

Acharei

Leviticus 16:1 - 18:30

Chapter 16

1 The Lord spoke to Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron who died when they drew too close to the presence of the Lord. 2 The Lord said to Moses: Tell your brother Aaron that he is not to come at will into the Shrine behind the curtain, in front of the cover that is upon the ark, lest he die; for I appear in the cloud over the cover. 3 Thus only shall Aaron enter the Shrine: with a bull of the herd for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering. - 4 He shall be dressed in a sacral linen tunic, with linen breeches next to his flesh, and be girt with a linen sash, and he shall wear a linen turban. They are sacral vestments; he shall bathe his body in water and then put them on. - 5 And from the Israelite community he shall take two he-goats for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering.

6 Aaron is to offer his own bull of sin offering, to make expiation for himself and for his household. 7 Aaron shall take the two he-goats and let them stand before the Lord at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting; 8 and he shall place lots upon the two goats, one marked for the Lord and the other marked for Azazel. 9 Aaron shall bring forward the goat designated by lot for the Lord, which he is to offer as a sin offering; 10 while the goat designated by lot for Azazel shall be left standing alive before the Lord, to make expiation with it and to send it off to the wilderness for Azazel.

11 Aaron shall then offer his bull of sin offering, to make expiation for himself and his household. He shall slaughter his bull of sin offering, 12 and he shall take a panful of glowing coals scooped from the altar before the Lord, and two handfuls of finely ground aromatic incense, and bring this behind the curtain. 13 He shall put the incense on the fire before the Lord, so that the cloud from the incense screens the cover that is over [the Ark of] the Pact, lest he die. 14 He shall take some of the blood of the bull and sprinkle it with his finger over the cover on the east side; and in front of the cover he shall sprinkle some of the blood with his finger seven times. 15 He shall then slaughter the people's goat of sin offering, bring its blood behind the curtain, and do with its blood as he has done with the blood of the bull: he shall sprinkle it over the cover and in front of the cover.

16 Thus he shall purge the Shrine of the uncleanness and transgression of the Israelites, whatever their sins; and he shall do the same for the Tent of Meeting, which abides with them in the midst of their uncleanness. 17 When he goes in to make expiation in the Shrine, nobody else shall be in the Tent of Meeting until he comes out.

When he has made expiation for himself and his household, and for the whole

congregation of Israel, 18 he shall go out to the altar that is before the Lord and purge it: he shall take some of the blood of the bull and of the goat and apply it to each of the horns of the altar; 19 and the rest of the blood he shall sprinkle on it with his finger seven times. Thus he shall cleanse it of the uncleanness of the Israelites and consecrate it.

20 When he has finished purging the Shrine, the Tent of Meeting, and the altar, the live goat shall be brought forward. 21 Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat and confess over it all the iniquities and transgressions of the Israelites, whatever their sins, putting them on the head of the goat; and it shall be sent off to the wilderness through a designated man. 22 Thus the goat shall carry on it all their iniquities to an inaccessible region; and the goat shall be set free in the wilderness.

23 And Aaron shall go into the Tent of Meeting, take off the linen vestments that he put on when he entered the Shrine, and leave them there. 24 He shall bathe his body in water in the holy precinct and put on his vestments; then he shall come out and offer his burnt offering and the burnt offering of the people, making expiation for himself and for the people. 25 The fat of the sin offering he shall turn into smoke on the altar.

26 He who set the Azazel-goat free shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water; after that he may reenter the camp.

27 The bull of sin offering and the goat of sin offering whose blood was brought in to purge the Shrine shall be taken outside the camp; and their hides, flesh, and dung shall be consumed in fire. 28 He who burned them shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water; after that he may re-enter the camp.

29 And this shall be to you a law for all time: In the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, you shall practice self-denial; and you shall do no manner of work, neither the citizen nor the alien who resides among you. 30 For on this day atonement shall be made for you to cleanse you of all your sins; you shall be clean before the Lord. 31 It shall be a sabbath of complete rest for you, and you shall practice self-denial; it is a law for all time. 32 The priest who has been anointed and ordained to serve as priest in place of his father shall make expiation. He shall put on the linen vestments, the sacral vestments. 33 He shall purge the innermost Shrine; he shall purge the Tent of Meeting and the altar; and he shall make expiation for the priests and for all the people of the congregation.

34 This shall be to you a law for all time: to make atonement for the Israelites for all their sins once a year.

And Moses did as the Lord had commanded him.

Chapter 17

1 The Lord spoke to Moses, saying:

2 Speak to Aaron and his sons and to all the Israelite people and say to them:

This is what the Lord has commanded: 3 if anyone of the house of Israel slaughters an ox or sheep or goat in the camp, or does so outside the camp, 4 and does not bring it to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting to present it as an offering to the Lord, before the Lord's Tabernacle, bloodguilt shall be imputed to that man: he has shed blood; that man shall be cut off from among his people. 5 This is in order that the Israelites may bring the sacrifices which they have been making in the open - that they may bring them before the Lord, to the priest, at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, and offer them as sacrifices of well-being to the Lord; 6 that the priest may dash the blood against the altar of the Lord at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, and turn the fat into smoke as a pleasing odor to the Lord; 7 and that they may offer their sacrifices no more to the goat-demons after whom they stray. This shall be to them a law for all time, throughout the ages.

8 Say to them further: If anyone of the house of Israel or of the strangers who reside among them offers a burnt offering or a sacrifice, 9 and does not bring it to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting to offer it to the Lord, that person shall be cut off from his people.

10 And if anyone of the house of Israel or of the strangers who reside among them partakes of any blood, I will set My face against the person who partakes of the blood, and I will cut him off from among his kin. 11 For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have assigned it to you for making expiation for your lives upon the altar; it is the blood, as life, that effects expiation. 12 Therefore I say to the Israelite people: No person among you shall partake of blood, nor shall the stranger who resides among you partake of blood.

