

# The Peace Offering



In lesson 1, the overview of the book of Leviticus we learned that there are five key offerings the Israelites made to God. Those five in sequential order were:

Offering	Reason/significance
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

## The Peace Offering Explained

### **Purpose:**

The purpose of this particular offering was to express gratitude to God. A Person gave an offering of peace as an expression of gratitude and a means of *maintaining* fellowship between himself and God.

### **Importance:**

The animal whose life was sacrificed emphasized the value of gratitude and *maintaining* harmony with God. Neither peace with God nor thanks to God was to be considered a cheap or unimportant gift. Because it symbolized peace with God, part of the offering was to be eaten by the person presenting it.

## TWO BASIC IDEAS OF THE OFFERING

Peace: The purpose of this particular offering was to express gratitude to God. A Person gave an offering of peace as an expression of gratitude and a means of *maintaining* fellowship between himself and God.

Fellowship: The animal whose life was sacrificed emphasized the value of gratitude and *maintaining* harmony with God. Neither peace with God nor thanks to God was to be considered a cheap or unimportant gift. Because it symbolized peace with God, part of the offering was to be eaten by the person presenting it.

The Peace Offering is discussed in Leviticus 3. Its structure is very similar to Leviticus 1. The regulations for the sacrifice of the Peace Offering are dealt with in terms of the kind of animal sacrificed. This chapter is broken down in the following structure:

- Leviticus 3:1-5 ~ offerings from the herd
- Leviticus 3:6-17 ~ offerings from the flock
  - A lamb (vv.7-11)
  - A goat (vv.12-17)

### **What makes the Peace Offering different?**

There are several things that make the Peace Offering, as compared with the Burnt and Grain Offerings of chapters 1 and 2. It is these differences that provide us with the key to the unique role of this offering.

1. The animal sacrificed in the Peace Offering could be from the herd or from the flock (but not a bird), whether male or female.
  
2. The offering was shared by God, by the priests, and by the person offering the sacrifice. All of the Burnt Offering was the Lord's (except for the skin). Most of the Grain Offering was for the priests. But the Peace Offering was shared by all, each receiving their appointed portions.
  
3. Three of the occasions on which the Peace Offering was appropriate were for thanksgiving, for completing a vow, and for a freewill offering.
  
4. The Peace Offering was unique in that there was a meal associated with this offering.

5. [The Thanksgiving Peace Offering included leavened bread \(Lev. 7:13\).](#)
  
6. [This offering was also special because it was the only meat which an Israelite ate from their cattle was that which was offered as a Peace Offering. I know this is hard to believe, but it is commanded by God in Leviticus chapter 17:](#)

*“Any man from the house of Israel who slaughters an ox, or a lamb, or a goat in the camp, or who slaughters it outside the camp, and has not brought it to the doorway of the tent of the meeting to present it as an offering to the LORD before the tabernacle of the LORD, bloodguiltiness is to be reckoned to that man. He has shed blood and that man shall be cut off from among his people” ([Lev. 17:3-4](#)).*



There are three principle passages in the Book of Leviticus which deal with the Peace Offering. They are:

- A. [Leviticus 3:1-17](#)—the mechanics of the sacrifice
- B. [Leviticus 7:11-34](#)—the meaning of the sacrifice
- C. [Leviticus 19:5-8](#)—the “law of leftovers”

*This lesson will cover Leviticus 3:1-17 and Leviticus 7:11-34. We will go through and breakdown these passages verse by verse to get a better understanding.*

## The Procedure of the Sacrifice

### Leviticus 3:1-17 (New International Version)

#### *The Peace Offering*

<sup>1</sup> "If someone's offering is a fellowship offering, <sup>[a]</sup> and he offers an animal from the herd, whether male or female, he is to present before the LORD an animal without defect. Unlike the sin and guilt offering, the peace/fellowship offering is voluntary. Verse 1 begins by saying "if someone's offering is a fellowship offering". So, it's not really a requirement. Since it's not a requirement, the rules/regulations are not as strict. The animal that was offered in the sin and guilt offerings had to be males. The male animal had a greater value. The animal that is offered here in this offering could either be a male or female. But, like any other sacrifice, it still had to be the best of the flock or herd and without blemish.

