

The Sacrifices Of Leviticus (Part 4)

The Meal Offering

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I think all of us are aware that I have been going through the offerings of Leviticus. The last time I spoke we completed the burnt offering, which is the first one, and so we are going to be moving into the meal offering.

Leviticus 2:1 And when any will offer a meal offering unto the LORD, his offering shall be of fine flour; and he shall pour oil upon it, and put frankincense thereon.

The first things I want you to notice is the name given to it. In the *King James Version* it is call the meat offering. This does not do us very much good because the usage of that word has changed through the centuries. The word "meat" has become to mean flesh, whereas meat in those days generally only meant food. I am going to use the word that best fits what the offering really consisted of, and that is "grain" or "meal." I may use the word "grain" sometimes, or I may use the word "meal," but I will probably be using "meal" most of the time because that more clearly describes the offering.

Leviticus 2:9 And the priest shall take from the meal offering a memorial thereof, and shall burn it upon the altar; it is an offering made by fire, of a sweet savor unto the LORD.

This offering, like the burnt offering, was a sweet savor offering. This makes it different from the sin offering and the trespass offering because they were not sweet savor offerings. Because this is a sweet savor offering, the thought of sin is not contained within this offering. The instruction involves something other than sin. This offering represents a man perfectly meeting the requirements of what this offering covers.

The One who covered this, or the One who perfectly met the requirements here, was Jesus Christ. It represents what He did for us, enabling Him to be the sin offering for us. It is because He lived His life perfectly that He met the requirements of being a sin offering. If He had sinned even one time, then He would have had to die for His own sins, but because He met the requirements of both the burnt offering and the sin offering *as He lived His life*, He therefore qualified to become the sin offering. Beyond that it also represents what we should strive for in our lives in following His example.

Next we will note the materials in the offering.

Leviticus 2:1 His offering shall be of fine flour; and he shall pour oil upon it, and put frankincense thereon.

Here we see a major difference between *it* and all the other offerings. Fine flour, oil, and frankincense means that there is *no life given* in this offering. In the burnt offering, a life was given. In the peace offering a life was given. In the sin and trespass offerings a life was given, but in the meal offering *no life* is given. So this is its major and most obvious difference from all the other offerings.

In the burnt offering, the man who was giving the offering brought his animal forth—whether it was a bullock, lamb, goat, or turtledove—to the altar and laid hands on it, signifying transference from him to the animal. In other words, the animal represented himself; and then the animal was killed. That offering represents the giving of a life in devotion to God. In the meal offering the man does not do that. He offers the fruit of the ground. This is a major difference.

Genesis 1:29 And God said, Behold, I have given you [man—represented by Adam and Eve] every herb bearing seed which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat [or meal, or food].

This verse shows what God has allotted to man as his portion of the creation. What He has given man is the *fruit* that the earth produces—its produce. Thus if we combine our knowledge of the burnt offering and the meal offering, and this verse together, we can reach a conclusion as to what they symbolized. Before we reach that conclusion, we are going to look at one more verse. After the Flood, God gave the following instructions to Noah.

Genesis 9:3-4 Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. I have given you all things, even as the green herb. But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall you not eat.

Life is what God has claimed as *His* part of the creation. It is what we owe to God. You will surely recall how that God commands us not to eat the blood. The reason that is

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given is because the life is in the blood. The inference is that the life belongs to Him because He gave it, and we are to respect His ownership of life whether it is animal life or our life. He is the giver of life. In addition to that we are to respect the fact that the animal gave its life so that we can live. And even beyond that, it foreshadows the sacrifice of Jesus Christ during which His life's blood was shed so that we might live.

Within the context of the offerings then, life therefore symbolizes what we owe to the Source of life—the only life-giver—God. By contrast then, the grain, the oil, and the frankincense—which was a fruit of the earth—symbolize what we owe to man. Remember, this is only in context of the offerings here. Both are our duty. We owe our life to God. So in the one we surrender our life, as it is being lived, to God. In the other is the fulfillment of our duty to our neighbor. It is the standard of the ethic that we are to live in relation to man. It is fellowman's claim on *us*.

Some of these things that I am saying will make more sense as we go along. I am laying a foundation here so that we can understand as we get more deeply into it.

