

**July 8, 2018 - Lev. 3:1 – 3:17 - The Peace Offering; Prohibition on Blood and Fat
Psalm 73 (repeated)**

Haftarah: Micah 6:9-16 + 7:7-8 (repeated)

Isaiah 48:12-20 + 49:7 (repeated)

The Peace Offering and Fellowship

Sharing Meals Together

It's universal. Anyone eating together can feel a certain natural openness and camaraderie in sharing a common meal. This is a shadow of the reality of the Peace Offering. Breaking bread elicits a breaking open of our defenses and boundaries to some extent. We're inviting someone else in.

For instance, in Africa, the Igbo people believe that when two or more eat or drink together from the same bowl they have entered into a covenant. Many other cultures have similar beliefs. In the Mediterranean world, sharing a meal affirmed fellowship, peace, and unity between those who participated, and meals could serve to reconcile people who had been estranged from each other.

But in all societies, there is usually a hierarchy, and those of higher status are served better food and drink. At the peace offering - and at the Passover meal and the Christian agape feast - there is no hierarchy. All are equal and share the same thing together.

Jesus washed the disciples feet and encourages us to take the lowest seat - upending this hierarchical structure of feasting (**Luke 14:7-9**).

“When you hold a lunch or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or your wealthy neighbors, in case they may invite you back and you have repayment. Rather, when you hold a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind” (**Luke 14:12-13**).

Jesus was accused of being a "glutton and drunkard." He ate with all kinds of people: with friends and strangers, with despised sinners and even his enemies. He miraculously fed the 5,000 with leftovers. Dining with Christ opened the disciples' eyes to His presence on the road to Emmaus. Eating with the disciples after his resurrection, Jesus proved his reality and his divinity.

For us, breaking bread together means taking care to give special attention to the poor, the homeless and those on the margins of society. To dismiss, talk down to, or abhor them is a sin!

Acts 2:44 - “And all that believed were together, and had all things common...”

The disciples ate “with gladness and singleness of heart” (**Acts 2:46**).

Sharing - having all things in common - is the very definition of fellowship. Sharing our

food, our ideas, our experiences, ourselves. That is the expression of the Peace Offering among us.

Every meal and feast would also look forward to the wedding supper of the Lamb, with anticipation to the messianic “feast of fat things” to be enjoyed in the age to come (**Isaiah 25:6–8; 29:8; 55:2; 65:13; Zephaniah 1:7**).

- **Revelation 3:20** - "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me."

The “guests” at the Peace Offering must all be in a state of Levitical purity, symbolizing “the wedding garment” needed at the later “agape feast” of the Church.

The Peace Offering

Leviticus 3:1 - "And if his oblation be a sacrifice of peace offering, if he offer it of the herd; whether it be a male or female, he shall offer it without blemish before the LORD."

The last of the acceptance and sweet savor offerings.

"sacrifice of peace offerings" = *zebach shelamim* - peace offerings, a sacrifice for alliance or friendship.

From *shalom* - peace, safety, friendliness, harmony, wholeness, completeness, contentment, prosperity, welfare and tranquility.

It also sometimes carries the idea of "paid for" / "atoned for."

See **Ezekiel 45:15** - "And one lamb out of the flock, out of two hundred, out of the fat pastures of Israel; for a meat offering, and for a burnt offering, and for peace offerings, to make reconciliation for them, saith the Lord GOD."

The priest, the offerer and God - meeting at the altar (the cross) - all partake of, and get satisfaction from, the same nourishment, which is the meaning of fellowship.

Peace Offerings consisted of an animal sacrifice, a meal offerings and a drink offering. As every other sacrifice, they needed imposition of hands, confession, and sprinkling of blood, the latter being done as in the burnt-offering. Then the “inwards” were taken out and “waved” before the Lord, along with the breast and the right shoulder (or, perhaps more correctly, the right leg).

