

**The Book of Leviticus:
Why It Matters to Christians**

“Ritual Cleanliness”

Leviticus 11-15



Leviticus

Week	Date	Topic
1	Oct 1	Leviticus Introduction
2	Oct 8	Sacrifices: Leviticus 1-7
3	Oct 15	Priesthood of Aaron: Leviticus 8-10
4	Oct 22	Ritual Cleanliness: Leviticus 11-15
5	Oct 29	Day of Atonement: Leviticus 16
6	Nov 5	Holiness of Conduct: Leviticus 17-20
7	Nov 12	Holiness of Priests: Leviticus 21-22
8	Nov 19	Sabbath and Feasts: Leviticus 23
9	Nov 26	Preparation and Punishments: Leviticus 24
10	Dec 3	Sanctification of the Land: Leviticus 25
11	Dec 10	Promises and Warnings: Leviticus 26
12	Dec 17	Vows and Redemption of Tithes: Leviticus 27
13	Dec 24	Summary class

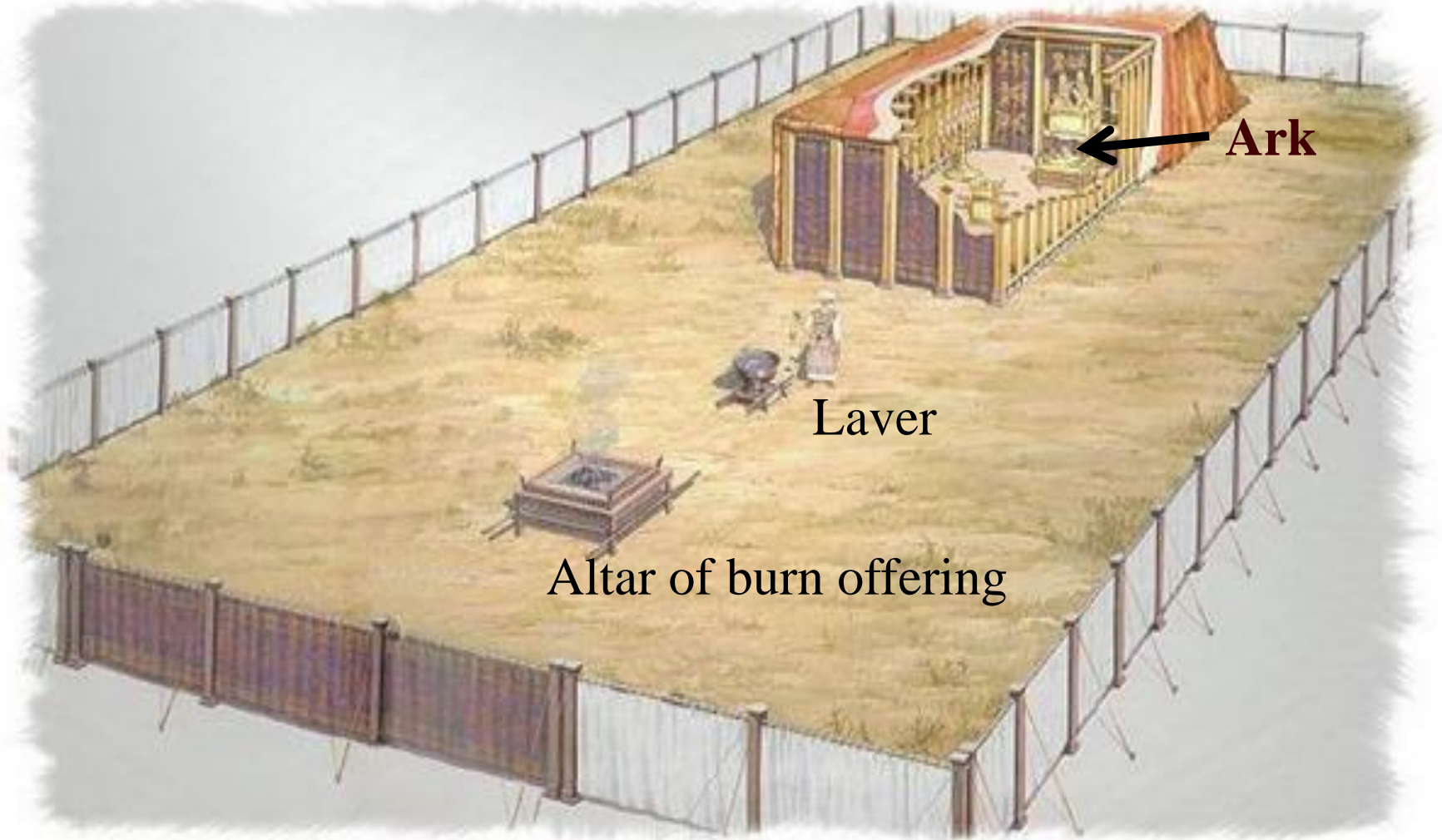
Today's Objectives

- Review the last week's lesson from last week
- Learn how the concept expressed in Leviticus 10:10 translate into laws found Leviticus 11-15
- Review possible sources of uncleanness and how God requires purification
- Learn about acceptable and unacceptable animals
- Learn about uncleanness due to childbirth
- Learn about uncleanness due to skin diseases
- Learn about uncleanness caused by the body

Last week

- Reviewed the last week's lesson from last week
- Learned about the selection and consecration of the priesthood and Aaron's preparation
- Learned about how the Israelites were to approach God
- Learned about the importance of acceptable worship
- Learned about God's instructions to Aaron
- Learned how the sons of Aaron violated the worship and saw God destroy them
- Reviewed New Testament parallels to Leviticus

