

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

Leviticus 06: 14-18

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 6, and today we'll read from verse 14 to verse 18.

God spoke to Moses in the tabernacle on Mount Sinai, first giving instructions about the five basic offerings so that the Israelites could come before Him and be accepted through their sacrifices. Following this, God commanded Moses concerning the regulations that the priests must follow when offering these sacrifices.

In the Old Testament, only males born into Aaron's family were eligible to serve as priests. However, in the New Testament, every believer is considered a royal priest, making these regulations applicable to every New Testament saint. While the Old Testament involved offering physical sacrifices, in the New Testament, we offer spiritual sacrifices. Therefore, we need to find the corresponding spiritual experiences in the Old Testament regulations. Perhaps you have the position of a priest today but not yet the function of a priest. If so, it is even more crucial for you to pay attention to God's commands and to train yourself so that you may grow into the reality of a priest.

Yesterday, we studied the regulations for offering the burnt offering, where the most crucial duty of the priest was to ensure that the fire on the burnt offering altar kept burning continuously and never went out. This signifies a constant and renewed dedication to God. The burnt offering serves as the foundation for the other four offerings; only when the principle of God's acceptance is upheld can the other offerings be made. Furthermore, the priests' burnt offerings form the basis for the sacrifices of the people. The priests offer the evening sacrifice, and throughout the night, the altar's fire must not be extinguished. In the morning, the priest offers the morning sacrifice, marking the beginning of his daily service. The people's offerings are made upon the morning sacrifice offered by the priest. Thus, the role of the priest in offering the burnt sacrifice is of great importance.

The burnt offering is entirely consumed by fire, satisfying God, and the ashes of the burnt offering are evidence of God's acceptance and must be handled appropriately. The priest must wear his beautiful robes to gather the ashes, then change into regular clothes to take the ashes outside the camp and deposit them in a clean place, which symbolizes the place of the cross. This is the only clean place outside the camp, where every seeker of salvation must begin. Today, we will study the regulations for offering the grain offering.

Verse 14: “This is the law of the grain offering: The sons of Aaron shall offer it on the altar before the Lord.”

When someone brought a grain offering, it was given to the priests. In the Old Testament, these priests were descendants of Aaron, but in the New Testament, they represent the saints serving in the church. In Leviticus chapter 2, we read that the people could offer three types of grain offerings:

The first type was fine flour mixed with oil and accompanied by frankincense.

The second type was fine flour made into breads. There were three methods of adding oil—pouring, spreading, or mixing it—and three ways of cooking the breads—baking, frying, or grilling. Each of these details symbolized the experiences and sufferings Christ endured during His earthly ministry, which now serve as our spiritual nourishment and experience.

The third type of grain offering consisted of the firstfruits of crushed and roasted wheat, also mixed with oil and accompanied by frankincense.

Regardless of which type of grain offering the people brought, the priest was responsible for receiving it and then presenting it before the Lord.

Verse 15: “He shall take from it his handful of the fine flour of the grain offering, with its oil, and all the frankincense which is on the grain offering, and shall burn it on the altar for a sweet aroma, as a memorial to the Lord.”

In the ritual of offering a grain sacrifice, the priest would take a handful of the offering to present before the Lord. The amount was determined by the size of the priest’s hand, meaning some would take a larger portion, while others might take a smaller one. This symbolizes that what is offered to God must pass through the hands of those who serve Him.

In the New Testament context, this act can be seen as a metaphor for the work of those who serve in the church. When those being served produce good fruit in their lives, which they wish to offer to God, the servant-leaders (represented by the priests) take a portion of that fruit. This portion symbolizes their labor in nurturing and guiding others. This handful of grain must be mixed with oil, representing the anointing and blessing of the Holy Spirit, and accompanied by all the frankincense, signifying the power of resurrection and the glory that belongs to God alone.

The priest then burns this mixture on the altar, creating a pleasing aroma that rises to God as a memorial. Today, as we serve in the church, any good works or virtues we offer to God must involve three essential elements: our diligent labor, the leading and blessing of the Holy Spirit, and the power of Christ’s resurrection. Together, these elements ensure that our offerings bring glory to the Father.

Verse 16: “And the remainder of it Aaron and his sons shall eat; with unleavened bread it shall be eaten in a holy place; in the court of the tabernacle of meeting they shall eat it.”

In the context of the grain offering, Aaron, as the high priest, and his descendants, the priests, were entitled to the remaining portion of the offering after a handful was presented to the Lord. This demonstrates God’s abundant grace, as the majority of the offering, though dedicated to God, was given back to the priests for

their sustenance. However, there were specific instructions on how they were to consume this portion: it had to be eaten in the tabernacle and without leaven.

From a New Testament perspective, the grain offering symbolizes the perfect humanity of Christ, which not only satisfies God but also serves as provisions for the priests. For the priests to partake of this offering is to enjoy and partake in the perfect humanity of Christ. However, this enjoyment and partaking must occur in the tabernacle, signifying that such spiritual nourishment can only truly be experienced within the church, where God's presence is manifest.

Additionally, the grain offering must be consumed without leaven, which represents sin or corruption. This emphasizes that the enjoyment of Christ's perfect humanity must be free from sin, reflecting the purity and sanctity required of those who serve God. Thus, the act of consuming the grain offering in the tabernacle, without leaven, illustrates the spiritual principle that the enjoyment and application of Christ's humanity in our lives as believers must be done in a manner that is holy, within the community of faith, and without the taint of sin.

In the New Testament, God has ordained that those who are saved by grace come together to form the church, where they worship and serve together. Through this collective service in the church, the servants partake of Christ, enjoy Christ, and experience Christ. As a result, they themselves develop human virtues. Only in a loving community, through the service that comes from life, can the virtues of Christian character be manifested in daily living.

The grain offering cannot be mixed with leaven. Leaven, on the one hand, symbolizes sin, and on the other hand, it can extend to represent human teachings and regulations. Let's first consider its representation of sin. In church life, the presence of sin is not allowed. This does not mean that the saints in the church do not sin; saints are still people with a sinful nature and will inevitably sin. However, in the church, there must be a sensitivity to sin. Not allowing sin to exist means that once sin is detected, the believer must immediately apply Christ's blood by confessing and repenting to remove the problem of sin.

This principle demonstrates the importance of maintaining purity in the church. Just as the grain offering could not contain leaven, the church must be vigilant in addressing sin, ensuring that the influence of sin is promptly dealt with. This is crucial for maintaining the holiness of the church and ensuring that the worship and service offered to God are pleasing and acceptable in His sight.

Let's further explore the teachings and regulations that stem from human intentions. During Jesus' ministry on earth, He often condemned the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees, which represented human teachings and regulations. In the church, believers must learn to respect the guidance of life. They should not rely on doctrines to convince others or use regulations to bind them, but rather, they should allow people to make mistakes within the patterns of life. Through confession and repentance, individuals can grow in life and live out a virtuous life.

To enjoy Christ as the grain offering, it must be done in a holy place, specifically within the courtyard of the tabernacle. In the Old Testament, the tabernacle had defined boundaries marked by a curtain of fine linen, enclosing an area 100 cubits long and 50 cubits wide. Within this space, on the western side, was the tabernacle itself, which contained the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place. The tabernacle measured 39 cubits in length and 10 cubits in width, while the area outside the tabernacle was known as the outer courtyard. The priests were required to eat the grain offering in this outer courtyard.

The tabernacle is a type of the New Testament church, and the church is a living organism composed of the saints. Unlike the Old Testament tabernacle, the church does not have fixed boundaries. When the saints gather together on the Lord's Day to worship and praise God, this assembly is undoubtedly the church. But what is the outer courtyard? The saints are part of the church, and the trajectory of their lives can be seen as an extension of the church. However, for an area to be considered part of the tabernacle, it must be holy and have the presence of God.

We might think of the outer courtyard as the range formed by the life trajectory of the saints, and within this range, there are specific places set apart as holy, where God's presence is real. These places can be considered the church's outer courtyard.

For example, when some saints open their homes to receive other believers and provide them with spiritual nourishment, this becomes the outer courtyard—a place where saints can enjoy the grain offering.

Dear brothers and sisters, we must seek to expand the boundaries of the church in our daily lives. The church should not only be confined to Sunday worship and service; in our everyday lives, we should regularly set apart time and places to fellowship with fellow believers, creating spiritual realities. These special times and spaces, set apart for the gathering of the saints, become the church's outer courtyard, where we can enjoy Christ as our grain offering. Otherwise, if we only partake once a week, we certainly won't grow well. May the Lord have mercy on us, so that we can experience the reality of the outer courtyard in our daily lives.

Verse 17: “It shall not be baked with leaven. I have given it as their portion of My offerings made by fire; it is most holy, like the sin offering and the trespass offering.”

When baking the grain offering, no yeast should be added. The first type of grain offering is fine flour mixed with oil and incense. The flour is still raw, and when the priests are ready to eat it, they can bake it or make it into breads. However, during the baking process, yeast must not be added. Leviticus 2:11 also tells us that honey should not be added.

The second type of grain offering is baked breads, and the third type is roasted wheat kernels, both of which can be eaten directly. These are the portions of the offerings made by fire given to the priests and are considered most holy. Leviticus 2:3 also mentions that this is most holy, "the most holy." Exodus 30:29 defines what is most holy: "Whatever touches them will become holy." Thus, the portion of the grain offering given to the priests is most holy because it sanctifies the priests as well.

In the Old Testament, the Israelites followed these regulations without fully understanding why they were considered most holy. New Testament believers,

however, understand that the grain offering represents the perfect humanity of Christ, which becomes our nourishment. By partaking of Christ, we are progressively sanctified. As Jesus says in John 6:56, "He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in them." When we abide in Christ and He in us, we naturally become holy.

Among the five basic offerings, the grain offering, sin offering, and guilt offering are all considered most holy, which is unique. These three offerings can sanctify a person. Although the burnt offering is the most important and fundamental of the offerings, its purpose is to please God and is related to God's acceptance of us. It does not inherently change us, so it is not considered most holy. The peace offering, which involves both God and people celebrating together in gratitude, focuses on the horizontal relationship and is not considered most holy either.

The grain offering, on the other hand, is actively associated with enjoying and partaking of Christ, leading to a life characterized by virtue, which is why it is most holy. The sin offering and guilt offering, which include a portion for the priests, are more about removing the hindrances of our sinful nature and actions to help us become holy, thus they are also most holy. We will explore these aspects in detail as we continue studying.

Verse 18: "All the males among the children of Aaron may eat it. It shall be a statute forever in your generations concerning the offerings made by fire to the Lord. Everyone who touches them must be holy."

The fire offerings given to God are most holy. The male descendants of Aaron, who serve as priests, are entitled to eat the remaining portion of the grain offering in the tabernacle. This portion is their inheritance forever, as it is most holy, and anyone who touches these offerings becomes holy.

In the Old Testament, this blessing was limited to Aaron's family. In the New Testament, every believer is a royal priest and part of Aaron's family. In Aaron's family, only males could serve as priests, symbolizing strength of life. Similarly,

among New Testament believers, only those with matured spiritual life can assume the priestly role.

Therefore, newly redeemed believers, though they have the priestly identity, may not yet have the strong spiritual life needed to fulfill the priestly role. They need to grow in spiritual maturity and strength before they can fully take on the priestly duties and partake of the grain offerings, which are most holy and contribute to their sanctification. God specifically promises that this is their eternal inheritance.

Dear brothers and sisters, what a wonderful promise this is. Today, as we serve in the church, each servant of God receives their portion, and this portion is eternal. Even in the New Jerusalem, we will still be able to remember the portion we received from our service in the church. May God give each of us spiritual insight to value eternal things. The relationships and connections we build on earth will fade and diminish as we depart. But the portion God promises us through our service in the church is eternal—what a blessing this is.

Let us pray together: Lord, we are so grateful to You. You lived on earth for 33 and a half years, demonstrating the highest virtues of humanity. You became the grain offering to God, satisfying Him. We are incredibly blessed to receive the provision of the grain offering through our service in the church. By enjoying and experiencing the richness of Your humanity, we also become gradually sanctified. You have promised this as our eternal portion. Help us to value this portion and be committed to serving in the church. Bless my church with a beautiful scene of mutual service among brothers and sisters. We pray this in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen!