

# Leviticus 19:5-8

<https://thebiblesays.com/commentary/lev/lev-19/leviticus-195-8/>

*Instructions surrounding the sacrifice of peace offerings are given. This builds upon a similar discussion in Leviticus 7:11-18.*

*When the Israelites would offer a sacrifice of peace offerings to the LORD, it was done so that they may be accepted. There are three types of peace offerings outlined in Leviticus 7:11-18, all of which have various yet similar time constraints in which they must be eaten.*

1. Thanksgiving Sacrifice—Offered when an Israelite wished to give thanks to the LORD (Yahweh).
2. Votive Sacrifice—Offered at the fulfillment of a vow.
3. Free-Will Sacrifice—Could be a voluntary animal sacrifice or an offering of physical items such as gold and silver as in the constructing of the tabernacle (Exodus 35:29).

*Peace offerings shall be eaten the same day you offer it, and the next day; but what remains until the third day shall be burned with fire.* There could be a connection between this statute and the Last Supper, where the disciples symbolically partook of Jesus' body in the breaking of the bread the night of Passover (Matthew 26:26). Then, *on the third day* Jesus received a glorified body.

Practically speaking, this admonition regarding consuming the *peace offerings* within two days also makes clear that the offering is to lead to a celebration. By insisting the “barbecue” be eaten shortly after it is cooked ensures that the meat will be consumed in a festive manner, with a group sufficiently large to consume the entire animal. The pattern of “*sacrifice to the LORD then enjoy in community*” is completely consistent with the commands God gave to Israel in His covenant with them. If they would obey His commands, and be set apart to His service, what would follow would be great harmony and flourishing of communities that love and collaborate with one another.

The Passover lamb offering itself is a *peace offering*. You can see in the passage below that the Passover lamb offering also utilizes a time constraint in which it must *be eaten*. In this case the offering was to *be eaten* the same day as it was cooked.

“They shall eat the flesh that same night, roasted with fire, and they shall eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. Do not eat any of it raw or boiled at all with water, but rather roasted with fire, both its head and its legs along with its entrails. And you shall not leave any of it over until morning, but whatever is left of it until morning, you shall burn with fire”  
(Exodus 12:8-10)

If anyone ate the *peace offering on the third day* or after, he would *bear his iniquity, for he has profaned the holy thing of the LORD; and that person shall be cut off from his people*. Jewish tradition interprets being *cut off* (Hebrew “kareth”) *from his people* to mean a death or separation (perhaps exile) that is enacted by God rather than a human court. This tradition could have begun early in Israel’s history, which could be why there appears to be no instance recorded in the Old Testament of this provision having been enforced by a Jewish court.

This Jewish tradition holds that being *cut off from among their people* could happen in two ways. The first way was understood to be a separation that occurred in this life, with the guilty party experiencing an early physical death or perhaps dying without offspring. The next way draws upon verses like Genesis 25:8 which says that Abraham died and was “gathered unto his *people*.” This leads to a second interpretation which is a spiritual separation or death in the afterlife, being *cut off* from one’s *people* in the age to come. The implication of Abraham being “gathered unto his *people*” is taken by Jewish tradition to mean that someone could *be cut off from among their people* in the next life. This could have a similar meaning with the New Testament concept that believers in Jesus can be excluded from gaining the reward of the inheritance of reigning with Christ in the new earth, losing the great opportunity to share responsibility (and related intimacy) with Christ in executing His reign.

Jesus being the true Passover Lamb makes New Testament believers unconditionally accepted by God. Jesus’s Passover sacrifice makes *peace* between believers and the Father. All believers are fully accepted by God as His child, based on the finished word of Jesus. Jesus also fulfilled each of the other *sacrifices*. Jesus fulfilled the “Oleh” offering which is usually translated “burnt offering” but better translated as “the offering which ascends.” When Jesus ascended into heaven from the Mount of Olives, He fulfilled the offering of ascent (Acts 1:9). He also fulfilled the sin offering when He shed His blood on the cross (Colossians 2:14; Hebrews 10:12).

If any *sacrifice of peace offerings remains until the third day it is an offense; it will not be accepted*. The sacrifice unto the LORD will not *be accepted* if it is not accompanied with obedience, and therefore be consumed within two days. In this case, God insists that the *sacrifice* be *eaten* in celebration, and shared with others. This underscores a Biblical theme that God’s blessing comes to His *people* when they love and serve one another.

## **Biblical Text**

**<sup>5</sup> ‘Now when you offer a sacrifice of peace offerings to the LORD, you shall offer it so that you may be accepted. <sup>6</sup> It shall be eaten the same day you offer it, and the next day; but what remains until the third day shall be burned with fire. <sup>7</sup> So if it is eaten at all on the third day, it is an offense; it will not be accepted. <sup>8</sup> Everyone who eats it will bear his iniquity, for he has profaned the holy thing of the LORD; and that person shall be cut off from his people.**