

HWMR - CRYSTALLIZATION STUDY OF LEVITICUS, Book 2, Week 10

Christ as the Peace between God and God's People for Their Co-enjoyment in Fellowship to Have the Vital-group Church Life and to Consummate in the New Jerusalem as the Ultimate Peace Offering

Scripture Reading: Lev. 3:1-2; 6:12; 7:37; Phil. 4:5-7, 11-13; John 12:1-3

- Leviticus 3:1-2 And if his offering is a sacrifice of **peace offerings**, if he presents it from the **herd**, whether male or female, he shall present it without blemish before Jehovah. And he shall **lay his hand** on the head of his offering and slaughter it at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, and Aaron's sons the priests shall sprinkle the blood on and around the altar.
- Leviticus 6:12 And the fire on the altar shall be **kept burning** on it; it must not go out. And the priest shall burn wood on it every morning, and he shall lay the burnt offering in order upon it and shall **burn the fat of the peace offerings** on it.
- Leviticus 7:37 This is the **law** of the burnt offering and of the meal offering and of the sin offering and of the trespass offering and of the filling of hands and of the sacrifice of **peace offerings**,
- Philippians 4:5-7 Let your **forbearance** be known to all men. The Lord is near. In nothing be anxious, but in everything, by **prayer** and **petition with thanksgiving**, let your requests be made known to God; And the **peace of God**, which surpasses every man's understanding, will **guard** your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus.
- Philippians 4:11-13 Not that I speak according to lack, for I have **learned**, in whatever circumstances I am, to **be content**. I know also how to be **abased**, and I know how to **abound**; in everything and in all things I have learned the secret both to be **filled** and to **hunger**, both to **abound** and to **lack**. I am able to do all things in Him who **empowers** me.
- John 12:1-3 Then Jesus, six days before the Passover, came to Bethany, where **Lazarus** was, whom Jesus had **raised** from the dead. Therefore they made Him a supper there; and **Martha served**, but Lazarus was one of the ones reclining at table with Him. Then **Mary** took a pound of ointment, of very valuable pure nard, and **anointed** the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair; and the **house** was filled with the fragrance of the ointment.

Romans 1:7b	"Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ"
1 Corinthians 1:3	"Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."
2 Corinthians 1:2	"Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."
Galatians 1:3	"Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ,"
Ephesians 1:2	"Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."
Philippians 1:2	"Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."
Colossians 1:2b	"Grace to you and peace from God our Father."
2 Thessalonians 1:2	"Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."
Philemon 1:3	"Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."

2 Peter 1:2 "Grace to you and **peace** be **multiplied** in the **full knowledge** of God and of Jesus our Lord;"

I. The issue of enjoying Christ as our burnt offering, our meal offering, our sin offering, and our trespass offering is the enjoyment of Christ as the **peace offering** — Lev. 3:1-2; 6:12; 7:37:

- A. We should not try to have peace by our own effort; the more we try in ourselves to have peace, the less peace we will have; the only way to have peace is to enjoy Christ every day — Rom. 14:17; 1 Cor. 12:3b; Eph. 3:16-17.
- B. Having **peace** is a **measurement** to show us to **what degree we enjoy Christ** — 1:2; cf. Matt. 11:28-30.
- C. We should enjoy Christ today and forget about yesterday and about tomorrow — 6:25, 34; Phil. 3:13-14; Heb. 3:7-8, 13.

The peace offering is for the fellowship in **enjoyment** between us and God. Both we and God enjoy Christ as the **same object** for our fellowship. We and God enjoy Christ as the burnt offering and as the sin offering, and this **issues in the enjoyment** of Christ as the **peace offering**. For Christ to be our peace offering means that we and God mutually enjoy Christ and have fellowship in Christ. This fellowship is not just once but is for our whole life. (Life-Study of Numbers, Chapter 10, Section 3)

II. Christ is the **peace** between God and God's people for their **co-enjoyment in fellowship** — cf. 1 Cor. 1:9:

- A. The one who offered the peace offering was to **lay his hand** on the head of the offering, signifying the **union** and **identification** of the offerer with the offering; our fellowship with Christ is a matter of identification, a matter of us becoming Him and of Him becoming us — Lev. 3:2, 8, 13.