The waving signified the offering was presented to the Lord and then received back again.

Three kinds of peace offerings: *todah* - A thank offering for a particular act of God's mercy or deliverance, *neder* - an offering made after completing a vow, and *nedavah* -

a voluntary or free-will offering toward God simply for who He is.

The peace offering can be eaten either out of thanksgiving for the peace you are experiencing, or because you are depressed or disrought and *seek to restore* such peace:

The example is after the war of the tribes against Benjamin:

- **Judges 20:26** - "Then all the children of Israel, and all the people, went up, and came unto the house of God, and wept, and sat there before the LORD, and fasted that day until even, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the LORD."

The process for experiencing the peace offering is the same as for all the sacrifices - it always begins with a broken and contrite heart:

- **Psalms 5:17-19** - "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion: build thou the walls of Jerusalem. Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering and whole burnt offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar."

The "sacrifices of righteousness" indicate the peace offering, according to the rabbis.

More on the Bullock

To "offer bullocks" means to have received the fullest understanding of the spiritual meaning of the sacrifices. The bullock also signifies we have taken on the "yoke" of the kingdom in the attitude of a servant, and the willingness to bear one another's burdens.

The rabbis said reading the Shema means "accepting upon oneself the yoke of the kingdom of heaven." Jesus gave this a new twist:

- **Matthew 11:28-30** - "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Notice the detail of description in **Leviticus 3:1**: "whether it be a male or female"

- **Galatians 3:28** - "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus"

Leviticus 3:2 - "And he shall lay his hand upon the head of his offering, and kill it at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation: and Aaron's sons the priests shall sprinkle the blood upon the altar round about."

Rashi - The Kohen must dash [the blood] by means of a vessel. He does not apply [the blood] with his finger except [in the case of] a sin-offering. — [Zev. 53b]

“**head**” - Although the heart is the seat of thoughts and understanding in Hebrew, laying on of hands on the head signifies the transfer of responsibility for sin to the animal. For the peace offering, mention of the "head" means Christ's peace would be transferred to allay our sense of responsibility or guilt because forgiveness has been bought with His blood. The peace offering gives an understanding of forgiveness; that the responsibility has been transferred to another.

Spiritually, we identify with Christ, we accept our death, and partake of Christ's life.

Inward Parts

Leviticus 3:3-4 - "And he shall offer of the sacrifice of the peace offering an offering made by fire unto the LORD; the fat that covereth the inwards, and all the fat that is upon the inwards, And the two kidneys, and the fat that is on them, which is by the flanks, and the caul above the liver, with the kidneys, it shall he take away."

Why all this talk of inward parts?

Christ's peace will permeate our hidden, inward parts

- The “inwards” or inward parts - includes the heart (*lev*), the seat of thought and understanding
- The kidneys were the seat of "the tenderest and deepest emotions, the inmost kernel of the man" and possibly the conscience.
- The liver is our integrity of character, honor and glory, our sense of who we are.

"heart" = *lev* - Not mentioned when discussing these sacrifices. It seems to not identify a particular organ, but, like "soul," to signify a human life in general.

- **1 Samuel 16:7** - "But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart."

- **Deuteronomy 10:12** - "...to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul."

Kidneys

- **Psalms 73:21** – "When my heart was embittered, and I was pierced within (*kilyah* = in my kidneys)"
- **Proverbs 23:16** - "And my inmost being (*kilyah* = kidneys) will rejoice when your lips speak what is right."
- **Psalms 16:7** - "I will bless the LORD, who hath given me counsel: my reins (*kilyah* =

kidneys) also instruct me in the night seasons."

Caul

"caul" - the large fatty *omentum* covering the intestines. The word *omentum* comes from "omen," and the Egyptian and Babylonian practice of divining the future by examining the entrails, liver, etc. Our inward parts can respond to circumstances with dread, excitement, rapid heartbeat, sudden fear that can even cause unwilling evacuation of the bowels, etc. By examining these organs in an animal the ancients thought they could find out future disturbing events that could cause their own inwards to react.

So, mention of the "caul" with the peace offering may assure us that the future is in God's eternal hands, we can be at peace and perfectly secure.

Liver

"The liver" = *ka'veid* - "that which is heavy" because it is the heaviest organ. It is also closely related to the word for "glory" or "honor" - *kaw'vod*. One's sense of integrity of character and personality, the conception of our presence in the world and also our place in society.

-Lamentations 2:11 - "...My liver is poured on the earth, because of the destruction of the daughter of my people" - i.e. Jeremiah's social compass was haywire, his honor was destroyed, his sense of who he was momentarily absent.

In contrast - the peace offering brings wholeness to our sense of honor and integrity (liver), and peace to our emotions (kidneys). It quiets our desires, because we find ourselves completely satisfied, and certain of our identity.

The Jews associated this idea of "weight" with the Shekinah glory, the implication being that God's presence in the form of the Shekinah glory is manifested by the peace offering and fellowship.

- Matthew 18:20 - "For where two or three have gathered together in My Name, I am there in their midst."

If the Offering is a Lamb

Leviticus 3:9 - And he shall offer of the sacrifice of the peace offering an offering made by fire to the LORD; the fat thereof, and the whole rump, it shall he take off hard by the backbone; and the fat that covers the inwards, and all the fat that is on the inwards,

Rump

rump = *'alyah* - the thick, fat tail of a sheep, which can weigh more than 15-20 pounds. It was a delicacy to eat and also used to make butter, etc. The "choicest" part of the animal.

Backbone

backbone - *`atseh* - only used here - backbone, the spine (as giving firmness to the body)

from a root that means to fasten (or make firm), i.e. to close (the eyes):—shut. To be hard.

The backbone extends from the coccyx up to the neck. We are naturally stiff-necked and stubborn:

- **Exodus 32:9** - "The LORD also said to Moses, "I have seen this people, and they are indeed a stiff-necked people"

The peace offering softens our sinful, opinionated stubbornness (backbone) so we can be loving with our fellow man and submissive toward God.

Fulfilled in Christ

Christ, as the Prince of Peace, made peace with the blood of his cross. Through him the believer is reconciled to God; and having the peace of God in his heart, he is disposed to follow peace with all men.

Spiritual Food - Prototypes:

The sacrifices were "God's food"

Not only are the daily burnt-offerings and the burnt and sin-offerings of the different feasts called "food of Jehovah" ("My bread," **Numbers 28:2**); but the sacrifices generally are described as "the food of God" ("the bread of their God," **Leviticus 21:6, Leviticus 21:8, Leviticus 21:17, Leviticus 21:21-22, and Leviticus 22:25**), as food, that is, which Israel produced and caused to ascend to its God in fire as a sweet smelling savour.

Natural food is digested and turns into us. Spiritual food, Thomas Aquinas said, does the opposite: It turns us into itself. Receiving bread, we become bread for the world. Drinking the blood of the grape, we are conformed to Christ's suffering witness, called to take up our cross to follow him and lay our own lives down.

- **John 4:32, 34** - "... I have meat to eat that ye know not of. ...Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work."

Melchizedek and Abraham

- **Genesis 14:18** - "And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God."

Bread and wine represent nature transformed into culture by human action. They exemplify the '*telos*' or endpoint of our labor. Adam broke our Edenic table communion with God by eating the wrong fruit. Cain offered the fruits of his labor and it was not accepted. But Jesus comes as Last Adam to restore communion. By His work - on the tree of the cross, he becomes life-giving fruit.

- **Ecclesiastes 9:7** - "Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart; for God now accepteth thy works."

(Human works or labor were required in all the sacrifices and offerings. No raw materials, only stuff raised, farmed or grown, or fermented and processed by man are used. But in offering it to God, it was transformed.)

