



SUGGESTIONS FOR A SERMON/TEACHING SERIES ON LEVITICUS

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The following suggestions are meant to provide some initial thoughts on how to go about preaching and/or teaching from Leviticus.¹ May the Lord bless and use you greatly!

If your goal is for a shorter series

In the following, I list several different series that could be preached or taught from the book of Leviticus. In each series, I list the topics that could be covered and the place(s) in the larger chart below where these topics are covered. For example, for "A series on sacrifice" I list "weeks 2-8," pointing you to the place in the larger chart where the relevant material may be found.

1. A series on "The Big Picture of Leviticus" – week 1 (could be spread over several weeks)
2. A series on "Sacrifice" – weeks 2-8
3. A series on "The 'Sermon on the Mount' of Leviticus (Leviticus 19)" – weeks 29-35
4. A series on "The Gospel in Leviticus"
 - a. Holiness – weeks 7, 20
 - b. Sin – weeks 5, 7, 26
 - c. Repentance – weeks 8, 26
 - d. Atonement – weeks 26, 27
 - e. Mission² – week 1 (see pp. 28-30, 74-76), week 45

¹ For sermon samples, see <http://bit.ly/1hdMI99> (a short series on Leviticus) and <http://www.kirkofthehills.org/media.php?pageID=43> (a first person narrative on the Day of Atonement). For a Q&A session on Leviticus, see <http://www.covenantseminary.edu/resources/qa/jay-sklar-leviticus/>.

² The Gospel is not simply salvation from sin; it is also a call to reflect God's holy and righteous character into the world, in this way filling the world with his Kingdom.

5. A series on "Leviticus and Jesus" (see pp. 72-76 for overview)
 - a. Jesus: The Final Sacrifice – weeks 2, 5, 7, 26, 27
 - b. Jesus: The Perfect Priest – week 18
 - c. Jesus: God Dwelling in the Midst of His People – week 19
 - d. Jesus: The King Who Calls Us to Eden's Mission – week 1 (see pp. 28-30; 74-76), weeks 29-35, 45
6. A series on "Questions we have about Leviticus"
 - a. How do you know if these laws still apply today? (Or: Why don't Christians follow all these laws today?) – pp. 55-62 of Introduction.
 - b. What is ritual purity and impurity and why are there so many laws about it? – week 21 and pp. 44-50 of Introduction.
 - c. Why such harsh penalties for sin? – week 36 and pp. 62-69 of Introduction.
 - d. Is Leviticus a Sexist Book? – weeks 22, 25.
 - e. What does Leviticus have to do with life today? – week 1 (see pp. 28-30, 74-76), week 45
7. Special occasions
 - a. Ordination ceremonies, installation of pastors, occasions where spiritual leaders are being called to faithfulness
 - i. Focus on the leader: weeks 9-11, 20, 38
 - ii. Focus on the leader and the congregation: weeks 14, 18
 - iii. Focus on the congregation: week 17

If your goal is to cover the whole book

Some chapters in Leviticus focus on one major theme and can therefore be covered well in one preaching/teaching time. Leviticus 3 would be a great example: it's all about the fellowship (or "peace") offering. Other chapters in Leviticus cover more than one theme and will likely require more than one preaching/teaching time. This would be true of Leviticus 19: it covers a number of different laws that touch on fairly diverse issues, including family, worship, business practices, law courts, etc. The following list is therefore one possible way to approach the book as a whole. The key themes are simply a rough guide to let teachers/preacher know ahead of time what types of topics the passage covers. The page numbers refer to the relevant pages from my commentary.

Week	Passage	Key themes	Relevant pages from commentary ³
1	Orientation to the book: what it is; why it matters; what it has to say to us today	<p>(Note: some will want to choose only one or a few of these themes as the introduction while others will want to cover the following themes over two or three teaching/preaching times.)</p> <p>Why it fits historically; what it teaches in terms of the Lord's mission for his people</p> <p>The Lord as covenant King dwelling among the Israelites; the Lord's holiness; the Lord as redeemer; the Lord's holy covenant people; the Lord's holy law</p> <p>Sacrifice and atonement</p> <p>Jesus as fulfillment of the themes of Leviticus</p>	<p>Pages 27-30</p> <p>37-42, 85-87</p> <p>50-55</p> <p>72-76</p>
2	Lev. 1 – The Whole Burnt Offering	Our need for atonement from the Lord; our need for his help; the Lord as the one worthy of all our praise.	Pages 87-95
3	Lev. 2 – The Grain Offering	Those in covenant relationship with the Lord can be encouraged by his covenant presence and must be faithful to their covenant responsibilities.	Pages 95-101
4	Lev. 3 – The Fellowship Offering	Giving our best to the Lord to acknowledge his greatness; celebrating God's covenant faithfulness to us; the need to reaffirm our covenant commitment to him and to our brothers and sisters in Jesus.	Pages 101-107
5	Lev. 4 – The Purification Offering, Part 1	The defiling nature of sin, the cleansing nature of the Lord's atonement, and his mercy in making it available to use; the sin of those in authority is viewed as more serious than those they lead.	Pages 107-114, 118

³ Jay Sklar, *Leviticus: An Introduction and Commentary* (Downers Grover, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2014).

