

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

Leviticus 4: 27-35

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 4: 27-35.

The method of offering a sin offering varies according to the impact of the sin. If the whole congregation of Israel has fallen into sin, the anointed priest must offer a young bull as a sin offering, and the procedure for offering it is relatively complex, which we have previously read about, so I won't elaborate further. If an individual sins, they can offer a goat as a sin offering through a regular priest. The goat symbolizes our experience of God's grace within the permissive will of God, to remove the difficulty of sin and restore worship and service to God. Since it is an individual sin, the blood of the sacrificial animal does not need to be brought into the Tabernacle, nor does the flesh of the sacrificial animal need to be burned outside the camp.

Yesterday, we read that if a ruler sins, he must offer a male goat so that he can regain the strength to fulfill his duties of leadership and care. Today, let's look at how to deal with the situation when the people sin.

Verse 27: "If any one of the common people sins unintentionally by doing something against any of the commandments of the Lord in anything which ought not to be done, and is guilty."

When the people commit something that God has commanded not to be done, it may be because they are unable to overcome it, or perhaps they are completely unaware—this is an unintentional sin. This stems from the sinful nature within humanity's corrupted life, a difficulty inherent in Adam's descendants from birth. However, God sent Moses to deliver the Israelites from the oppression of Pharaoh

because God had an exalted purpose and intention for them. As it says in Exodus 19:5-6, "Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." God desired that every Israelite become a holy nation. In the New Testament, God delivered us from the kingdom of darkness under Satan and gathered us together to become His church. Similarly, God also desires that every saint become holy. Therefore, do not underestimate yourself, thinking that committing small sins is of no consequence, especially those sins you are aware of but cannot overcome.

Verse 28: "or if his sin which he has committed comes to his knowledge, then he shall bring as his offering a kid of the goats, a female without blemish, for his sin which he has committed."

As soon as one becomes aware of the sin they have committed, they must offer a sin offering for their sin. They are to bring a female goat without blemish as the offering. The female goat symbolizes the grace that nourishes within the permissive will of God, helping a person to overcome the difficulty of sin. Dear brothers and sisters, I believe that if we are honest, we all know there are still some sins within us that we cannot overcome. If you are unaware of them, it indicates a lack of self-examination before God.

Whenever we come before God through prayer and reading the Bible to fellowship with Him, we are enlightened by God. We begin to see the areas in our lives that are still immature and the aspects of our lives that need to be adjusted by God. Often, these are the very things we hold dear, cling to tightly, and are unwilling to let God deal with. But when we are enlightened by God and become aware of these things, we must offer a female goat as a sin offering to break the bondage and difficulty of sin. This allows us to be restored and to once again experience the nourishing grace of Christ, which can help us grow in our spiritual life and ultimately overcome the sinful nature we are born with.

Verse 29: “And he shall lay his hand on the head of the sin offering, and kill the sin offering at the place of the burnt offering.”

Laying hands on the head of the female goat symbolizes union with the goat, as the goat takes our place to bear the punishment for sin. The female goat must be slaughtered at the place where the burnt offering is killed—specifically, on the north side of the altar, inside the Tabernacle. Here, we see God's wisdom and grace at work: the sin offering brought by an individual is not slaughtered in front of the Tabernacle for all to see, but within the Tabernacle, on the north side of the altar, before God's throne, with the assistance of the priest. We must personally slaughter the female goat.

Remember, as mentioned earlier, laying hands on the female goat symbolizes that we have united with the goat. Now, we must personally slaughter the female goat, which means we must put to death our own selves. This doesn't refer to physical suicide but rather to self-denial: denying our old life, denying our sinful nature. This is akin to what Paul declares in Galatians 2:20, "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me."

This is also reflected in Jesus' words to His disciples in Matthew 16:24, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me." The term "deny himself" in the KJV captures the idea of self-denial. Only through denying ourselves can we overcome our inherent sinful nature and prevent the old self from continuing to dominate our lives. The slaughtering of the sin offering goat at the place where the burnt offering is killed signifies that this act of self-denial is pleasing to God.

Verse 30: “Then the priest shall take some of its blood with his finger, put it on the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and pour all the remaining blood at the base of the altar.”

The priest assisting with the sin offering must dip his finger into some of the goat's blood and put it on the four horns of the burnt offering altar. These horns have the

power to forgive sins. By applying the blood of the sacrifice, it signifies that the penalty for sin has been paid, the sinner has received forgiveness, and this act of atonement is accepted by God. The priest is also to pour the remaining blood at the base of the altar, indicating that the foundation of salvation is certain and steadfast.

Verse 31: “He shall remove all its fat, as fat is removed from the sacrifice of the peace offering; and the priest shall burn it on the altar for a sweet aroma to the Lord. So, the priest shall make atonement for him, and it shall be forgiven him.”

The fat covering the internal organs of the female goat is to be entirely removed and burned on the altar, just like the fat of the peace offering. Through the sin offering, the sinner has made peace with God. The fat of the peace offering is to be burned on the altar, symbolizing the beauty and richness of Christ. It is to be a sweet-smelling fire offering, pleasing to God and remembered by Him. When the priest offers the sin offering for the sinner, he will be forgiven. We emphasize once again the word “shall be”—thanks be to God for so clearly revealing the regulations of the sin offering.

God is faithful and just. When people sin, they need only follow God's command to offer a sin offering. God cannot go against Himself; HE will surely forgive sins. For New Testament believers, Jesus is our sin offering lamb. In John 1:29, John the Baptist saw Jesus and testified to the people, saying, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world." Jesus has already been crucified and offered on the altar. We need only to accept the redemption that Jesus has completed to have our sins forgiven. What a tremendous grace this is.

Then from verses 32 to 35, God reveals the regulations for offering a female lamb as a sin offering. As mentioned earlier, God's highest will is for people to live and act according to the identity and status HE has given them, without deviating. When people stray from the original purpose and intent for which God created them, they sin, and sin requires a sin offering to seek God's forgiveness. God, in His permissive will, grants the grace of forgiveness through the offering of sacrifices to

atone for sin. Therefore, individuals must offer a goat as a sin offering, not a lamb; rulers must offer a male goat, while the people must offer a female goat.

The mention of a female lamb as a sin offering here arises because this chapter covers general regulations regarding sin offerings, encompassing all scenarios. The previous examples address both collective and individual sins, so when someone sins, they know how to offer a sin offering. However, there are still two special circumstances in which a female lamb must be offered as a sin offering. For now, we can only briefly mention this and will discuss it in detail when we read about it later.

The first situation is the case of someone who has been cleansed from leprosy, as outlined in Leviticus 14:10. We see that a person cleansed from leprosy must offer a male lamb as a guilt offering to address their offenses, and a female lamb as a sin offering to address their sinful nature. Finally, a male lamb is also offered as a burnt offering to be accepted by God. The offering of a female lamb as a sin offering is intended to restore the individual to God's highest will.

The second situation involves a Nazirite whose vow has ended and who is returning to normal life, as detailed in Numbers 6:14. He must offer a male lamb as a burnt offering to be accepted by God; then a female lamb as a sin offering to address his sinful nature; and finally, another male lamb as a peace offering to maintain peace and fellowship with God. In both of these cases, the offering of a female lamb as a sin offering is not related to a specific act of sin but signifies coming before God, acknowledging one's inherent sinful nature and tendency toward sin, even if no actual sin has been committed. This aligns with God's highest will. Understanding the reason for offering a female lamb as a sin offering helps us quickly move through the regulations for offerings, as the details are consistent with those previously mentioned.

Verse 32: ““If he brings a lamb as his sin offering, he shall bring a female without blemish.”

This is a personal sin offering, so a female lamb is offered, as previously mentioned. Offering a female lamb as a sin offering is for special circumstances: such as someone cleansed from leprosy or a Nazirite who has completed their vow and is returning to normal life. In these cases, the sin offering is not related to specific acts of sin but acknowledges before God one's inherent sinful nature and tendency toward sin. This understanding aligns with God's highest will, hence the offering of a female lamb.

Verse 33: “Then he shall lay his hand on the head of the sin offering, and kill it as a sin offering at the place where they kill the burnt offering.”

The person offering the sacrifice must lay hands on the head of the animal, symbolizing union with the sacrifice, and then slaughter the female lamb for the sin offering at the place inside the Tabernacle, on the north side of the altar where the burnt offerings are slaughtered.

Verse 34: “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 all the remaining blood at the base of the altar.”

The assisting priest must smear some of the blood of the sacrifice on the four horns of the altar, and the remaining blood must be poured out at the base of the altar. This action signifies, on one hand, the power of forgiveness, and on the other hand, the certainty and stability of salvation.

Verse 35: “He shall remove all its fat, as the fat of the lamb is removed from the sacrifice of the peace offering. Then the priest shall burn it on the altar, according to the offerings made by fire to the Lord. So, the priest shall make atonement for his sin that he has committed, and it shall be forgiven him.”

The fat covering the internal organs of the female lamb, as well as the fatty tail, must be removed. Since the tail of a lamb is full of fat, it should be removed both when offering a lamb as a peace offering and when offering it as a sin offering. Thus, for the sin offering of a female lamb, the fat must be removed according to the regulations for peace offerings, including both the fat covering the organs and the fatty tail. This symbolizes that when actions are aligned with God's highest will, they culminate in beauty and abundance. The fat covering the organs and the fatty tail are to be burned on the burnt offering altar. Even though it is a sin offering being made, it is based on the foundation of peace and burnt offerings, addressing the difficulties of human sin nature and restoring the beautiful fellowship between man and God.

Dear brothers and sisters, we see that God's provisions are truly meticulous. HE has provided various means of restoration to address the sinful nature of humanity after the fall, allowing for atonement and the restoration of worship and service to Him. Each set of regulations for offerings concludes with a definite assurance that the sin committed by the individual, through the sin offering made by the priest, will indeed be forgiven. May God help us to value and hold fast to such promises from Him.

Let us pray together: Dear Heavenly Father, we are truly grateful for Your great love. After the fall of our forefather Adam, each of us was born with a sinful nature. We often sin unknowingly and struggle to overcome our sin. We cannot lead a holy life on our own. Thank You for sacrificing Your only Son to be our sin offering. Thank You for the detailed regulations in Leviticus, which guide us in handling our sins according to Your will. Whether dealing with communal or individual sins, may we apply the rich salvation of Jesus Christ. Let not only our sins be forgiven, but also our worship and service to You be restored. Bless our church and our daily lives, delivering us from communal and individual sins. Keep us living a life that is pleasing to You. We pray all this in the holy name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.