

Passages we wish we could ignore

Pretty much the whole book of Leviticus

by Stephen Moore

As Christians, we love God's Word, the Bible. Quite often, we will say to ourselves "that's it! I'm going to read through the whole Bible in one year!" Or maybe, it might be "three years." Or maybe it might just be "as long as it takes!"

cause the Israelites had been held captive in Egypt for 400 years (before the Exodus), their concept of God had been distorted. The purpose of Leviticus is to provide instruction and laws to guide a sinful, yet redeemed people in their relationship with a holy God. Sin must be atoned for through

So we read Genesis. How exciting! Then, we read Exodus. The first half is pretty amazing, but the second half starts getting a bit weird. Then, we hit the book of Leviticus... And our Bible reading plan is all over. What on earth is the book of Leviticus about? What's with all these laws? Why did God give these Laws, through Moses, to the Old Testament Believers?



Well, it's helpful to mention that the book of Leviticus is about two things.

The book of Leviticus is about Holiness
 Leviticus is concerned with what it means to be the holy people of a holy God. Be-

the offering of proper sacrifices (chapters 8-10). Other topics covered in the book are diets (clean and unclean foods), childbirth, and diseases which are carefully regulated (chapters 11-15). Chapter 16 describes the Day of Atonement when an annual sacrifice is made for all the sins of the people. Also, the people of God are to be cautious in

their personal, moral, and social living, in contrast to the nations around them (chapters 17-22).

So the book of Leviticus is about holiness. In fact, Leviticus talks more about holiness than any other part of the Bible. The word "holy" or "Holiness" occurs 124 times in Leviticus.

Does that mean that when they didn't have Jesus it was more important to be Holy? And now that we have Jesus, we just need to be thankful that we're saved unconditionally?

The book of Leviticus is about our need for Jesus

Much of the ritualistic practices of worship point to the person and work of our Saviour, Lord Jesus. Hebrews 10 tells us that the Law is "only a shadow of the

good things that are coming" by which is meant that the daily sacrifices offered by the priests for the sin of the people were a representation of the ultimate Sacrifice—Jesus Christ, whose sacrifice would be once for all time for those who would believe

in Him. The holiness imparted temporarily by the Law would one day be replaced by the absolute attainment of holiness when Christians exchanged their sin for the righteousness of Christ.

God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. (2 Corinthians 5:21)

This means, that those who are in Christ are

no longer under the curse of the Law, but under grace that comes through Jesus (John 1:17; Romans 6:14). We live in a different era to the Old Testament believers, whereby we now have the law written on our hearts, and God's Spirit living within us (Ezekiel 36:26-27). So that instead of our hearts wanting to turn away from the law, by God's Spirit we seek to live according to God's will (Romans 8:4).

So, is the Old Testament Law worth reading?

Absolutely. It's God's Word. It shows us his character. It highlights what Christ has done and leads people to him.

But we must remember that we live after Jesus. Those in Christ are not under Old Testament Law, but under the Law of Christ. A law written on our hearts by God's Spirit, and recorded for us in the teachings of Christ and His Apostles in the New Testament.

Still find it hard to sit down and read the whole Bible?

Well then, don't start reading on page 1. Try this order: Mark, Acts, Romans, Genesis. That should give you a good foundation.

Here's why that's wise: the

Bible is about Jesus. The Old Testament is about Jesus. Leviticus is about Jesus. The genealogies are about Jesus. The sacrifices are about Jesus. "*These are the Scriptures that testify about me,*" declared Jesus.

So get a good idea of who Jesus is before you try to figure out the rest. Then you'll be surprised how much of it comes alive. 