It is said Israel ate the bread of angels (**Psalm 78:25**). Priests offered cakes and loaves on the altar (**Leviticus 2**), and animal offerings are described as the "bread of God" (**Leviticus 21:6, 8, 17, 21-22**)

In the Peace Offering, the Lord "consumed" his bread in fire, while Israel ate, drank, and rejoiced before him.

consume, eat = '*âkal*' - to eat, devour, consume like fire

Sometimes literally:

See **Leviticus 9:24** - "And there came a fire out from before the LORD, and consumed (*'âkal*) upon the altar the burnt offering and the fat: which when all the people saw, they shouted, and fell on their faces."

To eat God's word metaphorically:

Jeremiah 15:16 - "Thy words were found, and I did eat (*'âkal*) them"

Also **Ezekiel 2:8-9**: "...open thy mouth, and eat (*'âkal*) that I give thee. And when I looked, behold, an hand was sent unto me; and, lo, a roll of a book was therein."

Revelation 10:9-10 - to eat the scroll - "And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter."

Altars are tables (see **Ezekiel 41:22**), where priests serve bread to God and where God graciously shares his bread with his people. The Lord received his food as smoke, a soothing aroma.

See 'Taste and See That the Lord's Supper Is Good' - *Christianity Today*
<https://buff.ly/2KwoAb2>

Abraham and the Angelic Visitors

- **Genesis 18:6** - "So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah, and said, "Quickly, prepare three measures of fine flour, knead it and make bread cakes. And Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetched a calf tender and good, and gave it unto a young man; and he hastened to dress it. And he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat."

The Lord's Supper / Passover seder meal

The blessing over the afikomen:

"Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who createth the fruit of the vine"

"Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who bringeth forth bread from the earth"

The Passover precedes and anticipates all the types in the other offerings

- **Psalms 34:8** - "O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him."

- **John 6:32-33, 35** - "Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. ... I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst."

- **Matthew 26:26-28** - "And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."

The Disciples on the Road to Emmaus

(The Peace Offering as Proof of Resurrection)

- **Luke 24:30-31** - "And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight."

- **Luke 24:42-43** - "And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And he took it, and did eat before them."

Another Aspect - Suffering as Food

- **Numbers 14:8-9** - "Only rebel not ye against the LORD, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for us: their defense is departed from them, and the LORD is with us: fear them not."

Even what causes fear can become food for the faithful who see through it.

- **Isaiah 53:11** - "He (the Father) shall see of the travail of his (the Son) soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities."

Or better: "after the travail of his (Christ's) soul, he (the Father) shall see [a seed - His Son], and shall be satisfied" - as a woman, after her travail and sharp pains are over, having brought forth a son, looks upon it with joy and pleasure, and is satisfied, and forgets her former pain and anguish.

Tribulation can satisfy, when through it we see God's faithfulness and His promises kept.

- **Matthew 5:6** - "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled."

Those that "hunger and thirst after righteousness" must also be satisfied with His suffering:

- **Philippians 3:10** - "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death"

The picture of this is in Psalm 42, in which David struggles as his soul is "cast down":

- **Psalm 42:2-3** - "My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God? My tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say unto me, Where is thy God?"

In the end he is able to say to his soul, "hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him."

Christ our Peace

- **Isaiah 9:6** - "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."

- **John 14:27** - "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you: not as the world giveth..."

- **John 16:33** - "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

- **Romans 5:1-10** - "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through ..."

- **Ephesians 2:14** - "For He Himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has torn down the dividing wall of hostility"

- **2 Thessalonians 3:16** - "Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace always by all means. The Lord [be] with you all."

- **Colossians 1:20,21** - "And, having made peace through the blood of his cross..."

The question posed by the Peace Offering is, "What are you eating? Is it satisfying you, and producing peace in you?"

