

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

Leviticus 03: 06-11

Brothers and sisters, peace be with you, this is Hwa-Chi. Thank the Lord, it's time to read the Bible again. We'll continue to read Leviticus chapter 3, and today we'll read from verse 6 to verse 11.

The peace offering is a sacrifice made to God out of gratitude, to fulfill a vow, or as a freewill offering. Yesterday, we learned about offering a herd, male or female, as a peace offering, which symbolically represents fruitful results in diligent services. This may include having effective ministry filled with God's blessings, the perfection of spiritual gifts by God, or new guidance in the direction and field of ministry. At such times, offering a sacrifice as a peace offering in gratitude is appropriate. Today, from verses 6 to 11, we will examine offering a sheep as a peace offering.

Verse 06: "If his offering as a sacrifice of a peace offering to the Lord is of the flock, whether male or female, he shall offer it without blemish."

When a person offers a peace offering to God from the flock, they might choose a sheep if they cannot afford a bull, which is the largest livestock. Spiritually, while the bull represents diligent and laborious service, the sheep symbolizes obedience. Thus, if someone has experienced special blessings or guidance from God in their obedience, they can offer a sheep as a peace offering.

In Leviticus 1, if someone offers a sheep as a burnt offering, it must be a male. However, for a peace offering, either a male or female sheep can be offered. Offering a ram (a male sheep) spiritually signifies gratitude for God's mighty provision in obedience, while offering an ewe (a female sheep) represents gratitude for God's nurturing life in the same context. Every Christian is bound to experience these aspects while following God's guidance.

Sometimes, God's guidance surpasses our capacity to follow, and we struggle with obedience until one day we suddenly find ourselves able to keep up. When this happens, we should reflect carefully. It is likely that our spiritual growth has reached a new level, allowing us to overcome previous difficulties. When we realize this, we should immediately offer an ewe (a female sheep) as a peace offering to God, acknowledging that it is His nurturing life that has enabled our growth.

There are times when God places us in challenging circumstances that seem unbearable on our own. However, through the mighty provision and protection of Christ, we ultimately become more than conquerors in those situations. In such moments, we should offer a ram (a male sheep) as a peace offering to God. We have mentioned that the peace offering is an offering of gratitude, and the hallmark of a Christian is their ability to give thanks.

We should regularly examine our lives and the various experiences we go through, always looking for reasons to thank God. This will help us become grateful people. When offering a sheep as a peace offering, it must be without blemish, symbolizing that our experiences of obedience to God are healthy and complete.

Verse 07: "If he offers a lamb as his offering, then he shall offer it before the Lord."

Here it mentions offering a lamb. In the Chinese Union Version, it translates to "lamb," but the Hebrew word "keseb" can be translated into English as "lamb" or "sheep." This word appears 13 times in the Old Testament and is sometimes translated as "lamb" and other times as "sheep," depending on the context.

In Leviticus 1:10, it says, "If his offering is of the flocks—of the sheep or of the goats—as a burnt sacrifice." Here, "sheep" is translated from "keseb," emphasizing different types of sheep rather than their age. Following the same logic, if we look at Leviticus 3:7 and 3:12 together, we can understand that the peace offering from the flock is divided into offerings from sheep and offerings from goats, emphasizing the different types of sheep rather than their age.

Sheep and goats are different in size. Besides sheep being long-haired and goats short-haired, the most significant difference is in their tails. Therefore, the sacrificial process is handled differently, requiring two separate descriptions. As for the spiritual differences between sheep and goats, the most direct discussion is found in Matthew 25:31-46. There, it talks about Jesus Christ's return in glory to judge all nations and separate people as a shepherd divides the sheep from the goats.

The nations symbolized as sheep are those who, during the Great Tribulation, treat persecuted Christians kindly by providing them food, drink, and shelter. These people can enter the Millennial Kingdom and become God's people. On the other hand, goats represent those who mistreat Christians during the Great Tribulation. According to the meaning of that scripture, sheep can be understood as those who follow God's perfect will, while goats symbolize those who do not.

In today's scripture, we focus on the sheep. If a sheep is offered as a sacrifice, it must be presented before the Lord, meaning the offeror must bring the sheep before God. When the tabernacle was constructed, God had a dwelling place on earth, specifically the Holy of Holies within the tabernacle. Therefore, people had to bring the sheep to the entrance of the tabernacle to present it before God as a peace offering.

Verse 08: “And he shall lay his hand on the head of his offering, and kill it before the tabernacle of meeting; and Aaron’s sons shall sprinkle its blood all around on the altar.”

The offeror must lay their hand on the head of the offering, signifying the union between the offeror and the sacrificed animal. At this moment, whatever the sacrificial animal undergoes becomes the experience of the offeror. The offeror brings the sheep to the entrance of the tabernacle and lays a hand on its head, symbolizing their union with the sheep, and then slaughters it before the tabernacle.

