

Leviticus 3

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[0 : 00] So Leviticus 3, starting in verse 1, I'll read all of it, it's only 17 verses, it reads this way. Now if his offering is a sacrifice of peace offerings, or some say fellowship offerings, now if his offering is a sacrifice of peace offerings, if he is going to offer out of the herd, whether male or female, he shall offer it without defect before the Lord.

He shall lay his hand on the head of his offering and slay it at the doorway of the tent of meeting. And Aaron's sons, the priests, shall sprinkle the blood around on the altar. From the sacrifice of the peace offerings he shall present an offering by fire to the Lord, the fat that covers the entrails, and all the fat that is on the entrails, and the two kidneys with the fat that is on them, which is on the loins, and the lobe of the liver, which he shall remove with the kidneys.

Then Aaron's sons shall offer it up in smoke on the altar on the burnt offering, which is on the wood that is on the fire. It is an offering by fire, but soothing aroma to the Lord.

But if his offering for a sacrifice of peace offerings to the Lord is from the flock, he shall offer it male or female without defect. If he is going to offer a lamb for his burnt offering, then he shall offer it before the Lord.

He shall lay his hand on the head of his offering and slay it before the tent of meeting. And Aaron's sons shall sprinkle its blood around on the altar. From the sacrifice of peace offerings he shall bring as an offering by fire to the Lord its fat, the entire fat tail, which he shall remove close to the backbone, and the fat that covers the entrails, and all the fat that is on the entrails, and the two kidneys with the fat that is on them, which is on the loins, and the lobe of the liver.

[1 : 36] And he shall remove with the kidneys. Then the priest shall offer it up in smoke on the altar as food, an offering by fire to the Lord. Moreover, if his offering is a goat, then he shall offer it before the Lord, and he shall lay his hand on its head and slay it before the tent of meeting.

And the sons of Aaron shall sprinkle its blood around on the altar. From it he shall present his offering as an offering by fire to the Lord, the fat that covers the entrails, and all the fat that is on the entrails, and the two kidneys with the fat that is on them, which is on the loins, and the lobe of the liver, which he shall remove with the kidneys.

The priest shall offer them up in smoke on the altar as food, an offering by fire for a soothing aroma. All fat is the Lord's. It is a perpetual statute throughout your generations and all your dwellings.

You shall not eat any fat or any blood. Let's pray. Lord, we thank you for this night. Lord, we thank you for the divine privilege and opportunity you've given us of gathering together.

We pray as we look at the truths of your Old Testament, Lord, that we would see them as they are and they would point to you. We pray that through them we would draw closer to you, that we would be edified to grow up in Christ and we would grow in our relationship to one another.

[2 : 47] Lord, in all things you would be glorified, and we ask it in Jesus' name. Amen. I want us to see tonight from Leviticus chapter 3, a celebration of peace with God.

A celebration of peace with God. Some translations of scripture call this the fellowship offering. You need to understand that the word fellowship used there and is pertaining to this offering is the Hebrew word shalom.

And it literally means all that means for peace. It is a offering of peace or fellowship. Really, the word carries with it. Some would ask you, how are you today?

Are you doing okay? They would ask you, are you at shalom? Do you have all that pertains to peace? Are you at peace today? And it means more than just a state of mind.

It is really a state of life. And we see here in Leviticus 3, the third offering laid out for us in the book of Leviticus, and they are coming to us in order, in order of importance.

[3 : 43] Leviticus chapter 1 was the burnt offering. It was an offering of atonement for one's sin. It was the shedding of blood of a lamb, a sacrificial bull or a sacrificial ram or a sacrificial goat, and even made provisions all the way down to the birds.

And it was to atone the shedding of blood, of life-giving for one individual life for another individual. That entire offering belonged to the Lord.

It stayed on the altar until it was consumed. It was a soothing aroma to the Lord. It was the offering which spoke of one's atonement, that they were made right in person, not because of any activities they had done.

We will get to the sins offering. The next two, that when we mess up, there are five offerings we're introduced to very quickly, that if we make a mistake, we do this. That first offering was a sin offering.

Because by nature, I cannot approach a holy God, I need this sin offering. I have a sin offering, and I have a problem with sins.

[4 : 45] I have a sin problem. My problem is natural to me. I have a sin nature. That's what that one was. Take care of the nature. Take care of the fact that He is holy and I am not.

It was an atonement thing. The second offering was the grain or the meal offering. This is one in which a portion was put upon the altar, and then the remainder of that was given to the priest. Remember, they would eat of this.

This would be us sharing our provisions. Now, that was also called an offering of thanksgiving.

Now, listen to this order. We offer an atonement offering for our sin problem.

By that atonement, we are now able to approach a holy God. The sin problem has been taken care of. Since the sin problem has been taken care of, now we come to Him and worship Him with thanksgiving.

And once we have worshiped Him with thanksgiving, now we rejoice in that thanksgiving in the reality that we stand at peace with God, which leads us to Leviticus chapter 3.

[5 : 45] We have atoned for our sin. We have worshiped Him with thanksgiving. And now we celebrate in the peace that we possess. I read somewhere in preparation for this that I believe it's somewhere in the 1970s.

An individual penned a book, and his name has escaped me. Some of you may know the book. It is the book titled Peace of Mind. As soon as the book was published, Peace of Mind, it went on the New York Times bestseller list.

It stayed on the bestseller list as the number one bestseller for two years. It stayed in the top listing of bestsellers for the next five years. Once that book was published, the book Peace of Mind, the author of that book started receiving phone call after phone call after phone call and correspondence after correspondence of people wanting to find the peace that he had written about.

So he spent the next couple of years dictating to them and trying to help them find peace. And he spent a lot of effort trying to help them find peace to the extent that five years after publishing the book at the age of 41, he died of a heart attack.

Because he stressed himself out trying to help others find peace. While his book was still on the bestselling list, Peace of Mind, he died from a heart attack due to stress.

[7 : 01] Some years after his death, just a couple of years after his death, Billy Graham penned his book, Peace with God. And it had a stark different result.

Man tries to offer peace and he cannot find it, but God has extended peace and once he finds it, he celebrates in it. What we have in Leviticus 3 is a celebration of peace.

Because my sin has been atoned for, because I have rejoiced and worshiped him with thanksgiving, now I celebrate. And it is a celebration. It's an offering, sure. But it is an offering of celebration.

I celebrate in the peace I have with God. I want us to see four distinct things through this offering. Four clear things that we see as a result of this celebration.

And if my youngest son continues to act up and I call him out by name, you will have to excuse me. I've never done that, but I will, so that his mama can stay in here tonight.

[7 : 56] Got me? Thank you. I knew a pastor one time called his son out on Sunday morning from the balcony and said his name by name and his friends that were with him by name.

And he was a teenager. So I haven't done that yet, but I'm just letting you know. So we see a celebration of peace with God. Because our sin has been atoned for, because we have worshipped him with thanksgiving, now we experience the peace that passes understanding.

We have seen how each of these offerings and each of these sacrifices not only point to an Old Testament reality, they point to a fulfillment, ultimate fulfillment in Christ. So hopefully as we look through this, we will see the fulfillment we have in Jesus Christ.

Number one, we see that it is a specified offering. Just like every other sacrifice, which God divinely appointed for his people to give, he had very clear details of what it is they should offer.

You've probably noticed very quickly in this that there were no provisions made for those who could not afford a bull or a ram or a lamb. There were no provisions made for those who could not afford that which would cost them dearly.

[9 : 07] We have seen in each of these other sacrifices that God gave them the provisions of either offering a bird or offering a smaller portion of grain. But what we see here, God says you're going to offer from that of the herd or from that of the flock.

There are no provisions made for the poor. The reason being is because this was a sacrifice that was to be shared. And if you could only bring a bird, a bird could not be shared among other people.

You had to have something large enough that it could be shared. So this is a very specified offering. God very clearly details what it is that should be given. You need to understand too that the peace offering was often offered in connection to other offerings.

