

April 12

Scriptures: Read Leviticus 7

Key Verse: “Every male among the priests may eat it. It shall be eaten in a holy place. It is most holy.” (Leviticus 7:6)

Overview

In the Old Covenant period, only the males from the priestly families were consecrated to the Lord and His service, and only they were permitted to enter the holy places and eat from the holy offerings. All the offerings consecrated to the Lord, especially those for the expiation of sin, were considered most holy. God does not take sin lightly,, nor should we. It is a serious matter and must be dealt with. That is why God established the sacrificial system until His Son Jesus became the final, perfect, and ultimate Sacrifice, through whom we receive forgiveness of sins. All believers in the New Covenant, whether male or female, who are totally consecrated to the Lord make up the body of His holy priesthood, and as such may partake of the very holy things of the Lord. All true followers of Jesus may enter directly into the holy presence of the Lord and share in His Holy Communion, the Lord’s Supper; all may partake of the spiritual food received from the Holy Bible; all may receive spiritual gifts and fruits bestowed by the Holy Spirit. The Lord God is certainly a giver of great gifts, the greatest of which was His Son.

This chapter relates further information about the trespass and peace offering. The wave and heave offerings (7:30, 32) were portions of that offering which were voluntarily given for those who served God. The act of waving the breast portion of the sacrifice up before God signified consecration to Him and, in the heave offering, the right thigh was first lifted up toward God and then given into the priest’s hands for his personal use. In these and other ways, God saw to it that His priests shared in His offerings. This was one way they received pay for the great service they performed continually. Although only the priests could partake of the holy offerings in the holy place, they could still provide for their wives and families because the first fruits and tithes, as well as the breasts and right thighs of the peace offerings could be taken to their homes. These offerings enabled the priests not to worry about having to work elsewhere and earn a living so they could devote all their time to the service of God (cf. 1 Cor. 9:13, 14). As it was then, and still is today, it is the responsibility of the Lord’s people to support those who serve God in full-time ministry (1 Tim. 5:16, 17).

More details concerning the nature of the peace offering is given from verses 11 to 35. Three types are described, all having to do with communion with God. (1) A thanksgiving offering, (2) a vow offering, and (3) a freewill or voluntary offering, which sprang from, joy in the covenant relationship with God. It was strictly required that no meat of the offering became defiled by leaving it longer than the specified time. If this was disobeyed and the offering was eaten, it would be unacceptable to God and the offender would be guilty (7:18). Guilt also came upon the person who. Being ceremonially unclean ate from the holy offering. This disobedience resulted in exile or possible death, being “cut off from his people”. It was a serious matter, for those things holy to the Lord are sacred and must be respected. It is similar with the Lord’s Supper today (1 Cor. 11:27-29). We as the Lords priests are to be holy, as He is holy (Lev. 19:2; 1 Pet. 1:15, 16). To be holy there must be obedience to the Lord. It is once again stressed in chapter

seven that the Israelites were to eat no fat or blood, and again there is a serious penalty: being “cut off”. These rules, like many others given, including the burning of the offered meat on the third day (7:17), were good for the health of the people, for they were living in a hot desert region.

A basic principle of atonement was set forth: the offering was to be brought personally to the Tabernacle by the person offering it, never by proxy (7:17). Asking God for forgiveness, dedication oneself to Him, giving thanks to Him and having communion with Him was to be done by the individual worshipper as a tangible response to God’s blessings. Mere words expressing thanks or love were not enough; it had to be done “in deed and in truth” (1 John 3:18). Sacrificial material and financial gifts to the work of the Lord were to proper Israelite response to their love of God. This response should be ours today.

Prayer

O Lord, help us to offer sacrificial gifts to You. We trust You for forgiveness and now we offer a tangible expression of our thankfulness.