<sup>2</sup> He is to lay his hand on the head of his offering and slaughter it at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting. Then Aaron's sons the priests shall sprinkle the blood against the altar on all sides. <sup>3</sup> From the fellowship offering he is to bring a sacrifice made to the LORD by fire: all the fat that covers the inner parts or is connected to them, <sup>4</sup> both kidneys with the fat on them near the loins, and the covering of the liver, which he will remove with the kidneys. <sup>5</sup> Then Aaron's sons are to burn it on the altar on top of the burnt offering that is on the burning wood, as an offering made by fire, an aroma pleasing to the LORD. This passage of scripture is almost the same in detail for all of the blood sacrifices; burnt fellowship, sin and guilt. The general instructions can be found in Leviticus 1:3b-5a, 6-9. The person offering the sacrifice is to lay his hand on the animal's head to express identification between himself and the animal, whose death would then be accepted in "atonement". The blood was sprinkled on the sides of the brazen altar where the fire of sacrifice was never to go out.

(The Brazen Altar, as we know was not only the largest piece of furniture in the Tabernacle of Moses (The Tent of Meeting), but it was also the first piece that any Israelite had to face if he desired a meeting with God. In the Old Testament, it was by or through the sacrifice that you went into God's camp to commune with Him. In the New Testament and in today's culture, you have to go through the ultimate sacrifice being Christ Jesus in order to commune with God.)

Unlike the burnt offerings, the Peace Offering was not entirely burnt completely. Only the insides of the animal were burnt on top and with the burnt offering. This part of the offering is the portion that is to be given to God as a sign of fellowship or to commune with God.

<sup>6</sup> "If he offers an animal from the flock as a fellowship offering to the LORD, he is to offer a male or female without defect. <sup>7</sup> If he offers a lamb, he is to present it before

the LORD. <sup>8</sup> He is to lay his hand on the head of his offering and slaughter it in front of the Tent of Meeting. Then Aaron's sons shall sprinkle its blood against the altar on all sides. <sup>9</sup> From the fellowship offering he is to bring a sacrifice made to the LORD by fire: its fat, the entire fat tail cut off close to the backbone, all the fat that covers the inner parts or is connected to them, <sup>10</sup> both kidneys with the fat on them near the loins, and the covering of the liver, which he will remove with the kidneys. <sup>11</sup> The priest shall burn them on the altar as food, an offering made to the LORD by fire.

Pagan cultures during this time often stated that their sacrifices were food for the god. The Israelite sacrifices were not "food for the gods". (Ezek 16:10, Ps 50:9-13) There were sometimes called "food" metaphorically in the sense that they were gifts to God and that he received them with delight. (21:6, 8, 17, 21; 22:25)

<sup>12</sup> " If his offering is a goat, he is to present it before the LORD. <sup>13</sup> He is to lay his hand on its head and slaughter it in front of the Tent of Meeting. Then Aaron's sons shall sprinkle its blood against the altar on all sides. <sup>14</sup> From what he offers he is to make this offering to the LORD by fire: all the fat that covers the inner parts or is connected to them, <sup>15</sup> both kidneys with the fat on them near the loins, and the covering of the liver, which he will remove with the kidneys. <sup>16</sup> The priest shall burn them on the altar as food, an offering made by fire, a pleasing aroma. All the fat is the Lord's.

<sup>17</sup> " This is a lasting ordinance for the generations to come, wherever you live: You must not eat any fat or any blood. This is the last but most important command that God gives in this chapter. It is so important that He says it is lasting and for generations to come no matter where they live. We get an understanding of this command in 17:11. The blood shed in the sacrifices was sacred. It epitomized the life of the sacrificial victim. It's like keeping a portion of your sacrifice like we discussed in lesson 1. Since life was sacred, the blood had to be treated with respect. Every blood sacrifice was either sprinkled, poured or smeared on the brazen altar or in the tabernacle (17:6, 1:5, 3:2, 4:6, 25; 7:2) the blood also teaches that atonement involves the substitution of life for life. So if I drink or eat the blood of the sacrifice, I am taking my own life. I placed my life, my sins on this animal but then I take back the very essence of it by drinking it. God says NOT SO!!!

## The Meaning of the Sacrifice

### Leviticus 7:11-34

<sup>11</sup> "These are the regulations for the fellowship offering <sup>[a]</sup> a person may present to the LORD: **This section supplements chapter 3, adding regulations about (1) the three types of fellowship offerings (thanks, vv12-15; vows v. 16; freewill v. 16), (2) prohibition of eating fat and blood (vv. 22-27) and (3) the priests' share (v. 28-36).**

