

CHAPTER 3

INTRODUCTION TO LEVITICUS 3

This chapter contains the law of the peace offerings, and gives an account what they consisted of, and of the various rites and ceremonies used at them, as of the bullock and the rites appertaining to that, (~~RR01~~ Leviticus 3:1-5) and of the lamb, and of the rites peculiar to it, (~~RR06~~ Leviticus 3:6-11) and of the goat, and of the rites belonging to it, (~~RR12~~ Leviticus 3:12-16) and the chapter is concluded with a law forbidding the eating of fat and blood throughout their dwellings for ever, (~~RR17~~ Leviticus 3:17).

Ver. 1. *And if his oblation [be] a sacrifice of peace offering*, etc.] The Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan render it, the “sacrifice of holinesses”, or “sanctifications”; so called, not because they were more holy than other sacrifices; for they were what the Jews^{f74} call the lighter holy things, in distinction from the most holy things, such as the meat offerings were, (~~RR20~~ Leviticus 2:10) but as Ainsworth suggests, either because none but holy persons might eat of them, (~~RR19~~ Leviticus 7:19,20) though this also was enjoined in other sacrifices, or because hereby the name of God was sanctified. These offerings were either by way of thanksgiving for favours received, or for free devotion, or as a vow, and in order to obtain for himself that offered and family health and safety, peace and prosperity, (see ~~RR11~~ Leviticus 7:11,12) all which the word used signifies; and these sacrifices are by the Septuagint called “sacrifices of salvation” or “health”, because offered either in gratitude for it, or to enjoy it; or else they were offered to make peace and reconciliation, and therefore are called peace offerings, and that they were for this purpose is certain from (~~RR55~~ Ezekiel 45:15) and Gersom says they had their name from hence, because they bring peace between God and men; they were a kind of a pacific festival between God, the priests, and the owner, and were typical of Christ, who has made peace for us by his blood and sacrifice. There is something very offensive to God in sin, it being a breach of his law, and contrary to his nature and will, provoking to the eyes of his glory, deserving of wrath, and death itself, and so not only sets man at a distance from him, but creates an enmity between them; hence a peace offering became necessary; such an one man could not

bring acceptable to God; for neither his repentance nor good works would do; but Christ has offered up himself a sacrifice, and thereby has made reconciliation for sin and sinners, and procured peace with God for them; the consequence of which is spiritual peace here, and eternal peace hereafter; and so is a “sacrifice of peaces”, as the Hebrew phrase here may be literally rendered, and is the proper antitype and full completion of this sort of sacrifice:

if he offer [it] of the herd; that is, a bullock:

whether [it be] a male or female; as it might be either; showing, as some think, that in Christ Jesus, and in the Gospel churches, and under the Gospel dispensation, there is no distinction of male and female, with respect to blessings and privileges, (⁴⁰³³Galatians 3:28) or rather as others, denoting both strength and weakness in Christ; strength in his obedience, and weakness in his sufferings; strong he was as the man of God’s right hand made so by him, and yet was crucified through weakness:

he shall offer it without blemish before the Lord: signifying the perfection and purity of Christ’s sacrifice of peace offering in the sight of God: “before the Lord”; this, according to Gersom, was on the west side of the court.

Ver. 2. *And he shall lay his hand upon the head of his offering*, etc.] “His right hand with strength”, the Targum of Jonathan says; perhaps both his hands were imposed; the Septuagint and Arabic versions read it in the plural number, “hands”; this same rite was used in the sacrifice of burnt offering, (see Gill on ⁴⁰⁰⁴Leviticus 1:4”); which might be done in any place in the court where it was slain, only with this difference: according to Maimonides ^{f75}, there was no confession of sin made at laying on of hands upon the peace offerings, but words of praise were spoken:

and kill it at the door of the congregation; it seems as if it was not the priest, but the owner that brought it, and laid his hands on it, that killed it; and so the last mentioned writer says, that slaying the peace offering by a stranger was right; and as he and others ^{f76} say, it might be slain in any part of the court; it was not obliged to be slain in the north part of it, as the burnt offering was, (⁴⁰¹¹Leviticus 1:11)

and Aaron’s sons the priests shall sprinkle the blood upon the altar round about; in like manner as the blood of the burnt offering was, and it was done with two sprinklings, which were as four ^{f77}; (see Gill on

“(1006) Leviticus 1:5”) this was typical of the blood of Christ, called “the blood of sprinkling”.

