

Leviticus 17

Verses 1-7

Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, ²“Speak to Aaron and to his sons and to all the sons of Israel and say to them, ‘This is what the Lord has commanded, saying, ³“Any man from the house of Israel who slaughters an ox or a lamb or a goat in the camp, or who slaughters it outside the camp, ⁴ and has not brought it to the doorway of the tent of meeting to present *it* as an offering to the Lord before the tabernacle of the Lord, bloodguiltiness is to be reckoned to that man. He has shed blood and that man shall be cut off from among his people. ⁵ The reason is so that the sons of Israel may bring their sacrifices which they were sacrificing in the open field, that they may bring them in to the Lord, at the doorway of the tent of meeting to the priest, and sacrifice them as sacrifices of peace offerings to the Lord. ⁶ The priest shall sprinkle the blood on the altar of the Lord at the doorway of the tent of meeting, and offer up the fat in smoke as a soothing aroma to the Lord. ⁷ They shall no longer sacrifice their sacrifices to the goat demons with which they play the harlot. This shall be a permanent statute to them throughout their generations.””

Any man from the house of Israel who slaughters an ox or a lamb or a goat and has not brought it as an offering to the Lord before the tabernacle of the Lord, shall be cut off from among his people

The slaughter of any animal as a sacrifice anywhere except before the tent of meeting meant they would be cut off from among his people.

We discussed the meaning of this phrase in Leviticus 7:19-21 and the punishment had some variation depending on the sin.

The punishment could involve one or more of the following:

1. Banishment from the land of Israel
2. Death by stoning
3. This life would be made very difficult
4. Eternal punishment.

The reason is so that the sons of Israel may bring their sacrifices which they were sacrificing in the open field and sacrifice them as peace offerings to the Lord

Prior to this command the Israelites sacrificed wherever it was convenient but now all sacrifices had to be offered at the tabernacle.

They shall no longer sacrifice their sacrifices to the goat demons with which they play the harlot

Some gods were worshipped thru successive cultures but with a new name.

The Greek god, Pan, was the most famous of the goat-gods.

However this god had its beginnings long before the Greeks came to power.

This shall be a permanent statute to them throughout their generations

This regulation had 3 positive effects.

1. This would strengthen the authority and income of the priesthood.
2. It kept the people from eating the blood or the fat.
3. It would also stop the practice of idolatry.

Verses 8-13

⁸“Then you shall say to them, ‘Any man from the house of Israel, or from the aliens who sojourn among them, who offers a burnt offering or sacrifice, ⁹ and does not bring it to the doorway of the tent of meeting to offer it to the Lord, that man also shall be cut off from his people. ¹⁰ ‘And any man from the house of Israel, or from the aliens who sojourn among them, who eats any blood, I will set My face against that person who eats blood and will cut him off from among his people. ¹¹ For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood by reason of the life that makes atonement.’ ¹² Therefore I said to the sons of Israel, ‘No person among you may eat blood, nor may any alien who sojourns among you eat blood.’ ¹³ So when any man from the sons of Israel, or from the aliens who sojourn among them, in hunting catches a beast or a bird which may be eaten, he shall pour out its blood and cover it with earth.

Then you shall say to them, ‘Any man from the house of Israel, or from the aliens who sojourn among them, who offers a burnt offering or sacrifice, ⁹ and does not bring it to the doorway of the tent of meeting to offer it to the Lord, that man also shall be cut off from his people

This extended the law to include foreigners who lived among the Israelites

¹⁰ ‘And any man from the house of Israel, or from the aliens who sojourn among them, who eats any blood, I will set My face against that person who eats blood and will cut him off from among his people.

For eating blood the punishment was enforced by God.....**I will**

The punishment involved the following:

1. God will make this earthly life very difficult for him.
2. He will be separated from God’s people.

This could have included deportation, being sold into slavery or death.

For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls

God used blood to make atonement for sinners throughout history.

No person among you may eat blood, nor may any alien who sojourns among you eat blood

This prohibition preceded the Law of Moses.

See Genesis 9:1-4

So when any man in hunting catches a beast or a bird which may be eaten, he shall pour out its blood and cover it with earth.

All blood was considered sacred, and was to be covered with dirt.

Even animals that were used for a common meal (not a sacrifice).

Verses 14-16

¹⁴ “**For as for the life of all flesh, its blood is *identified* with its life. Therefore I said to the sons of Israel, ‘You are not to eat the blood of any flesh, for the life of all flesh is its blood; whoever eats it shall be cut off.’** ¹⁵ **When any person eats *an animal* which dies or is torn *by beasts*, whether he is a native or an alien, he shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and remain unclean until evening; then he will become clean.** ¹⁶ **But if he does not wash *them* or bathe his body, then he shall bear his guilt.”**

Therefore I said to the sons of Israel, ‘You are not to eat the blood of any flesh, for the life of all flesh is its blood; whoever eats it shall be cut off.’

The penalty for eating blood was discussed in verse 10

When any person eats *an animal* which dies or is torn by beasts, whether he is a native or an alien, he shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and remain unclean until evening; then he will become clean.

This law was split into two parts and modified to forbid both circumstances.

1. See Exodus 22:31

³¹ **“You shall be holy people to Me, therefore you shall not eat *any* flesh torn to pieces in the field; you shall throw it to the dogs.**

The law in Exodus 22 was given shortly after the one here in Leviticus 17.

2. See Deut. 14:21

“You shall not eat anything which dies of itself. You may give it to the stranger who is in your town, so that he may eat it, or you may sell it to a stranger; for you are a holy people to the Lord your God

The law in Deut. 14 was given 38 years after the one given here in Leviticus 17.