he must live alone and warn others of his uncleanness, lest it spread to them (13:45–46). In chapter 14 we learn about some kind of spreading mildew that can affect a house. If the problem can't be scraped away or otherwise resolved the extreme solution is to tear down the house (14:43–45)! Abi's response? "Well, I don't understand how we could avoid getting sick, but so far, everyone seems to be healthy and we don't have any mold in the house, so I think we're pretty good!" So far, so good.

Leviticus 15: Bodily discharges

These *discharges* cover a variety of things, both masculine and feminine ranging from diarrhea to semen to menstrual bleeding. Some things seem to be the result of sickness, while others appear to be a normal part of daily life even for healthy people. Some of the curious regulations, however, are that whatever an unclean person sits on becomes unclean and if an unclean person even “spits” on another person then he would become unclean too (15:8)! Abi’s response? “Hmmm, again, I know that sickness is a result of the curse, but I don’t fully understand all of it. At least, I think I can still navigate through these things and see us making it to the tabernacle as we’d planned.” OK.

So, let’s put it all together and imagine what the cumulative effect might be on Reuben and Abigail two weeks from now: actually getting to the tabernacle is really, really difficult. Imagine how good it would be to have *one sacrifice that would take away all our sin!*

Leviticus 16–17: The solution: the Day of Atonement and the value of blood

The Day of Atonement or in Hebrew the *Yom* (day) *Kippur* (atonement) is that one day a year when the High Priest alone enters the Holy of Holies and secures total forgiveness for the nation.

Leviticus 16: How the Day of Atonement works

The Day of Atonement required two main sacrifices to deal with sin. Both sacrifices involved goats but one escaped and the other paid with its life. The first goat (which we’ll call the substitute goat) was brought before the High Priest who would confess his own sins and the sins of the people as he laid his hand on the head of the goat. This symbolized that the goat was taking the place of the nation and bearing their sins. The blood of the goat was then sprinkled on the atonement cover to literally “cover” (atone) for sins.



The procedure was the same for the second animal (the scapegoat) except that after the confession of the High Priest the scapegoat was taken far away from the camp and released, presumably to wander even further away. The symbol here was that God was taking the sins of Israel and removing them far from them. To compare the two, the substitute goat symbolized God’s forgiveness of sin and the scapegoat that God would forget about sin. With the combination of these sacrifices the message was that sin was entirely dealt with and the relationship with God was restored.



Leviticus 17: Why the Day of Atonement works

Chapter seventeen answers the question of why these animal sacrifices would actually “work” to appease the wrath of a holy God. The answer in a word is simply *blood*. You can see the focus on blood in these key verses in chapter 17:10–12:

10 “I will set my face against any Israelite or any foreigner residing among them who eats blood, and I will cut them off from the people. 11 For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one’s life. 12 Therefore I say to the Israelites, ‘None of you may eat blood, nor may any foreigner residing among you eat blood.’”

In our society we have done our best to insulate ourselves from contact with blood, considering human blood could be tainted with diseases, making sterile gloves necessary! And when it comes to animals, most people just assume that meat comes from grocery stores, neatly wrapped in sanitary plastic, but the experience of the ancient Israelite was much different, and that experience would color the meaning of this chapter very differently. Whenever an animal was killed for cooking or for sacrifice God commanded that the blood be properly drained. This meant that the most common method of killing was to cut the throat. In reality the animal doesn’t die immediately because the process could take several minutes while an enormous amount of blood poured out of the animal. If the animal was standing it soon started to wobble and lost balance. Even after it fell down the animal struggled to regain its footing and continued to struggle for life. Soon the animal’s eyes would begin to glaze over as the struggling animal lost consciousness—and it would all be over. As the blood pumped out of the animal it was easy to associate it with the essence of life; indeed, as the “life-blood” flowed out of the animal so did the life.

When God says, “the life of the creature is in the blood,” he isn’t making a medical observation as though there is something miraculous and unique to the blood, because there are many organs and systems and fluids that are just as critical to life, but in the practice of sacrifice, this association—between the loss of blood and the loss of life—is very easy to make. The ultimate lesson here is that sin steals life. Sin takes away real life and in other places God says that the “wage” of sin is death. The sacrificial system teaches that the worshiper has forfeited his life because of sin, but the life of an innocent substitute can pay the price.

The reason we describe the substitute as “innocent” is because animals, by definition are not morally culpable or guilty. No (fallen) human could claim to be morally innocent, but no animal deserves to die because it broke one of the Ten Commandments! For this reason, animals actually picture the ultimate, innocent substitute of Messiah better than even some kind of human sacrifice.

