

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

Hebrews 13: 10-14

Brothers and sisters, peace be with you, this is Hwa-Chi. Thank the Lord, it's time to read the bible again. This week, we are going to read Hebrews Chapter 13, and today we will read verses 10-14.

Living a life of love is most importantly about obeying the new commandment that Jesus Christ gave to the church: "You shall love one another." When the saints live in a church life filled with mutual love, seekers who come to the church will say, "Truly, God is among you." This is the most direct and effective way to evangelize. Moreover, after people are saved, they will naturally integrate into church life. However, for every saint to truly love their brothers and sisters, two prerequisites must be met: First, they must know how to love themselves; second, they must love God. Loving oneself requires abstaining from immorality and greed: Immorality corrupts one's own body, making it impossible for the Holy Spirit to dwell in them. Greed prevents a person from building proper relationships with others.

Loving God begins with honoring the pastors and ministers who have served you in the past—remembering how they devoted themselves to serving you, imitating their love, and carefully observing their end result. Jesus Christ is now fulfilling His role as the great High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary. Just as He has shepherded, led, and perfected them into a beautiful testimony, He will do the same for you. For Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Jesus Christ never changes.

To walk on the right path of truth, do not be led astray by strange teachings. Every minister who serves according to God's will leads people to God and helps them learn to follow Christ on their own. This is the best way to resist strange doctrines. Following this, from verses 10 to 14, the scripture teaches us how to follow Jesus Christ.

Verse 10: “We have an altar from which those who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat.”

Yesterday, we already read this verse—our altar is Jesus' cross. Jesus offered His own body as a sacrifice, completing the great work of redemption for us. He also prepared the Lord's Table for us, so that we may eat the bread and drink the cup every week in remembrance of His death until His return. Christ has become our daily spiritual food. This is the privilege of New Testament believers—something that even the priests who served in the tabernacle were not allowed to eat. This is what we discussed yesterday. Today, we will read this verse from a different perspective.

Jesus' crucifixion was a fulfillment of the Old Testament sin offering. In the Old Testament, the priests regularly offered sacrifices on behalf of the people. Except for the burnt offering, which was entirely burned on the altar as a pleasing aroma to God, the priests were given a portion of the other offerings to eat. They could partake of these sacrifices and offerings in the Holy Place. However, on the Day of Atonement, the high priest had to offer a special sin offering—a sacrifice in which he himself could not partake. This sin offering foreshadowed Jesus' crucifixion. The blood of those Old Testament sacrifices could only cover sin but could not remove it. That is why the high priest had to offer this special sin offering every year on the Day of Atonement. When we understand this perspective, we can follow the author's reasoning into verse 11.

Verse 11: “For the bodies of those animals, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned outside the camp.”

The sin offering that the high priest presented on the Day of Atonement was a major event for the Israelites in the Old Testament. The ritual was highly complex, as recorded in Leviticus 16. Saints should review Leviticus 16 in their daily Bible reading to grasp the details of the offering. Here, we will follow the author's line of thought and highlight the key points he seeks to clarify. When the high priest offered the sin offering, he had to bring the blood of the sacrifice into the Holy Place.

In Leviticus 16:14, the high priest had to first atone for his own sins by offering a bull as a sin offering. He would slaughter the bull and take its blood into the Most Holy Place, sprinkling it on and in front of the mercy seat.

Then, in Leviticus 16:15, it says: "Then he shall kill the goat of the sin offering, which is for the people, bring its blood inside the veil, do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bull, and sprinkle it on the mercy seat and before the mercy seat." The mercy seat was made of pure gold and placed as the cover of the Ark of the Covenant. On either side of the mercy seat stood two cherubim with outstretched wings, facing downward toward the mercy seat.

Underneath the mercy seat was the Ark of the Covenant, which contained: A golden jar of manna, The two stone tablets of the Law given to Moses, Aaron's rod that budded. The act of sprinkling blood on the mercy seat was performed in the presence of the cherubim as a testimony. This ritual temporarily covered the people's sins against God's commandments through the blood of the sacrificial animal. It satisfied God's righteousness, holiness, and glory—but only for one year.

