

## WEEK EIGHT INTRODUCTION

Leviticus says fifty-six times, “The LORD said to Moses” enabling Old Testament scholar Walter Kaiser to write, “Leviticus, more than any other Old Testament book, claims to be a divine word for humanity.” That might not be your first impression reading this book. However, for the patient reader, through the lens of Leviticus light shines which illuminates the rest of Scripture. Bible teacher Graham Scroggie relates Leviticus to Exodus by noting that while Exodus describes God’s approach to His people and their being brought near to him, Leviticus articulates the people’s approach to God and being kept near Him. At the core, Leviticus orbits around the holiness of God. Derek Tidball summarizes the message of Leviticus in three points. 1. The Statement: God is holy. 2. The Command: “Be holy because I, the LORD your God, am holy.” (Lev. 19:2) and 3. The Promise: “I am the LORD, who makes you holy.” (Lev. 20:8)

## KEY SCRIPTURE

*For I am the LORD who brought you up out of the land of Egypt to be your God. You shall therefore be holy, for I am holy.*

– Leviticus 11:45

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Derek Tidball writes, “God’s revelation of himself in the words *I am holy* is the fundamental premise on which Leviticus is built.” How can you observe God’s holiness in this week’s reading?

The root meaning of holiness is “to set apart.” For the Lord to declare, *I am holy*, means that He is set apart for Himself. Joel Beeke and Paul Smalley account for this in their definition of God’s holiness, “God’s holiness means that *he is set apart by his glory, for his glory.*” God is holy within Himself, within the devoted love of the three persons of the Trinity. This means God is holy in His *essential nature*. He is self-existent, self-sustaining, and possessing glorious majesty. He is in a different category of existence than *everything* and *everyone* else. Read Isaiah 6:1-7. Why do holy *creatures* proclaim the Lord’s holiness while covering their faces? If that is true of them, how should we think about approaching God?

God's holiness also possesses a moral sense. Stephen Wellum notes, "God is holy, and thus *he* is the objective moral standard of goodness, righteousness, and justice so that all that stands in opposition to *his* will and nature is sin." The entirety of the sacrificial system present in Leviticus flows from this reality of the holiness of God. Read Leviticus 16. How can *unholy* sinners live with the *holy* God in the camp?

Consider Lev. 20:7-8, *Consecrate yourselves and be holy, for I am the LORD your God. Keep my statutes and do them; I am the LORD who sets you apart.* God's holiness means His people must be holy, set apart for *Him*. While God's holiness arises from Himself alone, our holiness is *derivative*. We cannot be holy on our own. We are only holy in consecrated relationship with the Lord. Have you thought about your own personal holiness? What does it mean to be *holy*? How can you grow in holiness?

Review Lev. 23. How do you think the appointed holy days shaped the lives of the people of Israel? This higher calendar of holy time impacted their experience of the lower calendar of days and seasons. Have you established "holy rhythms" for yourself and your family? Are there appointed times for prayer and Bible reading? Do you have a pattern for family worship? Have you prioritized gathering with the Lord's people on the Lord's Day (Sunday) for worship? What we *devote* our time to is what holds our *devotion*.

Describe the Year of Jubilee (Lev. 25). Imagine how the Israelites might have experienced that day. How does the Year of Jubilee point ahead to life in the New Heavens and New Earth (Rev. 21-22)?

**BE A DOER OF THE WORD**

“Do not make worthless idols for yourselves, set up a carved image or sacred pillar for yourselves, or place a sculpted stone in your land to bow down to it, I am the LORD your God” -**Leviticus 26:1**

**What *worthless idols* are in the way of your spiritual growth? Identify them and leave them behind.**