

Leviticus 2 - Thursday, August 20th, 2009

- Last week in chapter one, we had begun our study of the book of Leviticus and tonight find ourselves in chapter two as we continue on.
- In the first seven chapters of Leviticus we'll study the five offerings from the Israelites to the Lord, and how they point to Jesus as Lord.
- Chapter one had the requirements for the burnt offering, and now we will learn about the grain offering which is the second of the five.

2:1 'When anyone offers a grain offering to the LORD, his offering shall be of fine flour. And he shall pour oil on it, and put frankincense on it. 2 He shall bring it to Aaron's sons, the priests, one of whom shall take from it his handful of fine flour and oil with all the frankincense. And the priest shall burn it as a memorial on the altar, an offering made by fire, a sweet aroma to the LORD.

- This "grain" offering could also be considered as a "meal offering" that was brought before the Lord, as a free will offering to the Lord.
- Notice the detail with which this offering was to be given. The ingredients all point to and are fulfilled by the person of Jesus Christ.
- In typology, flour or bread symbolizes the Word, Oil symbolizes the Holy Spirit, and the frankincense is a symbol of prayer.

- This type is only true in its fullest extent of the blessed Master; but as we are to be conformed to his image, we may humbly take the ingredients of the grain offering as indicating various qualities in our personal character and behavior.

- The Fine flour. — There should be nothing coarse-grained or rough to the touch; but all even and tender. So that however great the pressure brought to bear on us, we should meet it with perfect grace and gentleness. Jesus reviled not again, but was led as a lamb to the slaughter. David Livingstone said that the promise of Christ was the word of a perfect gentleman. This should be our character.

- The Oil upon it. — We must be mingled with oil — that is, the Holy Spirit must have access into the secret places of the inner life, and we must have the anointing of the Holy Ghost for service. In Christian work nothing is of any value or permanence, useful to man or pleasing to God, in which the Holy Spirit is not first.

- The Frankincense. — Every act of our life should emit sweet fragrance towards God. Always moving forward in Christ's triumphant procession, bearing aloft the incense-bowls of thought, action, word, filled with love and praise.

F.B. Meyer Devotionals on Leviticus (http://preceptaustin.org/leviticus_sermon_illustrations_2.htm)

- Also, it's interesting that God would have the Israelites bring this grain offering and even the burnt offering as a picture of their Messiah.
- In other words, why wouldn't God choose something else besides animals, and agricultural products to accomplish the same thing?
- I believe the answer is twofold; first, for them as an agrarian society, it's priceless, and second, agricultural offerings would be timeless.

- While these offerings would have to cost them something, they would have to cost the promised one Who would fulfill them, everything.
- In that sense they're priceless, and what makes them timeless is that all cultures throughout all of history would understand its meaning.
- If God had the Israelites use something other than agricultural offerings, we may not have fully understood their meaning in our time.

- There's something else I want to mention before we move on to verse three, because I think it's germane in its application to our lives.
- We're told, in verse two, that this grain offering was to be roasted with fire. I believe the fire speaks not only about Jesus, but us as well.
- Here's what I'm thinking: "when we offer our bodies as living sacrifices, we are put through fiery trials to partake in Christ's sufferings."

Romans 12:1 Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. NIV

1 Peter 4:12-13 12 Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; 13 but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy. NKJV

1 Peter 1:6-7 6 In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. 7 These have come so that your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. NIV

Isaiah 48:10 Behold, I have refined thee, but not as silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction. ASV

- Why does God have to choose us and refine us in the furnace of affliction using those; fiery fellowship of His suffering, trials?
- God will choose those whom He can use, to serve Him and serve His people more effectively after they go through those same trials.

"...the people who are most effective in ministering to us are those who have experienced the very trials we face. I believe God walks His most trusted servants through the fire of difficulty, and the flames of tragedy."

Jon Courson

3 The rest of the grain offering shall be Aaron's and his sons'. It is most holy of the offerings to the LORD made by fire.

