

Purpose

- To learn what is in Leviticus
- To learn more about Moses
- To learn about Joshua

Background Information

LEVITICUS

The book of Leviticus was originally the first book of the Bible. Leviticus is very hard to read because this is the place that God had Moses write down all the laws and ceremonies. This is what was necessary to live in harmony with the Lord. Because they were God's people, their lives had to be different than those around them. This set them apart.

Leviticus is divided into two sections. Chapters 1-7 give instructions about how offerings and sacrifices were to be made. There are 5 basic offerings: 1 – The burnt offering – This was a voluntary offering given to God as an expression of praise. During this, the entire animal was to be burnt. 2 – Grain offerings – This was voluntary offering given as thanks to God for his goodness and provision. 3 – Peace offering – This was a volunteer offering expressing appreciation to God and to others for their friendship. Here, everyone ate the animal. 4 – Sin offering – This offering was required of anyone guilty of unintentional sin or wrong. 5 – Guilt offering – This sacrifice was required of anybody who broke the law of God.

The second section of Leviticus explains the sacred days in detail. There are 8 key festivals and sacred observances: 1 – Sabbath (The seventh day, Saturday, was a day of worship and rest). 2 – Passover – For 8 days in the spring, the Feast of Unleavened Bread was held. 3 – Feast of Weeks or Pentecost was held 1 day during the summer. 4 – Feast of Trumpets or Rosh Hashanah was held 1 day in the fall. 5 – Day of Atonement or Yom Kippur was held 1 day in the fall. 6 – Feast of Tabernacles or Ingathering was held for 7 days in the fall. 7 – Sabbath Year – This was held every 7 years and no crops were planted, and the Lord provided for their needs. 8 – Jubilee Year – This was held every 50 years. During this year, debts were forgiven, land was restored to its original owners and indentured servants were released.

This makes me grateful that I didn't live in Biblical times. We learn 2 vital lessons from this: God is holy and God expects His people to be holy.

MOSES – continued

In the book of Numbers, we again pick up the travels of Moses and the people of Israel from Mt. Sinai to the land of Canaan. At Mt. Sinai, the twelve clans or tribes of Israel camped around the worship complex. God's people waited at Mt. Sinai for 11 months and 5 days until God gave them the sign (the cloud over the tabernacle disappeared) to move.

12 spies were sent ahead into Canaan to see if the people should enter. 10 of the spies said they could not defeat the people of Canaan. However, 2 of them, Joshua and Caleb, said God would protect them and that they should proceed. When the people refused, God's punishment was inflicted upon them. They were now destined to wander in the desert area of Sinai for 40 years. Ironically, all of those who refused to follow God's orders died in the wilderness. Even though God was upset with them, He did provide for their needs during their wanderings.

In Deuteronomy, we have a collection of illustrated messages to Israel. Moses repeatedly told of their escape from Egypt and how God had provided over the last 40 years. Before his death, Moses gathered the people around him and gave them his final words. Because most of the people who fled Egypt had died, Moses knew this new generation had to claim God as their own since they could not survive on second hand faith. Moses helped them renew the agreement between God and His people. Moses gave them 3 basic messages: The first was about what God had done in the past. The second concerned what God expects in the present. The third spoke of what God would do in the future.

After the 3 messages were delivered, God lead Moses up on a high hill, so he could see the land that God had promised to Abraham. At 120 years of age, Moses died and God buried him. After grieving for 30 days, the people of Israel elected Joshua as their new leader.

JOSHUA

The book of Joshua reads like an adventure story, like a novel written by Steven Spielberg. Spies are hidden and narrowly escape with their lives, the waters of the Jordan River are pushed back, angels appear, the walls of a city crumble, treachery is exposed, a general leads his army into battle and the sun stands still. Joshua, our leading character, ends up being a military and political leader. He was born a slave in Egypt, became Moses' assistant and became a man of courage, totally committed to God.

The book of Joshua is divided into 2 parts. This first one covers conquering the land of Canaan. This involved overcoming several obstacles. The first was the Jordan River. Israel was on the east side of the Jordan, but the land God intended for them was on the west side of the Jordan. Just to add to the intrigue, the river was at flood stage. Joshua, following God's instructions, had the priest carry the Ark of the Covenant down to the river. The minute their sandals touched the water, the river immediately dammed up, and they walked across on dry land.

Next came the walls of the city of Jericho. God instructed Joshua to lead his soldiers in a march around the city once a day for 6 days. On the 7th day, they were to shout, and the walls would come tumbling down. Yea right, everybody who believes that, stand on his or her head! Hey, it worked. Aren't you glad they followed God's commands?

God again instructed them not to steal anything from the people of Jericho, but one soldier (Achan) did. This brought the wrath of God down on the whole nation, and they were defeated at the very next town.

The second section of Joshua speaks to us about taking the land of Canaan. Joshua divided the land among the 12 tribes of Israel. Joshua followed God until the end of his life. He died when he was 110 years old. He was buried in part of the land that he had divided among the 12 tribes of Israel.

Joshua, the man, made a lasting impression down through Israel's history. He influenced a whole generation for the Lord, and today, still stands as a compelling example of a person who followed God courageously.

Procedure

- Look over 9-1, 9-2, 9-3, and 9-4. Bring to class and we will discuss.
- 9-5 helps put it all together.
- 9-6, 9-7 do them for fun.