6	Lev. 5:1-13 – The Purification Offering, Part 2	The importance of seeing that justice is fulfilled (v. 1); the importance of dealing properly with impurity (vv. 2-3); the importance of keeping our word (v. 4); the nature of biblical confession (vv. 5-6); the Lord's desire for all to worship him no matter rich or poor (vv. 11-13).	Pages 114-118
7	Lev. 5:14-19 – The Reparation Offering, Part 1	Sin as a breach of covenant loyalty; the importance of showing due respect to the holy Lord; the importance of avoiding sin at all costs; the Lord's assurance of forgiveness by means of his atoning sacrifices.	Pages 118-123
8	Lev. 6:1-7 – The Reparation Offering, Part 2	The nature of biblical repentance, both in terms of confession and atonement before the Lord and in terms of making right any wrongs committed against others.	Pages 123-125
9	Lev. 6:8-13 – The Continual Burnt Offering	The need for the priests and people to depend continually on the Lord; the importance of priests being faithful to their duties.	Pages 126-129
10	Lev. 6:14-18 – The Grain Offering	The need for priests to be faithful to their duties and to model to the Israelites the importance of treating the Lord's holiness with due respect.	Page 129
11	Lev. 6:19-23 – The Priests' Continual Grain Offering	The priests' daily need for the Lord's favor.	Pages 129-130
12	Lev. 6:24-30 – The Purification Offering	See at Lev. 6:14-18.	Pages 130-131
13	Lev. 7:1-7 – The Reparation Offering	See at Lev 6:14-18.	Page 132
14	Lev. 7:8-10 – Distributing Sacrificial Portions Among Priests	The importance of providing for priests' practical needs.	Pages 132-133
15	Lev. 7:11-21 – Fellowship Offering Sacrifices, Part 1	Praising the Lord for answers to prayer; providing for the priests' practical needs; respecting the Lord's holiness; the nature of biblical vows.	Pages 133-137

16	Lev. 7:22-27 – Fellowship Offering Sacrifices, Part 2	The Lord is the one most worthy of honor; the Lord is sovereign over all of life.	Page 137
17	Lev 7:28-36 – Fellowship Offering Sacrifices, Part 3	Not only providing for the practical needs of spiritual leaders but also honoring them.	Pages 137-139
18	Lev. 8 – The Ordination of the Priests	The Lord demonstrates his desire for fellowship with his people by providing them with priestly mediators; the weightiness of spiritual leadership; the priests' need for atonement; the far surpassing greatness of Jesus' priesthood.	Pages 141-149
19	Lev 9 – Public Worship Begins and the Lord Appears	The Lord's desire for his people to know him; his people respond properly to his power by worshipping and revering him.	Pages 149-155
20	Lev. 10 – Judgment on Nadab and Abihu	The awesome responsibility of spiritual leaders to be faithful to the Lord and to lead his people in faithfulness.	Pages 155-162
21	Lev. 11 – Pure and Impure Animals	Being set apart as the Lord's people; the Lord's holiness; the importance of seeking purity in all of life.	Pages 163-173
22	Lev. 12 – What to do After Childbirth	Respecting the Lord's holiness; the Lord's merciful provision of purification to his people and his desire for fellowship with them.	Pages 173-180
23	Lev. 13:1-46; 14:1-32 – The Ritual Status of Various Skin Conditions and How to Become Pure	Respecting the Lord's holiness; the importance of purity in life; the Lord's merciful provision of purification to his people and his desire for fellowship with them.	Pages 181-189, 190-195
24	Lev. 13:47-59; 14:33-53 – The Ritual Status and Treatment of Various Garment, Leather and House Infestations	Respecting the Lord's holiness; costly love for the Lord and for one's neighbor; the need for holiness in every area of life.	Pages 189-90, 195-198

25	Lev. 15 – Ritually Defiling Body Fluids	Respecting the Lord’s holiness; the importance of purity in life; the Lord’s merciful provision of purification to his people and his desire for fellowship with them; seeking holiness in all of life.	Pages 198-205
26	Lev. 16 – The Day of Atonement	The Lord’s holiness and our need for atonement; the Lord’s compassion in providing atonement; the importance of repentance to experience atonement; Jesus’ crucifixion as the ultimate Day of Atonement	Pages 206-216
27	Lev. 17 – The Proper Slaughtering and Eating of Animals and the Proper Use of Their Blood	Relationship with the Lord is exclusive of other gods; the importance of caring for life because life belongs to the Lord; the Lord’s merciful and loving provision of atonement.	Pages 217-225
28	Lev. 18 – Laws Forbidding Various Sexual and Worship Practices	The importance of obedience for experiencing the Lord’s favor; the importance of not misusing our sexuality; the importance of giving our allegiance to the Lord alone, not to other gods.	Pages 226-241
29	Lev. 19 – The Lord’s Holy Practices for His Holy People ⁴	We live holy lives by imitating the Lord and by obeying his laws which prohibit evil and command righteousness; holiness relates to all aspects of life	Pages 241-254
30	Lev. 19 – The Lord’s Holy Practices for His Holy People: Family (vv. 3a, 29)	Holiness in the family	Pages 241-254 (relevant pages)
31	Lev. 19 – The Lord’s Holy Practices for His Holy People: worship (vv. 3b-8, 26-28, 30-31)	Holiness in worship	Pages 241-254 (relevant pages)

