

## **THE PEACE OFFERING**

**Scriptures:** Leviticus 3:1-17; 7:11-34; 19:5-8; 22:21-25; Numbers 15:2-16; Deuteronomy 12:5-14

**I. General Name** – from Hebrew word – **Shelem** – from the root word which means “to make up, supply that which is lacking, wanting, deficient.

A. Also called “**the offering of completion**”

1. For atonement leads to reconciliation with God.
2. And reconciliation to fellowship between God and man.

B. It was the most joyous of sacrifices.

1. Being one of the “**sweet aroma**” sacrifices.
2. The fat of the peace-offering was called “**the food of the offering made by fire to Jehovah**” **Leviticus 3:11** – It is God’s food.
3. The rest of the animal is given man as “the bread of God” **Leviticus 21:6, 7, 21.**
4. Thus the whole sacrifice is a festive banquet, celebrating a season of happy fellowship with God.

C. Main object consists of a sacrifice which terminates in a festive sacrificial meal.

1. To express an attitude of restored peace friendship and fellowship with God.
2. Therefore it comes at the end of the sacrificial repertoire.
3. Psalm 116:17 – “**I will offer to you the sacrifice of thanksgiving and will call upon the name of Jehovah.**”
4. Anyone presuming to eat the peace-offering without all sins and impurities already removed by the sin or trespass-offering: “**...but the soul that eats of the flesh of the sacrifice of peace offerings, that pertain to Jehovah, having his uncleanness upon him, that soul will be cut off from his people**” – **Leviticus 7:19-20.**
5. Even ceremonial impurities disqualified for this banquet.

## II. The Peace-offering is of ancient usage.

- A. In pre-mosaic days, its use underscored the basic concept of sacrifice.
1. Genesis 31:54 – though not called a peace-offering, it was a sacrificial meal enjoyed by the friendship between Jacob and Laban.
  2. Exodus 18:12 -0 Jethro with Aaron, Moses, and the elders of Israel.
  3. Possibly Exodus 32:6 – even in its perversion – where the people made a golden calf, worshiped it with a peace-offering **and “sat down to eat and drink”** and **“rose up to play.”**
- B. In New Testament times it was common among pagan religions.
1. 1 Corinthians 10:20-21 – Paul claimed the Gentiles sacrificed to demons.
  2. obviously their intent was to commune with their gods – as the eating and drinking in the context indicates the nature.
  3. Christians could not participate in such heathen practices and still enjoy communion with Christ at the Lords Supper.

## III. Greater liberty in choice of animals allowed – and the purpose for the feast.

- A. Three basic types of peace-offerings:
1. Thank-offerings- Hebrew – “horah” = also praise – Leviticus 7:11-14.
  2. A vow offering – Hebrew “neder”– Leviticus 7:16.
  3. A free-will offering – “nidabah” – Leviticus 7:16; Judges 20:26; 2 Samuel 24:25.
- B. Choice of animals allowed.
1. From the herd: – cattle – Leviticus 3:1-5.
  2. From the flock:
    - a. Sheep - verses 6-11.
    - b. Goats – verses 12-16.
  3. After each specie it was formally declared to be “an sweet aroma.”

4. either male or female:
  - a. The pigeon and the dove excluded – for size, not large enough for a banquet.
  - b. The feast could sometimes last over a two-day period; 7:17.
- C. The three different peace-offerings had restrictions and liberties peculiar to the nature of the sacrificial intent.
  1. The thank offering, being the highest form- had to be without blemish – 3:1.
    - a. And it must be presented with a loaf of bread for a heave offering to Jehovah, but it shall be given to the priest.
    - b. The flesh must be eaten on the day it is offered – Leviticus 7:15
    - c. All remaining scraps must be burned – BUT NOT ON THE ALTAR.
    - d. To do otherwise would “...**profane my holy name,...**” and God imperatively insists “**but I will be sanctified among the sons of Israel. I am Jehovah who sanctifies you.**” Leviticus 22:28-33.
  2. The vow offering, being of a lower grade, yet still had to be without blemish – Leviticus 22:20.
    - a. But the left-overs may be eaten on the second day – Leviticus 19:5-6.
    - b. It is an abomination to eat the peace-offering on the third day – Leviticus 19:7.
    - c. Perhaps because the “flesh begins to see corruption on the third day” John 11:39 – Lazarus dead for four days; and Acts 2:31.
  3. The free-will peace-offering, being the lowest form did not require a perfect animal – Leviticus 22:23.
    - a. “Anything superfluous or lacking in his parts” was allowed.
    - b. Only those defects which did not affect its value as food.
    - c. The reason for the latitude being that the expiation aspect of the sacrifice is subordinate to its chief intent.

- d. Any animal that was blind broken maimed, with sores, scurvy or scabs was excluded – verse 22.
    - 1) For the sacrifices all typify Christ and therefore must be physically perfect.
    - 2) Of course, the type stands for spiritual and moral perfection in Christ rather than simply physical health.
  - e. Any animal with “its stones bruised” or castrated (eunuchs) were excluded – verse 24.
- D. No uncovenanted person is allowed to offer sacrifices or to eat of those of the true Israelite – Leviticus 22:21, 25 – see also Leviticus 7:19-21.
- 1. No foreigner could offer so much as the animal to be sacrificed.
  - 2. Because “their corruption is in them, there is a blemish in them” – Leviticus 22:25.
    - a. Which seems to indicate that they are not in covenant relation with God – and do not qualify for this sacrifice that speaks of intense fellowship between the worshiper, and his God.
    - b. Probably the reasoning is the same as in 7:19-21, the impurity of a ceremonial nature of even an Israelite would exclude him from the sacrificial meal. Ritual purity demanded even for an Israelite to be cut off from the people.