

Offerings (Part Three)

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We have been finding that there is a great deal in the Bible about sacrifice. We have been studying through the early portions of the book of Leviticus, which is the book, more than any other that I know of, that tells us how to worship God. We found in the first sacrifice here, the burnt offering, that the worshipping of God involves the entirety of a person's life.

We have to fit ourselves into these things. We just cannot read it as so much intellectual thought that is in our mind, but something that has to be practical. Otherwise, it is of no use to us. In I Peter II Peter writes that:

I Peter 2:5 You also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

I Peter 2:9 But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.

The book of Leviticus has very much to do with you and me. It was the book that was written for the priests, and the church is a kingdom of priests. It tells us how to approach to God. And maybe above all, it tells us how to continue our fellowship or our communion with God.

How important is this communion? How important is this fellowship that we have with God as a result of the activities of Jesus Christ that has gone on before us? Brethren, that fellowship is our salvation! It is an important link. It is so important that without that link provided for us there would be *no* salvation.

I hasten to add here what Mr. Armstrong spent it seems the last several years of his life trying to impress upon our minds. How that when Adam and Eve sinned man did not fall anywhere. What happened was that man was cut off from God. He was cut off from fellowship with God. They were booted out of paradise there, out of the Garden of Eden. And symbolically, all of mankind was then barred from entrance into the presence of God.

Now Jesus Christ through His sacrifice has once again provided entrance into the very fellowship with God, but then comes our part. We not only have to believe in that sacrifice, we have to do our part in maintaining that fellowship. What is the best way to do it? Where does the instruction appear in the Bible as to how to not only maintain it but maybe even increase it and embellish it?

Well, that instruction is contained in typical fashion, in symbolical fashion, in the book of Leviticus and especially in the first five chapters of the book of Leviticus. Remember we have impressed this upon your mind in two different sermons now that Christ is the end of the law, Romans 10:5. It does not mean that He abolished the law. It means that He is the *object* of the law. He is its point. He is its purpose. It is the law that points to Christ.

And so I told you, and I think that you understand it, that we look into the law, into this ceremonial law, and we find out a great deal about the character, about the mind, about the attitude, about the offices that Jesus Christ occupies. We find there that He occupies three different positions. He is the offeror in those sacrifices. He is the one who brings the offering to be sacrificed. He is the offering, He brought Himself to be sacrificed. And He is the priest. He is the one who receives the offering from the offeror in behalf of God.

So we see Him in all three of these positions and it is in these three positions that we learn a great deal about ourselves because we have been brought into a position where we are the offeror. We are the offering and we bring it as a priest of God, in behalf of God. We are a kingdom of priests.

It is very important that we learn as much as we possibly can about that.

We have twice gone through Romans 8:28-29, where it says that all things work together for good. (Everybody knows those verses.) But it goes on to say that the reason for this is that we might be conformed to the image of His Son, that He is the firstborn of many brethren. And so if we are to be conformed in the image of His Son, and God is involving us in a creative process, it is essential that our part, though very small in terms of its importance to salvation, is nonetheless essential to salvation, because without our cooperation, God cannot perform His creative acts in the reproducing of Himself in us.

It is very interesting that in Mr. Tkach's most recent letter dated January the 26th, a "Dear Brethren and Coworker" letter, beginning in the fourth paragraph, it states,

I can't stress enough that when our ways please God, He will bless us. This is the work of God, not the work of men. God is patient and merciful with human shortcomings and sin, but He wants us to be turned toward Him with our whole hearts, truly striving to overcome. Notice what Jesus said in Matthew 22:37, "A lawyer of the Pharisees had asked Him, 'Teacher, which is the great commandment of the law?' And Jesus replied, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all of your heart, with all of your soul, and with all of your mind.'" Such intense sound-minded devotion to God is what the lives of each of His people should reflect.

That is what the burnt offering is about. Intense sound-minded devotion to God is what the lives of each of His people should reflect.

Now, we find that we are surrounded by a very real world and indeed that it should be there. But that world can be a very great problem to us. And it is very interesting that Jesus Christ began His ministry talking about principles that are involved in this intense devotion to God.

One of them that is going to prove to be very difficult for any one of us to struggle against, it is going to be something that is with us to the very end of our lives, and that is materialism. We are material, the world around us is material. There are all kinds of material things that we can find ourselves distracted by. And so I want you to turn to Matthew the sixth chapter where

Jesus addressed this. Here we are in the midst of the Sermon on the Mount, as far as we are able to see the very first preaching effort that Jesus made to His disciples.

Matthew 6:24 "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon."

