

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

Leviticus 08:22-29

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 08:22-29.

The ordination of priests is a solemn matter. God instructed Moses, and Moses completely followed the Lord's commands in ordaining Aaron and his sons. Yesterday, we mentioned that there are seven steps in the ordination process. The first six steps are for the preparation of the individual, and the seventh step is the actual ordination. The seven steps are: cleansing the body, wearing the priestly garments, anointing the tabernacle, anointing the high priest, offering the sin offering, offering the burnt offering, and finally, the ordination itself, which involves offering the second ram.

Verse 22: "And he brought the second ram, the ram of consecration. Then Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the ram."

The second ram was for the ordination and is called the ram of consecration. The high priest, Aaron, and the priests, who were his sons, were to lay their hands on the ram's head, signifying their union with the ram.

Verse 23: "And Moses killed it. Also, he took some of its blood and put it on the tip of Aaron's right ear, on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot."

Moses first ordained the high priest. After the ram was killed, Moses took some of its blood and applied it to the tip of Aaron's right ear, symbolizing listening attentively to God's word; he applied it to the thumb of Aaron's right hand,

symbolizing doing only the work of the Lord; and to the big toe of Aaron's right foot, symbolizing walking only in the ways of the Lord.

In the Old Testament, priests came from Aaron's family, and in every generation, there would be priests succeeding Aaron as high priest. The priesthood was passed down by bloodline. In the New Testament, Jesus Christ is the common high priest for all believers, and every believer has the identity of a priest because they have received life from God.

The Old Testament priesthood was based on earthly lineage, while the New Testament priesthood is based on eternal life from God. Every believer who has the life of God and the indwelling Holy Spirit not only holds the identity of a priest but can also develop into the role of a priest.

Jesus Christ, as the high priest, lived out the reality of only listening to God's word, only doing God's work, and only walking in God's ways during His ministry on earth. He has set a perfect example for all believers who wish to fulfill their priestly duties.

Verse 24: "Then he brought Aaron's sons; and Moses put some of the blood on the tips of their right ears, on the thumbs of their right hands, and on the big toes of their right feet. And Moses sprinkled the blood all around on the altar."

Next, Moses ordained the priests. Moses likewise applied the ram's blood to the tips of the right ears, thumbs of the right hands, and big toes of the right feet of Aaron's sons, symbolizing the same spiritual significance: listening to the Lord's word, doing the Lord's work, and walking in the Lord's way. Afterward, he sprinkled the ram's blood around the altar.

If we carefully examine how this ram of consecration was handled, we will notice that it largely followed the rules of the peace offering, with some additional details related to the ordination. Applying blood to the priest's right ear, thumb, and toe emphasizes that the priest's service must be centered on the Lord and fully submitted to His guidance, which is extremely important. However, the entire

offering process followed the peace offering regulations, pointing out some fundamental truths.

We know that the peace offering is an offering of thanksgiving, and this teaches us two things. First, the very fact that we can serve as priests, to serve God and to serve people, is an act of grace. We were once dead in our trespasses and sins, but through the redeeming grace of Jesus Christ, we have been brought to life. Now, He has also given us the role to serve Him and His church, which is indeed a great grace.

Second, the priestly service is an act of thanksgiving to God, just as the peace offering symbolizes. The motivation for a priest's service to God is simple and pure: to give thanks to God, not for personal gain, applause, or livelihood, but out of gratitude for the grace we have received.

If every person serving God can have such pure motives, the relationships among coworkers will naturally be harmonious. Many of the difficulties in the church arise when coworkers have impure motives: some aim to build their own influence, others seek personal gain, or pursue applause from the crowd. As a result, it becomes impossible for coworkers to work together in harmony.

May God have mercy on us and help us understand that serving Him is entirely by His grace. We must serve with a heart of gratitude. Not only should priests perform their duties with a heart of thanksgiving to God, which is connected to the peace offering, but the very path of fulfilling their priestly duties is also linked to the peace offering. The purpose of the peace offering is to bring about peace between God and man, allowing for an intimate relationship with God. Therefore, the peace offering is also called the fellowship offering.

Every priest fulfilling their duty must establish an intimate fellowship with God. In this close fellowship, they can understand God's will, clearly discern His guidance, and receive the commission from the Lord. Understanding the ordination ceremony is fundamentally about offering a peace offering.

The next passage may seem familiar because we already read about it in chapter 7. In that chapter, the priests were helping the Israelites offer peace offerings. In the peace offering, there is a portion that belongs to God, a portion that belongs to the priests, and a portion that belongs to the offeror. In the ordination peace offering, Moses was offering on behalf of the priests. Therefore, there are some differences in the portions belonging to God, Moses, and the priests. We need to pay special attention to these differences and understand their spiritual significance.

Verse 25: “Then he took the fat, the fat tail, all the fat that was on the entrails, the fatty lobe attached to the liver, the two kidneys and their fat, and the right thigh.”

First, we look at the portion that belongs to God, which is to be burned on the altar, creating a pleasing aroma to God. Here, the fat is removed, which includes the fat that covers the entrails, the fatty lobe attached to the liver, and the two kidneys and their fat. The fat tail is also removed, as the ram being offered has a tail rich in fat, so the entire tail is to be offered as fat. Lastly, the right thigh is included, which is a unique part.

Normally, in the priests' peace offerings, the right thigh belonged to the priest who made the offering. But now, it is to be burned on the altar and given to God. We know that in the peace offerings the priests offered for the people, the right thigh belonged to the offering priest, symbolizing that the priest receives strength for service. Now, the right thigh is burned on the altar and given to God, signifying that the source of the priest's strength comes from God. When the priest is being ordained, the portion they will receive in the future must first be given to God, meaning it must first pass through God's hand. As they offer to God and receive their priesthood from Him, it shows that their strength for service comes from God.

Verse 26: “And from the basket of unleavened bread that was before the Lord, he took one unleavened cake, a cake of bread anointed with oil, and one wafer, and put them on the fat and on the right thigh.”

In addition to the right thigh, the grain offering that accompanies the peace offering includes three types of unleavened bread: plain unleavened bread, unleavened bread mixed with oil, and unleavened wafers anointed with oil. These breads are placed in a basket, and one of each is taken out and placed on the fat and the right thigh. If we read the regulations in chapter 7 regarding the peace offering, these three breads were originally for the offering priest. But now, in the ordination ceremony, these three breads are added to the fat and the right thigh and burned on the altar as a fragrant offering to God.

The spiritual meaning is similar to that of the right thigh, indicating that the source of the priest’s human virtues also comes from God. When they begin their priestly service, offering peace offerings for the people, one of each of the unleavened breads, oil-mixed bread, and oil-anointed wafers is given to the priest. When the priest eats the unleavened bread, they grow in human virtues. But in the ordination ceremony, these three breads must first be burned on the altar and given to God, signifying that everything belonging to the priest must first be offered to God. In the future, when they serve, the sanctifying power from the grain offering will come from God.

Verse 27: “And you shall put all these in the hands of Aaron and in the hands of his sons, and you shall wave them as a wave offering before the Lord.”

The offerings and sacrifices to be burned on the altar must first be placed in the hands of Aaron and his sons. We previously mentioned that these are many offerings and sacrifices, including the fat that covers the entrails, the fatty lobe attached to the liver, the kidneys and their fat, the fat tail, the right thigh, and the unleavened bread, oil-mixed bread, and oil-anointed wafers. These offerings and sacrifices are to fill the hands of Aaron and his sons.

The term "ordination" in Hebrew literally means "to fill the hands." Now, Aaron and his sons indeed have their hands full. They must then wave these offerings before the Lord as a wave offering. The wave offering symbolizes Christ's resurrection and also signifies that the priests are offering these full-handed sacrifices and offerings to God in the newness of resurrection life. By presenting this wave offering, their hands are full, and they are now beginning their priestly duties.

Verse 28: "Then Moses took them from their hands and burned them on the altar on top of the burnt offering. They were ordination offerings for a pleasing aroma, an offering made by fire to the Lord."

Moses took the offerings from their hands and burned them entirely on the altar of burnt offering. The ordination ceremony began with the sin offering, followed by the burnt offering, and finally the peace offering, which was burned on top of the burnt offering altar. This signifies that being accepted by God is the foundation for the peace offering. Moses took all these offerings and sacrifices and burned them on the altar, making them a pleasing aroma to the Lord.

The fat, fat tail, and the two kidneys were always meant to be burned on the altar as God's portion. However, the right thigh and the three types of unleavened bread, which usually belonged to the offering priest in a peace offering, were now being burned on the altar as part of the ordination ceremony.

This signifies that, when the priests are ordained, the portion they would later receive when offering peace offerings for the people must first be given to God. The priest's service must prioritize God's satisfaction above all else. This serves as a reminder that before priests serve the people, they must first seek to please God, always putting God first. Only then can priests hear God's voice, do His work, and walk in His ways.

Verse 29: “And Moses took the breast and waved it as a wave offering before the Lord. It was Moses' share of the ram of ordination, as the Lord commanded Moses.”

Moses took the breast of the ram and waved it as a wave offering before the Lord. Normally, in peace offerings offered for the people, the breast belonged to Aaron and the priests. But since Moses was offering on behalf of the priests during the ordination ceremony, the breast was designated as Moses' portion. The verse concludes with a special note that all this was done as the Lord had commanded Moses.

Dear brothers and sisters, God places such great importance on the ordination of priests, showing us that serving in the church is no small matter. We must first be properly prepared, and when we are ordained, we must place God first, listen to His voice, do His work, and walk in His ways. May God help us in this.

Let us pray together: Lord, thank You. In the New Testament, You are the one and only High Priest. During Your time on earth, You fulfilled Your duties and set a beautiful example of service for us. May You bless my church and prepare for me companions who have a pure heart for You. May we learn to serve together and fulfill our priestly duties together. Help us put Christ first in all things. Bless the work of our hands, that it may glorify You and benefit others. In Jesus Christ's name we pray.