

Old Testament Israel: Law, Judges, Kingdoms

Law

Part One: Genesis and Exodus – Establishment

Part Two: Leviticus – The Law

Part Three: Deuteronomy – One nation under God

Lesson Text: Leviticus Chapters 12-20

Leviticus 12 – Childbirth – girl twice the waiting as a boy (boy circumcised 8th day)

Leviticus 13-14 – Leprosy; people (13:1- 46, 14:1-32), clothes (13:47-59), houses (14:33-53).

Leviticus 15 – Male and female reproductive discharges – Not for class discussion.

Leviticus 16-17, 23 – National Day of Atonement – Yom Kippur and the Scapegoat
Continues in chapter 23 (16:29 = 23:27), Feast of Booths

Discussion:

Discuss the broad, morally-neutral civil government aspects of being “unclean” – basically being off-duty and in quarantine. The connotations of separation from worship don’t go away, but many aspects are clearly hygienic or practical in nature. To be unclean does not imply personal sin, but separation.

Notes on “Leprosy” in the OT Law: Many diseases could qualify for Levitical leprosy. “Hansen’s Disease” is bacteria-based, contagious, and includes skin disease, deformities, blindness, and nerve loss. In the case of clothing or houses, mold and mildew are described, and can cause serious health problems.

Note regarding the negative connotations of “Scapegoat” in modern usage – In Babylon, the goat would return instead of just going away, which was considered ill-omened. Traditionally, some of these goats went over cliffs or were thrown down into ravines to prevent this return! So, if you need someone to take a fall for you...

Open Question:

Compare Yom Kippur with the modern Thanksgiving/Christmas/New Year’s holiday season – how are they similar?