

Daily Bread with Brother Hwa-Chi (Not reviewed by the speaker, for personal use only)

Leviticus 3:1

Brothers and sisters, peace be with you, this is Hwa-Chi. Thank the Lord, it's time to read the bible again. This week we will read Leviticus chapter 3, and today we will read verse 1.

Leviticus chapter 3 talks about the peace offering. The entire book of Leviticus is the word of God to Moses in the tabernacle. The first five chapters reveal five basic offerings in sequence: chapter one is the burnt offering, chapter two is the grain offering, and chapter three is the peace offering. This sequence is very meaningful. When a person comes before God, they must first be accepted by God. Therefore, they must first offer a burnt offering. Through the shedding of the blood of the burnt offering, the person's sin is covered. Then the offered sacrifice is completely burned on the altar, becoming ashes. The entire sacrifice turns into a pleasing aroma, satisfying God. This is the burnt offering. In typology, this means that a person must be wholly consecrated to God to please Him. This is the first step for a person to come before God.

Next, God reveals the grain offering. The burnt offering is entirely for God, enabling a person to be accepted by God. The ingredients of the grain offering are fine flour, oil, and frankincense. The priest takes a handful of flour, some oil, and all the frankincense and burns it on the altar as a memorial. The remaining fine flour and oil belong to the priest who offered the sacrifice. The fine flour typifies the richness of Christ's humanity, and the oil typifies the power of Christ's divinity. After the priest uses the fine flour and oil, his life grows, and he can live a life of excellent character.

In the New Testament, the saints are all royal priests. By offering the burnt offering, they are accepted by God. By offering the grain offering, they enjoy the richness of Christ, grow in life, and live a godly life. At this time, there is peace between God and man, and man can offer the peace offering to God. Therefore, the burnt

offering is the foundation, the grain offering is the experience, and the peace offering is the result. It is the offering of thanksgiving from man to God.

The peace mentioned here is not the peace of no disaster or illness, or everything being well, as we commonly think. The KJV translates it as "peace offering," meaning there is peace between God and man. God is holy, righteous, and glorious, while man has a sinful nature inside and sinful acts outside. There was no peace between God and man. However, through what Jesus Christ accomplished for us, we can have peace with God. Romans 4:25 tells us, "Jesus was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification." Following this, Romans 5:1 says, "Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." To be at peace with God means that peace has been established between God and man.

We have reconciled with God; at this time, we can offer the peace offering to God. The NIV translates it as "fellowship offering," meaning we can have fellowship with God. This is a step closer than just having peace between God and man. It means there is communication between God and man, a two-way dialogue and interaction. Being able to offer the peace offering and have two-way interaction with God is based on a person first consecrating themselves to God and being accepted by Him; then enjoying the richness of Christ, growing in life, and having a testimony in their life. The relationship between God and man can then move forward, with two-way communication. This is the meaning of the peace offering.

Verse 1: "When his offering is a sacrifice of a peace offering (peace: or translated as thanksgiving; the same applies below), if he offers it of the herd, whether male or female, he shall offer it without blemish before the Lord."

It begins by saying that if a person offers a sacrifice of a peace offering. The Chinese Union Version has a footnote saying (peace: or translated as thanksgiving). Thanksgiving means gratitude, so a peace offering is a sacrifice of thanksgiving to God. Why would one offer thanksgiving to God? What is the motive for offering a peace offering? We can first skip to Leviticus 7:12, which speaks of the peace

offering, saying that if a person offers it for thanksgiving, then skip to 7:16, “But if the sacrifice of his offering is a vow or a voluntary offering.” Combining these two verses, we see that there are three motives for offering a thanksgiving or peace offering to God: the first is to give thanks to God; the second is to fulfill a vow to God; and the third is to offer it voluntarily. Let's look at each of these.

The first is to give thanks to God, which shows that God is proactive. Under God's sovereign authority, we receive some benefits, whether material or spiritual. After enjoying these benefits, our hearts are grateful to God, and we can offer a peace offering to Him. Here we see a two-way interaction, with God being proactive and us being reactive. God proactively gives us grace, and after enjoying it, we offer thanksgiving to God. This is something Christians often experience throughout our lives. After we enjoy the grace God has given us, we must know how to be grateful because knowing how to be grateful is a hallmark of a Christian.

In Luke 17:11-19, Jesus healed ten lepers, but only one returned to give glory to God. In verses 17-19, “So Jesus answered and said, ‘Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine? Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?’ And He said to him, ‘Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well.’”

This Samaritan who returned to give glory to God not only received healing from leprosy and regained his health but also obtained salvation by returning to give thanks to God. The KJV translates it as “Your faith has made you whole.” This means that his faith made him completely blessed. Here we see that God initiates, people respond, and the result is that people receive complete healing. How wonderful this is! I hope we can all be people who know how to be grateful, frequently finding reasons in our lives to offer sacrifices of thanksgiving to God, and frequently offering peace offerings to maintain a two-way communication with God.

The second motive is to fulfill a vow. Here we see that it is initiated by the person. People hope to receive certain benefits, either material or spiritual, and they make vows to God. When God answers and fulfills their vows, they offer a peace offering to fulfill their vow. Among the vows people make to God, there is a very special

vow called the Nazirite vow. In Numbers 6:2, God told Moses to speak to the children of Israel, saying, “When either a man or woman consecrates an offering to take the vow of a Nazirite, to separate himself to the Lord.” Taking the Nazirite vow means separating oneself from the world and consecrating oneself to God. During the period of separation from the world, the person must observe many restrictions, such as not drinking wine or similar drink and not cutting their hair, until the period of separation is over, at which time they must offer a peace offering to God.

In the Old Testament, there was a great figure who marked the turning of an era named Samuel. Samuel was originally an Ephraimite and could not serve as a priest. However, because of the Nazirite vow, he consecrated himself to God and was used by God to not only become a priest but also a judge. The era of judges ended with Samuel, and he ushered in the era of kings. Offering a peace offering to fulfill a vow is higher than offering a peace offering to give thanks to God. People ask God for something, God answers, and then people fulfill their vows. Initially, we may ask for material things, but as our faith gradually increases, we will start asking for spiritual things, and ultimately, we will offer ourselves to God, like Nazirites.

The third motive is to offer voluntarily. This is not for giving thanks or fulfilling a vow, but purely because of knowing God and recognizing His goodness, leading to a voluntary offering of a peace offering out of love for God. The offering is made without any expectation of return from God. The person does not hope to gain any benefit from God; they offer the peace offering solely out of love for God. This is the highest form of offering and also the wisest. When you love God, God loves you. When you offer yourself to God, God gives Himself to you.

God is the source of all things, and having God means having everything. Why should we worry about counting specific blessings? It is like Ruth in the Old Testament; she did not consider gleaning in Boaz’s field sufficient, even though that was already a great grace from Boaz. She gave herself to Boaz, married him, and thus all that Boaz had become hers. I hope we all have this kind of vision and wisdom to fully consecrate ourselves to Christ and willingly offer peace offerings

frequently. When we gain Christ, it is also when Christ gains us, and all the riches of Christ will become our experience and enjoyment. How blessed this is!

After understanding the three motives for offering a peace offering, we will look at how to offer it. The next sentence says, "If he offers it of the herd," the cattle are the largest among the sacrificial animals. The size of the sacrificial animal represents the offeror's capacity to receive, experience, and enjoy Christ's supply.

Christ's supply is so vast in breadth, length, depth, and height. It is eternal in time and infinite in measure. However, our reception, experience, and enjoyment of Christ are limited. We offer a peace offering based on what we have received, experienced, and enjoyed. If the peace offering is from the herd, it must be without blemish, just like the burnt offering; an injured or diseased cattle cannot be offered to God.

In the context of the burnt offering, the offered bull represent Christ; therefore, it must be without blemish. For the peace offering, the cattle represent our reception, experience, and enjoyment of Christ, and it too must be complete and healthy, without blemish. Leviticus 1:3 specifically mentions that if the burnt offering is from the herd, it must be a male. However, in Leviticus 3:1, whether the peace offering from the herd is male or female is acceptable. The peace offering appears to be more lenient. Why is there this difference? We must understand it from the spiritual typology.

The purpose of the burnt offering is to be accepted by God, and the burnt offering must be entirely burned on the altar. Therefore, if the burnt offering is cattle, it typifies Christ because God is only pleased with Christ from beginning to end, and Christ is God's Son, so the offered cattle must be male. The purpose of the peace offering is to give thanks to God; thus, the offered animal represents our reception, experience, and enjoyment of Christ.

In our journey of spiritual growth, we have various needs. Sometimes we need Christ's powerful protection and abundant supply, and sometimes we need Christ's strict correction and earnest teachings, just like a father to his children. When you have such experiences and want to give thanks to God, you can offer a male cattle.

Sometimes we need the nurturing life of Christ, gentle acceptance, broad tolerance, and meticulous comfort and support, like a mother to her children. When you have such experiences and want to give thanks to God, you can offer a female cattle. Whether male or female, the peace offering from the herd must be without blemish and must be offered before the Lord.

Thus, the offeror must bring their male or female cattle to the tabernacle, which was God's dwelling place on earth at that time. Peace offerings must be offered before the Lord. In today's terms, this means you must offer the thanksgiving peace offering in the church. Dear brothers and sisters, we all must commit ourselves to the church, which should be a home where our lives can grow and where we can participate in service. Christ is the head of this home. As we experience the rich supply of Christ in this home, we should frequently offer thanksgiving peace offerings to God.

Let us pray together: Lord, teach us to be grateful people. We were once enemies with You, having no hope in the world. Yet because of Your love for us, You prepared salvation for us. You also gave us the wisdom to be saved, to accept You as the Savior of our lives. You placed us in the church, to live the church life with a group of saints who love the Lord with pure hearts. For this, we should be grateful and offer peace offerings to You. Bless my church to be a place where saints frequently offer thanksgiving peace offerings, filling the house of God with gratitude and praise for Christ. Bless us, I pray in the holy name of Jesus Christ.