

# Dr. Ted Hildebrandt, Old Testament Literature, Session 14, Leviticus Sacrifices and Feasts, Numbers

## Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Study Guide, 4) Briefing Document, and 5) FAQs

### 1. Abstract of Hildebrandt, Old Testament Literature, Session 14, Leviticus Sacrifices and Feasts, Numbers, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

This is a lecture transcript from Dr. Ted Hildebrandt's Old Testament course, focusing on Leviticus and Numbers. **The lecture covers the various types of sacrifices in Leviticus**, explaining them in the context of different aspects of sin (anger, pollution, guilt, damage, broken communion). **Five major sacrificial offerings are detailed**, along with their procedures and theological significance. **The lecture then examines the feasts of Israel**, their timing related to the agricultural seasons, and their connections to New Testament events. Finally, **the lecture begins an exploration of the Book of Numbers**, introducing the Nazirite vow and analyzing recurring literary cycles of complaint, God's response, and mediation.

**2. 20 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Hildebrandt, Old Testament Literature, Session 14 – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (Old Testament → Introduction → Old Testament Literature).**



**Hildebrandt\_OTLit\_  
Session14.mp3**

### 3. Hildebrandt, Old Testament Literature, Session 14, Leviticus Sacrifices and Feasts, Numbers

#### Old Testament Study Guide: Leviticus, Numbers, & Lamentations

#### Quiz

Answer the following questions in 2-3 sentences each:

1. What are the five aspects of sin discussed in the lecture, and what does each one entail?
2. Explain the concept of propitiation in the context of dealing with sin.
3. What is the significance of blood in the Old Testament sacrificial system, and how does it relate to the New Testament?
4. Describe the three categories of fellowship offerings and what makes them unique.
5. How do the two seasons in Israel affect the agricultural cycle and what crops are associated with each?
6. What are the three major festivals in the fall and what does each one commemorate?
7. Describe the rituals and significance of the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur).
8. What are the three rules for a Nazirite vow, and what does the vow represent?
9. What is the difference between a "Nazirite" and a "Nazarene," and how does that relate to Jesus?
10. Explain the difference between "complaint" and "lament" in biblical terms.

#### Answer Key

1. The five aspects of sin are anger/propitiation, pollution/purification, guilt/shame/atonement, damage/reparation, and confession/restoration. Each aspect addresses a different consequence or need related to sin, ranging from God's anger to the need for covering and reconciliation.
2. Propitiation is the act of appeasing or calming anger, particularly God's anger, through a specific action or offering. It seeks to create a favorable disposition by addressing the offense that caused the anger.

3. In the Old Testament, blood is essential for the remission of sin, often through animal sacrifices. In the New Testament, Jesus' blood is seen as the ultimate sacrifice for cleansing sin, creating an ironic use of blood for cleansing.
4. The three categories are freewill offerings (done simply out of desire to give to God), vow completion offerings (to fulfill a promise to God), and thanksgiving offerings (given to express gratitude for God's goodness). The unique element is that those making the offering also get to share a meal with the priests in the fellowship offering.
5. Israel experiences a dry summer and a rainy winter. Summer is the time of harvest of fruits like grapes, figs, and olives. The spring season is when grains like wheat and barley are harvested.
6. The three major fall festivals are the Feast of Trumpets (Rosh Hashanah), which marks the beginning of the new year, the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur), a time for reflection and atonement of sins, and the Feast of Tabernacles (Sukkot) commemorating Israel's wilderness wanderings.
7. On Yom Kippur, two goats are brought before God; one is sacrificed, and its blood is taken into the most holy place, the mercy seat, while the other goat, representing the sins of the people, is set free. The day was a time of reflection on one's sins.
8. The three rules of a Nazirite vow are to abstain from touching dead bodies, consuming products of the grape (wine, grape juice, raisins), and cutting one's hair. It represented a dedication of oneself to the Lord.
9. A "Nazirite" is a person who has taken a special vow of dedication to God (see #8), while a "Nazarene" is simply someone from the town of Nazareth. Jesus was not a Nazirite, but a Nazarene.
10. Both complaint and lament express dissatisfaction to God, but lament is a faithful expression of suffering, recognizing God's power while still expressing honesty about pain and confusion. Complaint, on the other hand, is often viewed as a rebellious act against God, showing dissatisfaction with God's ways.

