

Leviticus 17

Consecrated Atonement and Life in Christ's Blood

Friday, November 24, 2023 • Read Leviticus 17

Questions from the Scripture text: To whom does YHWH speak (v1) to address which three groups (v2a) introducing the statement in what way (v2b)? What three things might a man have killed (v3)? In what two places? But failed to do what (v4)? What will be the consequence? What will he have done? With what penalty? Where must the children of Israel carry out all such slaughtering (v5)? To what with them (end of v5)? What must they do with the blood (v6)? And with the fat? What had they otherwise been doing (v7)? What entire categories of offerings are addressed now in v8 (beyond just when the offered thing is an ox, lamb, or goat)? What might the offerer fail to do (v9)? What shall be done with him? What two types of people does v10 consider? What might they do? Who will do what two things to him? What do such rules teach about the blood (v11)? For what purpose has the Lord given it to them? Therefore, whom does the Lord prohibit from what (v12)? What two groups of people does v13 consider? What incident does it consider? What two things must be done with the blood in that case? What has God designed blood to do (v14)? What are they not to do with this life? What must be done to whomever eats it? What is the difference between the animal in v15 and the other animals in this chapter? What two types of people might end up eating it? With what effect (cf. 11:39–40)? What must such a person do? With what effect? What if he doesn't (v16)?

What is the first part of Israel's distinguishing the holy from the common? Leviticus 17 prepares us for the evening sermon on the Lord's Day. In these sixteen verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **the first part of Israel's distinguishing the holy from the common was to be their respect for the holiness of blood.**

Back in 10:9–11, the Lord had sought to guard the life of the priests so that they could teach Israel to distinguish between holy and common, and between clean and unclean. Chapters 11–15 had dealt with distinguishing between clean and unclean. Then, chapter 16 brought us back to chapter 10. Now, chapters 17–22 focus especially upon distinguishing between the holy and the common/profane.

Continual reminder of the inability to draw near due to sin, and of God's provision to overcome that inability. The Lord had provided various ways of coming near to Him by slaughter. The peace offering (end of v5) was the culmination of the other offerings (sin/trespass, then ascension, then tribute). The slaughtering of animals for it now governs the slaughtering of animals as a whole.

The Lord has provided a purpose for this slaughtering and now He has provided the tabernacle a place for this purpose; so, now, Israel must not just slaughter in the open field (v5). Apparently, being left to themselves about where to offer sacrifices had even led to them offering to some sort of goat figures, which v7 of our version translates as "demons." So, now, every time they kill or eat one of the "sacrifice" animals (v3), they are to remember that in Israel, these animals especially communicate that God has brought His people near by way of peace (v5), preceded by ascension (v8).

Over and over again, continually, the Israelite was to be reminded "I am a cut-off sinner, but God is my Savior." The one who did not live in the light of that reality would, in fact, be cut off from the community of salvation (cf, v4, 9, 10, 14). This may mean execution, as our translation's margin note asserts. But excommunication suits the words and the context at least as well, if not better. The cutting off is at least as likely to refer to community, or even to inheritance (cf. Ps 37:22), as it is to life itself. In either case, the penalty is dreadfully serious, particularly in v10, where God Himself personally carries it out.

Life from the Lord alone. It was not just atonement for Israel that was sacred (v11) but even life itself (v14). For this reason, even eating that which is killed by hunting rather than slaughter, they were to be very careful not to eat or even touch the blood (v13). They were not to ingest the animal in a way that looked to the animal for life, but only in a way that looked to the Lord for life and received the animal from the Lord as a nourishment like bread. Animals were to be their nourishment, not to be their life. The Lord was to be their life.

This is a good reminder to modern man, who is tempted to substitute science for magic, but treats his food (or his medicine) not as nourishment that God has provided but as the very source of his life. Such an approach cuts God out of our thinking and relies upon our own efforts to derive life directly from the world around us. If we are unmindful of God, then we will not give Him glory or thanks, and we will end up worshiping created things rather than the Creator (cf. Rom 1:18–25).

Death itself is defiling. The last two verses (v15–16) repeat what was already established in 11:39–40. Though that belonged to the teaching to distinguish between clean and unclean, there is a reminder here that it is the holiness of God that makes uncleanness such an abomination. The unclean is automatically common/profane and can never be holy. Particularly, that chapter had reminded us that death is always unclean. Death came into the world through sin, so death itself must be banished from the gracious presence of the God of life. Worship is not a place to bring that which is from the flesh, from the first Adam's fall, from the sinner. It is a place to bring that life which God, by grace, has given even to sinners in Jesus Christ! We should remember this when we think about worship, and especially when we come to worship. Though the ceremonial code is abolished, yet believers do have within them that which is from the death of our flesh and that which is from the life of Christ's Spirit. And it is only the latter that has a place in God's worship. We must look to Christ, by His Spirit, to wash us clean of that which is fleshly, as we prepare to come into His presence.

What is the substitution that the Lord has provided for you? What is the life that the Lord has provided for you? With what attitude/mindset should you make use of things like food or medicine—or, really, anything else in the creation? What is an example of the type of thinking or feeling that comes from yourself, rather than from Christ, that you need to be careful to deal with by Christ, before coming to worship?

Sample prayer: Lord, thank You for giving us life and breath and all things as our Creator. And, thank You, for providing for us, as our Redeemer, that atonement by Christ through which we may come near—and the application of that atonement to us by the work of Your Holy Spirit. Grant unto us to live in a continual remembrance of You, our Creator and Redeemer through Jesus Christ, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP32AB "What Blessedness" or TPH426 "How Vast the Benefits Divine"

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Leviticus 17. These are God's words. And you always spoke to Moses saying. Speak to Aaron to his sons and to all the children of Israel. And say to them. This is the thing which Yahweh has commanded. Saying whatever man of the house of Israel. Who kills an ox or lamb or goat in the camper.

Who kills it outside the camp. And does not bring it to the door of the tabernacle meeting to offer, an offering to your way. Before the tabernacle of y'all fight, The guilty bloodshed shall be imputed to that, man. He has shed blood. And that man shall be cut off from among his people.

To the end that the children of israel may bring their sacrifices. Which they offer in the open field. That they may bring them to your high at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. To the priest and offer them as peace offerings. To offer. And the priest shall sprinkle the blood on the altar of yahweh?

At the door of the tabernacle of meeting. And burn the fat for a sweet aroma to Yahwe. They shall know more offer their sacrifices to demons. After whom they have played the harlot. This will be a statute. Forever for them throughout their generations. Also, you shall say to them.

Whatever man of the house of israel or of the strangers, you dwell among you. To offers a burnt offering or sacrifice. And does not bring it to the door, the tabernacle of meeting to offer it to Yahweh. That man shall be cut off from among his people.

For the life of the flesh, is in the blood. And i have given it to you upon the altar. To make atonement for your souls. For it, is the blood that makes atonement for the soul. Therefore, i said to the children of Israel. No one among you shall eat blood.

Nor shawani stranger dwells among you eat blood. Whatever man of the children of israel or of the strangers, you dwell among you. Who hunts and catches any animal or bird that may be eaten. He's so pour out. It's blood. And cover it with dust. For it is the life of all flesh.

It's blood sustains, its life. Therefore i said to the children of israel, you shall not eat the blood of any flesh. For the life of all flesh, is its blood. Whoever eats it shall be cut off. And every person who eats what died naturally or what was torn by beasts.

Whether he is a native of your own country or a stranger, He shall both wash, clothes, and bathe in water, and be in clean until evening. Then he shall be clean. But if he does not wash them or bathe his body, Then he shall bear his guilt. Remember, since this reading of gods inspired and In there and toward The lord back in chapter 10 verse 9 through 11 as When native and i buy here.

Lay dead. In. The tabernacle. Or in the tabernacle precinct. Had given instruction for. Aaron and LAS are an ithamar. Concerning one of the things that they must not do. Lest they die? And the reason that it was so urgent for them to be kept alive, was not just For them to all for the sacrifices.

But for them to Make distinctions for israel as they did this offerings, and for them to teach israel. To distinguish between the clean and the unclean. And the holy and the common. And we had a lot. Five chapters from 11 through 15 on. Distinguishing between the clean and the unclean and Than the day of atonement in, which Annual leave the tabernacle would be ceremonially cleansed looking forward to the ones for all.

A tournament of christ. That consecrates our worship forever. And does not need to be repeated. And now, in verses verses in chapters. And now in chapter 17 through 22. We have the distinctions between the holy and the common. And specifically that nothing that is holy would be treated as common and here in chapter 17.

The first thing that is not to be treated as common Is blood even the blood of animals? Well, for a couple of different reasons. One, Uh, the lord has provided the blood of animals. As a way by which People are his people are to be pointed to christ. And his plot.

And so the sacrifices of the peace offerings were burnt offering the Well, the ascension offering that we Have translated in our bible is a burnt offering. And send offerings. Blood has been given to them. For the purpose of making atonement for the purpose of cleansing them, for the purpose of bringing them, near to god, reconciling them with god.