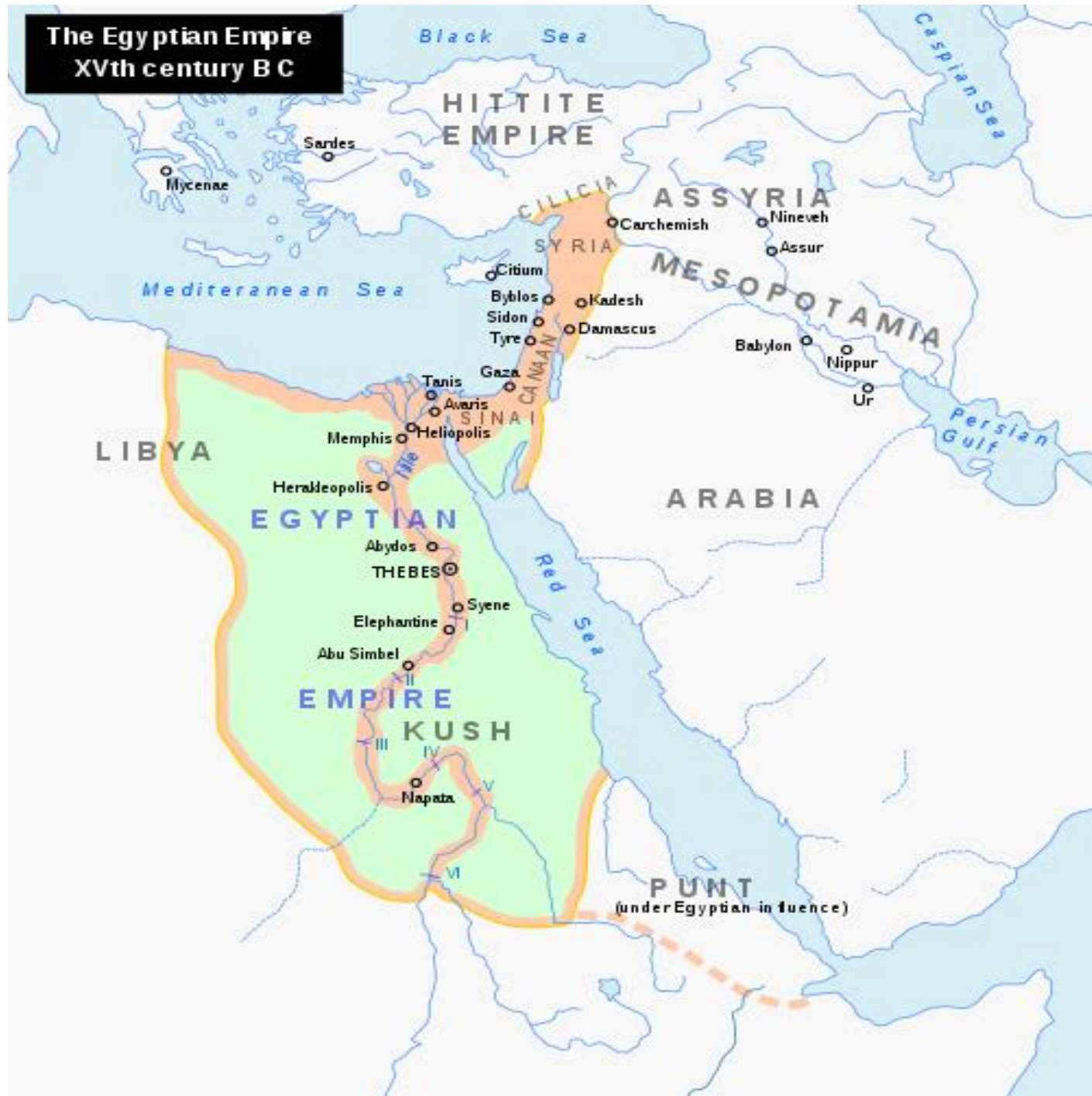
Tabernacle



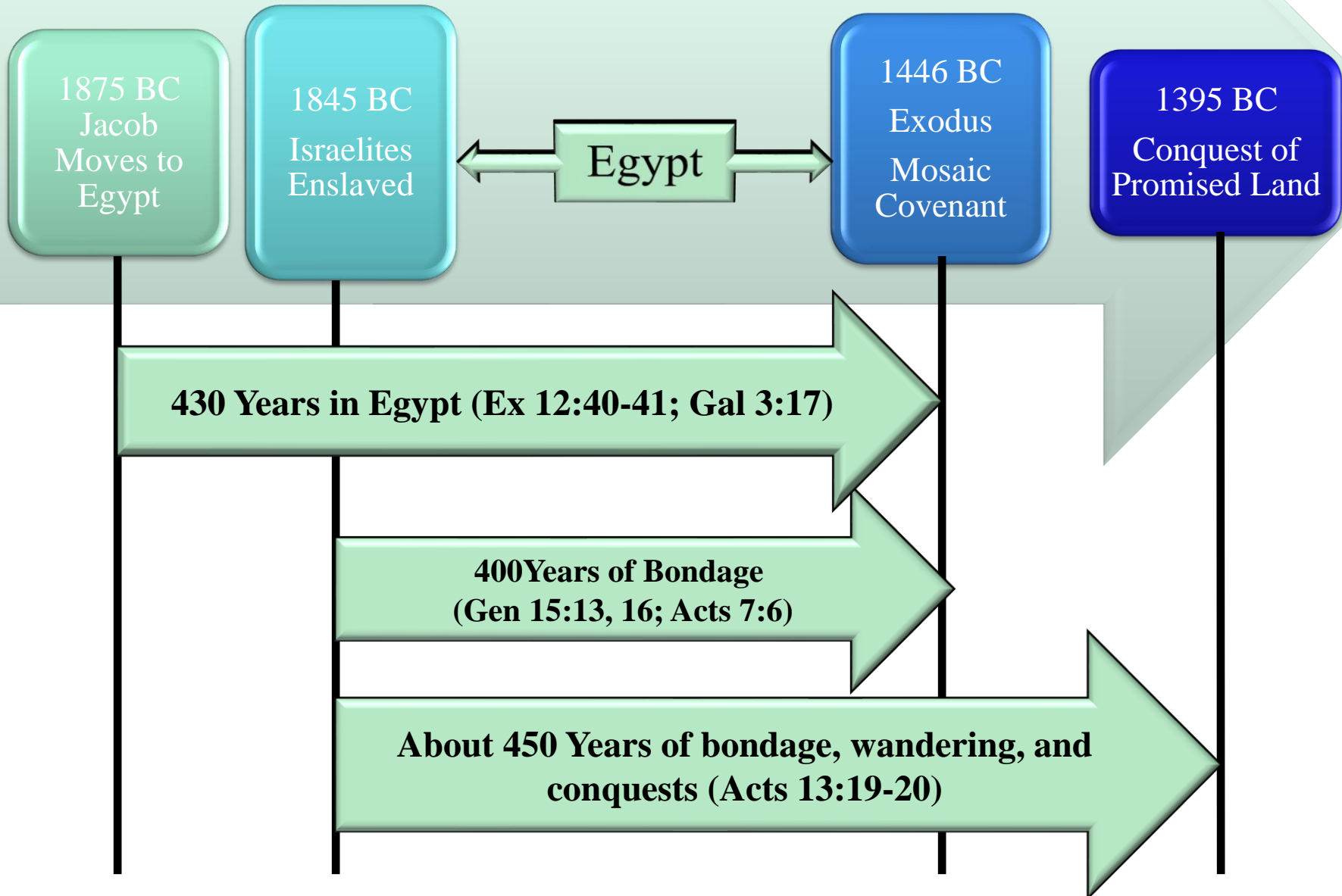
Altar



**The Egyptian Empire
XVth century B C**



Early Israelite Timeline



God's Appeal for Holy Living

- 1st Peter 1:13-16
 - “Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, ‘Be holy, for I am holy.’”
- We are to be holy because God is holy
 - Not an arbitrary, or changeable requirement
 - Holiness is defined by the nature of God, not the customs of men
 - Holiness should be present in every aspect of a Christian's conduct

