

References: Lev 3; Lev 7:11-36; Lev 10:14-15; Lev 22:21-30; Lev 23:19; Num 15:1-16

1. **The Peace Offering.** Read Lev 3. The offering here is the Hebrew word “*shelem*” (Strong 8002), translated:

- **peace** offering (ESV, KJV, NASB, NLT, AMP, MSG) or
- **fellowship** offering (CSB, NIV, LEB) or
- **well-being** offering (CEB, NRSV)

a. **Significance**

- Its primary significance was to celebrate that **all was well** (i.e., peaceful) in the relationship between Yahweh and the worshipper. It was not offered to secure peace, but rather to **celebrate peace**. When God sits down to eat with people it means they are already at peace.

Read Col 1:19-22. How did God establish peace with his alienated and hostile creation?

Read Eph 2:11-17 What 2 groups here experienced peace/union due to Christ’s death?

- It was a **festive meal** that celebrated **covenant union** between the worshipers and God. Sharing a meal together is sharing life together... having fellowship with each other.

Read 1 John 1:3. Who does John say are sharing fellowship together?

Read Rev 3:20. What does Jesus want to do after coming inside the house?

b. **Sequence.** Read Lev 9:15-18 and 9:22. Notice the order of the offerings: sin, burnt, grain, and **lastly**, peace offerings. When multiple offerings were prescribed, the peace offering is offered last.

Read Rom 5:1. What **precedes** having peace with God?

2. **Peace Offering Distinctives.**

a. **Sacrifice = Eating.** Read Lev 3:1 where the peace offering is introduced. Notice that it is referred to as a “**sacrifice of peace offering**” Was the burnt offering in Lev 1 referred to as a sacrifice?

In the OT, the word “sacrifice” (*zevach* / 2077) implies a slain offering **where the meat is eaten by the worshipper**. Whenever you see the word “sacrifice” it usually means some type of **peace offering**.

- Of the 5 offerings in Leviticus (burnt, grain, peace, sin, guilt) only the peace offering is referred to as a sacrifice because it was the only one where the worshipper (and family/friends) could eat the offering.
- Three well-known sacrifice-meals (peace offerings) outside of Leviticus are:
 1. the **Passover feast** celebrated yearly. Read Ex 12:6-10 and 12:26-27.
 2. the **Mt. Sinai covenant meal** where Moses & others ate with God. Read Ex 24:5, 9-11.
 3. the **dedication of the temple** by Solomon and the people. Read 1 Kings 8:62-63.

b. **Voluntary.** For the individual Israelite the peace offering was voluntary, just like the burnt and grain offerings; and like them it was a “pleasing aroma” offering to Yahweh. There were 3 types of voluntary peace offerings:

Type of Offering	Purpose	When Eaten
Thanksgiving Ps 107:22; Heb 13:15	To give thanks to God for his intervention, particularly deliverance from peril. The worshipper probably hired a Levitical singer to sing a psalm like Ps 30 while they formally thanked God.	On first day. Any meat remaining had to be burned.
Vow Ps 116:14, 18-19	To fulfil a vow made after God answers their prayer. Most famous is Hannah’s vow and Samuel’s birth (1 Sam 1)	On first or second day. Any meat remaining on third day had to be burned.
Freewill Ps 119:108	Spontaneous gratitude for God’s blessings. Deut 16:10	

- c. **Eligible Animals.** The animal could be male or female from the cattle or the flock (sheep, goats). It had to be unblemished (with one slight exception for a free-will offering). No birds were allowed.
- d. **Food Portions Eaten.** In the sacrifice of the peace offering there are 3 parties who share the communion meal together: 1) God, 2) the priests and their family, 3) the worshipper and their family and friends.
 - 1. **God’s portion.** Certain sections of **fat** (including the **kidneys** which are covered in fat) are burned on the altar as God’s food offering.

The fat belonged to God (Lev 3:16-17). It represents what is **best** and **richest** being offered to God first (Gen 4:4; Gen 45:18).

The kidneys represent the **inner person** and the seat of emotions and feeling. Read Prov 23:16. Read Ps 26:2. Signifies surrendering our deepest emotions and innermost being to the LORD.
 - 2. **Priestly portion.** Read Lev 7:31-33. The priests were given the **breast**. The officiating priest was given the **right thigh**. They could eat these along with their families in the camp (Lev 10:14).
 - 3. **Worshipper portion.** Read Lev 7:15-21. The worshipper received **all remaining meat**, which was the largest portion of the sacrifice. He could share this festive meal with his family, friends, the Levites, and the poor. The food was considered “holy food”, so care had to be taken to allow only ritually clean people to eat it, and to not let anything unclean touch it.
- e. **The Ritual.** Many of the steps are like the burnt offering. The worshipper selects the animal, presents it near the altar, lays his hand on its head and kills it. The priest splashes the blood on the sides of the altar. The worshipper skins and cuts up the animal, then waives the fat/breast/thigh. The priest burns the fat on top of the daily burnt offering. The priests receive their portion (breast, thigh), and the worshipper receives all remaining meat and eats it along with others at or near the tabernacle/temple.
- f. **The Mood.** Read Deut 12:5-7, 12. The peace offering was a time of **celebration** and **joy** for the worshipper and his family. When they “ate before the LORD” they were **commanded to rejoice**. Yahweh was the host of the banquet, and the priests and worshippers were invited guests to his table.

3. Our Eating at the Table of the LORD

- a. **A Shadow.** Read Heb 10:1. The Levitical offerings are a shadow of the “**good things to come**”.
- b. **Our Table.** Read Heb 13:10 & 9:23. You and I have a **right to eat** a **better sacrifice** at a **new altar-table**.
- c. **Our Food.** Read John 6:53-56 & 1 Cor 5:7. We **feed on Christ**, his flesh, and his blood **to receive life**.
- d. **Our Host** and new **Table Ritual**. Read 1 Cor 11:23-25 (also Mat 26:26-29; Mar 14:22-25; Lu 22:14-20). In Lu 22:16 Jesus said the meal was **prophetic**: it would “be fulfilled” when the kingdom of God comes.

The Sacrificial Food	The Table Ritual Actions of Jesus, our Host	The Lord’s Explanation
Loaf of Bread	1. Took the loaf 2. Gave thanks 3. Broke the loaf 4. Gave to his disciples with a command to eat unto Him	This is my body given for you
Cup of Wine	1. Took the cup after supper 2. Gave thanks 3. Gave to his disciples with a command to drink unto Him 4. Made a promise to abstain from wine until the messianic banquet arrives in the kingdom (see Is 25:6-9 and Rev 19:9)	This cup is the new covenant in my blood, poured out for many for forgiveness of sins.

Paul further explained that whenever we eat this bread and drink the cup, we proclaim the Lord’s death **until He comes** (1 Cor 11:26). Maranatha! Our Lord, Come! (1 Cor 16:22)