

Leviticus 3:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the priest shall burn it upon the altar: it is the food of the offering made by fire unto the LORD.

Analysis

And the priest shall burn it upon the altar: it is the food of the offering made by fire unto the LORD.

This verse falls within the section on **Peace Offerings**. The peace offering (שְׁלָמִים, shelamim) celebrated fellowship with God and community, with portions shared between God, priests, and worshipers.

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 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 peace offering (שְׁלָמִים, shelamim) celebrated fellowship with God and community, with portions shared between God, priests, and worshipers. Leviticus was given to Israel at Mount Sinai, shortly after the tabernacle's construction described in Exodus. The name 'Leviticus' (from Latin Leviticus, referring to the Levites) reflects its focus on priestly duties, though the Hebrew title Wayyiqra

('And He called') emphasizes God's initiative in revealing these laws. The first seven chapters detail the five main offerings, providing both worshiper instructions and priestly procedures. Ancient Near Eastern cultures had various sacrificial systems, but Israel's sacrificial worship was unique in its ethical foundation, monotheistic framework, and emphasis on atonement rather than appeasement. Unlike pagan rituals focused on manipulating deities, Israel's sacrifices acknowledged God's sovereignty and sought reconciliation based on His gracious provision. The tabernacle's design parallels ancient Near Eastern temple architecture, yet its portable nature and absence of divine images distinguished it from pagan temples.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does Christ's superior priesthood, prefigured in this verse, assure you of access to God and effective intercession?
2. What does this verse teach about the costliness of true worship and dedication to God?
3. What practical steps can you take this week to apply the principles taught in this verse?

Interlinear Text

וְהִקְטִיר וְ	הַכֹּהֵן	הַמִּזְבֵּחַ הָהוּא	לֵחֶם
shall burn	And the priest	it upon the altar	it is the food
H6999	H3548	H4196	H3899
אֵשׁ הַ	לַיהוָה:		
of the offering made by fire	unto the LORD		
H801	H3068		

Additional Cross-References

Leviticus 21:6 (Creation): They shall be holy unto their God, and not profane the name of their God: for the offerings of the LORD made by fire, and the bread of their God, they do offer: therefore they shall be holy.

Leviticus 21:17 (Parallel theme): Speak unto Aaron, saying, Whosoever he be of thy seed in their generations that hath any blemish, let him not approach to offer the bread of his God.

Leviticus 3:5 (Creation): And Aaron's sons shall burn it on the altar upon the burnt sacrifice, which is upon the wood that is on the fire: it is an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD.

Leviticus 3:16 (Creation): And the priest shall burn them upon the altar: it is the food of the offering made by fire for a sweet savour: all the fat is the LORD'S.

Leviticus 21:8 (References Lord): Thou shalt sanctify him therefore; for he offereth the bread of thy God: he shall be holy unto thee: for I the LORD, which sanctify you, am holy.

Ezekiel 44:7 (Parallel theme): In that ye have brought into my sanctuary strangers, uncircumcised in heart, and uncircumcised in flesh, to be in my sanctuary, to pollute it, even my house, when ye offer my bread, the fat and the blood, and they have broken my covenant because of all your abominations.

Leviticus 22:25 (Parallel theme): Neither from a stranger's hand shall ye offer the bread of your God of any of these; because their corruption is in them, and blemishes be in them: they shall not be accepted for you.

Malachi 1:7 (Sacrifice): Ye offer polluted bread upon mine altar; and ye say, Wherein have we polluted thee? In that ye say, The table of the LORD is contemptible.

Numbers 28:2 (Creation): Command the children of Israel, and say unto them, My offering, and my bread for my sacrifices made by fire, for a sweet savour unto me, shall ye observe to offer unto me in their due season.