Admittedly, this is a very difficult task because as I said, and you well know, we are physical, we are dependent upon physical things for our life. We are dependent upon jobs that are in this world. Our relationships are with other physical beings. The world itself is very physical and we need these things. But God is very concerned about the emphasis in our life. How do we look at material things? Is it an end in itself or is it a means to an end? Now, you know that it has to be the latter; that if these physical things become an end in themselves, that we are going to find ourselves in difficult straits in regard to our relationship with God because you cannot serve God and mammon, mammon representing materialism.

Matthew 6:25 "Therefore I say to you [Jesus said], do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?"

Did this same Jesus Christ not say just a little bit earlier that man shall not live by bread alone but by *every* word of God?

There is a dimension to life, the spiritual dimension, that adds what man physically lacks. And it is this dimension that makes life abundant and it is this dimension which is so easy to forget about in the midst of this very material world in which we live. So we are concerned about clothing. We are concerned about food. We are concerned about our job. We are concerned about sickness. We are concerned about money. They are natural concerns. But do they dominate our thinking?

Matthew 6:26-29 "Look at the birds of the air; for they neither sow nor reap, nor gather into barns [We all do those things, we reap and

sow and we gather.]; yet [He says] your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? [Will not God provide for us?] Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all of his glory was not arrayed like one of these."

We worry about being up to date about having the latest fashions. And if we do not have the latest fashions, we certainly want good material with which to be clothed in. And again, those things are not wrong. In and of themselves, they are not evil. Where is the emphasis of life?

Matthew 6:30 "Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you [here comes the question], O you of little faith?"

There is the problem. This is why we get turned aside and why spiritual things are of less value to us than material things. It is because of a lack of faith in God. That somehow or another, this world, this material world is so real that God seems so far away, and we worry, we are anxious that He will not provide. And so we emphasize the material at the expense of the spiritual.

Matthew 6:31-32 "Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For after all these things the Gentiles seek [the nations of the world]."

And if we might put it in a spiritual context, those who are on the outside. That is what their life consists of. That is the emphasis in their life, the material.

Matthew 6:32-33 "For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."

Did we believe that? Can we believe to the extent that we will really dedicate ourselves in complete devotion to God in the keeping of His commandments,

in doing the work, in striving after righteousness? Do we believe Him enough that we will not turn aside and break His law and sin, as His Son did? He never once turned aside and God provided for Him. He was a living example. Day after day, God provided and it did not cost Christ the time that would normally be needed even for Him to go to work, as we would say. But we are not all in that position but He is a wonderful example of that, of someone completely devoted, and God took care of Him, He provided for Him.

Matthew 6:34 "Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble."

Living is of great concern to us, but God is concerned with the emphasis in our life. Now, if materialism is the emphasis of our life, we will miss the mark. That is the definition of sin. We will sin. Sin means to miss the mark. We will miss the mark in our life and we will miss the mark as far as the Kingdom of God is concerned as well.

Jesus illustrated this many times and the one that popped into my mind this morning regarding this was the man that He told about who kept striving after more and more, and he became wealthy and he needed bigger and bigger barns all the time to collect his earnings into. And Jesus' comment regarding this person was, He said, "You fool! Do you not know that tonight your life is going to be required of you and then what will you have?"

If materialism is the emphasis in our life, we may very well acquire it. We know the laws that produce wealth and we could teach them to you. We tell you the seven laws of success and you can produce wealth using those laws because they are laws that are in the Bible and they are true law. But if you go in the direction of producing material success, you are going to miss the mark and you are going to end up life with an empty bag spiritually. The barns may be full, but spiritually, the bag is empty and we have lived life in vain.

That is what the book of Ecclesiastes is all about. That is its main theme. "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity." What is important? "Fear God and keep the commandments." That is what is important. That is the emphasis that should be in a person's life.

Now giving up materialism is a sacrifice. It is a very *great* sacrifice. How can we well meet the challenge of this? A couple of chapters later in the book of Matthew, Matthew 10, Jesus made it very clear that what He is calling upon us for is the devotion that is as great as we can do. He says,

Matthew 10:34-37 "Do not think that I come to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword. For I have come to 'set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law'; and 'a man enemies will be those of his own household.' He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me."

I will tell you, that is really throwing the gauntlet down. It might be easy for us to say, "Yeah, I can walk away from money. I can walk away from home. I can make those things secondary in my life. But my own blood relatives, the people who are the closest?" Now, He did not ask us to walk away from them. But yet we always have to understand that the time may come when that may be required. And so He says in verse 38,

Matthew 10:38 "And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. He who finds his life will lose it."

The wealthy man who kept building his barns bigger and bigger, he had an abundant life materially. He found life, but he lost it at the end. "And he who loses his life. . ." [he who sacrifices his life, he who devotes his life to Christ] will find it."

This is only fair. When you begin to think of the deal that God has made with us, it is only fair. God is creating us in the image of His Son. And He cannot do that—He is letting us know right up front—that as great as God is, He cannot create character by fiat. He cannot order it to be done, He cannot

say, "Come into existence" and it is there. It is something that requires the cooperation of a free moral agent who willingly submits his life to the Creator.

So it is only fair if this is going to be worked out, He has to have as much attention as we can possibly give Him in order for Him to carry out His beautiful creation. It is sort of like saying that if you cannot cooperate with a supervisor or if you cannot let the coach coach, then you better go somewhere else because it is going to foul up the works.

Now, the burnt offering shows Jesus completely devoted to God and thus, it is a sweet savor to Him. It tastes good. It is something that satisfies Him just like a very tasty meal satisfies you and me and we leave the table feeling good, maybe feeling bad because we ate too much! But it is that kind of a satisfaction that God wants to get across to you. Because He wants you, that because you and I can relate to eating a good meal of savory foods and we feel at the end of the meal satisfied, we have a sense of well being and we thought, wow, that was good. Well, that is what pleases God. It is not the food, it is a life that is devoted to Him. It gives Him the same kind of satisfaction. "Boy, that's good!"

So we saw in the burnt offering that every part of Jesus Christ was completely devoted to God: the head, the skin, His legs, the entrails, the fat. Everything was thrown on the altar and it was completely burned up. An entire life was consumed, symbolically, on that altar, on God's table. We saw different representations of His mind, His attitude, His character.

In the bullock, showing that untiring labor and strength, even unto death. The sheep with its uncomplaining submission, even to death, it would follow its leader right on to death. The goat, also a clean animal, but an animal showing a great deal of leadership. And so the Bible shows it being stately and dignified and it has an unwavering courage. And so there is leadership there.

But the Bible also shows that there is a flaw. That a goat in the midst of sheep tends to take over and that a goat in the midst of other goats, every goat tends to go in his own direction. And that is the way leadership has a tendency to do, to pick up the ball and run. That has good and bad aspects to

it. And so God is warning us there in Matthew 25 that it has to be restrained, there has to be restraint in a leader or he will take off and do his own thing in a self-centered way. And so He warns us there that the goats were rejected because they did not really serve the brethren. They were serving themselves in their leadership.

And then there was the turtledove, and how the turtledove represented innocence, harmlessness, childlike attitudes. But it also carries with it a sense of sadness. It is a mourning dove.

We saw also that with the bullock, the sheep, and the goat that the offeror brought the animal, that the offeror slayed the animal as well. A great deal of attention is paid on what the offeror does. But with the turtledove, we do not see that. We do not see the animal being killed by the offeror. We do not see it being cut into its various pieces like the bullock and the sheep and the goat were.

Instead, we see the emphasis is on the work of the priest and that is showing you and me that God will provide for and take care of and make up for the weaknesses of His people. To whom much is given much is required, and those who do not have the natural abilities of others, that the priest takes over and he makes up for those things. And so we see there the intercessory work of Jesus Christ in the behalf of His people. So there are a lot of lessons in that particular offering.

Now we are going on to the meal offering. That begins in Leviticus the second chapter. Now, if you have a King James, you will find that it is called the "meat" offering and that is a bit unfortunate. It was not a wrong translation. It is simply that the word meat use has changed in the last 400 years. To them in the 15th century, it simply meant food, but today it means something that comes from an animal. So a better word, the word that is more properly rendered in my Bible is grain. Some Bibles may have meal. And so I will be calling it the meal offering or the grain offering. Either one is correct.

Leviticus 2:1-3 '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. 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, and offering made by fire, a sweet aroma to the Lord. The rest of the grain offering shall be Aaron's and his sons'. It is a most holy offering of the offerings to the Lord made by fire.'

Let us look at its similarities and its contrast here, similarities and contrasts to the other offering. First of all, at the end of verse 2, it says that it is "a sweet aroma" or a sweet savor to the Lord. Now, in this case, it is the same as the burnt offering and the peace offering, but it differs from the sin offering and the trespass offering. It tells you then with the sweet savor that it does not involve sin. This offering does not involve sin. God is not satisfied with the offerings of sin as a sweet savor. And so He does not designate the sin offering or the trespass offering as being a sweet savor to Him.

What we are beginning to start into here is another offering which shows a perfect yieldedness to God. That is what satisfies God. That is what is sweet to Him. It is something that is pleasant to Him.

Notice also that the materials of the offering are different. There is no giving up of a life as in the burnt offering. There is no giving up of a life, no animal is slaughtered and its blood dashed at the altar. But rather we have flour, oil, and frankincense offered in this particular offering. Now, this is important to the understanding of the rest of the offering. The understanding of this particular offering, the grain offering, hinges on your understanding of this first part and you will begin to see that it goes together perfectly with the burnt offering.

Let us go back to Genesis 1, verse 29 and begin to lay a foundation for understanding the materials that were offered with this particular sacrifice. Here He is speaking to Adam and Eve.

Genesis 1:20 And God said, "See, I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food."

Genesis 23:16-17 [again speaking to Adam and Eve] The Lord God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

Let us go from there to Genesis the ninth chapter. We are talking here about things to eat. And God is showing that that which is produced from the ground is man's, all except that one tree. In Genesis the ninth chapter, we have a new factor that is thrown into this equation.

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

Let us explain this a little bit further by going into the book of Leviticus to chapter 17. Then we will begin to tie this series of verses together,

Leviticus 17:10-14 'And whatever man of the house of Israel, or of the strangers who sojourn among you, who eats any blood, I will set My face against that person who eats blood, and will cut him off from among his people. For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul.'

Therefore I say to the children of Israel, 'No one among you shall eat blood, nor any strangers who dwells among you eat blood.'

"Whatever man of the children of Israel, or of the strangers who dwell among you who hunts and catches any animal or bird that may be eaten, he shall pour out its blood and cover it with dust; for it is the life of all flesh. Its blood sustains its life. Therefore I said to the children of Israel, 'You shall not eat the blood of any flesh, for the life of all flesh is in its blood. Whoever eats it shall be cut off.'

Let us tie all of these principles together. What God is showing you and me in the beginning of Genesis there is that what is produced from and by the earth is man's portion in life. And so He designates that by saying that what is produced from the trees or what is produced as an herb, as a vegetable, that is man's portion. It is his.

On the other hand, He draws a line and says, "Yes, we can eat the flesh of animals, but you cannot eat the blood because the blood is the life." Now, what He is saying in reference to these offerings is this: God is showing Himself as Lifegiver and life is His portion. That is what is owed to Him. On the other hand, what is produced by the earth is what is man's and is owed to man, not by God but by other men. So life, represented by the blood, is God's part and fruit—grain—is man's part.

Now flour in the offering here (Leviticus 2), is the fruit of the earth. In the type it is man's part or it represents in the offerings what we owe to man. What *we* owe to man. In the burnt offering the animal represents what *we owe to God*. So the burnt offering represents the fulfillment of man's duty, of man's responsibility to God. The meal offering represents the fulfillment of man's duty to his neighbor. Now, it was an offering made to God, so it is man offering to God in order that he may give his portion to his neighbor.

These two offerings were offered together. This again is very important as we lay the foundation here. Let us go to the book of Numbers. We are going to begin this in chapter 29. These directions are being given here in chapter 29 for the offerings that are to be made on the Day of Trumpets. And this is typical of what it says regarding the burnt offering and the grain offering.

Numbers 29:1-3 'And in the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall have a holy convocation. You shall do no customary work. For it is a day of the blowing of trumpets. You shall offer a burnt offering as a sweet aroma to the Lord: one young bull, one ram, seven lambs in their first year, without blemish. [Now verse 3, first word, a possessive pronoun. It refers back to the burnt offering in verse 2.] Their grain offering shall be fine flour, mixed with oil. . . '

See, all of those burnt offerings, the bull, the ram, the seven lambs, each one had a grain offering with it and so God shows it by the possessive pronoun there.

Numbers 29:6 ' . . . besides the burnt offering with its grain offering for the New Moon, the regular burnt offering with its grain offering, and their drink offerings, according to their ordinance. . . '

Numbers 29:8 [the offerings on the Day of Atonement] 'You shall present a burnt offering to the Lord as a sweet aroma: one young bull, one ram, and seven lambs in their first year. Be sure they are without blemish. Their grain offering shall be of fine flour mixed with oil.'

Numbers 29:11 'also one kid of the goats as a sin offering, besides the sin offering for atonement, the regular burnt offering with its grain offering, and their drink offerings.'

Numbers 29:16 [these are the offerings at the Feast of Tabernacles] ' . . . also one kid of the goats as a sin offering, besides the regular burnt offering, its grain offering, and its drink offering.'

Go to one other book, all the way back to the book of Ezra, which was written as the children of Israel left their exile. In Ezra the seventh chapter, it is interesting. We have a letter from Artaxerxes to Ezra. Artaxerxes is the king and he writes this letter to Ezra telling him that he is giving him so much money in order to get the Jews reestablished in Jerusalem. And so he says in verse 17,

Ezra 7:17 "Now therefore, be careful to buy with this money bulls, rams, and lambs, with their grain offerings."

I read those to you so that you would understand that the two offerings were made together as one. They cannot be separated. That every time a burnt offering was made a meal offering, a grain offering, also had to be made. They go together, you cannot have one without the other.

Now, let us go back to the book of I John because I am going to begin to show you the practical application of that.

I John 3:10 In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest [Here is how we can see it. Here is the evidence.]: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother.

What did we say that the meal offering represented? It represented in perfect fulfillment what a man owes to his neighbor, loving your brother.

I John 3:11-13 For this is the message that you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another, not as Cain who was of the wicked one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his works were evil and his brother's righteous. Do not marvel, my brethren, if the world hates you.

I John 3:15 Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.

I am beginning to slowly put the picture together here. There are people who will proclaim to you very loudly that they love God and all the while they are doing dirty little things against their brother, their neighbor—cheating, stealing, lying, gossiping. Is it possible to love God and do acts that undercut and destroy your neighbor? John says, no, the two go together. You either love God and your neighbor or it is not a complete sacrifice.

I John 3:17 But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?

Let us jump all the way over to chapter 4, verse 20. This whole section from verse 10 of chapter 3, all the way to the end of chapter 4, is expounding this principle here. In verse 20 he is reaching a concluding statement.

I John 4:20 If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen?

It is impossible. The two offerings go together, they cannot be separated.

It is very interesting that John mentioned Cain. Can you remember Cain's and Abel's offerings? Can you remember what Abel offered and what Cain offered? Abel offered a sheep from his herd. Cain offered a grain offering of the fruit of the ground but he did not offer a sheep. So what is God teaching you about this?

It is very interesting. Cain's problem was that he tried to do this without the shedding of blood. He was not giving God His due because God has a prior claim on life. God comes first. We just read that in Matthew 10 that He said, "I've got to come before father, mother, sister, brother, aunt, uncle, and any other human relationship." He said we cannot serve God and mammon, we cannot have our life devoted to materialism and at the same time say that we love God. So Cain never acknowledged God's prior claim on our life.

Instead, what he did, he offered his grain offering, which was the same as saying that, "God, I am going to use my acts of love and kindness and goodness and charity to men to justify me before You." Impossible, God said. Our good works will not justify ourselves before God. Our kindness is to men. Though God requires them—we are to do them—we cannot allow ourselves to get into the frame of mind that somehow or another this is going to exonerate our sin or somehow earn us salvation.

There are many men who become quite wealthy in life, and later on in life they may begin to do all kinds of philanthropic works, donate hundreds of thousands of dollars, maybe millions of dollars to build libraries, to build hospitals, to build all kinds of things that we might consider to be good. But they leave God out of the picture. They are making the same kind of offering that Cain did. The two offerings have to go together; and God comes first, the burnt offering goes first and then the meal offering goes on top of it. Our devotion to God comes first. Our devotion to man comes second.

So what these two offerings are teaching us: the burnt offering teaches us the keeping of the first four commandments in relation to God. The meal offering teaches us the keeping of the last six commandments in relation to man.

(This keeps reminding me of the song, "You can't have one without the other." Funny the things that run through your mind while you are speaking. I just could not hold that one in.)

Back to Leviticus 2 again. Notice in verse 1, "his offering shall be a fine flour." Now, in other literature it shows us that the Israelite people ground that up until it was like talcum powder. They really did a good job. It was not left real grainy at all. It was ground up until it was like talcum.

In the book of Isaiah, chapter 28, verse 28 Isaiah writes, in an entirely different context but it shows a principle, "Bread flour must be ground." Now, there is a picture here that is in some ways quite similar to the burnt offering, and especially the bullock, and that is before [words here are unclear] Mark the ninth chapter, verse 19. We will read it and then we will illustrate what we mean here.

Mark 9:19 He answered him and said, "O faithless generation [we read about faith there in Matthew 6 at the very beginning of this sermon], how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him to Me."

A service to man involves considerable self-sacrifice.

Now, if we desired to, I could take you through a trip in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and I could show you, I think adequately, what kind of an investment of time and energy that Jesus Christ had to make in order to serve man. It was a considerable self-sacrifice on His part to do so. Please do not separate yourself. Because the real practicality of this is, how can we put it into use?

What God is saying here is if we are going to be devoted to the service of man, as the grain offering illustrates, it is going to be at the cost of a

considerable amount of self-sacrifice. It is going to make us weary. We are going to get tired of doing it. It is going to involve maybe a lot of time and energy as well. And that means pain. Now, where is the pain going to come from? Is it going to come just from the giving of the time and energy to serve our brethren?

Look at Jesus' statement there. He looks almost a little bit exasperated. "How long shall I bear with you?"! Like He was reaching the end of His patience, this faithless generation. No, what He was indicating there is that the very people that you are going to serve are going to be the people that inflict the pain on you. And this is weird, peculiar, strange, twists of human nature.

One would think that a man like Christ would have been loved, lauded, praised, glorified, put up on a pedestal, given every kind of honor that men could possibly give to Him. Because who else did you ever know that came along and gave words of teaching and instruction like He did? Words that are eternal, words that anybody could live by even to this day. Who do you know ever walked around healing the sick, changing people's sightless eyes into things that could see, limbs straightened after they had been bent and crippled since birth, 35 and 40 years, healed everyone practically, it says, that was brought to Him, cast out demons, put people's minds straight once again. Healed people of epilepsy, fed 5,000 people at one time, another time 4,000 people He fed; did all kinds of wonderful things. You would have thought that everybody would have wanted to get next to this Man. "Boy oh boy, He's too good to let go of!"

It is interesting, but the Psalms show us that the very people that He was serving were the ones that stuck it to Him.

There is a lesson in that and you have got to learn to expect that. When you serve God's people, you are going to be disappointed. You are going to be discouraged. Your expectations of what you would think their response would be are going to be severely damaged and you are going to be offended. What are you going to do? Are you going to get ground up in the process and to become finer and finer, with more evenness until you become like talcum? Or are you going to throw up your hands in exasperation and quit because you have been offended? "Well, I tried it once and it didn't work."

Let us go back into the Psalms and look at what happened to Christ.

Psalm 69:20 Reproach [He says] has broken my heart, . . .

Do you ever think of Christ's feelings? What would you feel like if you went around doing all these good things and then people spit on you and beat you with sticks and tried to take your life and then eventually did succeed in doing it. Boy, would we get offended!

Psalm 69:20 Reproach has broken my heart, and I am full of heaviness; I looked for someone to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none.

Go back to Psalm 35. This one has even more extensive material within it.

Psalm 35:11-16 Fierce witnesses rise up; they ask me things that I do not know. They reward me evil for good, to the sorrow of my soul. But as for me, when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth; I humbled myself with fasting; and my prayer would return to my own heart [that means that his prayers were answered]. I paced about as though he were my friend and brother; I bowed down heavily, as one who mourns for his mother. But in my adversity they rejoiced and gathered together; attackers gathered against me, and I did not know it; they tore at me and did not cease; with ungodly mockers at feasts they gnashed at me with their teeth.

Psalm 55:12-14 For it was not an enemy who reproaches me; then I could bear it. Nor is it one who hates me who has magnified himself against me; then I could hide from him. But it was you, a man my equal, my companion and my acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together, and walked to the house of God in the throng.

Who is it that is going to offend you? You know, when somebody who is outside persecutes us, we can take it because we expect it. But when it is our friends, our brother, our sister in the church, our guide—the minister—when

they are offend, what do we do? Well, Christ did not give up. He *allowed* Himself to be bruised, He *allowed* himself to be ground up until we see that He just gave Himself completely and totally. A good example of this is in Mark 15, where He was completely worn out.

Mark 15:21 They compelled a certain man, Simon a Cyrenian, the father of Alexander and Rufus, as he was coming out of the country and passing by, to bear His cross.

That is what our Mediator does for us. But do not give up. Understand from this offering that God is showing that He is allowing that grinding to perfect your character, and that grinding, that bruising, is coming from the people who are closest to you.

Now, also it was fine flour, and I want to emphasize the fine at this point. I mentioned before that it was of the consistency of talcum. What he is showing here of course, is the that there was no unevenness in the character of Jesus Christ. It says in Hebrews 13:8, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever." And so we can find examples in the Scriptures that He was firm, but He was not obstinate. He was calm, but He was not indifferent. And there were times that He got angry, but He controlled that anger. He was gentle, but He was not weak.

But you see in men all kinds of inconsistencies! For example, John. John is noted to everybody, practically, as the very epitome you might say, under Christ, of love. Was he not the man who has written more about love? He is shown in the Bible as being a very affectionate person. And it even states that he was the one that Jesus loved a couple of different times. That Jesus had a special regard for this man. And yet, Jesus named him a son of thunder. He was somebody with a mercurial temper. There was unevenness in his character. It was not always the same.

And then there is Peter. Oh, brash, zealous Peter. Peter jumps out of the boat and walks on the water, just like Christ. And then sinks when he loses his faith. Christ never lost his faith, but Peter did. Peter is that guy that said, "Hey, I'll go anywhere with You, all the way to the death!" and then promptly betrayed Him.

There is Paul. High energy level, lots of work. Nobody worked harder than Paul. So God opens up the door to Troas, Paul wants to go to Macedonia.

See, we have inconsistencies. But Christ did not. His character was like talcum powder. There was no unevenness at all.

Back to Leviticus 2. It says in verse 1 that he shall pour oil on it. In Acts the 10th chapter, we find a verse regarding Christ. It says there (we are breaking into the midst of a thought again):

Acts 10:38 how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.

Now, we find Christ bruised in His service to man. But yet we also find that He never lacked power. We are not bruised and we are not broken, and we are powerless. I wonder if there is any connection.

What does the oil here represent? I think all of us understand that it represents God's Holy Spirit. But did you notice that in the burnt offering oil was not used? Water was used and water also represents God's Holy Spirit, but it represents a different function. Water, we find used in the Bible to illustrate the Holy Spirit's cleansing action. And so we find that we need to be cleaned up as we come before God in the burnt offering. But in our relationships with men, what we need is power like Jesus had, and oil represents power in its symbolical relationship to the Holy Spirit.

Let us go back to Luke the 24th chapter, verse 44. This was just before Jesus' ascension or actually after He was raised from the dead, His resurrection, and the same day that He talked to those two disciples on the way road to Emmaus. Then He appeared to all the disciples in that room where they were meeting.

Luke 24:44-49 Then He said to them, "These are the words which I have spoken to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which are written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and in the Psalms concerning Me." And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures. Then He

said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the 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 to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And you are witnesses of these things. Behold, I send you the promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high."

They were His witnesses, but they needed power to make this known to the rest of the world. He gave them the truth but they had to wait for the power. And the truth is that the greatest amount of zeal and knowledge are useless without God's Spirit to rightly direct it.

Now, with that Spirit comes the love of God to rightly direct it. So in the burnt offering water is seen in the symbol of the Holy Spirit cleansing. In the meal offering oil is the symbol of the Holy Spirit and the power to do good in a right motivation. Because normally what we would do is we would do good to get our name in the paper, to advertise our goodness.

Again, back to Leviticus 2 and we find in verse 1 that frankincense was on it. And in verse 11,

Leviticus 2:11 '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.'

I am going to link together here frankincense and honey because there is a relationship, there is a contrast here. Both of them are sweet but under the heat of a fire, a fire representing trial, frankincense comes to its full fragrance, while honey breaks down and corrupts. So God wanted to make sure that no honey was offered with the offering because under the heat of the fire, it breaks down. Anybody who has done any kind of work at all with honey knows that. You do not want to put too much heat on honey. If it happens to solidify into sugar granules, you only want to use a very tiny amount of heat, just enough that will re-liquefy the honey. Because if you put too much heat on the honey, it will begin to destroy it. Not that the sweetness will disappear, but rather it will become destroyed.

But the more heat you put on frankincense, the better it smells.

Now, what is the spiritual teaching? It has to do with a person's attitude and especially a person's attitude under trial. Any one of us can be a fair weather sailor. Any one of us can be all sweetness and light as long as things are going well. And we can be a glad-hand in the congregation going around, smiling, everybody's happy, and we can greet everybody and say, "Boy, isn't life great!" And then a trial hits and then all that sweetness and light begins to corrupt. But if you are made out of frankincense, you keep smelling better and better.

In other words, you will retain the good attitude, the smiling, positive outlook, the faith in God, and love for your brethren. Despite the difficulty that you are going through: financial trial, health trial, trial within the congregation, whatever it is, you are going to keep your fragrance.

Turn with me to Matthew the 13th chapter where we find the Parable of the Sower and the Seed. He says,

Matthew 13:20-21 "But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles."

Now, why do you think that He included that in the meal offering? Remember, the intent of the meal offering is to show us meeting our requirements, our responsibilities to man. God is trying to tell you and me that these trials which are going to give us the most difficulty are those that involve people. They are relationships with other people. Most of the time we could say, "Well, I can get along with God," but we do not have to live with God, you know. I mean, we are supposed to, but you get the idea. He is not physically there so we can get along with somebody who is not bugging us. Boy, right in a family. (You have to see this application in the family and maybe we will do that the next time I speak.)

Most of our bad attitudes come out in trial with our mate. Are we made of frankincense or are we all honey sweet until the heat is on?

Leviticus 2:13 '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 grain offerings you shall offer salt.'

Back in verse 11 again. "No grain offering which you bring to the Lord shall be made with leaven, for you shall burn no leaven or any honey or any offering to the Lord made by fire.' As I linked frankincense and honey, I am also linking here together salt and leaven. On the one hand, the offerings had to have salt. On the other hand, no leaven. We are going to see one exception in just a minute. No leaven.

Let us go very quickly, just to give you a little bit of a scriptural reference, in II Chronicles 13, verse 5.

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

The words forever and salt are linked together. Salt is a preserving factor. It preserves and seasons. But leaven, far from preserving, corrupts. It is the opposite of the salt. So we find them in scriptures like in Colossians 4:6 where Paul said, "Let your tongue always be seasoned with salt," or your speech always be seasoned with salt. What he is saying there is it should have a nice flavor to it, but it should *always* build up, encourage, exhort, inspire, edify, in a good way. Those are preserving things. But if you are gossiping, that is destroying life, that is a leaven.

And so all of the offerings that you make to other people should be seasoned with salt and have a preserving character in them, preserving their lives and yours. Gossip destroys. It is leaven, it corrupts. And so no offering made to God in behalf of men can have any leaven within it. You are well aware that Jesus said to "beware of the leaven of the Pharisees." Another place He said to "beware of the leaven of the Sadducees, another place the leaven of Herod. Paul said in I Corinthians 5:7 to purge out the old leaven. These offerings were not to be corrupted by leaven.

Back to Leviticus 2, verse 12. There is one exception.

Leviticus 2:12 '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.'

Leviticus 23:10 "Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'When you come into the land which I give you, and reap its harvest, then you shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest.'

This was the wave sheaf offering, the first grain that was cut in the spring harvest on the Sunday morning after the weekly Sabbath that fell between the two holy days of the Days of Unleavened Bread. The high priest would go out with that and he would wave it before God to be accepted. And I think that you understand that that wave sheaf represented Jesus Christ who was the First of the firstfruits. James 1:18 says that we, the church, are a kind of firstfruits to the Lord. That Christ was the First of the firstfruits, the first one resurrected, and He was waved before God symbolically to be accepted.

Then we have down a little bit further in verses 12, 13, and 14, the offering that was to be made that day and you will find a grain offering in the midst of that.

Leviticus 23:17 [still the Day of Pentecost] 'You shall bring from your dwellings two wave loaves of two-tenths of an ephah. They shall be a fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven. They are the firstfruits to the Lord.'

Tie that back together with Leviticus 2:12 where it says, "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." Why? Chapter 23, verse 17 tells you because it has leaven in it. Two loaves, wave loaves, they are waved before God just like the wave sheaf offering, but they are not burned on the altar. It would not be a sweet aroma.

Then he goes through several more sacrifices and offerings. Again, there is a grain offering in there. And in verse 20,

Leviticus 23:20 'The priest shall wave them with the bread of the firstfruits as a wave offering before the Lord, with the two lambs. They shall be holy to the Lord for the priest.'

Let us explain all of this. Those two wave loaves which were made of the fine flour that was used for a grain offering, instead of being thrown on the altar, they mixed it all together and made loaves of bread out of it. They put the oil in, they put the frankincense in, but they also put leaven in. Those two loaves represented the church—you and me. It is a church with corruption within it. It is a church with sin in it, and as such, in the typology here, it is not a sweet offering to God. Therefore, it cannot be burned on the altar because there is sin in it. It would not be sweet to God.

There are two things to get out of this that are very instructive. I just mentioned to you the oil and that it is a symbol of God's Holy Spirit and the power that we need to do good works. It was mixed together with all of the other ingredients including leaven. Now, what it means is this: that no amount of oil, no amount of God's Holy Spirit can make a person acceptable as long as he has sin within him. No amount of God's Holy Spirit can eradicate from man what sin has done and what sin is. No matter how much Holy Spirit that you would receive from God, sin would still dwell in you.

We always think if we just had more Holy Spirit we would quit sinning. No, no! Paul says back there in Romans the seventh chapter, here was an apostle, here was a man who had about as much Holy Spirit as any man ever had, and yet he wrote that he still found himself sinning on occasion. Sin that dwelled within him was not overcome by the Holy Spirit. It is teaching you and me something very valuable, something that you ought to be deeply appreciative of before Christ and to Christ.

I did not go through everything here. But the only thing that makes us acceptable before God was the offering of Christ that preceded us. If it were not for that, we would *never ever* be acceptable before God, and all of those offerings that are made on the Day of Pentecost illustrate that very plainly

and clearly. The only thing that made those two wave loaves acceptable before God, even though they could not be burned on the altar, was the fact that they were surrounded with a burnt offering, with a meal offering, with a peace offering, with a sin offering, and a trespass offering. Were it not for those things God would not even have accepted them being waved before Him.

We can come into the presence of Jesus Christ only on the strength of what preceded us. That is very humbling. Otherwise, we would not be acceptable before Him at all except for what He has already done.

And so we find in scriptures like I Corinthians 15:50, that flesh and blood will not inherit the Kingdom of God; neither does corruption inherit incorruption. We are never going to be fit for the Kingdom of God as long as we are in the flesh because sin is in it, and sin has damaged it, and it is not acceptable to God. The way that we can be acceptable before God right now is through the sacrifice of Christ and then later on born into His Family as spirit.

Turn with me to I John 4, verse 17, and I will show you a tremendous verse.

I John 4:17 Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment [how or why?]; because as He is [as Christ is], so are we in this world.

That is, as God looks at Christ in all of His perfection: as the burnt offering, as the meal offering, as the peace offering, so does He look at us! What a tremendous gift. That is God's grace. That is what enables us to have communion and fellowship with Him and makes salvation possible. That as He is, so are we in this world. A tremendous thing to be so thankful for! Otherwise, there would be no salvation.

Well, the next time I speak, we will pick this up and continue our way through the offerings of God.