## Essay Questions

1. Compare and contrast the different types of sacrifices described in the lecture, and analyze how they addressed the various aspects of sin.
2. Discuss the significance of the annual festivals in the Old Testament. How do these festivals relate to the agricultural calendar, the history of Israel, and the religious life of the people?
3. Explore the idea of "lament" as expressed in the book of Psalms and other biblical texts. How does lament differ from simple complaint, and what role does it play in the relationship between God and humanity?
4. Analyze the Nazirite vow in the context of the Book of Numbers, discussing its rules, purpose, and its relationship to key figures like Samson, Samuel, and Paul. How does this vow illustrate the concept of dedication to God?
5. Reflect on the lecture's discussion about anger and discipline. How should individuals, both in biblical times and today, understand and manage their anger and how is God presented in relation to these ideas?

## Glossary

- **Atonement:** The act of making amends or providing a covering for guilt or shame caused by sin.
- **Complaint:** Expressing dissatisfaction or grievance, often without faith in or recognition of God's will or power.
- **Fellowship Offering (Shalom):** A type of sacrifice in which the person making the offering also gets to eat part of the meat with their family and the priests, promoting community and peace.
- **Hesed:** A Hebrew term that refers to God's loyal love, kindness, and mercy.
- **Jubilee Year:** Every 50 years, all land was returned to its original owners, and slaves were released, promoting economic and social equality.
- **Lament:** A faithful expression of deep grief, suffering, or complaint to God, acknowledging His power while still expressing honesty about pain or confusion.
- **Manumission:** The act of freeing slaves or servants.

- **Nazarene:** A person from the town of Nazareth.
- **Nazirite Vow:** A vow to separate oneself to God by abstaining from dead bodies, products of the grape, and cutting one's hair.
- **Pentecost:** The Feast of Weeks or 50 days after Passover, commemorating the giving of the law to Moses.
- **Pollution:** The defiling nature of sin that requires purification.
- **Propitiation:** The act of appeasing or calming anger, particularly God's anger, through specific actions.
- **Purim:** A Jewish festival celebrating the story of Esther and the sparing of the Jews from annihilation.
- **Rosh Hashanah:** The Jewish New Year celebrated with the blowing of trumpets (shofar).
- **Sabbath:** A weekly day of rest and worship, observed from Friday night to Saturday night.
- **Sabbatical Year:** Every seventh year, the land was to be left fallow, debts were to be released, and Jewish servants were to be set free.
- **Shofar:** A ram's horn used as a trumpet in Jewish religious ceremonies.
- **Shukkot:** A celebration of the wandering of the wilderness when tents (sukkahs) were the primary place of dwelling.
- **Reparation:** The act of making amends for damages caused by sin, often by paying back what was stolen or damaged.
- **Yom Kippur:** The Day of Atonement, the most solemn of Jewish holy days, marked by fasting and reflection on one's sins.

## 4. Briefing Document

Okay, here is a detailed briefing document summarizing the key themes and ideas from the provided lecture transcript, including direct quotes:

### **Briefing Document: Analysis of Old Testament Lecture on Leviticus, Numbers, and Lament**

#### **Overview:**

This lecture by Dr. Ted Hildebrandt explores complex aspects of sin, the sacrificial system, the feasts and festivals of Israel, and the book of Numbers, particularly focusing on the contrast between complaint and lament. The lecture also provides cultural and historical context for understanding these biblical concepts.

