

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

Leviticus 04:22-26

Brothers and sisters, peace be with you, this is Hwa-Chi. Thank the Lord, it's time to read the bible again. Today, we will continue to read Leviticus 04:22-26.

Chapter 4 describes the sin offering. The first two types of sin offerings deal with communal sin. When the whole congregation of Israel has sinned and lost their fellowship with God, a young bull must be offered as a sacrifice. The blood must be brought into the tabernacle, sprinkled before the veil, and applied to the four horns of the altar of incense in order to restore Israel's worship and service before God. The fat of the sacrificial animal must be burned on the altar of burnt offering, and the rest of the animal must be taken outside the camp and burned at the ash heap. This signifies that sin must be entirely removed.

If the whole congregation of Israel sins because of the sin of the priest, the kidneys of the sacrificial animal must also be taken out and burned along with the fat on the altar of burnt offering. Here we see how highly God values the priestly office. As long as the priest can fulfill his duty, the deep connection of love between God and His people remains intact. But if even the priest sins, the kidneys of the bull must be burned on the altar to restore the priestly office.

From verse 22 to the end of this chapter, the focus is on how to offer sacrifices for individual sins. Israel is a nation chosen by God. In the Old Testament, God dwelt among His people through the tabernacle, and the people enjoyed the reality of fellowship with God through worship and service. If the entire congregation falls into sin, a young bull must be offered for atonement, as this is God's prescribed method and cannot be changed. The blood of the bull must be brought into the tabernacle, sprinkled before the veil, and applied to the four horns of the altar of incense to restore worship and service to God.

If an individual sins, their sin becomes a hindrance, preventing them from coming before God, and they must offer a sacrifice to remove that hindrance. However,

individual sin does not affect the worship and service of the entire congregation, so the blood of the sacrificial animal does not need to be brought into the tabernacle.

From a New Testament perspective, Israel is a type of the Church. Today, God dwells in the Church, and the saints in the Church enjoy the reality of fellowship with God through worship and service. If the whole Church sins, Christ must be offered as the laboring young bull, and through the blood of Jesus Christ, the Church can pass through the veil and enter the Holy of Holies to appear before God. By Christ's blood, the Church's worship and service to God are restored.

If an individual saint sins, it does not affect the entire Church's worship and service. The sinning saint only needs to remove their personal hindrance to restore their fellowship with God. This is why the Bible repeatedly exhorts the saints not to forsake assembling together, because in the Church there is continual worship and service, and only there can the saints enjoy the reality of fellowship with God. Now let us consider how to offer the sin offering for individual sins.

Verse 22: "When a ruler has sinned, and done something unintentionally against any of the commandments of the Lord his God in anything which should not be done, and is guilty."

The rulers in Israel were those entrusted with managing the people; they held positions of authority and were respected by the Israelites. Here, it mentions that if a ruler unintentionally sins, human laws may be more lenient with unintentional sins, as they are neither deliberate nor premeditated. However, in God's eyes, sin is sin. Even an unintentional sin points to the deeper issue of a person's corrupted nature, showing that sin flows from their inherent sinful condition. This means it must be dealt with at its root. If a ruler has sinned, he cannot continue fulfilling his duties without offering a sin offering to address the impact of his sin.

Verse 23: "When his sin which he has committed comes to his knowledge, he shall bring as his offering a kid of the goats, a male without blemish."

When a person unintentionally sins, they may not even be aware of it at first. Later, through the reminder of others or through God's illumination, they come to realize their sin, and at that point, they must address it. They are required to bring a male goat without blemish as their offering. As previously mentioned, offerings to God must be without defect, so this principle is not repeated here.

However, in this case, the offering must be a male goat. In the laws of the peace offering, we saw that a lamb symbolizes submission to God's perfect will, while a goat represents submission to God's permissive will. In God's perfect will, He desires that a person's actions and lifestyle align with the identity and position He has given them. When people deviate from this standard, they sin, which is why God's perfect will is for people to live without sin.

Yet, when sin does occur, in God's permissive will, He provides a way of restoration. This way allows people to come back into His presence through the grace of redemption. Therefore, if someone sins, the sin offering must be a goat, representing submission to God's permissive will. If the one who sins is a ruler, he must offer a male goat. The male represents strength, indicating that through offering this male goat as a sin offering, the ruler can restore his position of leadership, regaining the strength needed to properly fulfill his duties of governance.

Verse 24: "And he shall lay his hand on the head of the goat, and kill it at the place where they kill the burnt offering before the Lord. It is a sin offering."

To offer a sin offering, the leader must lay his hand on the head of the male goat, symbolizing his identification with the goat. The goat's experience becomes the leader's own experience as it is slain. The goat is killed in the same place where the burnt offering is sacrificed, at the north side of the altar. In Leviticus 1:10–11, when a sheep is offered as a burnt offering, it is also slaughtered on the north side of the

altar, unlike a bull, which is slain at the front of the Tabernacle. When an entire congregation sins, the bull is killed before the Tabernacle, witnessed by the people to make their atonement public.

However, in the case of the leader's personal sin, the male goat is killed within the Tabernacle, at the north side of the altar, where only the assisting priest is involved. This reflects God's wisdom and grace—sin in leadership is handled discreetly, only by those involved, to avoid public gossip and prevent the matter from spreading and tarnishing the leader's position.

In church life, when a leader sins, only the relevant people should address it, avoiding unnecessary exposure that could harm the leader's ability to serve. The sin offering's purpose is to redeem the one offering it, restoring their ability to continue their role without unnecessary damage.

The sin offering is made on the basis of the burnt offering, showing that it is acceptable to God. Whether the animal is slain at the front of the Tabernacle or within it, on the north side of the altar, it is always offered before the Lord.

Verse 25: "The priest shall take some of the blood of the sin offering with his finger, put it on the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and pour its blood at the base of the altar of burnt offering."

When a leader in Israel sins, it does not affect the entire congregation's worship and service to God. Therefore, the blood of the goat for the sin offering does not need to be brought into the tabernacle. The priest, after dipping his finger in the blood, must smear it on the four horns of the altar of burnt offering. Horns represent power; the horns of the golden altar signify the power to restore fellowship, while the horns of the altar of burnt offering symbolize the power of atonement. Since the sin in this case is individual, once the leader's sin is forgiven, the obstacle is removed, allowing him to rejoin the congregation in worship and service. Thus, it is only necessary to smear the blood on the horns of the altar of burnt offering, without bringing it into the tabernacle.

Here, we see again that although this is a sin offering, Scripture still refers to the altar as the altar of burnt offering, signifying that this offering is accepted by God. The remaining blood must be poured out at the base of the altar of burnt offering, representing the solid foundation of salvation, firmly grounded and pleasing to God.

Verse 26: "And he shall burn all its fat on the altar, like the fat of the peace offering. So the priest shall make atonement for him concerning his sin, and it shall be forgiven him."

The blood is meant to remove obstacles and achieve forgiveness of sin. After dealing with the blood, all the fat of the goat is to be taken out and given to the priest, who will burn it on the altar, just as the fat of the peace offering is burned. The kidneys are not mentioned here because the priest's position remains intact and does not need restoration. The burning of the fat on the altar produces a pleasing aroma, symbolizing praise for God's rich and glorious grace, indicating that through the sin offering, the guilty leader is reconciled with God. Since this fat is also from the peace offering, it signifies that the leader's sins are redeemed and forgiven.

The Bible emphasizes that forgiveness is guaranteed because the sin offering points directly to the redemption accomplished by Jesus Christ on the cross. This also tells us that by applying the precious blood of Jesus Christ, our sins are forgiven. As Isaiah 1:18 declares, "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool." This assures the certainty and security of our salvation.

When the entire congregation sins, a bull is required for the sin offering. Beyond handling the blood and fat, the whole bull must be taken outside the camp and burned on the place where the burnt offering ashes are dumped, until the entire bull is reduced to ashes. This shows that corporate sin requires the complete destruction of the offering to remove the sin.

However, if a leader personally sins, a male goat is offered. The blood is applied to the four corners of the altar and poured at its base, while the fat is burned on the burnt offering altar. The Bible does not specify what to do with the goat beyond the blood and fat because this chapter focuses on what the offeror must do. Chapters 1 through 5 discuss the basic offerings required of the offeror, and chapters 6 and 7 will describe the priests' responsibilities. In Leviticus 6:24-30, it states that the sin offering's carcass belongs to the priest, and there are specific instructions for the priests regarding eating the meat, which will be discussed in detail later.

In today's passage, we see that if a leader in the church sins, they must offer a male goat for a sin offering. The priest will assist in the offering, and the rest of the congregation does not need to participate. Through this offering, the leader's sins are forgiven, allowing them to return to worship and service. For God, the leader needs to obtain forgiveness through the blood of Christ and offer the richness of Christ by burning the fat on the burnt offering altar, thereby achieving reconciliation with God and restoring their role in the church. Dear brothers and sisters, God detests sin. Even if it is an unintentional sin, we must handle it seriously before God. Once we apply the precious blood of Christ and offer praise as a sacrifice, God accepts us anew, allowing us to resume our roles in His house. Such offerings are not public but involve only the relevant parties, reflecting God's grace and wisdom.

Let us pray together: Lord, thank You for completing the grace of redemption on the cross. We acknowledge that within our old selves, there is still sinfulness. We continue to struggle with many sins, some of which we may not even see. But in Your grace, You have prepared salvation for us; grant us the vigilance to immediately humble ourselves before You when we recognize our sins and offer the sin offering.

On one hand, we take advantage of the efficacy of the blood of Jesus Christ to have our sins forgiven. On the other hand, we offer praise to You in the richness of Christ's grace. For though our sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow. Not only that, but in Your wise provision, we are also granted the privilege to

properly participate in worship and service. How great a privilege this is. Bless the church I am part of, that it may handle the matters of sin among the saints according to the revelation of Scripture, so that every saint who has sinned unintentionally may be restored and experience the greatness of salvation. Bless the church and our church life. We pray in the holy name of Jesus Christ.