

## Leviticus Chapter 17

---

V: 1-2 Aaron, his sons, all the children of Israel: everyone.

- “*This is the thing...*” – the focal point: it’s about the blood.
- Key verse: V: 11 “*The life of the flesh is in the blood...*”
- Blood – 447 times in the Bible, 88 times in Leviticus, 13 times in this chapter.
  1. Physical life.
  2. Human beings, men.
  3. Judgment.
  4. Atonement: spiritual cleansing, redemption.
- This will also emphasize the sanctity of life.

**Genesis 9:3-6** “<sup>3</sup>Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things. <sup>4</sup>But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat. <sup>5</sup>And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man’s brother will I require the life of man. <sup>6</sup>Whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made He man.”

- This is the foundation of all law in western cultures, this is the basis of capital punishment.
- This establishes the sanctity of life, from conception to the grave.

V: 1-7 This portion of scripture only makes sense in light of the context of verse 7 where we realize that God is talking about making pagan sacrifices, or sacrifices to other so called gods, and their history.

- Historically, up to this time each Hebrew family pretty much had their own priest who offered sacrifices for the family. We see Cain and Abel offering sacrifices, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob all offering sacrifices in the wilderness.
- God is now establishing not only a priesthood for the nation, but a place of worship specifically where He will manifest Himself, and where sacrifices are to be made, they are to be presented to the Lord at the door of the Tabernacle.
- Ezekiel Ch. 20 describes how the children of Israel had fallen into idolatry, that many of them had adopted the pagan practices of the Egyptians – here they are again being told to turn away from those practices.
- This is a reiteration of the 1<sup>st</sup> commandment:

**Exodus 20:2-3** “<sup>2</sup>I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. <sup>3</sup>Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.”

- Not only were they not to offer sacrifices to pagan gods, but they weren't to offer sacrifices to the Lord without taking it to the Tabernacle.
- The children of Israel were not to determine how and when, or where to sacrifice – God has already determined all of that – it's to be done on God's terms.

**Hebrews 10:25** “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some it; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.”

- If the sacrifice isn't brought to the Tabernacle, then it won't be accepted by God.
- God Himself refers to these practices as “whoring” after “devils”. Strong terms!

**Exodus 34:14** “For thou shalt worship no other god: for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God.”

- The nation of Israel, the Jewish people were considered the spouse of Jehovah, just as the church is considered the bride of Christ.
- When either is “un-faithful” and consorting, or having intimacy with other gods it is very much like adultery or fornication and is referred to as “whoring after other gods”.
- The penalty for this behavior is described as being “*cut off*” which is used 4 times in this chapter alone – some give or take a 190 X's in the bible

“*Cut off*” – sounds like being kicked out of the camp, ex-communicated, dis-fellowshipped.

- This is minimizing, softening the true meaning of what is taking place here.

“*Cut off*” – doctrine of 1<sup>st</sup> mention: the first time a word or phrase is used implies a meaning that carries on through the scriptures, sets the precedent.

**Genesis 9:11** “And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth.”

- All the inhabitants of the earth, approximately 6 billion people, except for Noah and his family were “cut off”.

**Genesis 17:14** “And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant.”

- The person who has broken God’s covenant, who places himself outside God’s covenant – there is no hope for that person, they are going to perish, they are going to hell.

**Exodus 9:13-15** “<sup>13</sup>And the Lord said unto Moses, rise up early in the morning, and stand before Pharaoh, and say unto him, thus saith the Lord God of the Hebrews, let My people go, that they may serve Me. <sup>14</sup>For I will at this time send all My plagues upon thine heart, and upon thy servants, and upon thy people; that thou mayest know that there is none like me in all the earth. <sup>15</sup>For now I will stretch out My hand, that I may smite thee and thy people with pestilence; and thou shalt be cut off from the earth.”

- Pharaoh and his army ended up at the bottom of the Red Sea, they were “cut off”.
- John 15 describes the branch that is removed from the vine, it falls to the ground, dries up, withers, and is gathered to the fire.
- Being cut off is not like being put in “time out” – we’re talking life and death consequences.
- There is a distinction between being stoned by the people for various crimes and when the Lord deals with people personally.

**Hebrews 10:31** “It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”

- We need to be very careful in what we do with God’s word:

**Numbers 15:30-31** “<sup>30</sup>But the soul that doeth aught presumptuously / willfully, whether he be born in the land, or a stranger, the same reproacheth the Lord; and that soul shall be cut off from among his people. <sup>31</sup>Because he hath despised (no value, ignored) the word of the Lord, and hath broken His commandment, that soul shall utterly be cut off; his iniquity shall be upon him.”

- We see the same thing in the NT

**Hebrews 10:26-31** “<sup>26</sup>**For if we sin willfully** after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, <sup>27</sup>but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. <sup>28</sup>He that despised Moses’ law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: <sup>29</sup>Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he

was sanctified, an unholy thing / common thing, and hath done despite unto the spirit of grace? <sup>30</sup>For we know Him that hath said, vengeance belongeth unto Me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, the Lord shall judge His people. <sup>31</sup>It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”

V: 8-9 Repeating or summarizing the previous admonition, in a more direct way, adding in the “strangers” or gentiles.

- God is simply forcing them to choose either obedience or disobedience:

**Joshua 24:15** <sup>14</sup>“Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve Him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the Lord. <sup>15</sup>And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood (river), or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”

**Deuteronomy 30:19** “I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live:”

V: 10-14 Deals again with the prohibition against eat / drinking blood.

V: 10 Whether Jew or Gentile, anyone who eats any manner of blood – this is slightly more prohibitive than previous warnings

*“I will even set My face against that soul that eateth blood...”*

**Romans 8:31** “What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?”

- The opposite is true as well: If God is against us, who can be for us?
- To me this means that I eat my steaks medium well – I want the blood cooked out.
- This same requirement is laid out in the New Testament as well:

**Acts 15:20** “But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood.”

**Acts 15:28-29** <sup>28</sup>“For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; <sup>29</sup>that ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from **blood**, and from things strangled,

and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well.”

- This is pretty much the gist of the first 9 verses of Leviticus Ch. 17.
- I personally take a pretty conservative approach on this issue, better safe than sorry.
- Again, the 3<sup>rd</sup> mention of the penalty for disobedience: being “cut off”.

V: 11 God gives us the rationale, we’re not to eat it because the life is in it – the life belongs to God, not to man.

- Sanctity of life!
- The blood is to be presented at the altar, it is to make atonement for our souls.

**Hebrews 9:22** “And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.”

V: 12-13 Again, they are not to eat blood, and if when you’ve when hunting or killing an animal to eat – the blood is to be pour out the blood onto the ground, and cover it with dirt.

**Deuteronomy 12: 23-25** “<sup>23</sup>Even as the roebuck and the hart is eaten, so thou shalt eat them: the unclean and the clean shall eat of them alike. <sup>23</sup>Only be sure that thou eat not the blood: for the blood is the life; and thou mayest not eat the life with the flesh. <sup>24</sup>Thou shalt not eat it; thou shalt pour it upon the earth as water. <sup>25</sup>Thou shalt not eat it; that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee, when thou shalt do that which is right in the sight of the Lord.”

- An inherent blessing for obedience, and an implied curse for disobedience.

V: 14 Again, it is the life of all flesh – you shall eat no manner of blood – whoever does shall be cut off, killed.

- In John Ch. 6, Jesus made some incredibly radical statements:

Turn to:

**John 6:48 - 69** “I am the bread of life.”

**V:66** Many disciples left, turned away from Jesus – difficult teaching.

- Jesus wasn’t talking about cannibalism, He was talking about assimilation, intimacy, being One, One and the same.

- Jesus knew as He said that the Holy Spirit would bring these things to their remembrance in due time, that it would bear fruit in their season.
- Jesus knew that only those drawn by the Father would be His disciples.

**John 6:44** “No man can come to Me, except the Father which hath sent Me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.”

- Jesus knew that their faith would help them to overcome:

**John 6:68-69** <sup>68</sup>Then Simon Peter answered Him, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. <sup>69</sup>And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the Living God.”

- These are profound truths; but they are all centered upon “the blood”, the blood of Christ.

**1 Peter 1:18-19** <sup>18</sup>Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; <sup>19</sup>but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.”

V: 15-16 This pretty well shuts down the road kill café... ☺

- I don't know about how long an animal can be dead of a disease or having been killed by a predator and still be able to drain out the blood effectively.

- 
- This chapter asserts the understanding that we owe our allegiance exclusively to God, there is an expectation of obedience.

**Matthew 6:24** “No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.”

**1 Corinthians 10:20-21** <sup>20</sup>But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. <sup>21</sup>Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and the table of devils.”

- It won't be long after this historically that the children of Israel will be joining themselves to Baal and doing the opposite of what God has commanded.

**Matthew 26:26-28**  
**John 3:16, 15:13**

**Leviticus 17:11**