

Leviticus 16:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And there shall be no man in the tabernacle of the congregation when he goeth in to make an atonement in the holy place, until he come out, and have made an atonement for himself, and for his household, and for all the congregation of Israel.

Analysis

And there shall be no man in the tabernacle of the congregation when he goeth in to make an atonement in the holy place, until he come out, and have made an atonement for himself, and for his household, and for all the congregation of Israel.

This verse falls within the section on **Day of Atonement**. The most sacred day in Israel's calendar, when the high priest entered the Holy of Holies to make atonement for all Israel's sins.

The central theme of Leviticus is God's holiness and the call for His people to be holy. The Hebrew word qadosh (שָׁדוֹשׁ) 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.

Every sacrifice and ritual in Leviticus points forward to Jesus Christ, who fulfills the entire sacrificial system as both perfect sacrifice and eternal high priest.

Historical Context

The most sacred day in Israel's calendar, when the high priest entered the Holy of Holies to make atonement for all Israel's sins. The Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) described in chapter 16 became Israel's most sacred day. Only on this annual day could the high priest enter the Holy of Holies, making atonement for the entire nation. This ceremony, still observed in Judaism, found ultimate fulfillment in Christ's entrance into heaven itself (Hebrews 9:11-12). Israel received these laws while encamped at Sinai, before entering Canaan. The laws prepared them for life in the promised land, distinguishing them from Canaanite practices and establishing their identity as God's holy nation. The portable tabernacle, central to Levitical worship, accompanied them through wilderness wanderings and eventually found permanent form in Solomon's temple. The tabernacle's design parallels ancient Near Eastern temple architecture, yet its portable nature and absence of divine images distinguished it from pagan temples.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

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. How does this verse help you understand both God's justice and His mercy in salvation?

Interlinear Text

וְאֵלֶּה	אֵלֶּה	לֹא	בְּאַפְלָה	בְּאַפְלָה
H3605	And there shall be no man	H3808	H1961	in the tabernacle
	H120			H168
מִוּעָד	בְּבָאָז	וְאֶכְפֵּר	בְּקָדְשָׁה	עַד
of the congregation	when he goeth	and have made an atonement	in the holy	H5704
H4150	H935	H3722	H6944	
צָאתִי	וְאֶכְפֵּר	וְבָעֵד	וְבָעֵד	
place until he come out	and have made an atonement	H1157	H1157	
H3318	H3722			
בֵּיתִי	וְבָעֵד	לְכָל	לְכָל	
for himself and for his household		H1157	H3605	and for all the congregation
H1004				H6951
וְשְׁרָאֵל:				
of Israel				
H3478				

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 53:6 (Parallel theme): All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Exodus 34:3 (Parallel theme): And no man shall come up with thee, neither let any man be seen throughout all the mount; neither let the flocks nor herds feed before that mount.

Luke 1:10 (Parallel theme): And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense.