

Leviticus

Written by admin

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Leviticus

by Beth LaBuff



By day, an Old Testament priest faithfully follows the requirements of the law regarding sacrifices. At night, he is plagued by a dream. He constantly wonders how long these sacrifices will be necessary.

The bleating and the lowing reach my ears before I see them approach. They come, leading their animals for the sacrifices: the sheep, the bulls, and the goats all to be offered up to Yahweh. I try to focus on my priestly duties and not mull over the dream, the dream last night that gave exodus to my sleep.

Day after day, year after year, we offer these sacrifices. My life has become an endless repetition. By day, I offer sacrifices to Yahweh; at night, a perpetual procession of animals parade through my sleep. I hear them; their scents permeate my slumber, and their blood soaks through my dreams.

Today I travel a worn path as I bear this sin offering to be burned outside the camp. I nod to those who pass by. They, too, bring their animals for the burnt offerings, for the guilt offerings, and for sin offerings. No matter how many we offer today, it seems our work is never finished, because tomorrow we will sacrifice more. The smell of blood ambushes me. Last night's dream bursts into my mind, a dream I've had countless times.

In the dream I heard the lowing of cattle and the bleating of sheep. There was an inexhaustible line of animals, all sprinkled with blood. As they filed past me, they looked neither to the right, nor the left. Like an arrow seeking a victim, their path was straight. They led me up to a craggy hill, where a shadowy figure was raised high. Then, instantly I awoke. The dream left me unsettled; I hungered to know its meaning.

I shake my head to clear my thoughts. Day after day, there are so many animals and so much

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blood. Moses says Yahweh requires it for forgiveness of sins, so we must do it. Is Yahweh pleased with these sacrifices? Will my son, and his son after him, be required to offer these same sacrifices year after year? As I finish my work for today, I head back to my tent; my clothing and hands are stained. I sigh. Will the dream plague my slumber tonight?

Oh Yahweh, how long must we offer these sacrifices? Nevertheless, I am a priest from Aaron's line, and I will be careful to do all that you ask of me. May my service be pleasing in Your sight.

Day after day every priest stands and performs his religious duties;
again and again he offers the same sacrifices,
which can never take away sins. Hebrews 10:11

When Christ came as high priest ...
He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves;
but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood,
having obtained eternal redemption. Hebrews 9:11-12 (NIV 1984)

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Before Beth LaBuff and her husband, Tilman, moved to the high desert of Arizona, she lived most of her life surrounded by the cornfields of Adair County, Iowa.

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