⁴ Some will choose to preach/teach on Leviticus 19 as a whole; if so, skip to week 36. If you choose to go through Lev 19 in more detail, skip this week and follow weeks 30-35.

32	Lev. 19 – The Lord’s Holy Practices for His Holy People: Business Practices (vv. 9-10, 13b, 19a, 23-25, 34b-36)	Holiness in business practices	Pages 241-254 (relevant pages)
33	Lev. 19 – The Lord’s Holy Practices for His Holy People: Proper Treatment of the Poor and Disadvantaged (vv. 9-10, 13-14, 33-34)	Holiness in caring for the poor and disadvantaged	Pages 241-254 (relevant pages)
34	Lev. 19 – The Lord’s Holy Practices for His Holy People: Courts of Law (vv. 15-16, 35a)	Holiness in courts of law	Pages 241-254 (relevant pages)
35	Lev. 19 – The Lord’s Holy Practices for His Holy People: Social Interactions (vv. 11-12, 17-18, 20-22, 32)	Holiness in loving our neighbors as ourselves	Pages 241-254 (relevant pages)
36	Lev. 20 – Laws forbidding divination and various sexual and worship practices	We are created to reflect the Lord’s holiness in how we conduct our worship, sexuality and family relations; the seriousness of sin (and thus the seriousness of sin’s penalty); sin must be addressed among the Lord’s people; continuing in sin results in experiencing the Lord’s justice.	Pages 254-261
37	Lev. 21 – Commands for Priests on Various Issues Related to Their Holy Status	The high standards of holiness to which the priests as spiritual leaders are called.	Pages 262-270

38	Lev. 22:1-9 – Commands for Priests About Treating Sacred Offerings Properly	The importance of priests showing respect to the holy things of the Lord.	Pages 270-271
39	Lev. 22:10-16 – Commands for Priests About Guarding Sacred Offerings	The importance of priests making sure the Israelites did not mishandle the Lord’s holy things (and thus the importance of spiritual leaders caring for the spiritual well-being of those under their care)	Pages 271-273
40	Lev. 22:17-33 – Commands for Priests and Lay People to Revere the Lord’s Holy Things	The importance of following the Lord’s commands in worship; the importance of coming to the Lord on the basis of the sacrifices of which he approves.	Pages 273-276
41	Lev. 23:1-44 – Observing the Lord’s Holy Times ⁵	The holy times served as reminders of the Lord’s character and mighty deeds; the corporate nature of celebrating the Lord’s character and mighty deeds.	Pages 276-287
42	Lev. 24:1-9 – Two Continual Rites at the Lord’s Holy Place	The Lord’s constant presence among his people; his people’s need to serve him continually; giving the Lord our very best as a way of honoring him.	Pages 287-290
43	Lev. 24 :10-23 – Revering the Lord’s Holy Name	Those who reject the Lord will be rejected by him; treating the Lord’s name (and therefore person) as holy; various principles illustrating justice.	Pages 290-295
44	Lev. 25 :1-7 – Laws for the Sabbath Year	The Lord’s care for his creation and those in it by providing a Sabbath year; the need to trust in the Lord in order to rest	Pages 296-300

⁵ Some might choose to discuss the different festivals and holy days in this chapter on a week by week basis.

45	Lev. 25 :8-55 – Laws About Redemption and the Jubilee Year	(Some will want to spread the following out over 2-3 teaching/preaching times.) The Jubilee year as a foretaste of heaven; economic themes (the importance of both equity and opportunity), social themes (the importance of family), theological basis for the Jubilee (the land and the Israelites belong to the Lord); Jesus as the fulfillment of Jubilee principles	Pages 297-299 (Context), 300-312
46	Lev. 26 – Covenant Blessings and Curses	The blessings humanity has been created to enjoy; the importance of obedience; the dangers of disobedience.	Pages 313-325
47	Lev. 27 – Further Laws Related to Jubilee and Redemption	Honoring our commitments to the Lord; the reasons for giving of our resources	Pages 326-335
48	Leviticus and the New Testament: the 'How Much More' of Jesus (Note: some will have done this at week 1 above.)	Atonement: Jesus as both priest and sacrifice; Jesus as God dwelling in the midst of his people; Jesus and the return to Eden	Pages 72-76