13 And if any Israelite or any stranger who resides among them hunts down an animal or a bird that may be eaten, he shall pour out its blood and cover it with earth. 14 For the life of all flesh - its blood is its life. Therefore I say to the Israelite people: You shall not partake of the blood of any flesh, for the life of all flesh is its blood. Anyone who partakes of it shall be cut off.

15 Any person, whether citizen or stranger, who eats what has died or has been torn by beasts shall wash his clothes, bathe in water, and remain unclean until evening; then he shall be clean. 16 But if he does not wash [his clothes] and bathe his body, he shall bear his guilt.

Chapter 18

1 The Lord spoke to Moses, saying: 2 Speak to the Israelite people and say to them: I the Lord am your God. 3 You shall not copy the practices of the land of Egypt where you dwelt, or of the land of Canaan to which I am taking you; nor shall you follow their laws. 4 My rules alone shall you observe, and faithfully follow My laws: I the Lord am your God.

5 You shall keep My laws and My rules, by the pursuit of which man shall live: I am the

Lord.

6 None of you shall come near anyone of his own flesh to uncover nakedness: I am the Lord.

7 Your father's nakedness, that is, the nakedness of your mother, you shall not uncover; she is your mother - you shall not uncover her nakedness.

8 Do not uncover the nakedness of your father's wife; it is the nakedness of your father.

9 The nakedness of your sister - your father's daughter or your mother's, whether born into the household or outside - do not uncover their nakedness.

10 The nakedness of your son's daughter, or of your daughter's daughter - do not uncover their nakedness; for their nakedness is yours.

11 The nakedness of your father's wife's daughter, who has born into your father's household - she is your sister; do not uncover her nakedness.

12 Do not uncover the nakedness of your father's sister; she is your father's flesh.

13 Do not uncover the nakedness of your mother's sister; for she is your mother's flesh.

14 Do not uncover the nakedness of your father's brother: do not approach his wife; she is your aunt.

15 Do not uncover the nakedness of your daughter-in-law: she is your son's wife; you shall not uncover her nakedness.

16 Do not uncover the nakedness of your brother's wife; it is the nakedness of your brother.

17 Do not uncover the nakedness of a woman and her daughter; nor shall you marry her son's daughter or her daughter's daughter and uncover her nakedness: they are kindred; it is depravity.

18 Do not marry a woman as a rival to her sister and uncover her nakedness in the other's lifetime.

19 Do not come near a woman during her period of uncleanness to uncover her nakedness.

20 Do not have carnal relations with your neighbor's wife and defile yourself with her.

21 Do not allow any of your offspring to be offered up to Molech, and do not profane the name of your God: I am the Lord.

22 Do not lie with a male as one lies with a woman; it is an abhorrence.

23 Do not have carnal relations with any beast and defile yourself thereby; and let no woman lend herself to a beast to mate with it; it is perversion.

24 Do not defile yourselves in any of those ways, for it is by such that the nations that I am casting out before you defiled themselves. 25 Thus the land became defiled; and I called it to account for its iniquity, and the land spewed out its inhabitants. 26 But you must keep My laws and My rules, and you must not do any of those abhorrent things, neither the citizen nor the stranger who resides among you; 27 for all those abhorrent things were done by the people who were in the land before you, and the land became defiled. 28 So let not the land spew you out for defiling it, as it spewed out the nation that came before you. 29 All who do any of those abhorrent things - such persons shall be cut off from their people. 30 You shall keep My charge not to engage in any of the abhorrent practices that were carried on before you, and you shall not defile yourselves through them: I the Lord am your God.

Haftarah for Acharei

Ezekiel 22:1-19

Chapter 22

1 The word of the Lord came to me: 2 Further, O mortal, arraign, arraign the city of bloodshed; declare to her all her abhorrent deeds! 3 Say: Thus said the Lord God: O city in whose midst blood is shed, so that your hour is approaching; within which fetishes are made, so that you have become unclean! 4 You stand guilty of the blood you have shed, defiled by the fetishes you have made. You have brought on your day; you have reached your year. Therefore I will make you the mockery of the nations and the scorn of all the lands. 5 Both the near and the far shall scorn you, O besmirched of name, O laden with iniquity!

6 Every one of the princes of Israel in your midst used his strength for the shedding of blood. 7 Fathers and mothers have been humiliated within you; strangers have been cheated in your midst; orphans and widows have been wronged within you. 8 You have despised My holy things and profaned My sabbaths.

9 Base men in your midst were intent on shedding blood; in you they have eaten upon the mountains; and they have practiced depravity in your midst. 10 In you they have uncovered their fathers' nakedness; in you they have ravished women during their impurity. 11 They have committed abhorrent acts with other men's wives; in their depravity they have defiled their own daughters-in-law; in you they have ravished their

own sisters, daughters of their fathers. 12 They have taken bribes within you to shed blood. You have taken advance and accrued interest; you have defrauded your countrymen to your profit. You have forgotten Me - declares the Lord God.

13 Lo, I will strike My hands over the ill-gotten gains that you have amassed, and over the bloodshed that has been committed in your midst. 14 Will your courage endure, will your hands remain firm in the days when I deal with you? I the Lord have spoken and I will act. 15 I will scatter you among the nations and disperse you through the lands; I will consume the uncleanness out of you. 16 You shall be dishonored in the sight of nations, and you shall know that I am the Lord.

17 The word of the Lord came to me: 18 O mortal, the House of Israel has become dross to Me; they are all copper, tin, iron, and lead. But in a crucible, the dross shall turn into silver. 19 Assuredly, thus said the Lord God: Because you have all become dross, I will gather you into Jerusalem.

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