Giving them a means by which to identify Uh with the substitute and whom they will ascend to god. And to be made, pleasing to go out And so, the blood and In particular, the types of animals whose blood Has been appointed for that reason. Ox lamb goat in verse 3.

Is holy and to be treated as holy. In fact. We may read versus one through four as Uh, specific to offering an offering. To your way. Uh verse 4 or it may actually be more generally that they were not to slaughter. Any of these without at least. Uh, bringing the slaughter as A peace offering.

So you can bring the piece offering it. At any time. As long as you went through the Um, The other. Preparations, sin offering if you had a guilty conscience, etc. And it probably does apply. Then to All slaughterings. Of these particular animals but the lord. I was teaching them that blood was holy.

Uh, first because it was provided as a means of atonement. And second. Because in the blood is the life, this is true for the animal and there were those who superstitiously fought that they would get. Um, life from the animal somehow that there'd be this. Transfer of Of life of life force.

Vitality from the animal to them. By the drinking of the blood. That's a very different. Way of viewing. Killing and eating an animal. Then viewing, the animal as a provision from god, as a nourishment in which god is our life, not the animal. And so, there is A false sort of worship.

In which we think that we are. Obtaining for ourselves vitality from the creatures.

And we ourselves are guilty of this sort of thing. In our age of modern, man, Uh, we treat science very much like they treated witchcraft. Um, although it is Based on. Things that are observable and the creation and At one point, it was especially in in christian believing places where science.

Advanced. Because We had reason to trust in the lord. Who created all things and to sustains all things for consistency and that he made the world useful for us. But there are those now. Uh, use science. Or think of science as The triumph of man in extracting life from the world around him.

And so, you get people who are Obsessed, whether with their Uh, pharmaceutical triumphs. So they're Nutritional triumphsin. There is no sense. Um, That god is providing nourishment. That the The food is being received from his hand. The way psalm 104 has been teaching us to think. These many weeks that we have been studying. It.

So, Blood was. Was holy. Of, because the life was in the blood and Sorry, especially then. When the lord jesus sheds, his blood and we come to him. To be our life, though. He even now Uh, not be dead but risen again and descended and seated in heaven. Uh, yet the new covenant is in his blood, as in his life.

He intercedes for us by the power of an indestructible life and therefore is able to save us. To the uttermost. And these were things, then that the lord By in. Bringing out or emphasizing to them. The holiness of blood that it shouldn't be treated. As common. Was teaching them to think continuously about how he is our life and he was providing a substitute.

Who would be our life by the spilling and application? Of his blood that atons that reconciles. And that it would be in union with him that we may draw near to god in a sense to god.

And so the the concept of union with christ union with a substitute there's not a new one in the new testament. It's one. That the lord not only taught his people. In the sacrificial system at times of Of worship. But one that would govern what they did with with animals now even if they didn't slaughter an animal.

You know, there are hunting and they were able to Um, To capture whatever, their prey was. They had to treat the blood of that animal. Uh, in In light of the fact deal with the blood of that animal in light of the fact that god had consecrated. Blood is holy, And so they would.

And pour out the blood on the ground, lest they should fall into a wrong idolatrous way. Of thinking about the life of that animal. And then they were also to cover the blood with dirt lest they touch the blood. And become. Unclean, thereby. And, And then, if they were Um, If they.

Uh, touched or eight. An animal who died naturally. In verse 16 is verse 15 and 16 he repeats the instructions. That we're given in 1139 to 40. That. Death itself. Was defiling, so they would have constant reminders throughout their life that Um, That they were unable to draw near to god attitude to sin.

But that god has provided his own life. In a substitute for them. Uh, to ascend. To him and to be reconciled to him. And that when they come near him, they must not come near him with death upon them. And so, even here, where he's teaching them to distinguish between the holy And the common.

He brings in this last regulation, at the end of the chapter distinguishing between the clean and the unclean to remind them. That as god. Uh, god has consecrated blood as holy. In the way that is. Um, communicated throughout the chapter. Uh so also when they come near to the holy god, they're not to bring death with them.

Uh, death. Came into the world, through sin and death itself. Must be banished from the gracious and glorious presence. Of the god of life. Uh, first Corinthians 15 tells us the last enemy to be defeated is death. Um, In the lord jesus's life. Uh, god. Is light in him as there is no darkness at all.