Additionally, the body of the sacrificial animal had to be burned outside the camp. In Leviticus 16:27-28, it states: "The bull for the sin offering and the goat for the sin offering, whose blood was brought in to make atonement in the Holy Place, shall be carried outside the camp. And they shall burn in the fire their skins, their flesh, and their offal. Then he who burns them shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water, and afterward he may come into the camp." Because the bull and goat bore the sins of the people, their bodies became unclean and had to be taken outside the camp and burned with fire. The person who burned them also became unclean from contact with sin and had to wash his clothes and bathe his body before re-entering the camp. All these Old Testament rituals were foreshadowing Christ.

Verse 12: "Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered outside the gate."

The sacrificial animals offered on the Day of Atonement in the Old Testament could not remove sin permanently. This is why the high priest had to offer the sin offering every year—a foreshadowing of Jesus Christ. In Hebrews 9:12, it says: "Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption." Jesus offered Himself as a sacrifice, and with His own blood, He once and for all accomplished eternal redemption. This is the work that Jesus Christ has already completed.

Then, in Hebrews 10:10, it says: "By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." This verse speaks about our relationship with Christ. If we are willing to believe in Jesus and accept His completed redemption, we will be sanctified through Him. Jesus shed His own blood to sanctify the people, and therefore, He suffered outside the city gate.

During the last week of His earthly ministry, Jesus was like the Passover Lamb, going through examination: Three times before the Jewish council and three times before the Roman court. Finally, Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor, publicly declared: "I find no fault in this Man." This was an official declaration that Jesus was without blemish, proving that He was qualified to be offered as the sin offering for the people. Just as the sin offering had to be burned outside the camp, Jesus also carried His cross and walked outside the city to Golgotha, where He was crucified. During this process, He was: Scourged, Mocked, and Insulted. Ultimately, He was judged by the Father because the sins of all people were laid upon Him.

After He breathed His last, He descended into Hades. Just like the sin offering, He was cut apart, stripped, and consumed. This was His suffering as the Son of Man, offering Himself as a sacrifice and bearing the punishment for our sins. However, He is also the Son of God—He is Life, and He is Resurrection. On the third day, He broke the power of death and rose from the dead. On the morning of His resurrection, just like the firstfruits of the harvest, He had to be offered to God. In a hidden ascension, He entered the heavenly sanctuary and sprinkled His blood on the mercy seat. God accepted this offering, and through Him, a new and living way was opened: So that all who believe in Him can approach God's throne of grace with

boldness. Not only to be justified and reconciled to God. But also to receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

The Order of Jesus' Completed Redemption: He first went outside the city – There, He suffered, was crucified, and shed His precious blood, bearing the punishment for our sins. He died, was buried, and entered Hades – He fully experienced every step of death. This was a complete substitution for us, for without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sins. Death could not hold Him – After three days, He rose from the dead and ascended into the Most Holy Place in heaven, where He finished the work of eternal atonement before the mercy seat. Because of this, we can now stand before God as holy and righteous. However, for each of us who are saved, our first step begins at the mercy seat in the heavenly sanctuary. Through the redemption completed by Jesus Christ, when we believe, we are justified by God.

Verse 13: “Therefore let us go forth to Him, outside the camp, bearing His reproach.”

Every saint's starting point is from within the veil. What is our “veil”? It is our spirit. At the very moment we believed and were saved, our spirit was quickened—we were born again, and the Holy Spirit came to dwell within us. Through the Holy Spirit, we have entered the Most Holy Place in heaven, where we stand before the mercy seat, are justified by God, and reconciled with Him. At first, we may not fully understand the precious treasure we have received. However, this experience of coming before the throne of grace must happen again and again in our Christian life.

Only through repeated experiences do we begin to recognize the true value of this heavenly treasure. Even if we have not yet fully experienced it, we still need to know about it beforehand, so that when the time comes, we can draw from it.

The Three Spiritual Treasures Under the Mercy Seat: In the Old Testament, these treasures were physical objects placed inside the Ark of the Covenant. But in the New Testament, they are now spiritual realities:

1. The Golden Pot of Manna – This represents God's Word, our hidden manna. The Scriptures we read daily are preserved by God in our hearts. At the right time, His Word will supply and sustain us.
2. The Two Stone Tablets of the Law – These become the Law of the Spirit of Life within us. From within our spirit, this regulates our lives, ensuring that our conduct aligns with God's ways.
3. Aaron's Rod That Budded – This helps us experience death and resurrection through trials. Through difficulties, we learn to reign in life, walking in spiritual authority.

