

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

Leviticus 24:5-9

Dear brothers and sisters, peace be with you, this is Hwa-Chi. Thank the Lord for bringing us once again to our time of Bible study. Today, we will continue with Leviticus 24, verses 5 to 9.

The feasts of the Lord reveal God's eternal purpose for humanity: that people may enjoy rest before Him. True rest for each person begins inwardly. If a person's heart is restless, even if they do nothing outwardly, they will still lack rest. The first step for a person to enter rest is to light the lamp in the sanctuary. This signifies igniting the lamp of life within the soul, allowing Christ to become the light of our life. This light illuminates our soul so that we can find genuine rest in Christ.

After lighting the lamp, it must also be tended. On one hand, this is the work of the high priest; on the other hand, it requires our cooperation. Tending the lamp includes adding oil and trimming the wick. Adding oil means being filled with the Holy Spirit in our spirit and allowing this fullness to overflow into our soul, enabling the Holy Spirit to govern our mind, emotions, and will. Trimming the wick refers to accepting the work of the cross in our lives, removing the flesh and natural elements from our old self.

Today, we will examine the second step to finding rest, which is to properly partake of the showbread. In the New Testament, the application of the showbread is that Jesus Christ becomes our provision. In John 6:51, Jesus says, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world." This clearly tells us that to have life, we must eat Jesus' flesh. What is Jesus' flesh? Jesus explains this in John 6:63, "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life." Thus, God's Word is our spiritual nourishment, and the showbread represents Jesus Christ as the supply for our life. More precisely, it is the words of Jesus Christ that become our spiritual food. With this foundational understanding, let us consider how we

can properly partake of the showbread—that is, how we can appropriate God's Word to attain eternal rest.

Verse 5: "And you shall take fine flour and bake twelve cakes with it. Two-tenths of an ephah shall be in each cake."

Fine flour symbolizes the tender and pure humanity of Jesus Christ. Using fine flour as an ingredient requires processing, which is then baked into bread. The bread takes on a defined shape, signifying the spiritual character that grows in someone after they partake of Christ's abundant provision, which then manifests outwardly as the bread. The process of baking the bread represents the Holy Spirit's work in us, often through the cross, shaping us to display the character of Jesus Christ outwardly.

The bread is baked into twelve loaves, which, at the time, represented the twelve tribes of Israel. Through the giving of the law, the Israelites adhered to God's commandments and became His testimony in the Old Testament. The number twelve signifies completeness, indicating a complete testimony. Each tribe participated, as God's law was for all the people of Israel. In the New Testament, Matthew 5:17 tells us, "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill." Christ came to replace and fulfill the Old Testament law. Before His ascension, Jesus entrusted His disciples with the mission of spreading the gospel and bearing witness to Him. These twelve apostles became representatives of all New Testament saints. This means that all New Testament believers are to be formed by Christ's Word and become His testimony.

The number twelve is an eternal number, symbolizing perfection in eternity. In eternity, there are the Old Testament saints represented by the twelve tribes of Israel, and the New Testament saints represented by the twelve apostles. Revelation 21:12 and 21:14 describe the composition of the New Jerusalem: "Also she had a great and high wall with twelve gates, and twelve angels at the gates, and names written on them, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel" (21:12) and "Now the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on

them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb" (21:14). Thus, in the future eternity, the New Jerusalem will include all the saints from both the Old and New Testaments.

Each loaf was made with two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour. An ephah equals 22 liters, so two-tenths of an ephah is 4.4 liters, a considerable quantity, producing loaves of significant size. In 1 Samuel 21, when David fled from Saul and arrived in Nob, he asked the priest for food as there was none. The priest provided the showbread that had been removed. 1 Samuel 21:6 states, "So the priest gave him holy bread; for there was no bread there but the showbread which had been taken from before the Lord, in order to put hot bread in its place on the day when it was taken away." David took five loaves, which was sufficient to feed himself and his companions, indicating the substantial size of the showbread.

Each loaf was two-tenths of an ephah, totaling twenty-four-tenths for all twelve loaves. Notably, the unit of measure here is one-tenth of an ephah, signifying that each individual's capacity is limited. No one can fully bear witness to Jesus Christ. However, when combined, the total is twenty-four units. Twelve symbolizes the Old Testament testimony of Israel, and another twelve symbolizes the New Testament testimony of the church. These twelve loaves encompass the complete testimony of God's saints from both the Old and New Testaments.

Verse 6: "You shall set them in two rows, six in a row, on the pure gold table before the Lord."

The twelve loaves were arranged in two rows of six. The word translated as "row" can also mean "stack," indicating two stacks of six loaves each. Since the loaves were so large, stacking them was necessary to fit them on the table. The number two symbolizes testimony, signifying that receiving the supply of God's Word is meant to manifest His testimony. This aligns with Jesus' command to His disciples before His ascension. In Acts 1:8, Jesus said, "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." Jesus called His disciples, and

by extension all New Testament believers, to bear witness to Him throughout the world.

The showbread was placed on the pure gold table before the Lord. According to Exodus 25:23–30, the table's dimensions were two cubits long, one cubit wide, and one and a half cubits high. It was made of acacia wood overlaid with pure gold. Acacia wood represents Christ's humanity, while pure gold represents His divinity. During His earthly ministry, Jesus outwardly appeared as a man, like a root out of dry ground, with no form or comeliness, akin to acacia wood. Yet within, He was the second person of the Holy Trinity, the glorious Son of God, represented by pure gold.

During His earthly ministry, Jesus' manifestation was akin to the showbread table. However, after His death, resurrection, and ascension to the heavens, His divinity was fully revealed in glory. His humanity was elevated and brought to the throne in Him. Jesus began His heavenly ministry, which includes His humanity to sympathize with our weaknesses and His glory as the divine Son, represented by pure gold.

Thus, Jesus Christ's heavenly ministry as the great High Priest is depicted as acacia wood overlaid with gold. The two stacks of showbread on the golden table illustrate that the church's testimony today relies on the preservation and blessing of Christ's heavenly ministry. His work in heaven forms the foundation and support for the church's testimony.

Verse 7: "And you shall put pure frankincense on each row, that it may be on the bread for a memorial, an offering made by fire to the Lord."

The pure frankincense symbolizes the resurrection of Christ. Each of the two stacks of bread must have frankincense placed on top. Frankincense is not for human consumption but must be burned on the altar, creating a fragrant aroma as an offering made by fire to the Lord, thereby satisfying God. Some commentators believe that the frankincense was held in golden cups and placed atop the

showbread. As previously mentioned, Christ's heavenly ministry supports the testimony of the church. Here, we see that Christ's resurrection also serves as the covering for the church's testimony. The frankincense must be burned on the altar so that the entire church may be acceptable to God and bring Him satisfaction.

Dear brothers and sisters, the testimony of the church's life must exist within the resurrection of Christ. Because Christ has already triumphed—over sin, the world, the flesh, death, and the power of Hades—the church's testimony, under the covering of Christ's resurrection, can likewise overcome sin, the world, and the flesh, and transcend death and the dominion of Hades. Only such a testimony of church life is pleasing to God.

Verse 8: "Every Sabbath he shall set it in order before the Lord continually, being taken from the children of Israel by an everlasting covenant."

The bread must be set in order before the Lord every Sabbath, which means the old showbread is removed and replaced with fresh bread on that day. This shows that bearing testimony for Jesus Christ must remain fresh every week, with new bread prepared on the Sabbath. True testimony arises out of rest.

We often mistakenly think that working harder for the Lord makes us His witnesses, but that is not the testimony God desires. Human work often involves too much flesh and natural effort. We may believe we are working for the Lord but fail to realize that it is our old self, busily laboring in ways that do not please God. True testimony involves allowing the Lord to work in us as we work for Him.

God's work in us can only manifest as His testimony when we rest before Him. This means that the fruit of the Spirit, produced through the work of the cross in our lives, becomes the testimony God desires. God's testimony is not about the size of the work or the grandeur of the church building but about the manifestation of the fruit of the Spirit in your life. This testimony becomes an everlasting covenant for Israel.

Initially, the Old Testament Israelites kept God's law and became His witnesses under the Old Covenant. When Israel failed, God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to the lost sheep of Israel. Only a small remnant of Israel accepted the gospel, opening the way for the New Testament church to begin bearing witness to Christ. Because most Israelites rejected the gospel, it turned to the Gentiles, and many churches were established among them.

The New Testament church becomes the "new Israel" or the "true Israel," temporarily taking the place of Israel until Jesus Christ returns. When the church is raptured, it will become God's heavenly people. The remaining Israelites will repent and be saved as a whole, continuing to bear witness to Jesus Christ. During the Millennial Kingdom, they will become a kingdom of priests, leading all nations to worship God. According to God's eternal plan, this truly becomes an everlasting covenant for Israel.

Verse 9: "And it shall be for Aaron and his sons, and they shall eat it in a holy place; for it is most holy to him from the offerings of the Lord made by fire, by a perpetual statute."

The bread removed from the table is reserved for Aaron and his sons as their food. They must eat it in a holy place because the frankincense on the bread, as an offering made by fire to the Lord, makes it holy. Although the showbread is not burned on the altar, the presence of frankincense makes it "most holy." Being "most holy" means that anything or anyone that comes into contact with it must also become holy. The showbread serves as food for the priests, and by eating it in a holy place, the priests themselves are sanctified and set apart for God. This becomes a perpetual statute.

The same principle applies in the New Testament. Although New Testament believers no longer observe the Sabbath, on the Lord's Day (Sunday), we remember Christ's resurrection. During Jesus' gatherings with His disciples after His resurrection, He ate and drank with them, as recorded in Luke 24:46-48: "Then He said to them, 'Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer

and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And you are witnesses of these things.'" New Testament believers are to break bread on the Lord's Day to remember the Lord and bear witness to Him.

Every Lord's Day gathering is akin to the Old Testament priests gathering. We eat the showbread together, receiving Christ's provision, and offer fresh experiences as a renewed testimony. Week after week, this is the path for Christian growth. Dear brothers and sisters, the Bible tells us not to forsake assembling together. May every Lord's Day gathering be an opportunity for saints to be spiritually nourished and to present themselves as a living sacrifice, becoming a brighter and stronger testimony for God. This is God's commission to the church.

Let us pray together: Dear Lord Jesus, You are the heavenly manna who provides for our daily needs. Bless the church I belong to, that every Lord's Day gathering would be richly supplied with Your Word; let every saint who comes be spiritually nourished and willing to offer their bodies as a collective living sacrifice. May the testimony of the church grow brighter and stronger. Bless the church I belong to. I pray in the holy name of the Lord Jesus Christ.