#### **I. The Nature of Sin:**

- **Sin is multifaceted:** It's not a simple, unitary concept. As Hildebrandt states, "Normally when people think of sin, they think it is kind of a unitary flat concept. In other words, sin is sin, and it's just you did something wrong and that's it. But actually sin is a complex of things..."
- **Different Aspects of Sin: Anger/Propitiation:** Sin provokes God's anger, which requires appeasement (propitiation). "So propitiation has to do with God's anger that needs to be propitiated or calmed down."
- **Pollution/Purification:** Sin defiles and causes a sense of "pollution." Purification, often through water, is necessary. "This is idea of pollution – you feel the pollution, the filthiness of sin. So there's need for purification/cleansing."
- **Guilt/Shame/Atonement:** Sin brings guilt and shame. Atonement is the "covering" for this shame. "“Atonement” means you provide a covering for shame."
- **Damage/Reparation:** Sin causes damage that requires compensation (reparation). "Stealing something actually damages someone else. So reparation when you steal something, and you get caught you have to pay it back. You have to pay it back in multiples of four."
- **Confession/Restoration:** Sin should be confessed within a community, followed by restoration.

## II. The Sacrificial System:

- **Blood is essential:** "Without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sin." This is seen as a precursor to the sacrifice of Jesus. "Ultimately, whose blood would be shed for the remission of sin? Jesus' blood."
- **Types of Sacrifices: Whole Burnt Offerings:** Completely burned on the altar
- **Sin Offerings:** Addressing unintentional sin
- **Guilt Offerings:** Addressing intentional sin requiring restitution
- **Fellowship/Peace Offerings (Shalom):** For freewill, vows, or thanksgiving; shared with family and priests. "Peace is "shalom" in Hebrew... the people that bring the animal get to eat some of this too... This would be a communal meal..."
- **Grain Offerings:** Made of wheat or barley, with no blood, but could include oil and salt.

## III. Feasts and Festivals:

- **Cycle of Seasons and Feasts:** The agricultural seasons and harvests influence the timing of the feasts. Israel has a two-season climate of summer and winter, unlike New England's four seasons.
- **Spring Feasts: Passover:** Commemorates the exodus from Egypt, also tied to Jesus' death in the New Testament.
- **Feast of Unleavened Bread:** Follows Passover, eating unleavened bread for seven days.
- **Feast of Weeks (Pentecost):** Fifty days after Passover, marking the end of the spring harvest. In the New Testament, it's when the Holy Spirit came down. "When I say "penta," what's "penta"? Penta is five like pentagon. So Pentecost is how many days after the Feast of Passover? Fifty days later."
- **Fall Feasts: Feast of Trumpets (Rosh Hashanah):** Marks the beginning of the new year.

- **Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur):** The most sacred feast; a day of reflection on sin and atonement. "This is the most sacred of all the Jewish feasts... a very, very high holy day." The ritual of the two goats – one sacrificed, one sent away – demonstrates substitution. "Do you see the notion of substitution there? That would actually play in with Jesus Christ that one person dies and the other person goes free."
- **Feast of Tabernacles (Sukkot):** Commemorates the wilderness wanderings and living in temporary shelters.
- **Other Important Observances:Sabbath:** A weekly day of rest (Friday night to Saturday night).
- **Sabbatical Year:** Every seventh year, the land was to rest and debts were to be released. "They were to let the land rest. Every seventh year..." God punished the Israelites for not following this law. "God kept track of it, and when they go to Babylon... God says, 'My land has not had its rest.' "
- **Year of Jubilee:** Every 50 years (seven Sabbatical cycles plus one), land was returned to the original family and slaves were set free.
- **Post-Exilic Feasts:Purim:** Celebrates Esther's role in saving the Jews; a festive occasion, kids get candy, with noise-makers to drown out Haman's name. "This is the Feast of Purim – celebrating Esther's sparing of the Jewish people under the hand of God."
- **Hanukkah:** Celebrates the Maccabean revolt and the rededication of the temple. Jesus also celebrated it. "John chapter 10 verse 22 says flat out it was the Feast of Dedication and Jesus was going down there."

#### IV. The Book of Numbers:

- **Negative Reputation:** Often seen as a negative book because of the complaints and rebellion of the Israelites.
- **Nazirite Vow:** A special dedication to God through abstaining from:
  - Touching dead bodies
  - Products of the grape
  - Cutting hair



- The vow could be for a limited time. "Do you realize that many people took the Nazirite vow for just a year, for two years, or half a year, or something like that? You could take the vow for a shorter period of time."
- **Examples of Nazirites:** Samson, Samuel and Paul in the New Testament. Jesus was not a Nazirite, but a "Nazarene" from Nazareth.
- **Priestly Blessing:** Numbers 6 contains the ancient priestly blessing, a piece of scripture that has been found in archaeological digs. "The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you. The Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace." This blessing, found on ancient silver scrolls, is a reminder of the antiquity of the biblical text. "Numbers 6, the priestly blessing is the earliest piece of Scripture ever found."
- **Literary Cycles:** The Book of Numbers is structured around cycles of:
  - Problem
  - Complaint/Rebellion
  - God's Anger/Judgment
  - Intercession
  - Restoration/Lesson

## V. Complaint vs. Lament:

- **Key Distinction:** The difference is not in the words themselves, but in the heart behind the expression. "The words are exactly the same. They are both complaints to God, but the meaning is totally different..."
- **Complaint:** Is often about rejecting God and giving up on him.
- **Lament:** Is about engaging God in relationship, even in pain and frustration. It demands better and is an expression of love. "You are a better man than that. I demand better out of you."
- **Examples: Israel's Complaint:** Leads to God's anger and judgment.
- **Moses' Lament:** Leads to God's help and intervention.

- **Lament in Psalms:** The Psalms are filled with laments that are honest and raw expressions of pain to God, often ending in hope. Hildebrandt acknowledges that not all laments resolve positively, referencing Psalm 88 which ends in darkness. "Psalm 88 – there's only one psalm in the whole that's a lament and guess how it ends?... It ends in darkness."
- **Christian Culture and Lament:** Hildebrandt points out that Christian culture can be uncomfortable with lament, often favoring a perpetual positive outlook. He emphasizes that it's okay for Christians to experience and express a full range of emotions to God, as evidenced by biblical examples.

## VI. God's Anger and Discipline:

- **God's Anger is Real:** The lecture challenges the idea of a God who is only loving and kind, emphasizing that God can also express anger. "Does God get hacked sometimes? Yes, he does... God disciplines people when he's in anger."
- **Righteous Anger:** The New Testament teaches that it is possible to be angry without sinning ("Be angry and sin not."). Righteous anger is appropriate in response to injustice.
- **Moses' Interaction with God:** Moses challenges and even rebukes God through rhetorical questions, demonstrating an intimate and honest relationship with God.
- **Longing for Death:** Moses even says, "God, if this is how you are going to treat me, put me to death right now." This illustrates the depth of his despair and honesty with God.

## VII. Other Key Points:

- **Alcohol:** The Bible condemns drunkenness, not alcohol itself. Jesus drank wine.
- **Community and Fellowship:** Fellowship is more important than minor doctrinal differences.
- **Interracial Marriage:** Will be addressed in the next lecture.

## Conclusion:

This lecture provides a rich overview of key Old Testament themes, highlighting the complexity of sin, the purpose of sacrifice, the importance of the feasts, and the value of engaging God honestly through both praise and lament. It also emphasizes the need to understand biblical texts in their historical and cultural context.

## 5. FAQs on Hildebrandt, Old Testament Literature, Session 14, Leviticus Sacrifices and Feasts, Numbers, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

### FAQ: Key Themes and Ideas from

"Hildebrandt\_EN\_OTLit\_Lecture14\_Leviticus\_Numbers\_Lament.pdf"

1. **How does the text describe the complexity of sin?** The text emphasizes that sin is not a simple, unitary concept. Instead, it's presented as a complex of different aspects, including causing anger (which needs propitiation), pollution (requiring purification), guilt and shame (demanding atonement), and damage (necessitating reparation). This multifaceted understanding moves beyond the idea of sin as merely doing something wrong to encompass its varied consequences and the necessary responses to it.
2. **What is propitiation, and how is it used in relation to God's anger?** Propitiation refers to actions taken to appease someone's anger. In the context of sin and God, it involves doing something to calm or turn away God's anger as a response to wrongdoing. This is likened to doing something nice for someone who is angry at you (like cutting the lawn for an angry father or buying flowers). The text notes that propitiation requires careful consideration, as it can sometimes backfire if it's perceived as insincere.
3. **What are the various types of sacrifices and what do they represent?** The text discusses several types of sacrifices, including whole burnt offerings (where the entire animal is burned), reparation or purification offerings (where some of the sacrifice is eaten by the priests), and fellowship offerings (where the offerer, their family, and the priests share a communal meal.) Whole burnt offerings were to please God, while reparation and purification offerings were used to address the consequences of sin. Fellowship or peace offerings were used to express free will, the completion of vows, or as a thanksgiving to God. Additionally, grain offerings of wheat and barley were mentioned as offerings without blood. The variety of sacrifices highlights the different ways people sought to approach God.

4. **How do the Jewish feasts and seasons function within the described religious context?** The text describes Jewish feasts tied to agricultural cycles and historical events, including Passover, the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost), the Feast of Trumpets (Rosh Hashanah), the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur), the Feast of Tabernacles (Sukkot), Purim, and Hanukkah. These feasts mark specific times of the year, often related to harvest or commemoration of key events. The festivals served as reminders of God's interactions with his people and were central to their religious identity and practice. Additionally, the text touches on the importance of Sabbath (weekly day of rest) and the Sabbatical year and the Year of Jubilee (every 50 years), which emphasizes both rest and restoration to prevent poverty and excessive wealth.
5. **What is the significance of the Nazirite Vow, and how does it apply to both the Old and New Testaments?** The Nazirite vow was a voluntary act of dedicating oneself to God by abstaining from products of the grape, not touching dead bodies, and not cutting one's hair. This vow symbolized a specific separation to God and demonstrated that God was over one's food, family, and body. People took the vow for varying periods of time. The text highlights Samson and Samuel as lifelong Nazirites, and Paul in the New Testament as taking a vow to fulfill a religious obligation. While some may believe Jesus was a Nazirite because he was called a Nazarene, this was disproven in the text because a Nazarene simply refers to someone from Nazareth.
6. **What is the distinction between "complaint" and "lament," and why is it significant?** While both involve expressing dissatisfaction to God, the text differentiates between "complaint" and "lament" based on the heart's orientation. A "complaint" is when someone is expressing grievances in a way that conveys lack of trust, distancing themselves from God (like saying "I'm out of here" and expressing a permanent departure). Lament, on the other hand, involves wrestling with God honestly, even expressing frustration and anger, but ultimately seeks a response from God and is grounded in faith (such as saying "I will scream until you are the man you should be"). The text points to lament as a way to draw closer to God by showing the emotions while still acknowledging his love and place as a source of change and justice. Moses exemplifies lament with his frank, emotional complaints, which God engages with, contrasting with the Israelites' complaints that draw God's wrath.

7. **How does the text address the complex issue of anger, particularly God's anger and its implications for discipline?** The text acknowledges that God experiences anger and disciplines people in anger, challenging the common notion that Christians should only embrace God as a being of love. It argues that anger is not inherently sinful and that "righteous anger" exists, especially in the face of injustice (Ephesians 4:26, "be angry and sin not"). The text suggests that there is value in expressing appropriate anger (not sinful anger), noting that God's anger and subsequent discipline can be an act of love. However, one must be cautious in expressing anger and mindful of when it is appropriate.

8. **What are the cyclical patterns and key themes present in the Book of Numbers?** The book of Numbers exhibits a repeated pattern involving a problem, complaining, God's response (often anger and judgment), and then resolution and learning (often resulting in naming the place). The overarching theme in Numbers is the journey through the wilderness that reflects the struggles and consequences of the Israelite's lack of trust and faith in God. The book, while often viewed as negative, includes lessons about faith, obedience, and the complex relationship between God and his people, as demonstrated through both cycles and the distinction between complaint and lament.