But it was always the last one to be offered. So if you were bringing a bird offering or an offering of thanksgiving, you could also bring along with it. If you read Leviticus 7, you'll see there, and we'll kind of point to that here in a minute.

If you were bringing a grain offering of thanksgiving, you could also bring a peace offering. But you could only bring that which God said was acceptable. He says that it could be from the herd or from the flock.

[10 : 14] That was the only two places that it could come from. It was a very clear offering, and it was very clearly stated that when you brought this offering, and I know this is kind of repetitive as we see Leviticus, but it is repetitive for a reason.

You could only bring it to one place. Which means you did not have the freedom to celebrate peace with God with any such sacrifice as you chose at any place you chose.

You could only celebrate your peace with God through what He clearly said in the place He had already determined. You could not. We find later on when we read the book of Leviticus that God says that the people must bring their sacrifices to the tent.

And the reason they had to bring them to the tent is because people were attempting, and they were killing their animals in the field. And they were bringing the dead animal they had killed in the field to the tent and trying to burn it on the altar.

God says that's not acceptable to me. You must bring the live animal to the tent and slay it at the doorway of the tent of meeting. Why? Because God was very clear in that.

[11 : 22] If for no other reason, it is because God said so. And God expects absolute adherence to His word. And when He says to do it, that is what we must do.

Again, that goes along with what we saw this morning. It is absolutely right, and it is absolutely possible to have right teaching and wrong practice. You could take from the herd and kill it in the wrong place, and it not be acceptable.

Why? Because this was a specified offering. It had to be brought to the doorway. Where was the doorway of the tent of meeting? It was on the eastern side, which means you were coming from the east, which in Scripture, to go towards the east is always moving away from God.

You were coming to the presence of God, and as you came to the presence of God, you could only come so far. You could only come to the doorway, and there was but one doorway, and at that single doorway, you would bring that acceptable specified offering, and there you would offer it. Because right inside that single doorway was the altar. It was only there at that place with that offering at that time could you come and bring the offering in which you would celebrate your peace.

[12 : 33] Why is that true, and what is the application to that? The application to that is, my friend, listen, you can try to find peace in a number of places, but there is only one in which we can truly find peace, and that one is Jesus Christ.

We know that there is only one doorway that we can come to, one sacrifice, one atonement, and one place that we can find peace, and that peace is in Jesus Christ. God has extended a way for man to celebrate and enjoy peace, but he has done it in a very narrow focus.

Some have said that Jesus wants to lead you down the narrow path so that he can bring you into the broad plains. It is a narrow path, and it is a narrow gate, but he is bringing you into a broad and spacious plain of his enjoyment and his fellowship.

So we see here, it is a specified offering. A celebration of peace with God is not only a specified offering, it entails a symbolic death. Just like every other sacrificial offering, if you were to bring your offering, if you were to bring the right offering, if you were to bring from the herd or from the flock, if you were to bring a bull or a cow, if you were to bring a goat or a lamb, if you were to bring that to the right place, there were certain things you had to do.

When you got to the doorway of the tent of meeting, you had to lay your hand upon the head of that animal. You did it. Not the priest, not Aaron, not his sons, the worshiper, that is us.

[13:56] And remember, this is something that is done in a company of individuals. This is one of the unique offerings in that you did not do it alone. You'll see that by the time we get to the end of it. And you would bring this and you would bring it to the doorway and you would lay your head upon it.

Now laying your hand upon its head was symbolic. It was representative. It was saying that I and this animal are now one. We are connected.

This animal is a representative of me. What we were seeing here is that God was opening the door. God was making a way so that there would be a substitutionary death for man.

This is important. Why? Because there is a substitutionary death for man. God was laying out the standards here. You can approach me. The wages of your sin are death. Because you have a sin nature, you must die.

Because you do bad things which are called sins, you cannot be in my presence. But I'm going to allow you to come in my presence by way of a substitutionary death.

[15:00] This is important. Why is it important? Because the only way we come into the presence of God now is through a substitutionary death who is our propitiation which is Jesus Christ.