One last thing before we leave this section on Atonement: let’s visit our Israelite couple, Reuben and Abigail, one more time, two days after the Day of atonement and see what this might have

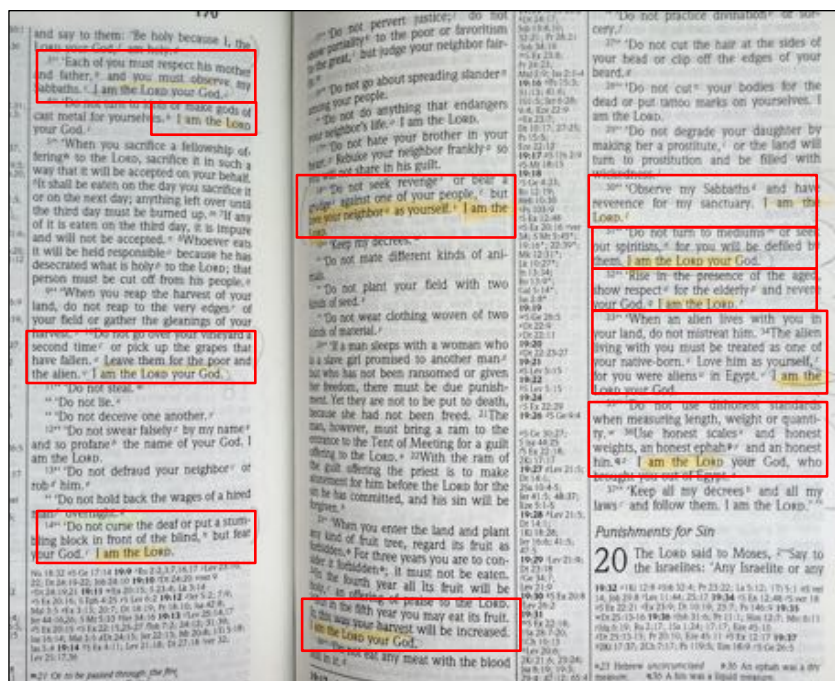
looked like! I'll bet she was longing for *a Day of atonement so good that they'd never need another one.*

Leviticus 18–27: How to Live with the God of the Universe

After the Israelite has approached God at the Tabernacle and the issue of sin had been dealt with the next goal was to maintain and enhance the relationship by living in a way that the Creator and Redeemer intended. We could think of this next section as directions from a divine “owner’s manual.”

Regulations for the people and priests, 18–22

At first glance this section looks a lot like Exodus 19–23 with its focus on commands such as “do not lie, cheat or steal.” The one addition in these chapters is the repetitive phrase “I am the LORD” and variations of it (“I am the LORD who makes them Holy”). One could understand this as a statement of authority as though Israel must do these things because God is the one who said them, and while this may be partly true, I think the emphasis may be a bit different. What God is asking his people to do is simply to behave in a way that is reflective of him. Having come close to God’s presence in the Tabernacle it is now time to reflect the glow that comes from Him. In effect, I think he is saying, “behave in this way, because in so doing you will reflect who I am.”



Leviticus 23–24: Regulations for the feasts

Important in Israel’s walk with God was her constant reminder of God’s goodness. This was accomplished through the weekly Sabbath and the annual feasts. Before we discuss the particulars, however, I’d like to communicate what a life-giving blessing these feasts were. Three of the feasts, Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles required attendance at the Tabernacle. For those who lived in Galilee this would have required taking at least a week or 10 days off of work or school to walk together as a community for several days (80 miles) up to Jerusalem, celebrating there and then hiking



back home together. Imagine what it would be like if today the President of our University or your boss at work declared a 10-day break to enjoy life together and worship God. Do you remember how students (at Cedarville at least) are absolutely blessed by the unscheduled break of a “snow day?” Imagine a “snow week” where no assignments or work could be done and all we had to do was enjoy life together. We’re too busy making money so we can “make ends meet,” too busy to enjoy life together in the community of God.



The first two feasts, Passover and Unleavened Bread, focused on the past and remembered God's goodness of *redemption* and *separation* from Egypt. The Passover celebrated God's judgment passing over the firstborn of Israel based upon the blood of the lamb. Since, by its very nature, leaven is a means of continuity and is dependent upon a previous supply of leaven, its absence serves well as a symbol of separation from the past. Unleavened bread could be made at any time with just some flour, but if it was to rise it needed leaven (or yeast) that



always came from a previous loaf of bread, where some of the dough with leaven already worked through it, was pinched off and set aside to introduce the leaven into the next loaf.

Leavened bread always had a small amount of a previous loaf in it and God was communicating that Israel would now take none of the values of Egypt with her as she set out to become a new nation, thus the celebration with fresh, unleavened

bread, which had no connection with the past.

The next two feasts, First fruits and Pentecost, celebrated God's goodness in the harvest of the land. First fruits was, as it sounds, a celebration of the first fruit of the land in the spring. After a long winter without fresh food Israelites would almost drool at the first apple or tomato of the year, but it would be offered to God by faith that he would provide much more. The feast of Pentecost (50 days later) celebrated the end of the harvest. In distinction to First fruits, Pentecost was cause for praise for the *reality* of God's provision.



The last three feasts, Trumpets, Atonement, and Tabernacles looked to the future. Trumpets broke the four-month silence since the last feast to prepare people for the only sorrowful feast, the Day of Atonement. The Day of Atonement was, or course, a time of national judgment in which the nation repented and was purged of sin for another year. Tabernacles was celebrated in appreciation of the completed harvest in the land to which God brought them after living in tents in the wilderness.



Conclusion

This book instructs the reader about how to approach God and how to then walk and live before him. It takes the ancient Israelite much, much further in his relationship with God than he had ever dreamed of before, but at the same time causes the thoughtful person to imagine and long for an even better relationship like Eden that all of us collectively and vaguely remember, yet have never really experienced. Look at all those palm trees, and cherubim, and gold, and God's presence. Reminds me of something, but I can't quite place it.

