

Leviticus 16:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he shall go out unto the altar that is before the LORD, and make an atonement for it; and shall take of the blood of the bullock, and of the blood of the goat, and put it upon the horns of the altar round about.

Analysis

And he shall go out unto the altar that is before the LORD, and make an atonement for it; and shall take of the blood of the bullock, and of the blood of the goat, and put it upon the horns of the altar round about.

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 Hebrew word *kaphar* (כִּפּוּר) 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. Leviticus 17:11 declares 'the life of the flesh is in the blood,' establishing blood's sacred role in atonement, pointing to Christ's blood shed for redemption.

Hebrews 9-10 explains how Christ's once-for-all sacrifice supersedes the repeated Levitical offerings, providing permanent cleansing from sin.

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. Ancient texts like the Code of Hammurabi show that law codes were common in the ancient Near East, but biblical law uniquely grounded ethics in God's character rather than merely social convention.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. In what ways does this verse deepen your appreciation for Christ's atoning sacrifice and the seriousness of sin?
2. What does this verse teach about the costliness of true worship and dedication to God?
3. In what ways does this verse challenge contemporary cultural values or your personal attitudes?

Interlinear Text

וְיָצַא אֵל	לִפְנֵי רֶאשֶׁת הַמִּזְבֵּחַ בְּפָנָי	הַלְּבָנִי הַלְּבָנִי
And he shall go out	of the altar	that is before the LORD
H3318	H4196	H6440
וְיִכְפֶּר	וְיִלְקַח	וְיִמְצַק
and make an atonement	for it and shall take	and of the blood
H3722	H5947	H1818
וְיִמְצַק	וְיִלְקַח	וְיִמְצַק
and of the blood	of the goat	of the bullock
H1818	H8163	H6499
וְיִתְבְּרָא	וְיִתְבְּרָא	וְיִתְבְּרָא
and put	the goat	the bullock
H5414	H5921	H4196
וְיִתְבְּרָא	וְיִתְבְּרָא	וְיִתְבְּרָא
and of the blood	of the goat	of the altar
H1818	H8163	H6499
וְיִתְבְּרָא	וְיִתְבְּרָא	וְיִתְבְּרָא
round about	the altar	the bullock
H5439	H4196	H6499

Additional Cross-References

Leviticus 4:7 (Blood): And the priest shall put some of the blood upon the horns of the altar of sweet incense before the LORD, which is in the tabernacle of the congregation; and shall pour all the blood of the bullock at the bottom of the altar of the burnt offering, which is at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

Exodus 30:10 (Blood): And Aaron shall make an atonement upon the horns of it once in a year with the blood of the sin offering of atonements: once in the year shall he make atonement upon it throughout your generations: it is most holy unto the LORD.

Leviticus 16:16 (Parallel theme): And he shall make an atonement for the holy place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins: and so shall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation, that remaineth among them in the midst of their uncleanness.

Leviticus 4:18 (Blood): And he shall put some of the blood upon the horns of the altar which is before the LORD, that is in the tabernacle of the congregation, and

shall pour out all the blood at the bottom of the altar of the burnt offering, which is at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

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