God lays his hand upon us and he became identified with us in taking on the flesh of mankind so that he could die for us. What we see in the animals is man laying his hand on the animal and being identified with the animal and then laying the animal to die in his place.

It is symbolic. This is such symbolism. If you think about it, you could not overlook this fact as a worshiper. Your sin had already been atoned for.

That offering had already been made. You had already brought your grain offering so you had already said you were thankful. And now you were going to rejoice in your peace. But do you know that you did not rejoice in your peace apart from blood?

And when you spilled the blood, it was you, not the priest, not Aaron, you would kill the animal. You would put your hand upon this animal and you would say, this animal now represents me.

[16:03] And then you would kill it. That sounds harsh. But what was you doing? You were showing the symbolic reality that the only way there's true peace with God is through the shedding of blood.

And the only way really for there to be true peace with God is that he who commits a sin must pay the price of sin. And the New Testament reality is this, that until I come to the end of me, there is no peace with God.

I must, as Paul said in Galatians 2.20, crucify myself. I am crucified. I no longer live. He said, I die daily.

He said, I've been crucified with Christ. Nevertheless, I live. It's no longer I who live, but Christ who lives inside of me. What is he saying? Christ laid his hand upon my head. He made himself with me. He was representative of me.

And he is the one in which I lay my hands upon. So his death is now my death and his life is now my life. And his shedding of blood was my shedding of blood. And this is picture we get that I have peace with God because there has been in the Old Testament teaching a symbolic death.

[17:15] One died in my place. And the New Testament truth is we have peace with God because there was a death and that death was in my place. He took my sin.

He took my wages. He took my pain. He took my guilt. He shed his blood. And his blood has been sprinkled around that altar. We see here in this symbolic death that there was the sprinkling of blood whatever it is that you offered of the prescribed sacrifices of what God says acceptable.

The blood had to be spilt. The blood had to be caught. And the blood had to be applied. Because apart from that listen we're not even talking about atonement anymore. We're just talking about peace. Without the shedding of the blood there was no peace.

You say well his blood has been shed so that I may be forgiven. Right? And his blood was shed that we may have peace. We did not shed blood when we were thanksgiving. When we rejoiced in him with a thankful heart.

But in order to understand and experience the reality of the peace man has with God there is the shedding of blood. And it was symbolic that that is my blood that has been spilt.

[18 : 25] That is my blood that is being applied to the altar. That is my blood that is the price of my peace. So we see that there was a specified offering.

We see there was a symbolic death. We see thirdly there is a set aside portion. As we go through this offering we see here that there is a set aside part.

Not all of it will be burnt up. It's not like the burnt offering found in Leviticus 1 where the whole offering is consumed by fire. Only portions of this it is. It says in verse 3 from the sacrifice of the peace offerings he shall present an offering by fire to the Lord the fat that covers the entrails and all the fat that is on the entrails and the two kidneys with the fat that is on them which is on the loins and the lobe of the liver which he shall remove with the kidneys.

And then we go over and if it's of the lamb he shall lay his hand on the head and offer it. It says there in verse 8 and he shall also in verse 9 from the sacrifice of peace offerings he shall bring an offering by fire to the Lord its fat the entire fat tail.

You know what's important the fatty lambs of the Israelite the fat tail could weigh anywhere between 50 to 90 pounds. The tail and the back strip is pretty much what it was.

[19 : 36] Okay that's almost like 90 pounds of meat. He couldn't have it couldn't touch it had to stay there okay so the entire fat which he shall remove close to the backbone and the fat that covers the entrails and all the fat that is on the entrails and the two kidneys with the fat that is on them which is on the loins and the lobe of the liver.

Here we see the kidneys and the liver and the fat. This is the set aside portion. Now let's start with the liver. The reason the liver had to be set aside the Canaanite people of that region and many people of that region would kind of they had a thing called reading the liver kind of make you liver quiver type of thing okay they would actually take the animals and take a liver out of it and they thought that by looking at the liver and they could read the liver they could tell your future.