God wants us to examine what we're taking in trying to satisfy ourselves:

The prodigal son would "fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat" (**Luke 15:16**). The spiritually starving try to eat their own garments, but are never satisfied:

- **Psalms 109:18** - "As he clothed himself with cursing like as with his garment, so curses poured into his stomach like water and seeped into his bones like oil."

Anything other than feeding on Christ is eating from the table of demons:

- **1 Corinthians 10:18-21** - "Behold Israel after the flesh: are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar? But ... Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils."

- **Isaiah 55:2** - "Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness."

"That which is good" is the peace offering - it is Christ Himself!

- **1 John 1:3** - "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ."

Fat and Blood

Leviticus 3:17 - "It shall be a perpetual statute for your generations throughout all your dwellings, that ye eat neither fat nor blood."

"a perpetual statute" - until the Messiah comes, and his sacrifice is offered up, and his blood is shed "once for all." Then Jesus commands us to "drink his blood" - which will provide our only life - a life outside of time.

Targum of Jonathan - "but upon the top of the altar it shall be offered to the name of the Lord"

(See expanded prohibition **Leviticus 7:23-27**)

"fat" - the fat of the inwards, the suet. This was to be burned on the altar for God, so it was not to be a common thing, but holy. So with the blood, reserved for its holy purpose of redemptive atonement.

There are two words for fat in Hebrew. *Shumen* refers to fats that one is permitted to eat, while *cheilev* refers to particular fats that are prohibited, even if they come from perfectly kosher animals. *Cheilev* is the fat that in the case of sacrifices was burned on the altar - from oxen, sheep or goats. It is prohibited to eat these fats even from non-sacrificial animals. (Basically, these are the fats on the kidneys and the intestines, etc. The fat tail of a ram is not considered *cheilev*, and is permitted.)

These fats are removed from kosher meats in a process called *nikkur* (commonly translated as de-veining, as the sciatic nerve is also removed in the process).

— See <https://www.ou.org/torah/mitzvot/taryag/mitzvah147/>

Blood Prohibition

The prohibition was given to Noah after the flood:

- **Genesis 9:3** - "You must not, however, eat flesh with its life-blood in it."

Eating meat was only permitted after the flood. The animals had been rescued by Noah (seven of each of the clean animals), and so they were willing to become sacrifices for mankind, pointing us toward Christ. But they also had to be respected as souls themselves - they contained *nephesh* - "life" like humans. Their life-blood was restricted only for use at the altar.

The prohibition of blood is reiterated in Leviticus 17, along with the reason for the prohibition: Although it was hinted at with Abel's sacrifice (**Genesis 4:4**), in the Law blood gained a new and exclusive meaning as the way of reconciliation between God and humanity.

- **Leviticus 17:11-12** - "For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement [*kappara*, from the verb *kof-peh-resh*] for the soul. Therefore I said unto the children of Israel, No soul of you shall eat blood, neither shall any stranger that sojourneth among you eat blood."

"atonement" = *kof-peh-resh* - linked to the Akkadian verb "*kuppuru*," is "to wipe, erase, cover over, purge." The second meaning relates to ransom or payment.

This is where we get the name for Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement.

Blood represents animals, which in turn substitute for humans in sacrifice. Since they are inferior to humans, animals can be sacrificed in their stead. However, humans and animals have a common denominator: the life force in the blood, without which animals cannot be substituted for humans. To drink their blood lightly would be to not reverence their status as chosen by God as substitutionary sacrifices (and further, to not recognize Christ as that perfect sacrifice which they point to).

Blood represents life - and the only life we need to have is Christ's.

- **John 14:6** - "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."

Drinking the blood of another being is to appear to blend it's life with your own.

- **John 6:53** - "Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you."

- **Luke 22:20** - "In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you."

The ban of drinking blood was apparently still in effect for the early church:

- **Acts 15:29** - "That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well."

See 'The Biblical Ban on Eating Animal Blood, Explained' - <https://buff.ly/2MSmf84>