



~ Thought For The Day ~

~gathering from the 4 winds~

“come just as you are”

Refresh, Restore, Rebuild = Healing



Vol. 20 Issue 379

March 08, 2012

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Prayer

Lord, I admit that I've been carrying the worries, stresses, and pressures of life for too long. Before I do anything else, I want to cast these burdens over onto You today. I am tempted to worry that the problems I'm facing won't work out, but taking them into my own hands and worrying about them isn't going to make the situation any better. So I repent for letting myself become consumed with worry about things I cannot change, and I turn them all over to You today. Please help me stay free of anxiety as I learn to relax and enjoy life a little more than I've been enjoying it lately, in Jesus' name. Amen.

Scripture

Leviticus 1: 1-17 (AMP)

1 THE LORD called to Moses out of the Tent of Meeting, and said to him, 2 Say to the Israelites, When any man of you brings an offering to the Lord, you shall bring your offering of [domestic] animals from the herd or from the flock. 3 If his offering is a burnt offering from the herd, he shall offer a male without blemish; he shall offer it at the door of the Tent of Meeting, that he may be accepted before the Lord. 4 And he shall lay [both] his hands upon the head of the burnt offering [transferring symbolically his guilt to the victim], and it shall be an acceptable atonement for him. 5 The man shall kill the young bull before the Lord, and the priests, Aaron's sons, shall present the blood and dash [it] round about upon the altar that is at the door of the Tent of Meeting. 6 And he shall skin the burnt offering and cut it into pieces. 7 And the sons of Aaron the priest shall put fire on the altar and lay wood in order on the fire; 8 And Aaron's sons the priests shall lay the pieces, the head and the fat, in order on the wood on the fire on the altar. 9 But its entrails and its legs he shall wash with water. And the priest shall burn all of it on the altar for a burnt offering, an offering by fire, a sweet and satisfying odor to the Lord. 10 And if the man's offering is of the flock, from the sheep or the goats, for a burnt offering, he shall offer a male without blemish. 11 And he shall kill it on the north side of the altar before the Lord, and Aaron's sons the priests shall dash its blood round about against the altar. 12 And [the man] shall cut it into pieces, with its head and its fat, and the priest shall lay them in order on the wood that is on the fire on the altar. 13 But he shall wash the entrails and legs with water. The priest shall offer all of it and burn it on the altar; it is a burnt offering, an offering made by fire, a sweet and satisfying fragrance to the Lord. 14 And if the offering to the Lord is a burnt offering of birds, then [the man] shall bring turtledoves or young pigeons. 15 And the priest shall bring it to the altar, and wring off its head, and burn it on the altar; and its blood shall be drained out on the side of the altar. 16 And he shall take away its crop with its feathers and cast it beside the altar on the east side, in the place for ashes. 17 And he shall split it open [holding it] by its wings, but shall not cut it in two. And the priest shall burn it on the altar, on the wood that is on the fire; it is a burnt offering, an offering made by fire, a sweet and satisfying odor to the Lord.

Old Testament Sacrifices

Sacrifice: OT References : Elements: Purpose

Burnt offering

Lev 1; 6: 8–13; 8: 18–21; 16: 24

Bull, ram, or male bird (dove or young pigeon for the poor); wholly consumed; no defect

Voluntary act of worship; atonement for unintentional sin in general; expression of devotion, commitment and complete surrender to God

Grain offering

Lev 2; 6: 14–23

Grain, fine flour, olive oil, incense, baked bread (cakes or wafers), salt; no yeast or honey; accompanied burnt offering and fellowship offering (along with drink offering)

Voluntary act of worship; recognition of God's goodness and provisions; devotion to God

Fellowship offering

Lev 3; 7: 11–34

Any animal without defect from herd or flock; variety of breads

Voluntary act of worship; thanksgiving and fellowship (included a communal meal)

Sin offering

Lev 4: 1–5; 13; 6: 24–30; 8: 14–17; 16: 3–22

1. Young bull: for high priest and congregation

2. Male goat: for leader

3. Female goat or lamb: for common person

4. Dove or pigeon: for the poor

5. Tenth of an ephah of fine flour: for the very poor

Mandatory atonement for specific unintentional sin; confession of sin; forgiveness of sin; cleansing from defilement

Guilt offering

Lev 5: 14–6: 7; 7: 1–6

Ram or lamb

Mandatory atonement for unintentional sin requiring restitution; cleansing from defilement; make restitution; pay 20 fine

—From The NIV Study Bible. Used by permission

The Burnt Offering: Chapter 1 deals with the burnt offering. It was an offering of consecration. If I wished to consecrate my life completely to God, I would signify this desire by fringing an ox to the priest, laying my hand upon its head and slaying it. " I beseech ye therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God that you present your bodies holy and acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" (Romans 12: 1). God wants you to present yourself completely to Him, not reserving or holding back anything but consecrating yourself totally. V3 Any sacrifice or offering to the Lord had to be voluntary. God does not force you to love, to serve Him. V4 In the case of the sin or trespass offering, it was the laying of your hand upon the head of the animal in order that your guilt and your sin might be transferred onto the animal and thus it was slain for your sins. In the case of the burnt offering, your consecration, the laying on of your hand symbolized the animal taking your place as a complete offering unto God, a total consecration unto Him. " Atonement" in the Old Testament comes from the Hebrew word kaphar, meaning to cover. It was impossible that the blood of bulls or goats could put away our sin, but they did make a covering for sin, so that the guilt of the person was

covered but it wasn't put away. VV 5-9 The priest took the blood in and put it on the horns of the altar and then the ox was to be burnt entirely. The whole thing was to be consumed on the altar as a sweet smelling savor unto God. This speaks of the fact that my consecration to God needs to be not holding back any area for myself. V 14 You could use an ox, a sheep, or if you were poor, you could use turtledoves for this offering. (OT Study Guide; The Word For Today; 2005; Chuck Smith; Commentaries; page 46)

Relax From the Stresses of Life!

2 Thessalonians 1:7

If you have been under a lot of stress, pressure, and anxiety lately, I think Paul's words in Second Thessalonians 1:7 are meant just for you! Read carefully, because you're going to find real encouragement and instruction today that will help you find peace in the midst of trouble.

When Paul wrote the book of Second Thessalonians, the believers in the city of Thessalonica were undergoing horrifying persecution. The persecution in this city was worse than it was in other places because Christians were being hunted both by pagan idol worshipers and by unbelieving Jews who detested the Gospel message. As a result of these threatening conditions, members of the Thessalonian church were suffering, and some even paid the price of dying for the Gospel. However, in spite of these afflictions and pressures from outside forces, this congregation refused to surrender to defeat.

When Paul addressed these believers in Second Thessalonians, they had already been under this stress and pressure for a long period of time. The assaults against them had been like a stream of unrelenting poundings from which they had no pause. Naturally, they were exhausted—extremely tired, worn out, and fatigued. It had been a very long time since they had put up their feet and taken a break! The idea of unwinding or lightening up almost seemed like a fantasy. But everyone needs to rest at some point!

If you've been going through a prolonged period of hardship due to persecution, your business, your family, your relationships, your finances, or your children, you still must learn how to rest in the Lord, even in the middle of that difficult situation you are facing. If you don't, the battle will wear you out!

That's why Paul told the Thessalonians, "And to you who are troubled rest with us...." The word "troubled" tells us the extent of their hardships. It is the Greek word *thlipsis*, a word Paul often employs when he describes difficult events that he and his team have encountered. This word is so strong that it is impossible to misunderstand the intensity of these persecutions. It conveys the idea of a heavy-pressure situation. In fact, one scholar commented that the word *thlipsis* was first used to describe the specific act of tying a victim with a rope, laying him on his back, and then placing a huge boulder on top of him until his body was crushed. As time progressed, this word came to describe any situation that was crushing or debilitating.

One example of this can be found in Second Corinthians 1:8, where Paul writes, "For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia...." The word "trouble" in this verse is also from the word *thlipsis*. It could be translated, "We would not, brethren, have you ignorant of the horribly tight, life-threatening squeeze that came to us in Asia...." By using this word, Paul lets us know that his time in Asia was one of the most grueling nightmares he had ever undergone. In fact, when he was in the midst of the situation, he didn't even know if he would survive it!

Now this is exactly the word Paul uses when he writes to the Thessalonian believers and says, "To those of you who are troubled...." The word "troubled" alerts us to the fact that they were not just mildly suffering; they were horrifically suffering—and as noted earlier, this suffering had gone on for a very long time. But because Paul had been in these types of adverse circumstances himself on different occasions and had victoriously survived, he knew that for the Thessalonians to outlast these difficulties, they needed to take a break from the pressure! That is why he told them, "... Rest with us."

The word "rest" come from the Greek word *anesis*, which means to let up, to relax, to stop being stressed, or to find relief. One scholar comments that the word *anesis* was used in the secular Greek world to denote the release of a bowstring that has been under great pressure. It was also used figuratively to mean relaxation from the stresses of life and freedom to have a little recreation. By using this word, Paul urges the believers in the city of Thessalonica to find relief from the constant stress they are undergoing as a result of opposition to their faith. Paul exhorts them to let it go, shake it off, and learn how to relax, even in the midst of difficult circumstances.

An interpretive translation of this verse could be:

"To you who are still going through difficulties right now, it's time for you to let up, take a breather, and relax. We know what it's like to be under pressure, but no one can stay under that kind of stress continuously. So join us in learning how to loosen up a bit. Shake off your troubles, and allow yourself a little relaxation and time for recreation...."

I realize that when you're dealing with problems, a vacation is the last thing on your mind! You just want to survive the challenge and make a transition into the next phase of your life—and to do it as soon as possible! You may even feel that it's irresponsible for you to put up your feet and relax for a while. But even God rested on the seventh day!

Take Paul's counsel to heart, and allow yourself a little relaxation and time for recreation—time away from your problems. When it's time to come back and face those problems again, you'll be refreshed and recharged with renewed vision. You'll see that challenge with new eyes, and you'll face it with new strength. Yes, I know it's hard to allow yourself the time to do what I'm suggesting. But, friend, your survival depends on it. If you don't take a break from that constant stress, it will keep wearing you down until you become easy prey for the devil.

So say goodbye to your problems today. Take a break, and allow yourself a little time to rest, relax, and recuperate!

QUESTIONS FOR YOU TO CONSIDER

When was the last time you took some time to rest and relax from the pressures in your life?

What are some signs in your life that you need to take time to rest and gain a fresh perspective about the situations you're facing right now?

What are some of the best ways you've discovered that help you rest and recuperate during a stressful time in your life?

Sparkling Gems from the Greek.

Psalm 41:1-13 (AMP)

1 BLESSED (HAPPY, fortunate, to be envied) is he who considers the weak and the poor; the Lord will deliver him in the time of evil and trouble.

2 The Lord will protect him and keep him alive; he shall be called blessed in the land; and You will not deliver him to the will of his enemies.

3 The Lord will sustain, refresh, and strengthen him on his bed of languishing; all his bed You [O Lord] will turn, change, and transform in his illness.

4 I said, Lord, be merciful and gracious to me; heal my inner self, for I have sinned against You.

5 My enemies speak evil of me, [saying], When will he die and his name perish?

6 And when one comes to see me, he speaks falsehood and empty words, while his heart gathers mischievous gossip [against me]; when he goes away, he tells it abroad.

7 All who hate me whisper together about me; against me do they devise my hurt [imagining the worst for me].

8 An evil disease, say they, is poured out upon him and cleaves fast to him; and now that he is bedfast, he will not rise up again.

9 Even my own familiar friend, in whom I trusted (relied on and was confident), who ate of my bread, has lifted up his heel against me.

10 But You, O Lord, be merciful and gracious to me, and raise me up, that I may requite them.

11 By this I know that You favor and delight in me, because my enemy does not triumph over me.

12 And as for me, You have upheld me in my integrity and set me in Your presence forever.

13 Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, from everlasting and to everlasting [from this age to the next, and forever]! Amen and Amen (so be it).

(AMP Bible; The Everyday Life Bible; Joyce Meyers; Scripture; Commentaries; Past Pastor Sermons; Dictionary; 2006; pgs 157-158)
(Word 9 Bible Software; 2010; Concordance, Dictionary, Scripture, Sermons of Saints past, Devos; Sparkling Gems From The Greek)