

Leviticus 16:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

He shall put on the holy linen coat, and he shall have the linen breeches upon his flesh, and shall be girded with a linen girdle, and with the linen mitre shall he be attired: these are holy garments; therefore shall he wash his flesh in water, and so put them on.

Analysis

He shall put on the holy linen coat, and he shall have the linen breeches upon his flesh, and shall be girded with a linen girdle, and with the linen mitre shall he be attired: these are holy garments; therefore shall he wash his flesh in water, and so put them on.

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 New Testament reveals that Christ's sacrifice accomplishes what the Levitical system could only symbolize—complete forgiveness and restoration of relationship with 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 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

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

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 challenge contemporary cultural values or your personal attitudes?
3. How does this verse reveal God's character, and how should that revelation shape your relationship with Him?

Interlinear Text

כְּתַנְתִּית	בְּ	בְּ	דְּשִׁ	לְ	לִבְשָׁם:	וְמִכְתָּסִי
coat	and he shall have the linen		are holy	He shall put on	breeches	
H3801	H906		H6944	H3847		H4370
וְבָאֶבֶן ט	בָּשָׂר וְ	עַל	יְהִי וְ	בְּ	דְּ	
and he shall have the linen		H1961	H5921	his flesh	girdle	
H906				H1320	H73	
וּבְמִצְבָּה פָּתָ	יְחִגֵּה רָ					
and he shall have the linen	and shall be girded			mitre		
H906	H2296			H4701		
וְבָאֶבֶן דְּשִׁ	בְּגִדִּי	וְ	יְצַנְּנָה	לְ	מִ	וְ
and he shall have the linen	shall he be attired		garments	are holy	these	
H906	H6801		H899	H6944	H1992	
וְלִבְשָׁם:	בָּשָׂר וְ	אַתְּ בְּמִ	וְכַמְּ	לְ	מִ	
therefore shall he wash	in water	H853	H1320	his flesh	He shall put on	
H7364	H4325			H3847		

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 30:20 (Parallel theme): When they go into the tabernacle of the congregation, they shall wash with water, that they die not; or when they come near to the altar to minister, to burn offering made by fire unto the LORD:

Hebrews 7:26 (Holy): For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens;

Leviticus 6:10 (Parallel theme): And the priest shall put on his linen garment, and his linen breeches shall he put upon his flesh, and take up the ashes which the fire hath consumed with the burnt offering on the altar, and he shall put them beside the altar.