- Now, Aaron and his sons, as the priestly tribe of Levi, could take the rest of this offering for themselves because of their priestly service.
- It's important to know that every other tribe of Israel was given provision in the form of land for their livelihood, but not the tribe of Levi.
- The reason for this is that in lieu of having income from land to work, the Levites would receive their income from the priestly work.

- We see this priestly precedent as it applies in the New Testament when the Apostle Paul writes his first epistle to Timothy in 5:17-18.

1 Timothy 5:17-18 17 The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching. 18 For the Scripture says, "Do not muzzle the ox while it is treading out the grain," and "The worker deserves his wages." NIV

- In other words, they were not to muzzle the ox who is working in the field because he would not be able to eat the grain from the field.
- So too is this true for the Levites and all those who work in the ministry, they should be able to eat and be provided for from the ministry.
- It's interesting that when the Apostle Paul writes his first epistle to the church in Corinth, he expounds even more as to this principle.

1 Corinthians 9:7-12 7 Who serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat of its grapes? Who tends a flock and does not drink of the milk? 8 Do I say this merely from a human point of view? Doesn't the Law say the same thing? 9 For it is written in the Law of Moses: "Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain." Is it about oxen that God is concerned? 10 Surely he says this for us, doesn't he? Yes, this was written for us, because when the plowman plows and the thresher threshes, they ought to do so in the hope of sharing in the harvest. 11 If we have sown spiritual seed among you, is it too much if we reap a material harvest from you? 12 If others have this right of support from you, shouldn't we have it all the more? NIV

4'And if you bring as an offering a grain offering baked in the oven, it shall be unleavened cakes of fine flour mixed with oil, or unleavened wafers anointed with oil.5 But if your offering is a grain offering baked in a pan, it shall be of fine flour, unleavened, mixed with oil.6 You shall break it in pieces and pour oil on it; it is a grain offering. 7'If your offering is a grain offering baked in a covered pan, it shall be made of fine flour with oil.

- Notice that this offering could be baked in the oven, cooked on a skillet, or even fried in a covered pan. What in the world is this about?
- It's been suggested that this was so that people could still bring this offering even if they weren't wealthy enough to afford an oven.
- Be that as it may, were now told about another ingredient in the recipe for this offering; the unleavened cakes of again, fine flower.

- Leaven, in the scriptures, is a picture of sin. Specifically, it's the first sin making it the core, or common denominator, of all sin; pride.
- In other words, leaven, or yeast, makes the bread rise up and get puffed up, just as pride exalts self making it rise up and get puffed up.
- One has aptly noted that "I" is in the middle of "PRIDE" just as "I" is in the middle of "SIN," suggesting that I, in my pride, am in sin.

8 You shall bring the grain offering that is made of these things to the LORD. And when it is presented to the priest, he shall bring it to the altar.9 Then the priest shall take from the grain offering a memorial portion, and burn it on the altar. It is an offering made by fire, a sweet aroma to the LORD.10 And what is left of the grain offering shall be Aaron's and his sons'. It is most holy of the offerings to the LORD made by fire.

- This is interesting and can easily be missed at first. Notice the offerings were first prepared in the home then brought to the Tabernacle.
- This may seem like a nebulous detail, however, as it has been suggested, there is a powerful principle and precedent set forth here.
- We must first have our home prepared and in order, in our daily lives before we bring any sacrifice of service into the place of worship.

1 Timothy 3:1-6 1 Here is a trustworthy saying: If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer, he desires a noble task. 2 Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, 3 not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. 4 He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. 5(If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?) NIV

- One might argue that this principle does not apply to them by virtue of how they are not an overseer who is serving in the ministry.
- To this I would respond with what Jesus said when He was teaching the beatitudes that we have recorded in Matthew's gospel.

Matthew 5:23-24 23 "Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, 24 leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift. NIV

11'No grain offering which you bring to the LORD shall be made with leaven, for you shall burn no leaven nor any honey in any offering to the LORD made by fire.

- In addition to not having leaven, the offering was not to have any honey as well. There are a couple of important reasons for this.
- One reason was that honey was used in the pagan sacrifices to their pagan gods, and the Israelites were not to imitate these practices.
- Another reason was that honey, at least in this context, was symbolic of sensuous attraction, much like with the adulteress in Proverbs.

Proverbs 5:3 For the lips of an adulteress drip honey, and her speech is smoother than oil; NIV

- One commentator suggests that while the leaven would have made it artificially sour, the honey would have made it artificially sweet.
- The thought is that God wants us to come to Him just as we are, without artificially making ourselves more "sour" or "sweet."

- Another commentator suggests yet another reason for not having any honey in the grain offering, and it's a most interesting thought.
- Honey will break down in the fire, as it's consumed by the fire, and with this offering being roasted in the fire, honey wouldn't survive.
- By way of application, when the pressure and heat are turned up our lives, the sweetness in the honey breaks down from our lives.
- Furthermore, as it pictures in typology, Jesus Christ and the finished work on the cross; He didn't break down nor was He consumed.

12 As for the offering of the firstfruits, you shall offer them to the LORD, but they shall not be burned on the altar for a sweet aroma. 13 And every offering of your grain offering you shall season with salt; you shall not allow the salt of the covenant of your God to be lacking from your grain offering. With all your offerings you shall offer salt.

- Notice that the offering of the firstfruits, which was to be offered with this grain offering, were not to be burned with fire on the altar.
- To do so ruin's the typology in the sense that grain offered in the firstfruits does not point to Jesus' crucifixion but Jesus' resurrection.

- Also, were given yet another ingredient in this offering and this time it's salt, and it seems that this is quite important to God's covenant.
- So important is salt to this offering, that God says that it should never be lacking from the grain offering, and it should be in all offerings.
- Why is salt so crucial? Because it speaks to, and is a symbol of; "grace." You cannot speak of Jesus without also speaking of grace.

Luke 4:22 All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips. "Isn't this Joseph's son?" they asked. NIV

"Salt speaks to how we are to 'Let your conversation be always with grace, seasoned with salt.' The words of Jesus were full of grace, and also of truth. There was a pungency and purity and uncorruptness in his speech, which have in every age arrested the progress of the world's evil. Let us give Him our lips."

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- Not only did Jesus speak words of grace, but because of Jesus we are saved by grace, which is why it had to be in all of the offerings.
- Also, salt was a preservative in how it would cure the meat, or flesh, from becoming rotten. This is a picture of purity from corruption.

"By which was meant that it was an unchangeable, incorruptible covenant, which would endure as salt makes a thing to endure, so that it is not liable to putrefy or corrupt."

Charles Spurgeon

14 If you offer a grain offering of your firstfruits to the LORD, you shall offer for the grain offering of your firstfruits green heads of grain roasted on the fire, grain beaten from full heads. 15 And you shall put oil on it, and lay frankincense on it. It is a grain offering. 16 Then the priest shall burn the memorial portion: part of its beaten grain and part of its oil, with all the frankincense, as an offering made by fire to the LORD.

- The green heads of grain according to the KJV, are green ears of corn, which were to be beaten a symbol of when Jesus was beaten.
- Here again we have many details about different aspects of this offering, all of which point to the different aspects of Jesus' offering.

Ch. Vs.	THE OFFERING	HIS OFFERING
1	It was sifted as flour to make bread	Jesus the bread of life was tempted to make bread.
2-3	It was mingled with oil and oil was poured on it.	Jesus had Spirit poured out upon Him.
4	It was to be made without yeast.	Jesus was without sin.
11	It was not to be burned with honey, which would breakdown in the fire.	Jesus would withstand the fire of judgment; nothing else was needed or added. He is all we need.
13	It was all to be seasoned with salt a picture of grace	Jesus said we are the salt and are saved by grace