

Leviticus 27:26

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Only the firstling of the beasts, which should be the LORD'S firstling, no man shall sanctify it; whether it be ox, or sheep: it is the LORD'S.

Analysis

Only the firstling of the beasts, which should be the LORD'S firstling, no man shall sanctify it; whether it be ox, or sheep: it is the LORD'S.

This verse falls within the section on **Vows and Dedications**. Regulations for voluntary vows and dedicating persons or property to God, teaching careful commitment.

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.

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

Historical Context

Regulations for voluntary vows and dedicating persons or property to God, teaching careful commitment. Chapters 17-27, often called the 'Holiness Code,' expand covenant obligations beyond ritual to encompass all of life—sexuality, economics, justice, and relationships. The repeated refrain 'I am the LORD' grounds these laws in God's character and covenant relationship with Israel. 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

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

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

Interlinear Text

אֶרְבִּי H389	בְּכֹרֹת H1060	אֲשֶׁר H834	יִבְכֹּר H1069	לַיהוָה H3068	בְּבִהֵמָה H929	לֹא H3808
	Only the firstling		firstling	it is the LORD'S	of the beasts	
יְקַדֵּשׁ H6942	אִישׁ H376	אֶת H853	אִם H518	שֶׁוֹר H7794	אִם H518	שֶׁהֵם H7716
shall sanctify	no man			it whether it be ox		or sheep
לַיהוָה H3068	הוא H1931					
it is the LORD'S						

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 13:2 (Parallel theme): Sanctify unto me all the firstborn, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of beast: it is mine.

Exodus 22:30 (Parallel theme): Likewise shalt thou do with thine oxen, and with thy sheep: seven days it shall be with his dam; on the eighth day thou shalt give it me.

Deuteronomy 15:19 (References Lord): All the firstling males that come of thy herd and of thy flock thou shalt sanctify unto the LORD thy God: thou shalt do no work with the firstling of thy bullock, nor shear the firstling of thy sheep.

Numbers 18:17 (References Lord): But the firstling of a cow, or the firstling of a sheep, or the firstling of a goat, thou shalt not redeem; they are holy: thou shalt sprinkle their blood upon the altar, and shalt burn their fat for an offering made by fire, for a sweet savour unto the LORD.