Ver. 3. *And he shall offer of the sacrifice of the peace offering*, etc.] That is, the priest, not all of it, but some of it, even what is after mentioned:

an offering made by fire unto the Lord; for what was offered to the Lord was burnt, and is that part of it which is next mentioned in this and the following verse:

the fat that covereth the inwards, and all the fat that is upon the inwards; both that which covered them, and that which stuck to them; and the fat being the best, it was the Lord’s, and offered to him, and denoted Christ the fatted calf, whose sacrifice is best and most excellent; and which was typified by that which Abel offered up, and which being of the fat of the flock, and offered up by faith in Christ’s sacrifice, was more excellent than Cain’s, (1004) Genesis 4:4 (8104) Hebrews 11:4).

Ver. 4. *And the two kidneys, and the fat that [is] on them, which is [by] the flanks*, etc.] Meaning either the two kidneys which were next the flanks, or the fat upon them, which was next to them; these, and the burning of them, may signify the burning zeal and flaming love and affections of Christ for his people, which instructed him, and put him upon offering himself a sacrifice of peace offering for them, (see 9107) Psalm 16:7)

and the caul above the liver, with the kidneys, it shall he take away; or the caul, which is a thin membrane or skin, in which the liver is enclosed, with the liver, together with the kidneys, he separated from the rest in order to burn, at least with a part of the liver; so Jarchi and Gersom interpret it, that he should take a little of the liver with the caul; and indeed some think the word rendered “caul” signifies a part of the liver, that which the Greeks call the “table”, the broader part of it, like a table; and which word the Talmudists^{f78} retain, who speak of *ad bkd hycprj* , “the table of the liver”; and by which Jarchi on (1029) Exodus 29:13) interprets the caul above the liver, the same as here.

Ver. 5. *And Aaron’s sons shall burn it on the altar*, etc.] That is, the fat of the several parts before mentioned; this signified the sufferings of Christ, by which our peace is made, and by whose death we are reconciled to God: this rite of burning the fat of the inwards of sacrifices was used by the Pagans, and is still retained by the idolatrous Indians to this day^{f79}:

upon the burnt sacrifice; which, as Gersom says, was the burnt offering of the daily sacrifice of the morning, which was offered first of all sacrifices; so Jarchi says,

“we learn that the daily burnt offering preceded every other offering:”

this was an eminent type of Christ’s sacrifice:

which is upon the wood that [is] on the fire; that is, which burnt offering was laid upon the wood on the fire, and the fat of the peace offering upon that:

[it is] an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the Lord; as Christ’s sacrifice is, (^{CHR}Ephesians 5:2 (see Gill on “^{CHR}Leviticus 1:9”)).

Ver. 6. *And if his offering, for a sacrifice of peace offering unto Lord, be of the flock*, etc.] As it might be: and be either male or female; which he pleased:

he shall offer [it] without blemish; (see Gill on “^{CHR}Leviticus 3:1”).

Ver. 7. *If he offer a lamb for his offering*, etc.] Which was of the flock, and must be of the first year; this is a rule laid down by Maimonides ^{f80}, that where ever this word is used in the law, it signifies one of the first year:

then shall he offer it before the Lord; bring it into the court, and present it to the priest.

Ver. 8. *And he shall lay his hand upon the head of his offering*, etc.] The Targum of Jonathan adds here, as before, “his right hand with strength:”

and kill it before the tabernacle of the congregation; in the court, in any part of it; for, as Gersom says, all places were right for this; the man that brought it killed it, or the butcher, as the Targum of Jonathan says here also as on (^{CHR}Leviticus 3:2):

and Aaron’s sons shall sprinkle the blood thereof round about upon the altar; upon the four horns of it, (see Gill on “^{CHR}Leviticus 3:2”).

