

Leviticus 16:31

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

It shall be a sabbath of rest unto you, and ye shall afflict your souls, by a statute for ever.

Analysis

It shall be a sabbath of rest unto you, and ye shall afflict your souls, by a statute for ever.

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.

What Leviticus portrayed through types and shadows, Christ fulfilled in reality through His incarnation, perfect life, atoning death, and resurrection.

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 sacrificial texts from cultures surrounding Israel demonstrate the widespread practice of animal sacrifice, but Israel's system uniquely emphasized moral atonement over magical efficacy.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does understanding the purpose behind God's laws help you obey Him from the heart rather than mere duty?
2. In what ways does this verse challenge contemporary cultural values or your personal attitudes?
3. How can you use this verse to worship God more fully, obey Him more faithfully, or love others more sacrificially?

Interlinear Text

שָׁבַת	שַׁבַּת וְ	הִיא	לָכֵן	וְעֲנִיתֶם	אֶת
It shall be a sabbath	of rest	H1931	H0	unto you and ye shall afflict	H853
H7676	H7677			H6031	
נַפְשֹׁתֵיכֶם	חֹק	עוֹלָם:			
your souls	by a statute	for ever			
H5315	H2708	H5769			

Additional Cross-References

Leviticus 23:32 (Parallel theme): It shall be unto you a sabbath of rest, and ye shall afflict your souls: in the ninth day of the month at even, from even unto even, shall ye celebrate your sabbath.

Isaiah 58:5 (Parallel theme): Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the LORD?

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