

Leviticus 16:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Thus shall Aaron come into the holy place: with a young bullock for a sin offering, and a ram for a burnt offering.

Analysis

Thus shall Aaron come into the holy place: with a young bullock for a sin offering, and a ram for a burnt offering.

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* (קֹדֶשׁ) means 'set apart' or 'sacred,' emphasizing both separation from sin and consecration to God's purposes. The Aaronic priesthood mediated between God and Israel, offering sacrifices and maintaining the tabernacle. This prefigured Christ's superior priesthood after the order of Melchizedek. 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

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

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 Christ's superior priesthood, prefigured in this verse, assure you of access to God and effective intercession?

Interlinear Text

כֹּהֵן	בֶּן־אֶחָד	יָבֹא	אֶל־	הַקֹּדֶשׁ	בְּפָרִי	בֶּן־
Thus	come	shall Aaron	H413	into the holy	bullock	place with a young
H2063	H935	H175		H6944	H6499	H1121
בֶּקָרָן	לְחֹטֵא	אֶת־	וְאֶל־	לְעֹלָה:		
H1241	for a sin offering	and a ram	H352	for a burnt offering		
	H2403			H5930		

Additional Cross-References

Leviticus 4:3 (Sin): If the priest that is anointed do sin according to the sin of the people; then let him bring for his sin, which he hath sinned, a young bullock without blemish unto the LORD for a sin offering.

Hebrews 9:7 (Parallel theme): But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people:

Leviticus 1:10 (Sacrifice): And if his offering be of the flocks, namely, of the sheep, or of the goats, for a burnt sacrifice; he shall bring it a male without blemish.

Leviticus 8:18 (Sacrifice): And he brought the ram for the burnt offering: and Aaron and his sons laid their hands upon the head of the ram.