Ver. 9. *And he shall offer of the sacrifice of the peace offering*, etc.] That is, the priest, Aaron, or one of his two sons:

an offering made by fire unto the Lord; that part of it which was to be burnt with fire; and in the peace offering of the lamb there was something more than in the peace offering of the bullock, or of the goat, which follows:

the fat thereof, [and] the whole rump, it shall he take off hard by the backbone; not the rump or tail, but the fat of it; the copulative “and” is not in the text; wherefore Aben Ezra says, that Gaon was mistaken in reading it as we do, “the fat there of”, and “the whole rump”; but it should be rendered, “its fat of the whole rump”, or “tail”: in the eastern countries ^{f81}, some sheep and lambs had very large tails, and very fat ones, the least weighing ten or twelve pounds, the largest above forty, and were put in little carts for ease and safety; see Gill “~~<1222>~~Exodus 29:22” now such as were “whole”, entire, perfect, and without blemish, as the word signifies, the fat of them that was next to the backbone was to be taken off of such as were brought for peace offerings:

and the fat that covereth the inwards, and all the fat that is upon the inwards; as before; (see Gill on “~~<RRB>~~Leviticus 3:3”).

Ver. 10. *And the two kidneys*, etc.] The same direction is given here as about the bullock of the peace offering, (see Gill on “~~<RRB>~~Leviticus 3:4”).

Ver. 11. *And the priest shall burn it upon the altar*, etc.] The fat of the tail, of the inwards, the two kidneys, and the caul of the liver:

[it is] the food of the offering made by fire unto the Lord; or “bread”; this part of the offering that was burnt belonged to the Lord; it was his food, and what was accepted of by him, and therefore is elsewhere called the bread of God, (~~<RIB>~~Leviticus 21:8,22 ~~<QED>~~Numbers 28:2).

Ver. 12. *And if his offering be a goat*, etc.] As it might be, and which also was of the flock:

then he shall offer it before the Lord; in the same place and manner as the bullock and the lamb, (~~<RRB>~~Leviticus 3:1,7

Ver. 13. *And he shall lay his hand upon the head of it*, etc.] His right hand, according to the Targum of Jonathan, as before; the same directions are given for the killing of it, and for the sprinkling of its blood, as in the offerings of the bullock and lamb.

Ver. 14. *And he shall offer thereof his offering*, etc.] The same rules are laid down about taking the fat off of several parts as in the sacrifice of the bullock; but nothing is said of the fat of the rump and tail, as is said of the lamb.

Ver. 16. *And the priest shall burn them upon the altar*, etc.] Which shows that not the fat only, but the inwards and the kidneys, were burnt also; so Maimonides says ^{f82}, that the priest salted the parts, and burned them upon the altar; and the priests might not have the breast and shoulder (which were what belonged to them) until the parts were burnt:

[it is] the food of the offering made by fire; which the Lord ate of, or accepted of:

for a sweet savour; as a type of the sweet smelling sacrifice of Christ, with which he is well pleased;

all the fat is the Lord's; that is, all that was upon the parts mentioned in the several sacrifices of peace offerings, which was to be taken off and burnt: though the Jewish writers understand it of all fat in general, and so interpret the law that follows.

Ver. 17. *[It shall be] a perpetual statute for your generations*, etc.] That is, unto the end of the Mosaic dispensation, until the Messiah comes, and his sacrifice is offered up, and his blood is shed, till that time in all generations: and

throughout all your dwellings; wherever their habitations should be, it is a law to be observed:

that ye eat neither fat nor blood; the Jewish writers think, that this is not to be restrained to the fat and blood of sacrifices, because these were not offered in their dwellings, but in the tabernacle and temple, and therefore interpret it of fat and blood in general; but what fat and blood are meant may be seen in (^{<OR>}Leviticus 7:23-27) the Targum of Jonathan adds,

“but upon the top of the altar it shall be offered to the name of the Lord,”

which seems to restrain it to the sacrifices.