

Leviticus 10:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Wherefore have ye not eaten the sin offering in the holy place, seeing it is most holy, and God hath given it you to bear the iniquity of the congregation, to make atonement for them before the LORD?

Analysis

Wherefore have ye not eaten the sin offering in the holy place, seeing it is most holy, and God hath given it you to bear the iniquity of the congregation, to make atonement for them before the LORD?

This verse falls within the section on **Nadab and Abihu's Unauthorized Fire**. The tragic death of Aaron's sons for offering unauthorized fire demonstrates the severity of approaching God improperly.

The central theme of Leviticus is God's holiness and the call for His people to be holy. The Hebrew word qadosh (קָדוֹשׁ) means 'set apart' or 'sacred,' emphasizing both separation from sin and consecration to God's purposes. The Hebrew word kaphar (כַּפֵּר) means 'to cover' or 'to make atonement.' The sacrificial system provided temporary covering for sin, pointing forward to Christ's perfect, once-for-all sacrifice. The five main offerings (burnt, grain, peace, sin, and guilt) addressed different aspects of relationship with God, all fulfilled in Christ's comprehensive sacrifice.

The holiness demanded in Leviticus becomes possible through Christ, who both satisfies God's righteous requirements and transforms believers by His Spirit.

Historical Context

The tragic death of Aaron's sons for offering unauthorized fire demonstrates the severity of approaching God improperly. Chapters 8-10 describe the priesthood's consecration and early ministry. Aaron and his sons received special anointing for their mediatorial role between God and Israel. The tragic account of Nadab and Abihu (ch. 10) demonstrates that approaching God requires reverence and obedience. Ancient Near Eastern cultures had various sacrificial systems, but Israel's sacrificial worship was unique in its ethical foundation, monotheistic framework, and emphasis on atonement rather than appeasement. Unlike pagan rituals focused on manipulating deities, Israel's sacrifices acknowledged God's sovereignty and sought reconciliation based on His gracious provision. The Israelite dietary laws in Leviticus 11 have no exact parallel in surrounding cultures, though some ancient cultures had food taboos, suggesting unique revelation rather than borrowed customs.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does God's holiness, as revealed in this verse, shape your understanding of worship, obedience, and daily living?
2. In what ways does this verse deepen your appreciation for Christ's atoning sacrifice and the seriousness of sin?
3. What does this verse teach about the costliness of true worship and dedication to God?

Interlinear Text

לֹא	מִדְבָּר	אַכְלָתָ מִ	אֶת	בָּמָקָם	וּמְ
H4069	H3808	Wherefore have ye not eaten	H853	the sin offering	place
		H398		H2403	H4725
מְ	מְ	קָדְשָׁ יְמִים	נָתָן		
holy	H3588	holy	holy	and God hath given	
H6944		H6944	H6944	H5414	
לְ	לְ	לִשְׁאָתָה	עַ	לְכַפֵּר	
H0	it you to bear	H853	the iniquity	of the congregation	to make atonement
	H5375		H5771	H5712	H3722
לְ	לְ	לִפְנֵי	וְ		
H5921	for them before	H6440	H3068		

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 28:38 (Holy): And it shall be upon Aaron's forehead, that Aaron may bear the iniquity of the holy things, which the children of Israel shall hallow in all their holy gifts; and it shall be always upon his forehead, that they may be accepted before the LORD.

Numbers 18:1 (Sin): And the LORD said unto Aaron, Thou and thy sons and thy father's house with thee shall bear the iniquity of the sanctuary: and thou and thy sons with thee shall bear the iniquity of your priesthood.