<sup>12</sup> "If he offers it as an expression of thankfulness, then along with this thank offering he is to offer cakes of bread made without yeast and mixed with oil, wafers made without yeast and spread with oil, and cakes of fine flour well-kneaded and mixed with oil. <sup>13</sup> Along with his fellowship offering of thanksgiving he is to present an offering with cakes of bread made with yeast. <sup>14</sup> He is to bring one of each kind as an offering, a contribution to the LORD; it belongs to the priest who sprinkles the blood of the fellowship offerings. <sup>15</sup> The meat of his fellowship offering of thanksgiving must be eaten on the day it is offered; he must leave none of it till morning. **Thank offerings were given in gratitude for deliverance from sickness (Ps 116:17), trouble (Ps 107:22), or for a blessing received. The Israelite was to offer God one leavened and one unleavened bread and the other grain offering was given to the priests.**

<sup>16</sup> "If, however, his offering is the result of a vow or is a freewill offering, the sacrifice shall be eaten on the day he offers it, but anything left over may be eaten on the next day. <sup>17</sup> Any meat of the sacrifice left over till the third day must be burned up. <sup>18</sup> If any meat of the fellowship offering is eaten on the third day, it will not be accepted. It will not be credited to the one who offered it, for it is impure; the person who eats any of it will be held responsible. **All meat had to be eaten promptly (in the case of the thank offering on the same day, and in case of the vow and freewill offerings within two days). One reason may have been that in Canaan meat spoiled quickly and thus became ceremonially impure (v. 18) because it was not then perfect. (1:3, 21:16-23). The prohibition applied also to the Passover (Ex 20:10)**

The Peace/Fellowship Offering could be eaten on the day it was sacrificed, or on the day after, but not on the third day. To eat this sacrificial meat on the third day would have serious consequences ([Lev. 19:5-8](#)). One of the main reasons that I found was the meat spoiled quickly and so it became ceremonially impure. So, not only was God saving their natural life by not eating spoiled meat. He was also, once again, saving their spirit man. If they ate unclean meat, they had to be cut off from their people. This means basically that they weren't able to follow the cloud of Glory anymore.

<sup>19</sup> " Meat that touches anything ceremonially unclean must not be eaten; it must be burned up. As for other meat, anyone ceremonially clean may eat it. *Removed from the covenant people through direct divine judgment or (as here and in vv. 21, 25, 27) through execution (20:2-3; Ex 31:14), or possibly sometimes through banishment.*

<sup>20</sup> But if anyone who is unclean eats any meat of the fellowship offering belonging to the LORD, that person must be cut off from his people. <sup>21</sup> If anyone touches something unclean—whether human uncleanness or an unclean animal or any unclean, detestable thing—and then eats any of the meat of the fellowship offering belonging to the LORD, that person must be cut off from his people.' "The *penalty for doing things that were abominable in the Lord's eyes was severe.*

### ***Eating Fat and Blood Forbidden***

<sup>22</sup> The LORD said to Moses, <sup>23</sup> "Say to the Israelites: 'Do not eat any of the fat of cattle, sheep or goats. <sup>24</sup> The fat of an animal found dead or torn by wild animals may be used for any other purpose, but you must not eat it. <sup>25</sup> Anyone who eats the fat of an animal from which an offering by fire may be [b](#) made to the LORD must be cut off from his people. *The prohibition of fat for food was as strict as that of blood, but the reason was different. The fat of the fellowship offerings was the Lord's and was to be burned on the altar. There was no explicit prohibition of eating the fat of the hunted animals like deer or gazelle.*

<sup>26</sup> And wherever you live, you must not eat the blood of any bird or animal. <sup>27</sup> If anyone eats blood, that person must be cut off from his people.' "

### ***The Priests' Share***

<sup>28</sup> The LORD said to Moses, <sup>29</sup> "Say to the Israelites: 'Anyone who brings a fellowship offering to the LORD is to bring part of it as his sacrifice to the LORD. <sup>30</sup> With his own hands he is to bring the offering made to the LORD by fire; he is to bring the fat, together with the breast, and wave the breast before the LORD as a wave offering. <sup>31</sup> The priest shall burn the fat on the altar, but the breast belongs to Aaron and his sons. <sup>32</sup> You are to give the right thigh of your fellowship offerings to the priest as a contribution. <sup>33</sup> The son of Aaron who offers the blood and the fat of the fellowship offering shall have the right thigh as his share. <sup>34</sup> From the fellowship offerings of the Israelites, I have taken the breast that is waved and the thigh that is presented and have given them to Aaron the priest and his sons as their regular share from the Israelites.' "The *breast and right thigh given to the priest were first presented to the Lord with gestures described as waving the breast and presenting the thigh. This was considered to be a wave offering. (8:27) this gesture could be similar to us waving our hands in worship.*