In the context of the offerings, it is man, represented by the flour, the oil, and the frankincense, surrendering himself to God, but in doing so that he may give to fellowman what is his due. This will make more sense as we progress along.

Matthew 22:36-40 Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

The burnt offering represents the perfect fulfillment of the first of the great commandments. The meal offering represents the perfect fulfillment of the second.

We are going to go back to the Old Testament again. Numbers 28 and 29 contain the instructions regarding the daily offerings showing how much was required and when they were to be offered, and who was to do things, and so forth.

Numbers 28:11-13 And in the beginnings of your months you shall offer a burnt offering unto the LORD; two young bullocks, and one ram, seven lambs of the first year without spot; and three tenth deals of flour for a meal offering, mingled with oil, for one bullock; and two tenth deals of flour for a meal offering, mingled with oil, for one ram. And a several tenth deal of flour

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mingled with oil for a meal offering unto one lamb; for a burnt offering of a sweet savor, a sacrifice made by fire unto the LOORD.

That instruction appears elsewhere for other ones. I just picked that out at random so that you would see what was required. Now burnt offering is mentioned, and meal offering is mentioned. These offerings were offered at the Tabernacle and at the Temple on a national scale. In other words, these things were not being offered everywhere. They were offered only at one place. See Deuteronomy 12 for that. They were only allowed to be done where the Tabernacle or the Temple was. People were not doing this at every corner, or behind the barn, or on the street. They were just doing it one place.

This is another typical verse:

Numbers 29:6 Beside the burnt offering of the month, and *his* meal offering, and the daily burnt offering, and *his* meal offering, and their drink offerings, according unto *their* manner, for a sweet savor, a sacrifice made by fire unto the LOORD.

This relationship becomes very important to understanding these two offerings. Did you notice I emphasized the word *his*? That is the way God worded it. He is showing that the meal offering is in possession of the burnt offering. It indicates a possessiveness, as *belongs to*. This was the Hebrew way of showing that these two offerings were never to be made separately. They were always to be made together.

You never offered a meal offering without also a burnt offering, and you never offered a burnt offering without also having a meal offering. You cannot separate the two great commandments: "You shall love the LOORD your God with all of your heart, all of your soul, and all of your mind. And the second is like unto it. You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Again, this will become more distinct and clear as we reach the end of the sermon as to why the two always have to be done together.

Ezra 7:17 That you may buy speedily with this money bullocks, rams, lambs, with their meal offerings and their drink offerings, and offer them upon the altar of the house of your God which is in Jerusalem.

The speaker here is Artaxerxes, and he is giving instructions to Ezra before Ezra took a

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group of people back to Jerusalem. The king understood that these offerings were to be offered together. Again, it shows a possessiveness: "with their meal offerings." These two offerings were to be made together.

Is it not interesting that when Cain made his offering, he brought the fruit of the ground? He brought a meal offering without a burnt offering, and God did not accept it. That triggered a murder.

The one is incomplete without the other. The one shows man doing his duty to God, and the other doing his duty to fellowman. Now if a man completely devotes himself to man, the offering is showing God goes unsatisfied. If he completely devotes himself to God and ignores man, man is unsatisfied, not meeting the requirement of the law. Very unprofitable.

I John 4:20-21 If a man say, I love God, and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he that loves not his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? And this commandment have we from him, that he who loves God loves his brother also.

The two have to be operated together. Having a fellowship with God and seeking the holiness of God does not relieve us of our responsibility to our fellowman. A person who does not love his fellowman, but claims he loves God, is a liar in two ways. First of all, he is a liar about what he says in regard to his relationship with God, and the other is by the actions of his life. So God has them nailed to the wall coming and going. Two "witnesses" against him.

A Christian does not go into a monastery to live his life. He does not take himself into the wilderness to be alone and escape the problems that others cause him. He does not separate himself from his brethren, but rather he serves them, and in many cases he may be called upon to serve the one he feels is causing him the problems.

Where there is no ethical action in relation to men, the claim of loving God is a lie. The love of God is not genuine. So what these offerings are saying is that if a person really devotes himself to God, he *will* love man. There will be no doubt about it, because the power of God's Spirit will work in that person to serve others. And if the one is missing, that person really does not have a relationship with God. He is a liar. He may be blinded to his lie, but the Bible is very clear on that. That person is a liar.

Let us focus again for awhile on the materials. Remember that the main ingredient here

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is flour. Now turn with me to Isaiah 28:28. This verse appears toward the end of an Old Testament parable in which the parable shows that even as a farmer is organized and orderly in the way he does things, so is God.

God will follow regular progressions that we can count on, because He is faithful. God is organized in the way that He does things. He does not depart from those patterns, because if He did depart from them, we would not understand. We could not rely on Him. So this verse is showing part of the process of being orderly.

Isaiah 28:28 Bread corn is bruised; because he [the farmer] will not ever be threshing it, nor break it with the wheel of his cart, nor bruise it with his horsemen.

In other words, everything goes in order, but what I want to pick up here that is very interesting in application to the meal offering, is that grain must be ground. That is what it means. Many modern versions will change the word "bruise" to the word "ground" because that is what it means. Grain must be ground, or bruised, in order to get any bread or food from it. As long as it is in the berry, it is not very useful to us. Bread is the staff of life. This has very interesting spiritual applications, because Jesus said that He is "the bread of life." Now was He ground? Was He bruised in order that there might be feeding for us? Absolutely!

John 6:35 And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life. He that comes to me shall never hunger; and he that believes on me shall never thirst.

John 6:48 I am *that* bread of life.

He is the bread from which the eating thereof will give us eternal life.

John 6:50-51 This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I *am* the living bread which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.

That is very plain. So bread is the staff of life, and Christ—the spiritual bread—is the spiritual staff of life.

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The word "corn" is simply the old English word that represented the biggest grain crop. We have attached the word "corn" to the stuff that grows on the tall stalks and is yellow and white. You know what I mean. But again, the word use has changed, and so we are here really talking about wheat or barley—something that would be more likely to be made into a bread we would have every day.

Grain is normally ground usually once in order to make bread. If you have ever seen grain that was ground in a stone-grinder—the kind they had to turn by hand—you will know that the grinding left the corn or the wheat pretty rough or coarse. But God would not accept that as the offering because it did not clearly represent the spiritual teaching He wanted to get across. Leviticus 2:1 says, "His offering shall be of *fine* flour."

According to the things that I have read regarding the offerings in secular books, commentaries and so forth, the flour for the meal offering was ground until it was like talcum powder. The picture here is somewhat similar to the bullock in the burnt offering—of grinding, pressing, wearying trials, but in this case it occurs as a result of service to man.

Think about this. Here we have God, the Creator, the Life-Giver, who comes to earth. If anybody should have been served, if anybody should have been worshipped, adored, and had all our devotion given to Him, it was *Him*. He was perfect. He never sinned. He had a mind that was so great it was awesome in comparison to any human mind; and yet, here He came as a lowly servant, stooping, bowing, giving up His glory in order to serve the very creatures He created.

I think that in our grander moments we would think that if we were witness to a great awesome miracle, where somebody was healed of something he had for 38 years, or that some cripple was raised up so that he went leaping down the street, or a leper who was so disfigured nobody would want to look at him was suddenly restored to wonder peak health, or that a dead man came walking out of his grave with his grave clothing still hanging all over him, you would think that people would fall all over themselves in adoration to Him. But it was not that way. The more He did, the worse they hated Him. But how did He feel about this?

We know that He took all the abuse without openly murmuring about what was happening to Him. This verse that I am going to read you shows that there were times when He reached the point of just about being exasperated.

Mark 9:19 He answered him, and said, O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I suffer you? Bring him unto me.

You would think that after He did all these healings that people would be falling all over themselves, but I think that He just about had it right about there. An almost exasperated complaint indicated that He expected more from them than they were performing. Do you know with whom He was exasperated? His disciples—the fellows who were with Him day in and day out and were watching these things occur. He chastened them for their lack of faith.

We are going to hop, skip, and jump through Matthew 9. I think this chapter pretty much presents an example of what I would consider to be a typical period of time in His life seemingly taking place just in one day's span of time. Yet the apostle John writes at the tail end of the gospel of John that Jesus did so many things. He said Jesus did so many things that there would not be enough books in the world that could contain all the things He did—and **still** people killed Him. Boy! The patience of God! It is awesome.

Matthew 9:18 While he spoke these things unto them, behold there came a certain ruler, and worshipped him, saying, My daughter is even now dead: but come and lay your hand upon her, and she shall live.

In another account the man is named. It was Jairus. He was a ruler of the synagogue, which meant that he was in the Sanhedrin. He was one of the high officials in the country. Maybe he was one who spoke openly against Jesus. The Sadducees were the ones who ran things, and the Pharisees were also part of that same clique to some extent. These people had a bad attitude toward Jesus. They did not like Him. They mistreated Him.

Now here comes Jairus to Jesus. His daughter was dead, and he comes to Jesus and says, "Will You heal her?" If this had been you or me, very likely He would have said, "Bug off, buddy. You have done nothing but speak against me. You have run me down, and now you want me to go and help **you**?" Well, He went and raised the girl from the dead.

Matthew 9:27 And when Jesus departed thence, two blind men followed him, crying, and saying, You son of David, have mercy on us.

This is interesting. Why did He not just heal them right there? But He did not. He went into the house. It does not say whose house. Then He questioned them privately.

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Matthew 9:28-30 And when He was come into the house, the blind men came to him and Jesus said unto them, Believe you that I am able to do this? They said unto him, Yes, Lord. Then touched he their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you. And their eyes were opened; and Jesus straightly charged them, saying, See that no man know it.

Why did He say that? Was Jesus trying to avoid anymore controversy? Probably.

Matthew 9:32-33 As they went out, behold, they brought to him a dumb man possessed with a demon. And when the demon was cast out, the dumb spoke and the multitudes marveled, saying, It was never so seen in Israel.

What did He get out of that? He got accusations from the Pharisees. Was Jesus' life a grinding, wearying trial, where everything that He said and did was for the good of others? Yes it was, and what did He get in return? Accusations. Bitterness. But when they were in trouble, whom did they run to? They ran to the One they had run down.

Matthew 9:36-38 But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Then said he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few; Pray you therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest.

Jesus' service to man in the accounts given in Matthew, Luke, and John, were seemingly endless, and it involved a considerable amount of self-sacrifice. That means pain—and often emotional and psychological pain. The very people He was trying to serve were the ones who were inflicting the pain.

Learn something from this, brethren. You are going to get more pain from the people closest to you than you will ever get from the outside. Now how are you going to bear up under it? That is part of the meal offering. Jesus did it perfectly.

It says in John that "He came to His own, and His own received Him not." Think of this in terms of our marriage to our mate since our closest neighbor is our mate. That is the one we should be serving most, and most uncomplainingly.

Now by contrast to Jesus, we draw lines in our service. We put limits on our self-

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sacrifice. We, in our self-concern, think of *our* interest, *our* credit, and *our* life that it must be unruffled and must move smoothly. We want it to move without disturbance so we can do what **we** want to do.

I will tell you about this one. We think of our times of rest and relaxation as our own. That is a particularly hard thing for me, because I like to go home like anybody else and think that time is my own. But the phone rings. Somebody needs help. You have got to go out to anoint. You have got to pray for them. You have to counsel with them. Now, I am not saying do not call, but what I am saying is that I have to fight this battle, and so do you because we are faced with opportunities that require some self-sacrifice. So often we draw back because we want to do what we want to do when we want to do it. Do you think that Jesus, as a human, did not have the same thoughts? "Boy! I'd like to get off on Lake Galilee and dip My feet in the water and just rest there comfortably."

I saw an interesting thing on television the other day I think applies to this. There was going to be a special that evening on one of the major stations, and they were giving a little preview of what people were going to see. It was going to be a documentary on the paparazzi.

Do you know what the paparazzi are? The paparazzi are people who follow celebrities around, getting in their face all the time, snapping pictures of them. They try to catch them in a compromising position, or in a fight with their wife or husband, or getting drunk at the local bar—that kind of thing.

They showed an excerpt from the program. John Kennedy, Jr. came out of the apartment where he is living, somewhere there in New York City. He had his car parked at the curb. He came out almost as stealthily as he possibly could, collar turned up and everything, and dashed across the pavement and leaped into his car. He pulled the visors down on the front because immediately two men with cameras ran up to him as he was running across the pavement to get into his automobile, and were snapping pictures the whole time with their 35mm cameras.

He got into his automobile, and as I said, he pulled the visors down so the people could not look in. Incidentally, the glass has that material on it that makes it very difficult to look inside. Then his wife came out of the apartment building. He already had the car running. His wife came out, ran around the front of the automobile, jumped in, and locked the doors. He was parked on a one-way street.

Then John Kennedy, Jr.—knowing these people are so intrepid in following the celebrity, that they have cars ready so they can follow his car wherever he goes,

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snapping pictures as he goes along—backed up the wrong way on a one-way street, backed into an intersection, and backed into another street. Guess who was there? A policeman. Of course he had to answer to the policeman. He told the policeman, "These people are bugging us," and the policeman, very unsympathetic, said, "They have every right to take a picture of you." That was where the advertisement ended.

Be glad that you are not a celebrity. Now multiply that by maybe tens or scores of times that Jesus had people bugging Him for what they could get from Him. Was His time His own? Was His life a grinding, wearying trial? Were people always besetting Him because they needed Him? Oh! You had better believe it! But was He supposed to go through life without feeling it? Like it says in Peter, "He opened not His mouth," and He did not complain. But on the other hand, He felt it inside, and some of these things are recorded in the Psalms. Turn to Psalm 69. David wrote this.

Psalm 69:1-4 Save me, O God; for the waters [a symbol of deep trouble] are come in unto my soul. I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing. I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me. I am weary of my crying, my throat is dried; my eyes fail while I wait for my God. They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of my head; they that would destroy me, being my enemies wrongfully, are mighty. Then I restored that which I took not away [or what I did not steal].

Psalm 69:19-21 Thou have known my reproach, and my shame, and my dishonor; my adversaries are all before you. Reproach has broken my heart; and I am full of heaviness. [This is describing Him on the cross.] and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none. They gave me also gall for my food; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.

So He opened not His mouth in complaint, but He did to God, asking for comfort, asking for strength, asking for help, because the very people He was serving were the ones who were rending away at Him. Psalm 55 is another one.

Psalm 55:12-13 For it was not an enemy that reproached me; then I could have borne it; neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me; then I would have hid myself from him. But it was you, a man my equal, my guide, and my acquaintance.

Psalm 22:15 My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaves

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to my jaws; and you have brought me into the dust of death.

Now back to the meal offering. Jesus Christ was ground in body, in spirit till, symbolically, He was like talcum. Of course, in one case, He was literally bruised so badly that He could not bear His cross. Another was compelled to bear it for Him because Jesus was already ground and was ready to be put on the altar.

The lesson for us is that in our service to fellowman there is much self-sacrifice. Much self-surrender is required, and the nearer that our service approaches His service, the more we will resemble what happened to Him because we too will be bruised. The pain will come.

There is one other thing the talcum powder-like flour symbolized, and that is that there is no inconsistency in His character or in the character of His servant. It says, "Jesus Christ the same, yesterday, today, and forever." There was perfect balance in Him. He was firm, but He was not obstinate. He was gentle, but He was not weak. He was calm, but He was not indifferent. He was kind and merciful, but He could also correct.

Now think about His companions—"the Twelve." By comparison, Peter could walk on water, and then turn around and deny Christ. John seems to have had a very affectionate nature, but on the other hand he wanted to sit at Christ's right hand. Besides that, he wanted to call fire down from heaven.

Paul was not with the first twelve. He had a great deal of energy, but that energy at times led him into things he admitted were not right. He wanted to go to Macedonia. In fact, he went there, but God had opened up the door in Troas, he said himself. Paul repents that he wrote a letter, and then he turns right around and says, "No, I do not repent." God allows those things to go in there to help us to see the character of those men. They had weaknesses just like all of us. There was no such unevenness in Him.

Now what about us? We can show strong faith in one area and be quite weak in another. We may tithe with regularity but also treat the Sabbath with great disrespect. Then again we may keep the Sabbath punctiliously, but when it is convenient to save face, we will lie. We can be exceedingly careful that nothing unclean passes our lips, and yet judge others with great severity. We have a long way to go.

Let us look at the oil. I think oil is one of the most widely understood symbols of the Holy Spirit, and so we are not going to go into a detailed explanation of how this is understood, but I am going to turn to some scriptures that link the Holy Spirit and oil

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together just enough so that we will get the point. There is a very interesting episode back in Luke 3. Once you understand the meal offering, it is kind of interesting.

Luke 3:21-22 Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, You are my beloved Son; in you I am well pleased.

Now what do we have here in relation to the meal offering? The oil—the Holy Spirit—was poured on the flour.

Luke 4:1 And Jesus being full of the Holy Spirit returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness.

Luke 4:14 And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee; and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about.

In verse 18 is His first sermon in the synagogue where He announces His commission from God.

Luke 4:18 The Spirit of the LOORD is upon me, because He has anointed me to preach the gospel.

Do you see the progression there? From the time the Holy Spirit is poured out on Him and He is anointed for His commission, then the Bible begins to speak of Him as being **full** of the power of the Holy Spirit. And then He Himself announces it, that "The Spirit of the LOORD is upon Me, because He has anointed Me."

Acts 10:38 How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit **and** with power, [Here we have the oil representing the Holy Spirit connected with power.] who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with Him.

He went about doing good. That is the meal offering. Anybody who meets the demands of the meal offering is going to go about doing good to men.

Now we are to understand that Jesus was bruised in service, but He never lacked power. That is what brought Him through it. By contrast, we are not bruised in service, we are not broken, but we are powerless. The truth is that the greatest zeal and knowledge are useless without God's Holy Spirit and the power that it brings to us.

Luke 24:44-49 And he said unto them, These are the words which I spoke unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. [He's speaking to the disciples after His resurrection, but before His ascension.] Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And you are witnesses of these things. And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you; but tarry you in the city of Jerusalem, until you be endued with power from on high.

Jesus gave them the truth, but it was useless until they were given the *power*. And then when they had the power they could rightly use the truth. That is why I say that even the greatest zeal is useless with truth if God's Holy Spirit is not mixed with it. According to II Timothy 1:6-7, we have the power.

II Timothy 1:6-7 Wherefore I put you in remembrance that you stir up the gift of God which is in you by the putting on of my hands, for God has not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

Now we have that power *if* we will use it in service as Christ did. A big "IF" here. God will back up our service.

In the burnt offering *water* is the symbol of the Holy Spirit, but it is used for cleansing. In the meal offering *oil* is the symbol of the Holy Spirit, and it means *the power to do right*.

The next material is *frankincense*, and we are going to consider this in conjunction with *honey, leaven, and salt*.

Leviticus 2:2 And he shall bring it to Aaron's sons the priests; and he shall take there out his handful of the flour thereof, and of the oil thereof, with all the frankincense thereof; and the priest shall burn the memorial of it upon

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the altar, to be an offering made by fire, of a sweet savor unto the LOORD.

When an offerer came, let us say he came with a whole bushel basket full of ground flour, but all the priest would do was reach in and get a handful, put it on the altar, put the oil, and then the frankincense all on there together. So only a small amount actually went on the altar.

Leviticus 2:11 No meal offering, which you shall bring unto the LOORD, shall be made with leaven; for you shall burn no leaven, nor any honey, in any offering of the LOORD made by fire.

Leviticus 2:13 And every oblation of your meal offering shall you season with salt; neither shall you suffer the salt of the covenant of your God to be lacking from your meal offering; with all your offerings you shall offer salt.

So frankincense and salt, but absolutely forbidden are leaven and honey. Only one of these four has clear scriptural reference as to its qualities, and that it leaven. However, the characteristics of the others are well known, and the way it is used is well known, so there is no problem in determining the spiritual application here.

I am going to link frankincense and honey, because they have opposite effects. Frankincense has a sweet fragrance, and honey is sweet to the taste, but the effects of the *heat*, representing the pressure of a trial, has diametrically effects on them. Heat corrupts honey. It breaks it down and destroys it. But with the frankincense, the very best of its fragrance is not brought out until it is heated. And so one shows a good application, and the other shows a bad application.

Now there is significant instruction here. You might recall in Proverbs 31, right at the last couple of verses there, it says that "Beauty is vain, and charm is deceit." When we consider that in light of the meal offering, we find that what God is saying is that "Beauty is as beauty *does*; not as beauty *appears*, without the pressure of a trial." In other words, He is saying that when the heat is on in the midst of a trial it is going to bring out the best in those who have the qualities of God; but for those who do not have the qualities of God, it is probably going to destroy them.

You can begin to understand why God says that He will never give us a trial that is too great for us. He always has to give it in measure according to what He understands knows of our character, of our endurance, of our perseverance, because He does not

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want to destroy us. And so our trials come in measure to that, because He wants each trial to bring out the frankincense—the fragrance in each person; not to destroy them. The honey represents the destructibility of what may *appear* to be beautiful, but the character is lacking.

Matthew 13:20-21 But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that hears the word, and anon with joy receives it; yet he has not root in himself, but endures for a while; for when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, by and by he is offended.

And so we see in the meal offering there is symbolism that has to do with a person's attitudes during his trials in giving service to fellowman. A person can be all sweetness and light until the hardship of service hits him, and then he turns aside. The kinds of trials involved here are going to involve people. There is nothing more consistently difficult in life than interpersonal relationships. The frankincense indicates that God is pleased with the enduring quality of those who give service even though the heat is on.

The other two—salt and leaven—also have contrasting reactions to what they are put into. Salt preserves from corruption, while leaven corrupts and degenerates what it is inserted into. Now unlike frankincense and honey, there is Scripture concerning these two, and we will look at these a bit more closely.

II Chronicles 13:5 Ought you not to know that the LORD God of Israel gave the kingdom over Israel to David forever, even to him and to his sons by a covenant of salt?

You can connect this to Psalm 89. Psalm 89 is apparently written upon the death of Josiah. Josiah was one of Judah's better kings, and except probably for some presumptuousness, he may have turned out to be their greatest one, at least up there on the level with David. When Josiah was killed in battle he should not have been in, that is where the presumptuousness came in. He was told not to get involved, but he got involved anyway. He stuck his nose in it, and he lost his life.

When Josiah died, Jeremiah was the prophet. So Jeremiah might very well be the author of Psalm 89, because Josiah was such a good king, that when he died they felt "This is all she wrote. We will never get a king like this again. We are going to go into captivity." There was great lamentation.

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But in Psalm 89 Jeremiah remembers God's promise to David—that His promise to David would be "He would last as long as the sun and the moon are in heaven." In other words "forever," that God would never go back on what He said to David. There would always be someone to sit on his throne. So Jeremiah was then encouraged because he understood that this was not the end, that there would be more. Yes, maybe they would go into captivity, but they would come back from that captivity because God was faithful to His promise.

I went into that because it says, "A covenant of salt." Salt is a symbol of perpetuity. Salt is a symbol of being a preserving factor, that where salt is there is incorruption; not corruption, incorruption. Where salt is, a thing endures.

Matthew 5:13 You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

Sometimes salt is thought, at least in this context, of having to do with our example or our witness to our neighbor. That is partly correct, but it has more to do with being a preserving factor because in the "cast out" reference, it is no good. In other words, if we do not live for God, then the reason for preserving the earth is gone. And so the earth is preserved for the elect's sake.

Salt is a Bible symbol of purity because it has a cleansing effect, thus it represents honesty, diligence, conscientiousness, carefulness of speech, and high morality in general. It represents solid stability because it keeps other things from going bad, and it gives flavor to the things that are otherwise insipid. So it is a good one.

Now with leaven, everything about it is bad. We are told to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees. You can see that in Luke 12:1. That was their rigorous external legalism. Bad doctrine. We are told to beware of the leaven of the Sadducees. That is in Matthew 16:6. Again, bad doctrine: the denial of the supernatural, such as the resurrection, and also their religious, political wheeling and dealing. We are told to beware of the leaven of Herod in Mark 8:15, which was their out-and-out political wheeling and dealing, and worldliness.

I Corinthians 5:7-8 Purge out therefore the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, as you are unleavened. For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us. Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity

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and truth.

So in the New Testament, leaven signifies wickedness and malice in contrast to sincerity and truth.

Now all of our offerings to God are mixed with some measure of sin. Has God made any allowance for this? Yes, He has, but we will save that for the next sermon.