Okay they have actually in excavations found clay liver models it is thought that they would use these models to teach other fortune tellers how to read the liver because they have specified region so they would kill an animal take the liver out of the animal look at that animal's liver and tell you what your future held based on the reading of the liver sounds kind of odd to us because it is odd but it is a very prominent practice during the time of the Israelite people going into the Canaanite region what is God saying here give me the liver because your future belongs to me you don't need to look at it and tell what your future holds give it to me your future belongs to me I hold your future that's who it is I'm going to consume that the kidneys and the liver also were considered by many to be the seat of life as a matter of fact it says that if your liver was ever punctured you would surely die and they understood those things and these things seem to be the seat of life and God says not only does your future belong to me your life belongs to me now he wanted the fat it says at the end of this actually in verse 16 the priest shall offer them up and smoke on the altar as food an offering by fire for it is a soothing aroma all fat is the Lord's it is a perpetual statute throughout your generations and all your dwelling you shall not eat the fat or any blood now we know the reason that there should not be any blood consumed because God himself says the blood contains the life and we should not be those who consume the life of others but here it says that the fat of the peace offering is his why because the fat was considered the best part it was kind of the prime cuts and what he is saying is I know you don't eat a lot of meat but when you kill one and you're going to roast one and you're going to barbecue one give me the best part give me the prime cuts bring the best you have an unblemished unspotted perfect animal from the herd or from the flock and when you bring me the best you have give me the best cuts every time we cook barbecue and we make it there are certain parts of a

Boston butt that I think are the best parts and whenever I shred one up guess where those go in a little container beside me and I'll hold on to those little parts in a little container beside me because if I've watched it cook for 12 hours and I'm going to shred it when my hands are burning

somebody's going to get the good stuff and it usually is reserved beside me and it's going to be that which I share with the people who are standing closest to me not going to go into a pan just to be mixed in it is a set aside portion it is what I consider to be one of the perks and privileges of cooking barbecue the brisket the beef brisket that is so expensive in stores and it's so expensive if you try to buy it at a restaurant the brisket used to be considered a worthless piece of meat by many packing houses they considered it something that was unsellable but then the people of Texas the butchers of Texas began to understand that if you cooked brisket just right it was the best portion of meat and the reason they figured that out is nobody wanted the brisket it was tough it was hard to deal with so the butchers were always left with it so the butcher had this set aside portion and that set aside portion is what you pay big money for why because the best cuts don't belong to everybody what God is saying is when you kill the animal you give me the best portions you give me that 90 pound back strip and fat tail off that lamb you give me the fat around these areas you give me that which tastes the best

I know in our day and time we want it as lean as we can get it with as much fat some of us some of us like the fat we don't want it all fatty there but we understand that God is saying that's the part you desire you give it to me why because when you celebrate your peace you're going to bring me the best and give me the best because you know it's worth the best that's a celebration of peace God has the best parts it is a set aside portion and now we get to probably one of the greatest aspects of this celebration of peace it is a shared rejoicing you don't get this from Leviticus chapter 3 you have to go to Leviticus 7 verses 11 through 18 I'm not going to ask you to go there tonight maybe you can go there sometime following this but you'll find in Leviticus 7 verses 11 through 18 that this peace offering the reason it's called a fellowship offering in many translations was to be shared not only with Aaron but with the one who offered it and with those around the one who offered it which means they would put it on the altar cook it a little bit and give it back to you now you had to eat it at the tabernacle at the tent of meeting you had to eat it at that location and you had to eat it within a constrained amount of times you couldn't eat it for five days you didn't have leftovers as a matter of fact in the peace offerings depending on how you offered it you either had two days or three days to eat it you had to eat it together and you had to eat it in his presence that is his presence and you had to eat it with other people it wasn't just you the reason you had to bring a big offering is because you were going to have a big party and the reason you were having a big party is because you were at peace with God this is such a beautiful picture is that when man understood that his sin had been atoned for and he had worshipped

[25 : 55] God with thanksgiving and he had provided for Aaron and his sons and he had been so thankful for God for all that God had provided for him and then he rightly understood he now was at peace with God it was such a divine privilege he threw a party at the tent of meeting he brought his animal his family his friends if anyone else was there offering up a peace offering whoever offered up the peace offering sat down together and had a feast they would eat it with the priests they would eat it with friends they would eat it with families they would eat it with strangers but they always ate it as a group why I'm at peace with God and I want you to rejoice with me I'm at peace with God and I'm going to have a cookout and I want you to come over I'm at peace with God and I'm so blessed to be at peace with God I want all to know it

I'm at peace with God we're going to have a time of fellowship and communion like none other this is an Old Testament reflection of the New Testament truth called the Lord's Supper that our peace with God is Jesus Christ he is the meal that we take in and we celebrate his is the divine privilege of being set down saying I am at peace with God and I get to commune with you in rejoicing at my peace with God this is why when we take the Lord's Supper it should be so much more than just the passing of the cup and the breaking of the bread rather it should be and I know it would break so many Baptist traditions and it would be so uncomfortable for some people it should be a glory shout hallelujah time I am at peace with God and I'm celebrating with my brothers and sisters in Christ I'm at peace with God I don't think when they sat down and they ate of this roasted animal did anybody sit with a solemn face did anybody sit with a downcast look they didn't eat meat every day bread was their thing and when they had a cookout it was a big deal and the biggest grill in town was at the tabernacle it might have been the only grill in town and the fire was always going and when they gathered together and I'm not belittling it at all because that's exactly what is going when they got there they said

I'm offering a peace offering won't you come with me we're going to eat of my peace offering we're going to celebrate and the reason we're going to celebrate is today I know I am at peace with God and it is a cause of celebration it is a cause of rejoicing I know that my sin has been atoned for I know that I am thankful for all that he has given me I know that he has provided the way and since I am at peace with God I want you to sit down and have a meal with me we're going to rejoice together we're going to fellowship together we're going to have a great time together and we're going to eat some good food together what a picture what a picture do you know that God has always called his people to celebrate the peace they have with God as a corporate body not as individuals you didn't offer the peace offering by yourself as an individual you celebrated your peace with God with others that's what we do every time we gather together we gather together as a church family and we know that through

Christ who is our peace offering through the blood he spills that has been sprinkled around that altar in heaven not the altar on earth that has been there yet lives through him we have peace with God and we come together and we rejoice in that peace with God not only as individuals but as a corporate body won't you rejoice with me won't you celebrate with me D.

Martin Lloyd Jones one of the greatest preachers he preached in England and and wrote some great books he he's passed away now not too many years ago but he preached at the Westminster Chapel I believe it was and did such fantastic work D.

[30 : 07] Martin Lloyd Jones used to say there's something special about the corporate gathering of the body of believers called the church as a matter of fact he wrote very few sermons and or not not wrote few he had very few published I have some of them when I have a series of sermons called the sermons on the mountain where he preached the sermons on the mountain and he even apologizes you're going to read these and they're not going to make sense because they are printed as I preach them he didn't believe in published sermons as much because he said there's something special about preaching and you don't get it unless you're sitting in the body you don't get it unless you're gathered together with the saints he said there's something spiritual about it and he said what it is it is men and women celebrating together the peace they have with God and others are drawn to it others are compelled to come think about this how visible picture the tabernacle was in the center of the nation of Israel it was right in the middle of the camp anytime somebody was having a feast celebrating the peace they have with God everybody else saw it look at that body of people sitting down at the doorway of the tent eating that meal look at them rejoicing in the peace he has with God look at him in the forgiveness that he knows he has look at him in the celebration of his thankful heart look at how much joy he has because he now knows he has peace with God friend listen that should be the same thing others experience every time they walk into our corporate gathering together look at the peace they have with God and look at the celebration why because Jesus Christ our peace offering has been made and we live eternally in light of it let's pray

Lord again we thank you so much we thank you not that you offer us peace of mind but Lord your great offer is peace with God what a privilege what a standing Lord I pray that we would celebrate in that truth Lord that our lives will be lives of rejoicing understanding all you've done so that we could be where we're at in your standing and we ask it all in Christ's name Amen God bless you God bless you God bless you God bless you God bless you God bless you God bless you God bless you Thank you.

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