And god is also life, and in him. There is no death at all, and must be cleansed from our contact with death and order. Uh, to see him. And this, of course, Is a reminder that. We must be not ceremonially, cleansed from contact with death but Actually sanctifyingly, cleansed from that death, which remains in us.

That sinfulness that is in our dead flesh. And we must be made. Holy, we must be Made pure in order to see him. First john three. In order to Um, See him also i think is the language. Yes. And hebrews. Chapter 12. And that even now the blood of the lord jesus christ.

Cleanses us. From unrighteousness, cleanses, our conscience enables us To come near to god not with the death of our flesh. But with the life, That is. From. The lord jesus christ. Life that is from the lord alone life that we do. Not get from ourselves life that we do not get from the creation around us.

So, there's a very important application to that. Um, This was then. Of a law that is Application of a similar law that was given to Noah when he exited the ark. A law that was preserved by the apostolic council. In the book of Acts. Even when the ceremonial law was set aside not eating.

Um, the, the blood of the animal there is Um, An inherent tendency toward. Idolatry in that. That leaves it as A lasting. Creational. Regulation. From god. But it also reminds us of more than just Uh, that we should be careful. Not to think that we are getting our life from the creature.

As opposed to the creator. It also teaches us that we should be observing. In God's creation, truth about The lord jesus. And, And how he atons for us how he cleanses us. The lord intends for us to be continually mindful of him reminded of him. And indeed, whenever we do see, Uh, blood, it is not a wrong application for us to remember.

The blood of the lord jesus christ, that was shed for us. The fact that we are. To be united to him, through faith that he is. All of our life. Finally. There is. That coming through christ and through his blood, that establishes the only right place and way of worship.

For them. I had to be at the tabernacle. It is, Ridiculous, that anyone would excuse. Solomon for offering sacrifices at gbian when you have such explicit command here in Leviticus 17 to only offer, sacrifice at the door of the tabernacle. And for us, It is a reminder. That because the lord has provided the one in whom we come near now, not a tabernacle, but jesus himself and glory.

And because god has provided the only way that we can come near, not the blood of Oxen lamb and goat, but the blood of the lord jesus christ. That if we worship in any other way, then god has given us to worship that we too. Or than to be.

Cut off excommunicate. It Um, At least it means x communicated. The language of cutting off here, meaning to be cut off from the people and cut off from inheritance. That's the way that psalm 37 22 in the Poetic couplet there. The. Uh, the righteous have inheritance but the wicked arc cut off.

And we even use the language. That way when someone is disinherited we say we cut them off. Um, but it could also mean The cutting off of the life. Particularly. The dreadful instance, in verse 10, In which the lord uses the first person. And says that. God that he i will set my face against that person and i will cut him off.

From among his people. In that case. It may well mean not just a providence in which the person ends up separated from the people. Um, but a divine intervention in, which the lord kills. The person in that case, Or. It may be as is true of excommunication has described by jesus and matthew 16, and matthew 18, that they are required to put the person out of the people of god.

But that when they do that, they should know that it wasn't the people. Who had put the person out of the camp on earth. But it was god, who had put the person out of the camp. From heaven. And considering the four times. Verse 4 verse 9, verse 10, verse 14, in which this happens, perhaps, verse 10, then is not describing a unique case.

Uh, just For the person who has Um, Who has eaten blood? Uh, but it is using varied language in verse 10. To describe what happens also in the other three instances. That it is god who turns his face? And it is god. Who cuts him off. By means of his people obeying, his command.

Forex communication.

I am sorry that that was a little bit disorganized, we kept catching things and coming back to them. But me. Called the holy spirit perfectly use. Uh, that which we have. Considered before him from his word. In his worship. Let's pray. Our gracious gardener heavenly father. We thank you.

For your perfect word. We pray that We would know it to be a word of life for us. Because we do not live by bread, but especially By every word that proceeds from your mouth. You are our life. Oh lord. Don't let us think. Of anything that we do.

Whether with food or any other thing, As if we are, obtaining our life. Extending our life. Strengthening our life. By means of the creature, rather. Oh lord. We look to you to give by your hand and any wisdom that you have given us in any provision that you have given us as your own goodness for us.

Most of all the lord you're giving yourself. Both for us and to us. And the lord jesus christ, and the laying down. Of his life for us and shredding of his blood. We pray that as we go through life in this world and see so many things that Do have a resemblance or fulfillment or Even merely communicate about.

The lord, jesus your son. And our reconciliation to you in him. That your spirit would help us to remember, Not just vaguely and generally but specifically from your word. That you have atoned for us in him and brought us near. Grant us to live by faith in jesus. We ask Amen.