

Message #32**Leviticus 17:1-16**

To worship God means we must go to the place God has prescribed as a place of worship, not a place we have invented in our own minds and we must be willing to go via His sacrifices.

Let's set the context of this chapter:

1. Israel was in the wilderness.
2. Israel has just come out of Egypt.
3. The Egyptians were idolaters who worshipped idols (i.e. Lev. 18:3).
4. The Egyptians taught Israel to do the same.

When God brought the Israelites out of Egypt, He gave them a system whereby they could know Him and worship Him. That system demanded they go to His chosen place of worship and worship in His chosen way. The point we see from this chapter is this:

A KEY TO HOLINESS IS TO GO TO GOD'S PLACE OF WORSHIP AND REALIZE THE VALUE OF BLOOD IN ONE'S RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD.

In Leviticus 1-16 the dominant theme is atonement. In Leviticus 17-26 the dominant theme is holiness. In fact, Leviticus 17-26 has been called by many Biblical scholars "The Holiness Code."

According to Leon Morris, the word "blood" is used 460 times in the Bible. It is used 362 times in the O.T. In Leviticus 17, the word is used 13 times—**17:4** (twice), **6, 10** (twice), **11** (twice), **12** (twice), **13, 14** (three). What we learn from this is that blood is critical to worship, but the blood of worship must be at God's prescribed place of worship.

Dr. Warren Wiersbe said there are four special holiness themes in the next four chapters (p. 77):

Chapter 17 – The sanctity of blood or life/blood.

Chapter 18 – The sanctity of sex.

Chapter 19 – The sanctity of law.

Chapter 20 – The sanctity of judgment.

PART #1 – These instructions are commandments of God. **17:1-2**

When it comes to worshipping God, the principle that must always be applied is what God does want, not what do we want. Chapters 17-26 are very personal chapters. God addresses Israel more in the first person than in the previous chapters (i.e. 18:2). God wants Israel to realize that these are not just interesting assignments for the nation to try and complete—these are commandments of God.

PART #2 – The person who kills an ox, lamb or goat must bring it to the doorway of the tent of meeting or he will be cut off from among his people. **17:3-7**

Now the animals named here are animals used for sacrifices. If we look down at **verse 7**, apparently some of the Israelites were still carrying baggage from Egyptian worship services and were offering sacrifices to the goat demons. This is why God wanted these animals brought to Him. If a person killed one of these animals, whether in the camp or outside the camp, he was to bring it to the Tabernacle area. If he didn't there were three results: **(Result #1)** - He was guilty of shedding innocent blood; **(Result #2)** - He would be cut off from his people; **(Result #3)** - He would not have peace with God.

Now the concept of being cut off from people was a very serious concept. Two particular sins seem to bring about this kind of judgment: 1) idolatry; 2) immorality. The judgment means God turns His face of blessing against one of His own children to the point of physical execution (Ex. 31:14; Lev. 22:8-9). One who is a believer that dabbles around in idolatrous or immoral areas will never have peace in himself or peace with God.

The priest is to sprinkle blood at the appropriate place of worship and offer the appropriate portion for worship as a soothing aroma to the Lord **(17:6)**.

Holiness becomes a matter of everyday life. If any of these animals were killed even for food, God must be brought into the equation.

PART #3 – Any person who offers an offering in any place but God's prescribed place will be cut off from God's people. **17:8-9**

Let me bring this into the N.T.—any person who thinks he can be right with God in any other way or place other than by the cross work of Jesus Christ will be cut off from God's people and will burn forever in the Lake of Fire.

You and I do not choose the place of sacrifice. God chooses it! The place of sacrifice is the cross.

PART #4 – It is the life in the blood that atones for sin and whoever eats any blood shall be cut off from God's people. **17:11-14**

Now look carefully at **verse 11**; it is the blood that can save your soul. It is the shed blood applied to you that atones for sin and saves your soul and that is why no one dare eat this precious blood (**v. 12**). God was so serious about this principle that even if one was hunting and killed an animal, he was to drain the blood out and cover it with dirt (**v. 13**). Because God identifies the life of "all" flesh as being in the blood (**v. 14**).

PART #5 – If a person eats an animal that dies or is torn, he shall wash his clothes and is unclean until evening and if he refuses, he is guilty. **17:15-16**

A key to holiness is to recognize the sanctity of blood—the blood of Jesus shed on the cross.