Overview of Leviticus 11-15

- Legislation of ideas expressed in Leviticus 10:10
- Explains possibly sources of uncleanness and how God requires cleansing and purification
- Chapter 11
 - Acceptable and unacceptable animals (and insects) to consume, resulting in uncleanness for hours
- Chapter 12
 - Uncleanness related to childbirth, lasting months
- Chapter 13 and 14
 - Uncleanness due to skin diseases, lasting years
- Chapter 15
 - Uncleanness from bodily discharge, lasting hours to years

Causes of Uncleanness

- Moral transgressions
 - Caused spiritual defilement (moral uncleanness)
- Ceremonial defilement
 - Did not necessarily mean that the defiled person had sinned
- Some practices that resulted in ceremonial uncleanness were not morally wrong
 - Example is childbirth
- Therefore, unclean does not equal sinful, but it means impure
- Impurity restricted Israelite participation in worship at the tabernacle

Uncleanness from Animals (Ch 11)

- Six major different distinctions between clean and unclean animals (why some were/some were not)
 - Arbitrary – God was only testing obedience
 - Avoid animals used in pagan or cultic practices
 - Certain animals were more likely to carry disease
 - Symbolic – unclean animals were like sinful people
 - Aesthetic – liked only the “good looking” animals
 - Ethical – Animals chosen were somehow more reverent
- Jews ultimately regarded food laws as symbolic of the division between themselves and Gentiles
 - Read Acts 10:14, 28

Clean (Chapter 11)



Unclean (Chapter 11)



Clean versus Unclean (11:1-47)

- God begins positively (vs. 1-8)
 - God tells them what they can eat first
- Regarding water creatures (vs. 9-12)
 - Limited to those that had fins and scales for movement
- Insects (vs. 20-23)
 - Some varieties of locust clean, as an example
 - Insects that seem to swarm were unclean
- Defilement from animal carcasses (vs. 24-28)
- Uncleanness caused by swarming insects (vs. 29-38)
- Further directions about the uncleanness of animals that died (vs. 39-40)
- Extorts His people again to be holy (vs. 44)

Childbirth (Chapter 12)

- Ritual purification lasted 40 days
 - First seven days she was contagiously unclean (15:31)
 - Had to offer a sin (purification) offering
- Several purposes were served
 - New mother to regain her health
 - And to regain her ritual purity
 - Circumcision was not a purification rite (Gen 17:9-14)
- Timeframe was twice as long with a female child
 - Potentially considered the redemption time more effective (see Lev 27:2-7)
- Mary, mother of Jesus, practiced this Levitical law
 - See Luke 2:22-24

Unclean Skin (Chapter 13-14)

- Contains three sections
 - Diagnosis and treatment of skin and clothing abnormalities (Ch 13)
 - Ritual cleansing of abnormalities in human skin (14:1-32)
 - Ritual cleansing of abnormalities in houses (14:33-53)
- Abnormalities of the skin (13:1-46)
 - Swelling, scab, bright spots (vs. 2-28)
 - Infection on the head or beard (vs. 29-37)
 - Bright spots on the skin (vs. 38-39)
- Priests were charged with distinguishing between the clean and unclean, remember Lev 10:10-11
- Abnormalities in clothing (vs. 47-59)

Ritual Cleaning of Skin (14:1-32)

- Procedures were not cures but were rituals
 - God explains how priests could recognize healed skin so the affected individual could continue worship
- The first event took place outside of camp (vs. 1-9)
 - One bird killed, one bird released
- The second event took place before the altar of burnt offerings – restoring fellowship (vs. 10-32)
- Ritual cleansing of abnormalities in houses (vs. 33-53)
 - God prescribes a purification rite for houses
- Summary of ordinances (vs. 54-57)
 - Emphasis on God's provision for cleansing

Review

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- Next week: Leviticus 16