

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

**Leviticus 24: 10-16**

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 23, and today we'll read from verse 15 to verse 22.

Man's rest comes from within. When the lamp of life is lit in a person's soul and regularly maintained, it drives out the darkness within, along with the accompanying fear and anxiety. The next step is to enjoy Christ as the bread of life in the soul. With abundant weekly supply and the production of renewed testimony, one's inner being fully enjoys rest.

When there is inner rest, the external environment must also be properly managed to prevent disturbances. Today, the world is still under the sway of the evil one, filled with injustice and unrighteousness, making it difficult for people to find rest. However, God has prepared a suitable environment for His people to rest. In the time of Moses, it was the camp of Israel, surrounding God's tabernacle. In David's time, it expanded to the holy city of Jerusalem, surrounding God's temple. Today, in the New Testament era, it is the church, surrounding the testimony of Christ.

In the Old Testament, God maintained the environment in which the Israelites lived through the law, creating an atmosphere of righteousness, fairness, and justice, allowing their rest to remain undisturbed. In the New Testament, it is Christ's commandments that uphold the church's operation, fostering a spirit of love among brothers and sisters so that New Testament believers can find rest within the church. Today, we will study an event that disrupted the rest of God's people. We will see how God instructed Moses to handle the situation and learn together how this can be applied in the New Testament church.

**Verse 10: “Now the son of an Israelite woman, whose father was an Egyptian, went out among the children of Israel; and this Israelite woman’s son and a man of Israel fought each other in the camp.”**

There was a son of an Israelite woman whose father was an Egyptian. By lineage, this son was considered Egyptian. Perhaps he was born while the Israelites were still in Egypt. The passage does not mention his father, who may have passed away or left the family early. When Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt, this son followed his mother and mingled among the Israelites. According to Exodus 12:37-38, when the Israelites departed, there were 600,000 men on foot, along with many others, including a mixed multitude. This son might have been part of this group.

This son of the Israelite woman got into a physical struggle (wrestling, fighting) with another Israelite in the camp. The Hebrew term used for "struggle" implies a violent confrontation, involving physical conflict. Since this fight occurred in the camp, which surrounded the Tabernacle—the place of God’s presence—it must have drawn significant attention from the people around them.

**Verse 11: “And the Israelite woman’s son blasphemed the name of the Lord and cursed; and so they brought him to Moses. (His mother’s name was Shelomith the daughter of Dibri, of the tribe of Dan.)”**

The passage does not tell us the reason for their quarrel, so we cannot judge who was right or wrong. At most, this incident was a civil dispute that could have been resolved by the Israelite officials through a fair judgment. The guilty party would compensate, and the other party would accept the compensation, bringing the matter to a peaceful resolution. It should have been an easy issue to settle. However, during the struggle, the son of the Israelite woman not only blasphemed but also cursed the name of God. This turned the matter into a serious offense. He broke the third commandment from the Ten Commandments, recorded in Exodus 20:7, "You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain." When someone violates God's commandments, it goes beyond a civil matter that Israelite officials can handle. He

violated God's law and sinned against God. Therefore, the witnesses brought him to Moses.

The Scripture highlights the name of his mother, Shilomith. Shilomith means "peaceful." She was the daughter of Dibri from the tribe of Dan. Dibri means "the word," suggesting that he was skilled in speech. Mentioning their names emphasizes that this was a real incident. Ironically, though Dibri from the tribe of Dan was eloquent, and his daughter was known for being peaceful, her marriage to an Egyptian produced a son who was not peaceful. He engaged in a fight and blasphemed God's name, leading to his being brought before Moses.

This incident reveals the consequences of an Israelite woman marrying an Egyptian, resulting in a son who violated God's law. God's people are meant to be separate from the world. When they unite with the world, it often leads to ungodly descendants. However, this is not a racial issue but a matter of faith. In the New Testament, we see an example with Timothy, a young co-worker of Paul. His mother was Jewish, and his father was Greek. Timothy's mother, being devout, brought him before God from a young age and taught him God's Word, making him an essential co-worker in Paul's ministry. Therefore, parents must strive to provide appropriate spiritual guidance and upbringing for their children from an early age to raise godly offspring.

**Verse 12: "Then they put him in custody, that the mind of the Lord might be shown to them."**

It is evident that when this man was brought to Moses, even Moses did not know how to handle the situation. If he were an Israelite, Moses could have dealt with him according to God's law, as the law had already been given to the Israelites and they were commanded to obey it. Those who violated the law could be judged by Moses according to God's commandments. However, this man was not an Israelite—he was an Egyptian. If this incident had occurred outside the camp, away from where God's people dwelled, it would have been easier to handle. Since it would have happened beyond the jurisdiction of God's law, it would not have

affected the Israelites' rest. In that case, Moses would not have had to intervene, as God could handle the situation directly. The issue, however, was that a Gentile had blasphemed and cursed God's name within the camp where God's people lived, thereby defiling the community. How should this be addressed? Moses did not know, so he waited for the LORD's instruction.

Dear brothers and sisters, Moses' "not knowing" demonstrated great wisdom. He understood that God's law was given specifically to the people of Israel and should not be applied to Gentiles. In today's terms, Christ's teachings are given to the church and do not need to be imposed on those outside the church. This distinction helps to maintain a clear separation between the church and the world. However, on the other hand, this Gentile had entered the camp of the Israelites and blasphemed God's name within it, which indeed affected the Israelites. How should they handle such a case involving a Gentile? Since God had not previously given instructions regarding such a situation, Moses wisely refrained from making any decisions on his own authority.

Dear brothers and sisters, this also reminds us that if unbelieving Gentiles frequently come in and out of the church, it can present a challenge for the church. Modern churches, in an effort to attract people, often intentionally blur the line between the church and the world to avoid making visitors uncomfortable and unwilling to return. However, this approach is inappropriate because the church's purpose is to bear witness to Jesus Christ.

We should live the church life according to the commands of Jesus Christ. If outsiders come into our midst and do not understand, we can explain and use the opportunity to share the gospel, clarifying the distinction between the church and the world. If someone chooses to continue coming, it shows that God's grace is already working in their lives. The church should not resemble the world. Maintaining the church's distinctiveness from the world allows seekers to recognize Christ through this difference and understand the work of the gospel in the lives of believers.

**Verse 13-14: “And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, ‘Take outside the camp him who has cursed; then let all who heard him lay their hands on his head, and let all the congregation stone him.’”**

Moses sought the Lord and waited for His instruction. When the time came, God commanded Moses to take the man who had cursed the holy name outside the camp, meaning outside the realm of God's presence. Then, those who had heard him were to lay their hands on his head. This action carried two meanings: first, it served as a public testimony that this man had indeed blasphemed God's name; second, it symbolized that the sin of cursing God, which had defiled the hearers, was being transferred back to the blasphemer. Finally, the entire congregation was to stone him to death.

Here we see three steps in God's execution of judgment:

1. Separation from the presence of God: The man was taken outside the camp.
2. Testimony and the transfer of guilt: The witnesses laid their hands on his head.
3. Execution of judgment: The congregation stoned him.

God showed no tolerance for this act. Although the man was not an Israelite, he had entered the dwelling place of the Israelites, where God's presence resided, and he was obligated to respect and uphold God's holiness. He could not defile what was sacred to God.

God's love for His people is evident: He not only desires holiness among His people but also in the place where they dwell. Dear brothers and sisters, the church today is no different. We must strive to maintain the holiness of the church. Inappropriate words should not be spoken, and improper actions must not be taken. If someone deliberately violates the church's sanctity, they should be asked to leave immediately.

God's house is indeed full of love and mercy, but this is extended to those who are willing to repent and accept grace. For those who intentionally bring impurity into

the church, we must remain vigilant and ensure the church is kept separate. The church is the house of God, a place where God's children worship and praise Him. Any defilement in the church contradicts God's holiness and cannot be tolerated.

**Verse 15-16: "Then you shall speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'Whoever curses his God shall bear his sin. And whoever blasphemes the name of the Lord shall surely be put to death. All the congregation shall certainly stone him, the stranger as well as him who is born in the land. When he blasphemes the name of the Lord, he shall be put to death.'"**

After this case, God instructed Moses to tell the Israelites that anyone who curses God will bear their sin. Whoever blasphemes the name of the Lord must be put to death, and the entire congregation is to stone them. This applies equally to Israelites and foreigners residing among them. The moment someone blasphemes the Lord's name, they are to be put to death.

Dear brothers and sisters, may we all learn to honor God's house as a holy place, one that must not harbor anything impure. Every week, God's children gather in His house to worship and praise Him. If there are improper things in God's house, they can become stumbling blocks for His children. Jesus said in Matthew 18:6, "But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea." Therefore, we must strive to follow Christ's command to keep God's house holy, ensuring that no one in our worship is caused to stumble. In this way, God's children can find rest and peace within the church.

Let us pray together: Lord, thank You. Not only do You desire rest within us, but You also prepare an environment of peace where we can live and move without disturbance. Bless my church to be one set apart from the world, where Your name is exalted and Your children can rest in Your presence. I pray this in the holy name of my Lord Jesus Christ. Amen!