

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

Leviticus 07: 11-18

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 7, and today we'll read from verse 11 to verse 18.

The instructions for the priests' offerings have already covered the burnt offering, grain offering, sin offering, and guilt offering. Through the help of the priests, the people first offered the burnt offering and were accepted by God. Then they offered the grain offering, which produced the manifestation of a virtuous human nature. They dealt with their inner sinful nature through the sin offering and made restitution for the external damage caused by their sinful actions through the guilt offering. Now, they reach the ultimate goal of the priests' help in offering peace offering —to bring peace between God and men.

Initially, when humanity sinned and became sinful, there was no way for people to approach God, for the holy and righteous God hates sin. However, through the offering of the burnt offering, grain offering, sin offering, and guilt offering, the problem of sin has been fully dealt with, and people can once again come before God. Peace between God and humanity has been achieved. At this point, people can offer the peace offering to God. The peace offering signifies not only peace between God and men but also a celebration and shared joy between God and men, a time of mutual enjoyment. The instructions for the peace offering are the longest, spanning from verse 11 to verse 36. Let's now read through these verses one by one.

Verse 11-12: "This is the law of the sacrifice of peace offerings which he shall offer to the Lord: If he offers it for a thanksgiving, then he shall offer, with the sacrifice of thanksgiving, unleavened cakes mixed with oil, unleavened wafers anointed with oil, or cakes of blended flour mixed with oil."

When a person wants to offer a peace offering to God, he needs the help of a priest. The priest must first clarify the purpose for which the person is offering the peace offering, as there are different ways to handle the peace offering depending on its intent. There are three possible reasons a person might offer a peace offering to God: the first is for thanksgiving, the second is for the fulfillment of a vow, and the third is a freewill offering. Leviticus 7:12 first speaks about offering a peace offering as an act of thanksgiving. We'll examine the other two purposes when we reach verse 16.

Offering a peace offering out of thanksgiving shows that the worshiper has been in a reactive position: they faced difficulties, perhaps illness, challenges at work, relational conflicts within the family, or other life circumstances. They prayed to God, and God responded by removing the difficulty. In gratitude, they offer a peace offering to God.

Regarding the animal to be sacrificed in a peace offering, Leviticus chapter 3 explains that it could be an ox, a sheep, or a goat, and it could be either male or female. However, the smallest animal that could be offered was a lamb—doves or young pigeons were not allowed because this is a joyous and celebratory offering, and a smaller sacrifice would not provide enough for a full and joyous feast.

From a spiritual perspective, when you encounter difficulties and experience God's provision, overcoming those challenges, your spiritual gain is significant enough to share with others. The smallest offering of this gain is like a lamb, meaning it is sufficient to share with others. This also reminds us to always maintain a heart of gratitude. When you experience God's grace in overcoming difficulties, you must share your testimony — this becomes your peace offering.

Even the smallest grace you experience is like a lamb. If you are mature enough and, through God's provision, you overcome challenges in situations that God permits, you can bear witness and praise His grace. At this stage, you can offer a goat as a peace offering. If you become more spiritually seasoned and seek God's perfect will in difficult situations, you can offer a ram. And if you reach an even deeper level of

maturity, where you transform your experiences into a ministry that helps others who face similar challenges, you can offer an ox as a peace offering.

In addition to the animal sacrifice, the peace offering of thanksgiving also requires a grain offering, which could be unleavened breads mixed with oil, unleavened wafers spread with oil, or breads made of fine flour with oil. It is important to note that raw flour was not acceptable; it had to be made into bread because the peace offering was part of a feast.

Aside from the portion offered to God, there was no portion for the priests, so most of it would be shared with family and friends. From a spiritual perspective, when you face difficulties, experience God's grace, and overcome them, this should produce a tangible testimony of grace in your life — symbolized by the bread in the offering. Therefore, facing challenges as a Christian is spiritually healthy, as it provides an opportunity to experience God's grace.

In this passage, three types of grain offerings are mentioned: the first is unleavened breads mixed with oil, which are made from fine flour mixed with oil and baked into thick cakes. The second is thin breads made from rolled-out fine flour, with oil spread on top, which are easier to consume. The third is thick breads made from fine flour mixed with a large amount of oil, thoroughly blended before being baked. These three types of breads contain varying amounts of oil. As we know, oil represents the Holy Spirit, indicating that during times of difficulty, the Holy Spirit provides different levels of supply, helping us to produce a consistent virtue in our humanity. In the peace offering of thanksgiving, aside from offering the sacrificial animal and these three types of breads as the grain offering, there is also something very special that must be added.

Verse 13: “Besides the breads, as his offering he shall offer leavened bread with the sacrifice of thanksgiving of his peace offering.”

This passage is indeed quite unique in that it mentions offering bread with leaven. Typically, leaven represents sin, which is why grain offerings presented to God

cannot contain leaven. In Leviticus 2:11, when grain offerings were first mentioned, God clearly revealed that "no grain offering which you bring to the Lord shall be made with leaven." However, here, leavened bread is introduced.

If you read the context carefully, this leavened bread is not part of the peace offering itself but is to be offered alongside it. The certainty remains that offerings to God cannot contain leaven. So, why is leavened bread included here? The reason is that the peace offering is a celebratory sacrifice meant to be shared with friends and family. Among those friends and family, there might be children or others who are not yet able to eat solid food. The leaven makes the bread softer and easier to eat. Here, we see God's deep kindness and consideration. He takes special care to ensure that the friends and family of the offeror, including those who may not yet be able to eat solid food, can partake. However, leavened bread cannot be placed on the altar.

In the Bible, there are only two instances where leavened bread is included in the offerings. This passage on the peace offering is the first instance, and the second instance is found in Leviticus 23:17, during the Feast of Pentecost or the Feast of Weeks, where leavened bread is also required. In both cases, the leavened bread is for the benefit of people. As for the leavened bread during Pentecost, we will explore it in more detail when we study that section. Here, the addition of leavened bread in the peace offering is entirely for the needs of people and is not meant to be placed on the altar.

Verse 14: "And from it he shall offer one bread from each offering as a heave offering to the Lord. It shall belong to the priest who sprinkles the blood of the peace offering."

In this passage, it mentions taking one bread from each offering and presenting it to the Lord as a "heave offering", which is then given to the priest who assists with the offering. There is a special mention of the sprinkling of the peace offering's blood, serving as a reminder that while it is a joyful feast, it must still be under the covering of blood. The blood of the peace offering is to be sprinkled around the

altar. Symbolically, this shows that our peace with God is entirely based on the solid foundation of Jesus Christ's salvation.

The priest assisting with the offering is entitled to a portion: one bread from each type of offering. This bread is first offered to God as a heave offering, which in Hebrew is "terumah." Although the Chinese version translates this as "heave offering", it is not burned on the altar. Instead, the priest raises it before God, and then the bread is given to the priest. The Hebrew word "terumah" can also be translated as a "contribution," which is how the NIV and ASV versions translate it. The essential meaning is that it is an offering presented to God.

The heave offering is essentially for the priests. According to the principle that various offerings and contributions are types of Christ, the act of lifting up might refer to the ascension of Jesus Christ. We can interpret it as the bread lifted up under the testimony of Christ's ascension should be given to the priests. Interestingly, one of the types of bread must be taken out, lifted up before God, and then given to the priests. According to Israelite customs, each type of bread should be offered in groups of ten, with one taken out, lifted up before God, and then given to the priests, which aligns with the principle of tithing. This includes bread with leaven as well.

This serves as a reminder to the priests that, although they are helping others offer sacrifices, they themselves are still human and retain sinful nature, thus requiring special vigilance. Particularly during the peace offering, which is a joyful feast where people are prone to relax, priests must remain alert to avoid being lax and offending God in a celebratory setting.

Verse 15: "The flesh of the sacrifice of his peace offering for thanksgiving shall be eaten the same day it is offered. He shall not leave any of it until morning."

Previously, we read that one-tenth of the offerings must go to the priests, which refers to the grain offering. What about the sacrificial animals? The fat and kidneys of the sacrificial animals are to be burned on the altar, which is for God. The meat

of the sacrificial animals, which belongs to the priests, is detailed in the last verses (31-33) of the peace offering. The remaining portion belongs entirely to the one offering the sacrifice, who must share the sacrificial meat with his family and friends. If the peace offering is made as an expression of gratitude, the meat must be eaten on the day it is offered and cannot be left until the morning. If not consumed, it must be burned, possibly for sanitary reasons to prevent spoilage. However, more importantly, the spiritual meaning is that gratitude to God should be fresh and not held over to the next day.

If we are truly grateful people, we should find many things to be thankful for each day; thus, we should offer thanksgiving and praise to God daily. Especially for New Testament Christians, experiencing God's grace in daily life means we should offer peace offerings to God, testifying to our peace with Him and fostering deeper fellowship, which leads to a closer relationship with God.

Verse 16: "But if the sacrifice of his offering is a vow or a voluntary offering, it shall be eaten the same day that he offers his sacrifice; but on the next day the remainder of it also may be eaten."

Here, we see that the second type of peace offering is for fulfilling a vow, and the third type is a voluntary offering of gratitude without any specific reciprocal expectation from God. Both of these offerings are initiated by the offeror.

A vow is made when the offeror has previously promised something to God, and upon the fulfillment of that vow, they bring a peace offering to thank God for what He has done. For example, in 1 Samuel 1, Hannah, unable to conceive, made a vow before the priest that if God gave her a son, she would dedicate him to the Lord for his whole life. Later, when God granted her request and she gave birth to Samuel, she took the child to Shiloh after weaning him to fulfill her vow and offer a peace offering.

In these examples, the first and second types of peace offerings are expressions of gratitude or fulfillment of a vow for what God has done for the offeror. The third

type of peace offering, however, is given purely out of appreciation for who God is. The offeror recognizes God's greatness, perfection, and abundance, and therefore willingly offers a peace offering simply out of gratitude, without any specific expectation.

For the second and third types of peace offerings, since they are acts of voluntary worship and deeper appreciation of God, if the meat is not finished on the day of the offering, it can be eaten the next day. This reflects a spiritual principle that actively seeking and receiving the richness of Christ can provide sustenance that lasts longer. The cost we invest in seeking God's abundance can supply us even into the next day, which is a higher level of experience compared to a passive experience of the Lord.

Verse 17-18: "The remainder of the flesh of the sacrifice on the third day must be burned with fire. And if any of the flesh of the sacrifice of his peace offering is eaten at all on the third day, it shall not be accepted, nor shall it be imputed to him; it shall be an abomination to him who offers it, and the person who eats of it shall bear guilt."

Regardless, the sacrificial meat cannot be kept until the third day. Any meat that is not eaten must be burned. The principle is that we must experience a fresh relationship with Christ and not cling to past experiences of grace without growth. God is abundant and progressive; we need to continually have fresh experiences with Him. If one eats the peace offering meat on the third day, the offering will not be accepted by God, and it will be as if the offering was made in vain.

According to the typology, the third day represents resurrection, and it must be fresh. Clinging to past grace on the third day—essentially, eating the sacrificial meat on the third day—is something that God finds abhorrent and it incurs guilt before Him. God is teaching the priests that even in the context of the peace offering, a joyful occasion, we must follow His will and adhere to His laws, and not act recklessly.

This also illustrates that experiencing God's grace must be done within His regulations because God is a God of order. We must experience the grace God has prepared for us according to His will and enjoy the peace offering feast with fellow saints.

Let us pray together: Lord, thank You for placing before us the regulations for the peace offering, clearly showing us that even when enjoying the peace offering feast before You, we must follow Your will and adhere to Your laws. Whether it is a peace offering of thanksgiving, fulfilling a vow, or a voluntary offering, we must offer the sacrificial animal and grain offering together, and include bread with leaven. We see how kind You are, considering the needs of the younger saints in the church who cannot yet handle solid food, and providing for them by specifying the inclusion of leavened bread. Lord, help us to understand Your heart, recognizing that the leavened bread reminds us of our own sinful nature and the need to live continuously in grace to overcome sin. At the same time, You show great tolerance in grace towards the younger saints, allowing them to follow You according to their measure. Bless the church I belong to, that it may be filled with such mutual understanding and tolerance among brothers and sisters, and a loving church life. I pray all these in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen!