

Leviticus 16:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And when he hath made an end of reconciling the holy place, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar, he shall bring the live goat:

Analysis

And when he hath made an end of reconciling the holy place, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar, he shall bring the live goat:

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 (קָדוֹשׁ) means 'set apart' or 'sacred,' emphasizing both separation from sin and consecration to God's purposes. 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 access to God's presence that Leviticus carefully regulated is now freely available through Christ's blood, tearing the veil and opening the way to God.

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

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How does God's holiness, as revealed in this verse, shape your understanding of worship, obedience, and daily living?
2. What does this verse teach about the costliness of true worship and dedication to God?
3. How can you use this verse to worship God more fully, obey Him more faithfully, or love others more sacrificially?

Interlinear Text

וְכֹלֶה	מִכְפֵּר	אַתָּה	וְאַתָּה	פָּקַדְתָּ	דָּשָׁן
And when he hath made an end	of reconciling			the holy	
H3615	H3722	H853		H6944	H853
אֵל	מוֹעֵד	וְאַתָּה	הַמִּזְבֵּחַ	וְיִבְרָא	
place and the tabernacle	of the congregation		and the altar	he shall bring	
H168	H4150	H853	H4196		H7126
אַתָּה בָּשָׂר יְלֵאֵת					
goat	the live				
H853	H2416				

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 45:20 (Parallel theme): And so thou shalt do the seventh day of the month for every one that erreth, and for him that is simple: so shall ye reconcile the house.

Leviticus 16:16 (Holy): 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.