These three lessons are lifelong. They help us grow and mature spiritually. Entering the veil is both the beginning of our Christian life and the starting point of our daily walk.

The next step is to go outside the camp and bear the reproach of Jesus. Jesus went outside the camp to suffer to complete redemption. The camp was where God's Old Testament people lived and gathered. But when Jesus came to His own, they did not recognize Him. Instead, they rejected Him, persecuted Him, and sentenced Him to death. So, Jesus bore His cross and went outside the camp to finish redemption. We must follow Jesus outside the camp.

Paul says in Colossians 1:24, "I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for the sake of His body, which is the church." After Jesus completed redemption, resurrected, and ascended. He entrusted His disciples with the work of building the church. The early apostles suffered for the church to fill up what was lacking in Christ's afflictions. They set a beautiful example for us to follow. Thus, we must also follow Jesus outside the camp, bearing His reproach. What is "Our Camp" Today? Jesus left the camp because Israel had fallen into religious traditions and worldly influences: The scribes and Pharisees were bound by religious rules. The priests and Sadducees were entangled in worldly power. Jesus rejected both, took up His cross, and separated from religion and the world.

Today, we must also take up our cross and follow Jesus outside the camp. When we enter within the veil and stand before the mercy seat: We eat the hidden manna. We obey the law of the Spirit of life. We allow resurrection life to reign in us. We recognize Christ as the Head of the Church. However, if worldly influences—such as political compromises, human organizations, or financial interests—enter the church, the church becomes a camp that is no longer centered on Christ but on idols.

In Exodus 32, Israel worshipped the golden calf inside the camp. Moses broke the tablets and judged those who led Israel into idolatry. Then, in Exodus 33:7: "Moses took his tent and pitched it outside the camp, far from the camp, and called it the tabernacle of meeting. And everyone who sought the Lord went out to the tabernacle of meeting which was outside the camp." Moses moved his tent outside the camp to separate himself from idolatry.

Dear brothers and sisters, when a church begins to pursue worldly glory, fame, wealth, and political influence, it is almost inevitable that spiritual decline will occur without realization. As a result, it becomes like the church of Laodicea in Revelation 3, which thinks it is wealthy, lacking nothing, but does not know it is wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked. While the congregation is joyfully gathering inside the church, in Revelation 3:20, Jesus says, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock." The church's gathering has become a typical religious activity, seemingly worshiping God, but without God's presence; God is outside, knocking on the door. When we encounter such a situation, we must go outside the camp and follow Jesus.

Verse 14: "For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come."

We are strangers and pilgrims on this earth; we do not have a permanent city here. When Christ returns, He will shake the earth and the heavens, and everything that can be shaken will be removed. Therefore, the church on earth will not have a permanent city either. The life of the church today is to help the saints become holy. As 2 Timothy 2:21 says, "Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from the latter, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every

good work." Today, in the church, we are preparing the saints to become valuable vessels, useful for the Lord. We are preparing materials for God's building.

We are not building a great city on earth, one that is admired by men; the real building is in the heavenly city. The designer and builder of that city are God Himself. Just like the great men of faith in Hebrews 11, they all longed for a better heavenly country and the city that God has prepared for them. Dear brothers and sisters, we should often enter the Holy of Holies, having intimate fellowship with God before the mercy seat. Afterward, we can go outside the camp, walking the path of the cross that God has prepared for us.

Let us pray together: Dear Lord Jesus, thank You. You went outside the camp, suffering and shedding Your precious blood on the cross for us; and in the heavenly Holy of Holies, You completed our eternal redemption. This is the starting point of each of our lives. Help us also to go outside the camp, take up our own cross, and follow Your lead. Please prepare spiritual companions for me in the church where I am, so that we can encourage one another and run together on the heavenly path. May we learn to serve in the church and, like Paul, fill up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions in our bodies. Bless the church where I am, and I pray all of this in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.