This act indicates that the offeror is publicly testifying to their experience of obeying God, encouraging others and sharing in God's grace together. The sons of Aaron, who are priests helping people offer sacrifices to God, take the sheep's blood into the tabernacle and sprinkle it around the altar. This process is similar to offering a bull as a peace offering, where the blood is for the offeror's conscience. By sprinkling the blood on the altar, they understand that their sins are covered, allowing them to confidently present their thanksgiving peace offering, knowing that God will accept it.

Verse 09: “Then he shall offer from the sacrifice of the peace offering, as an offering made by fire to the Lord, its fat and the whole fat tail which he shall remove close to the backbone. And the fat that covers the entrails and all the fat that is on the entrails.”

The peace offering is divided into three parts: one part is given to God, one part to the priests, and one part to the offeror, his family, and friends, allowing them to share and rejoice together.

First, let's examine the portion given to God, which is burned on the altar as a sweet-smelling fire offering. All the fat of the sheep is given to God, including the fat that surrounds the internal organs and the fat connecting different organs, just like the peace offering of a bull. The fat represents the glory and richness of Christ.

However, unlike the peace offering of a bull, the sheep's tail must also be removed and offered. The entire tail, from the backbone, is taken off. The Bible specifically mentions the fat tail, as sheep in Palestine are known for their particularly large and fat tails, which are rich in fat. The tails of Palestinian sheep contain additional tail bones surrounded by fat, making them exceptionally large. It is said that a fully grown sheep's tail can weigh up to 20 kilograms and is considered a delicacy in that region. This fine, fat tail, full of rich fat, is entirely removed and belongs to God. Spiritually, this symbolizes the same as the fat: the glory and richness of Christ.

Verse 10: “the two kidneys and the fat that is on them by the flanks, and the fatty lobe attached to the liver above the kidneys, he shall remove”

The text here, like the peace offering of a bull, records that the two kidneys must be removed, along with the fat that covers the kidneys and the fatty lobe attached to the liver. The kidneys represent the most delicate and sincere emotions, which are also to be offered to God.

This indicates that the offeror, in his obedience to God's perfect will, has experienced the richness of Christ, enabling him to obey. He has encountered the beauty of Christ, filling him with hope in his obedience. In moments when he could hardly endure, he experienced the tender and sincere emotions of Christ from the deepest parts, providing him support and comfort, allowing him to persist in upholding God's perfect will. The offeror, in his obedience to God's will, has had special experiences and enjoyment of Christ, all of which are to be placed on the altar as a sweet-smelling fire offering to God.

Verse 11: “and the priest shall burn them on the altar as food, an offering made by fire to the Lord.”

The fat, kidneys, and the fatty tail offered to God are to be given to the priest, who will take them into the tabernacle and burn them on the altar as a sweet-smelling fire offering to the Lord. It is specifically noted as a food offering to the Lord, emphasizing the idea of food. This clearly shows that the peace offering is food enjoyed by God, the priest, and the offeror together, representing a joyous feast shared between God and man.

Of course, the meaning of food for God is different from its meaning for humans. While humans eat to satisfy physical hunger, God does not experience physical hunger. As stated in Psalm 50:12-14, "If I were hungry, I would not tell you, for the world is mine, and all its fullness. Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats? Offer to God thanksgiving, and pay your vows to the Most High." God does not experience physical hunger, so He does not eat the flesh of bulls or drink the

blood of goats. What God delights in is people offering sacrifices of thanksgiving and obeying His will.

In John chapter 4, we see Jesus at Jacob's well, evangelizing to a Samaritan woman. Since this process involved discussing her immoral past, Jesus sent His disciples to buy food. When they returned, the woman had already received grace and was testifying in the city that Jesus is the Christ. When the disciples urged Jesus to eat, He said in John 4:34, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent me and to finish His work." Obedience to God's perfect will is God's food. When people obey God's will and offer a peace offering of thanksgiving, the fat, kidneys, and fatty tail of the lamb are burned on the altar as a sweet-smelling fire offering—this is God's food.

In Leviticus 7, we will see that the breast and the right thigh are given to the priests, and the remainder is for the offeror to share with his family and friends. This truly is a joyful feast enjoyed by God, the priest, and the offeror together.

Let us pray together: Lord, help us to obey Your perfect will. Help us in every situation in life to seek Your guidance and ask what Your perfect will is. Once we understand, grant us grace. When we struggle to obey, help us to experience Your nurturing life and Your powerful protection and strength. Let us experience Your richness and see Your beauty, especially Your compassion, condescension, comfort, and support for us. Let us also learn to share our experiences of obedience as a peace offering of thanksgiving, witnessing before others. This is a feast enjoyed by God and men together. Bless my church so that there will often be people offering peace offerings of thanksgiving to God. I pray in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen!