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The Shalamim Offerings: Leading the Celebration of Peace

7: 11-21

The shalamim offering DIG: How do Pesach and the Lord's Supper describe a fellowship offering today? When you are particularly thankful to God, how do you show it? In what ways is this like the thanksgiving offering depicted in verses 12-14? For what are you particularly thankful for today? How will you express this thankfulness to ADONAI?

REFLECT: When have you felt most alienated from God? How important is it to you that all barriers between yourself and God be removed? Why? What do you do to rebuild a relationship with Him: Say your prayers? Read the Bible? Give more money? Give more of yourself? Or what? How does this compare to the peace offering?

The peace offerings from the perspective of the priests.



The culmination of worship, and its greatest joy, is to enter the presence of **God** and celebrate being at peace with **Him**. It is the great privilege of **the priests** to lead people in this; but it is also the great responsibility of **the spiritual leader** to make sure that it was done correctly, that purity and generosity characterized the celebration. At the heart of the spiritual life of the community, both ancient and modern, is the spontaneous, personal worship of believers. The emphasis in

Leviticus 7 on spontaneous praise, payment of **vow** and **fellowship offerings** reflects true, spiritual worship. Without these, worship becomes stagnant and mere ritual; with these, however, the faith of the congregation is alive, people are encouraged and strengthened in their pilgrimage, and **ADONAI** is glorified.⁷⁷

Thus far I have presented the average **priest's** work day in a rather tiring, or cumbersome way. I stressed some of the more difficult jobs **he** had to do on a daily basis. But it was not like that all the time. As our passage indicates it was not all **blood** and guts for **the priests**. Our parashah reminds us that one of the offerings which was brought daily was **the shalamim offerings**, or more commonly known as **the peace offerings** (**to see link click [Ak](#) - The Peace Offerings**). This portion teaches that there were actually **three different kinds** of **salami offerings**. The first was called *the todah* or **thanksgiving offering**; the second and third were called **the vow** and **fellowship offerings** respectively.⁷⁸

A blood offering always preceded any of the peace offerings, because the basis of peace between man and God is always a blood sacrifice. However, the Torah was very precise about not eating **the fat** or **the blood** of meat associated with **the shelamim offering**. This was very important because **YHVH** tells us that **the life of the animal is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the bronze altar to make atonement for yourselves; for it is the blood that makes atonement because of the life (17:11)**. It is a matter of **life for life**. When **the Isrealites** killed **an animal** outside of **the Tabernacle** they were told to spill **its blood** on the ground and cover **it** with earth because **blood** symbolizes **life**. Today there is no **bronze altar** or **Temple**, but **the blood** of **Yeshua** makes atonement for us. **The offering** portion of **the animal** was not designated as **most holy**. Thus, it could have been eaten outside of **the Tabernacle** by members of **the priests'** family within the camp of Isra'el (see the commentary on **Numbers [Am](#) - The Camp of the Twelve Tribes of Isra'el**). However, everyone who ate the offering had to be in a state of ritual purity.

First, there was the thanksgiving offering. When people brought the shelamim offerings for praise, they were expected to declare to the congregation what **God** had done for them. It was simply part of their mentality that they should not receive anything from God without publicly acknowledging **Him** and offering a gift in return. It can be called **a thanksgiving offering** to capture the idea of **the worshiper's** gratitude; but the thanksgiving that accompanied **the offering** was more a declaration of praise given to the congregation. When the gift, **the shelamim offering**, was given to **ADONAI**, it was given back to **the worshiper** as a

communal meal.

As an expression of his praise, then along with his thanksgiving offering he was to offer cakes of bread made without yeast and mixed with oil before cooking, **wafers made without yeast and spread with oil** after the cooking, **and cakes of fine flour well-kneaded and mixed with oil** before and after cooking. Since **the offerings** were made **without yeast, the priest** apparently offered a “memorial portion,” or a small portion of **the offering**, on the bronze altar. In the case of the grain offerings, the “memorial portion” would be a handful of grain, but here with **the shalamim offering**, it consisted of some of **the unleavened cakes of bread**.

However, **along with his peace offering of thanksgiving he was to present an offering with cakes of bread made with yeast**, because it was not to be burned **on the bronze altar**. It was only used for eating. **He was to bring one of each** of the three kinds of **peace offerings as a contribution to ADONAI**; it belonged **to the priest who** sprinkled **the blood of the meat** portion of the **peace offerings. The cakes of bread made with yeast** were then shared with **the priest, the worshiper, his** family and friends **(7:12-14)**.

The Torah was very specific about *when* the meat accompanying a **shalamim offering** could be eaten. **The meat of the thanksgiving offering had to be eaten on the day it was offered; he couldn't leave any of it till morning (7:15b)**. If, however, his offering was **the result of** the second kind of **peace offering, the vow offering**, then, while it was **to be eaten on the day of the sacrifice, what remained could be eaten on the next day (7:16a)**. The **vow offering** was brought by **the worshiper** to fulfill a **vow**. **Vows** might arise in various situations, for example a person in danger might make a **vow** to bring a **sacrifice** at the Tabernacle if **ADONAI** would rescue him from immediate danger. **The Psalms** often make reference to the repayment of **vows**. **They** were probably sung in conjunction with **the sacrifice of a vow offering (Psalms 22:25, 66:13, 116:14, 76:11)**. **The Nazarite vow** required very specific **sacrifices**. It was also possible to make a vow to bring a particular type of **sacrifice** or donation to the Tabernacle.

We learn from **the vow offering** that it was not inappropriate to make **vows** to **ADONAI**. However, the one who did so needed to be sure to fulfill such a **vow**. Wisdom would discourage the custom of making **vows** without seriously thinking about it beforehand. Perhaps one might make a **vow** and then find himself unable

or unwilling to fulfill it. In that case, it would have been better if he had never made **the vow** at all. **The Master's** warning against taking an oath should be measured in regard to making **a vow** as well.

Thirdly, **the fellowship offering** was simply a generous, voluntary gesture. It might be brought for the pure joy of sacrificing to **the LORD** and drawing closer to **Him (7:15a)**. **The fellowship offering** reminds us that we never need a particular reason to worship **ADONAI**. It is always appropriate to render **Him** what is due. It is always proper to seek **fellowship** with **Him** because we love **Him** and want to draw near to **Him**. In addition, if they, whose only comfort was that **God** would pass over their **sins** and **cover** them up (**Psalm 32:1**) until **the Messiah** comes, could render thanks unto **the Holy One**, how much more so can it be for us who know **Him** who loved us and freed us from our **sin** once-and-for-all, to give thanks to **Him**.⁷⁹

In both cases, **the sacrifice** had to **be eaten on the day he offered it, but anything left over could be eaten on the next day**. On the third day the meat would begin to turn rancid. Therefore, **any meat of the sacrifice left over till the third day must be burned up** because **ADONAI** would **not** accept it. It would **not be credited to the one who offered it, for it was impure, or pigul**, literally meaning *a stench* (**Leviticus 19:7; Isaiah 65:4; Ezekiel 4:14**). **The person who ate any of it was held responsible** for their own punishment (**7:16b-18**).

Anyone who ate of a sacrifice from the bronze altar on **the third day** or later, invalidated the sacrifice. Better that **the meat** should be **burned up** than decompose and become ritually unclean. **Meat which touches something unclean is not to be eaten but burned up completely. As for the meat, everyone who is clean may eat it; but a person in a state of uncleanness who eats any meat from the sacrifice of peace offerings made to ADONAI will be cut off from his people. Anyone who touches something unclean - whether the uncleanness be from a person, from an unclean animal or from some other unclean detestable thing - and then eats the meat from the sacrifice of peace offerings for ADONAI, that person will be cut off from his people (7:19-21). The sacrifices** and the worship in **the Tabernacle** were all about life, the imperishable world and the worship of **the Immortal One**. That is why they were kept separate from death, corruption, and human mortality.⁸⁰

We encounter, for the first time in **Leviticus**, explicit references to the penalty of being **cut off** in **Chapter 7** (also see **7:20-21 and 25-27**). This penalty is usually formulated in terms of *being cut off from his kin*. **In rabbinic literature the penalty is called *karet*, or “cutting off.” In priestly literature, the penalty of *karet* was understood to include a series of related punishments at the hand of God, ranging from the immediate death of an offender, as in **20:17**, to his premature death at a later time, and even to the death of his descendants. In Mishnah Sanhedrin 9:6 and Mishnah Keritot 1:2, this penalty was characterized as *mitah biydei shamayim*, or “death at the hands of heaven.” Since in **7:20-21** *karet* is mentioned in the context as childlessness, there is the implication that it took that course as well.**⁸¹

Can you picture the scene? A man comes to **the Tabernacle** bursting with joy because of something **ADONAI** has just blessed him with. There is his family and invited guests all waiting in the background as he offers up his sheep with tears of joy. **The priest** who assisted him was ready to call it quits after a long day of slaughtering in the hot sun. **He** has heard his fill of confessions of **sin**. **He** has seen enough **blood** to last for several lifetimes. But now **the worshiper** arrives, desiring just to render thanks to **YHVH**. All of the sudden **the priest** is revived. **For the joy of ADONAI is his strength (Psalm 28:7)**. Then, after the **blood** sacrifice is over, **the priest** sits down with the happy family. They eat fresh roasted sheep and **cakes** to their fill. When the meal is over, perhaps with the coolness of dusk settling in and the deep blues, radiant oranges and pinks of the sunset over them, together they all sing **Psalm 107, “Oh give thanks to ADONAI, for His mercies endure forever.”**⁸²

The Messianic significance: The significance of **the Master’s** resurrection on **the third day** is linked to **the peace offerings**. **The third day** was the day **the sacrifice** would become invalid because decomposition would begin (see the commentary on **The Life of Christ Ia - The Resurrection of Lazarus: The First Sign of Jonah**). In this regard, the worship system of **the Tabernacle** foreshadows our transformation in **Messiah**. In **Messiah** our bodies will be changed from corruptible to incorruptible. We pass from the mortal to the immortal. Our uncleanness is washed away and we enter the presence of **ADONAI** in perfect purity (see the commentary on **First Corinthians Dw - The Rapture: Victory Over Death**).

Dear Heavenly Father, Praise **Your** awesome grace that willingly brought peace to all who love you, Jews and Gentile. **For He is our Shalom, the One who made**

the two into one and broke down the middle wall of separation (Ephesians 2:14). Amazing that **You** so lovingly offered peace to both Jews and Gentiles and then made the huge blessing of **Your Holy Ruach** to live within each believer. **So that we, who were first to put our hope in Messiah, might be for His glorious praise. After you heard the message of truth - the Good News of your salvation - and when you put your trust in Him, you were sealed with the promised Ruach Ha'Kodesh. (Ephesians 1:12-13).** We love and worship **You** with our hearts. In **Your Holy Name** and power of **His** resurrection. Amen

Therefore, we have learned that **the Master** has, in one regard or another, answered to each of **the sacrifices**. The **sacrificial** system foreshadows **Him** and **His** work on our behalf. **He** is our korban 'Olah, completely dedicated to **God the Father** (see [Ao](#) - **The 'Olah Offering**); **He** is our korban **Minhah**, the bread of life (see [Ap](#) - **The Minhah Offering**); **He** is our korban **Chatta't**, our means of purification (see [Aq](#) - **The Chatta't Offering**); **He** is our korban **Asham**, repaying the debt we could never pay (see [Ar](#) - **The Asham Offering**); **He** is our korban **Shalamim**, our peace and fellowship with **God** (see [As](#) - **The Shelamim Offering**).