- B. The **peace offering** is illustrated in Luke 15:23-24 by the fattened calf as a peaceful enjoyment between the receiving father, God, and the returning prodigal son, a sinner.
- C. We need to learn the secret of enjoying Christ as our peace offering—the peace of God, which **surpasses every man's understanding**—Phil. 4:12, 7; John 16:33:
1. We must **learn the secret** of how to take Christ as life, how to live Christ, how to magnify Christ, and how to gain Christ in any environment and in any matter— Phil. 4:11-13:
 - a. We need to let our requests be made known *to God*, talking with Him and conferring with Him in everything—vv. 5-6; cf. Josh. 9:14; Prov. 3:5-6.
 - b. “Those who do not know this secret consider to live Christ a difficult thing. Actually, you just need to **practice speaking with the Lord constantly**; then spontaneously, you will live Christ” (*The Organic Aspect of God's Salvation*, p. 55)— Phil. 1:19-21a.
 - c. The result of practicing fellowship with God in prayer is that the **peace of God**, God as peace, is **infused** into us for our enjoyment as the **counterpoise** to **troubles** and the **antidote** to **anxiety** so that Christ as our **forbearance** can be known to all men— 4:5-7, 9; 1:20; Rom. 8:6; John 16:33:
 - (1) Through our fellowship with God in prayer, we enjoy the Lord as a **river of peace** and as a **comforting mother**—Isa. 66:12-13; cf. Gal. 4:26.
 - (2) Through our fellowship with God in prayer, we enjoy the Lord as a **refuge** from the wind, a **covering** from the tempest, **streams** of water in a dry place, and the **shadow** of a massive rock in a wasted land—Isa. 32:2.
 2. The virtues of Christ for our experience in Philippians 4:5-9 are the **expression of a life** that lives Christ as peace—1:19-21a; 2:5-13; 3:8-10:
 - a. Paul considers **forbearance** and the **lack of anxiety** as the first two aspects of the expression of a life that lives Christ.
 - b. **Anxiety**, coming from Satan, is the sum total of human life and disturbs the believers' life of living Christ; **forbearance**, coming from God, is the sum total of a life that lives Christ; the two are opposites.
 3. “*Let your forbearance be known to all men. The Lord is near*”—4:5:
 - a. **Forbearance** is **reasonableness, considerateness, and consideration in dealing with others, without being strict in claiming one's legal rights; forbearance means that we are easily satisfied, even with less than our due.**
 - b. According to Christian experience, forbearance is all-inclusive, for it includes all Christian virtues:
 - (1) **Forbearance** includes **love, patience, kindness, humility, compassion, considerateness, and submissiveness, a willingness to yield; if we have such an all-inclusive virtue, we shall also have righteousness and holiness.**
 - (2) **Forbearance** also includes **self-control, moderation, gentleness, understanding, sympathy, wisdom, mercy, peacefulness, looking to the Lord, and even the virtue of admitting that the Lord is sovereign in all things.**
 - c. A forbearing person is one who **always fits in**, whose behavior is always suitable—cf. 2 Cor. 6:1a; 10:1; Phil. 1:19; Isa. 11:2.
 - d. If we are forbearing, we shall have the **wisdom** and the **ability** to supply others with what they need; we shall also have the **full knowledge** of what to say to them and when to say it—50:4-5; Col. 1:28.
 - e. To be forbearing is to consider how others will be affected by what we do or say— 2 Chron. 1:10.
 - f. As an all-inclusive virtue, **forbearance is Christ Himself**; since Christ is forbearance, for Paul to live was forbearance—Phil. 1:21a:
 - (1) To **let our forbearance** be known to all men is to let the Christ whom we live and magnify, whom we take as our pattern and pursue as our goal, be known to all men.
 - (2) Only the Lord Jesus lived a life full of forbearance, and only Christ can be our perfect forbearance today.
 - (3) To **make known our forbearance** is to live a life that expresses Christ as the totality of all human virtues.
 - g. Immediately after speaking about forbearance, Paul says that the Lord is near:
 - (1) With respect to **space**, the Lord is near us, ready to help; with regard to **time**, the Lord is at hand, coming soon—cf. Rom. 10:8-13.
 - (2) The Lord's being near refers primarily to **His presence with us**—Matt. 1:23.
 4. “*In nothing be anxious, but in everything, by prayer and petition with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses every man's understanding, will guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus*”— Phil. 4:6-7:
 - a. The words *in everything* refer to the many different things that happen to us day by day.
 - b. **Prayer** is general, having worship and fellowship as its essence; **petition** is special, being for particular needs; both our prayer and our petition should be **accompanied** by **our giving thanks** to the Lord.
 - c. **To God** denotes motion toward, in the sense of a living union and communion, implying fellowship; hence, the sense of *to God* here is “*in the fellowship with God.*”
 - d. The God of peace **patrols** before our hearts and thoughts in Christ, keeping us calm and tranquil; **a proper Christian life is a life of calm, tranquility, peace, and quiet** (1 Tim. 2:1-2; Isa. 30:15a); the first aspect of a life that lives Christ is tranquility— without rivalry, vainglory, murmurings, or reasonings and without debate, arguing, or fighting with others.
 - e. *Let your forbearance be known* is parallel to *let your requests be made known*—Phil. 4:5-6:
 - (1) Our anxiety can be turned into forbearance by **bringing** every need, every request, to God, and by **conversing** with Him; we should just **tell Him** what we need; that is, if we have any worry or anxiety, we should just tell Him.
 - (2) Our letting Him know is our **motion toward Him**; then **His response is His dispensing, His mingling Himself with us**, even before He answers our request; the practical mingling of divinity with humanity is carried out by the traffic described in verse 6.

- f. If we would have a life free of anxiety, we need to realize that all **our circumstances**, good or bad, have been **assigned to us by God** in order to serve us in fulfilling our destiny **to gain Christ**, live Christ, and magnify Christ—Rom. 8:28-29; Matt. 10:29-30; 2 Cor. 4:16-18.

..., we must have a fixed time to **practice** this **fellowship** with the Lord. The beginner, learning how to fellowship with the Lord, **should set aside** several fixed times each day to **practice** this fellowship. At this time, do not try to bring in many items of prayer (we should even cease from praying outward prayers), but pray according to the inner feeling. During this kind of prayer, we sense mostly our sins and offenses and deal with them accordingly. Later, we feel mostly that we have to turn to the Lord and consecrate ourselves to Him. Then spontaneously we look to the **grace** of the Lord; through His **supply of grace** we enter into deeper fellowship. Finally, **thanksgiving, praise, and worship** follow. If we **practice** this fellowship daily at these set times, our spirit will be strong and living, making it easier to touch the Lord and enter into His fellowship.

..., we must **practice** fellowship with the Lord at all times. After we **spend quite a period of time** in practicing fellowship at specific times, we should **practice** fellowship with the Lord at all times. **Appointed times** of fellowship are possible by laying aside all outward activities and by praying and seeking wholeheartedly after the Lord. It is comparatively easy for us to do this. However, **continual** fellowship should be **maintained** during the whole day, whether at work or at rest. We may be very busy outwardly or occupied with many business affairs, yet **inwardly** we are always with the Lord, experiencing **constantly** and naturally the anointing in His presence so that we can **continuously** live in fellowship. This point is higher and more difficult to attain, but is possible through **continuous practice**. (The Experience of Life, Chapter 7, Section 11)

III. We need to learn the secret of how to have the **vital-group church life** as a **house of feasting**—a feast of Christ as the peace offering—where **He and His lovers can have rest and satisfaction**—John 12:1-3:

- A. This church life is **produced** by the resurrection life—11:43-44.
- B. This church life is **composed** of cleansed sinners—Mark 14:3.
- C. This church life is **outwardly** poor and afflicted—John 12:1; 16:33.

The **church** is composed of **cleansed sinners** as represented by Simon the **leper** (Mark 14:3). When I was young, I thought that the house there in Bethany where they were **feasting** with the Lord was the home of Lazarus. Eventually I learned that it was not the home of Lazarus, but the **house** of a **leper** who must have been healed by the Lord. According to Mark 14:3 the feast mentioned in John 12:2 was prepared for the Lord in the house of a leper named Simon. The house of Simon, a **cleansed leper**, **became the meeting place of the church**. This is very meaningful. On the one hand, we all were dead; on the other hand, we all were lepers. Originally, the members of the church were both dead and leprous (sinful) people. In a sense we, like Lazarus, were **dead** and have been resurrected. In another sense we, like Simon, were contaminated **lepers** and have been **cleansed**. Hallelujah, **the Lord has raised us from the dead and cleansed us from our leprosy, our sins! Now where we are becomes the meeting place of the church.**

It is very strange that the place where the feast was prepared for the Lord was in the home of Simon the leper, yet John 12 is silent about Simon's doing anything. The feast was prepared in Simon's house, **but** everything was done by two sisters and one brother. In Bethany, in the house of a leper, everything was done by **Martha, Mary, and Lazarus**. Although the church is the place where the Lord quickens and regenerates the dead and cleanses the lepers, the **service** in the church is **not** done by the lepers. This is the meaning behind the fact that Simon was absent from serving in John 12. (Life-Study of John, Chapter 25, Section 2)

- D. This church life is a **life of feasting** in and with the presence of the Lord—12:2; Acts 3:20a.
- E. This church life has **more sisters** than brothers—John 12:2-3.
- F. In this church life there are the **functions** of Martha (diligently **serving** the Lord), Lazarus (**testifying** of the resurrection life), and Mary (pouring out her **absolute love** on the Lord)—vv. 2-3, 9-11.

IV. Our **enjoyment of Christ as our peace offering in our daily life and in the church life consummates in the New Jerusalem as the ultimate peace offering**—Rev. 21:2:

- A. **Jerusalem** means “*the foundation of peace*.”
- B. The New Jerusalem is the Triune God to be our peace, to be our safety.
- C. The whole New Jerusalem will be an **entity of peace**.

The Lord Jesus told us, “*Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you*” (John 14:27). Our Lord also said in John 16:33, “*These things I have spoken to you that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have affliction, but take courage; I have overcome the world.*” Since the Lord has given us His peace and left us His peace, **today we should live in His peace**. Actually, the Lord Himself is still here as our peace. Jerusalem is the Triune God to be our peace, to be our safety. The whole New Jerusalem will be an entity of peace. When we consummate in the New Jerusalem, we will be in peace, that is, in the Triune God. The New Jerusalem will be solidly grounded and safeguarded in the Triune God as peace and safety, and **we will enjoy the Triune God as peace forever**. (God's New Testament Economy, Chapter 27, Section 2)