

Christ in the Sacrifices 15-10-11b

We resume our study now of the grain offering that is introduced to us in Leviticus chapter 2. Some of its characteristics, we've already looked at the ingredients, if you will, the materials and some of the principles related to that, what the fundamental meaning of it is in terms of focusing more on the place of human effort in God's plan. It does have a place while salvation and deliverance and all good things come from God and are by grace through faith. There is a role and there is a function for our human efforts and they likewise should be dedicated to God and sanctified.

In that regard, one of the things you'll notice that is a shared characteristic with chapter 1 and with all the other chapters is that the whole burn offering is, first of all, everything involved in it is of the highest quality. It's not coarse flour. It's not the second best.

It is the best that you can bring. The highest quality of a bull or a goat or a sheep or the doves that are brought, these lambs and other animals without blemish, is reflected in chapter 2 in the quality of the materials being offered. None of this is cut rate, leftover old stuff.

It is the best that can be brought. Secondly, it is an offering by fire. These things that come before God are tested.

God is pictured in heaven as being surrounded by fire. Nothing comes into His presence that is not evaluated, that is not judged. Fire was a means of testing and it is also a means of judgment.

Those things that don't pass the test are burned up. Gold, silver, precious stones survives. Wood, hay and stubble does not.

So these are offerings by fire. Not only does it speak of righteousness and of judgment and survival, but also as that which comes into the invisible presence of God. When you reduce something to smoke and to heat and to that which arises upward, it is in a sense, symbolically at least, being sent to God from the tangible and the visible and the temporal and the earthly into the invisible and the eternal and the spiritual.

We look at our lives and we look at our work in terms of its spiritual and heavenly value, its heavenly evaluation and dedicating it to God, sending it as the verse my father wrote in the front of the Bible, I was going to be forgiven when I graduated high school. Whatever you do, do it heartily as unto the Lord and not unto men. So it is an offering by fire.

Thirdly, both of these are said to produce a pleasing aroma. It doesn't necessarily seem pleasing to the human nostrils, the human aroma. Sensory olfactory senses don't necessarily enjoy burnt flesh or burnt grain.

You know what it's like when something burns on the stove, I'm sure. Maybe some of you don't.

I certainly do.

And I mean by my own efforts, not just those of others. You haven't lived till you've burnt green vegetables in a house that has a smell all its own. But these offerings, fourthly, as we saw in our first session this morning, are almost always concomitant.

One accompanies the other. There was even a theory, I don't know that it has been documented, but there were some who thought the grain offering was never offered independently. It always accompanied the burnt offering.

But you can't really document that from Scripture. But what you do find is anytime there's a burnt offering, there is a grain offering as well from the time of Moses forward. So there is a close relationship between these two.

They are tied together because what we are and who we are is inevitably expressed in what we do. So who we are, the inherent nature of ourselves, our motivation, our heart is in chapter 1, the burnt offering. What we do, that we commit it and dedicate it to God and hope that it reflects His glory, that is chapter 2. Of course, those are the similarities and the things that they have in common.

The differences, obviously the first one is one is animal and one is vegetable or from the plant kingdom. And all of the components of the grain offering are from the plant kingdom, the plant area. The first offering of course has blood, the second does not.

It would be a typical, if this stuff was invented by humans, you know what people would have probably decided? Well, without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin, the life of the flesh is in the blood, blood is all important, so we are going to pour blood on the grain offering. Well, not only would that render it unfit for consumption by the priests, but even if they only poured it on the part that went to God, it mixes two different things, two different themes, two different idea sets. And so the chapter 2 offering is an unbloody offering because the blood and its connection to remission of sins, that is accomplished and that is pictured in that sacrifice.

Now we are talking about afterward. Hebrews goes to great lengths to talk about how the high priest had to go in year after year and repeat the ritual offerings and sacrifices on the atonement and all of the other sacrifices and the innumerable animals that were slain because it was not until Christ came and died once for all that these things are no longer necessary. His work is complete and final and so we live in the light of that completed work and now it is what we do as a result of that.

So the grain offering not only accompanied the burn offering, but followed it. It was afterward and the order is important. The grain, especially in the time of the wilderness wanderings, which is pretty much 39 ½ years, the grain offering was a little bit more difficult because they had animals with them.

They are transient mode. How do you plant fields? So this in the wilderness might have had to come out of their stores of seed grain that they were taking to the land and this would have been a very precious commodity indeed. Additionally, the entire first chapter offering went to God and was consumed, all except the portions, the blood sprinkled in and so on.

But the entire sacrifice goes to God up in smoke where a representative portion is dedicated to God, but then the priests eat the rest of this. This is a recognition of the fact that it is not your heart for God and your appreciation of the Lord Jesus and the rest of it that is man-directed. The whole burn offering is directed entirely toward God, but the second chapter offering, the grain offering, representing human effort and work, many times our fellow believers are the beneficiaries of that and the priests are representatives of the people.

Obviously, if you are going to try to benefit people with your grain offering, I don't care how big the bowl is, when you've got thousands of Israelites, what are they going to do? Come and get a little pinch? It isn't actually going to be a benefit. So the priests partaking of and benefiting from the grain offering is representative that the nation benefits, the people of God benefit from your dedication to God and the reflection in the grain offering. This is a reflection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Not only did the Lord Jesus come to do His Father's will, not only did He love the Father and dedicate Himself to the Father, but His presence and His work and His faithfulness and obedience benefited everyone. This is the picture in the grain offering. I mentioned this before, but I constantly scratch my head at the really intentional ignorance of people who think that the Bible is just a collection of humanly authored myths and traditions and people needed to keep control so they invented a religion so they could have a hierarchy and so on.

The integrity of the pictures, the level of detail and the consistency throughout Scripture on things like this is something unknown to these people. If they knew how much depth there is in these pictures, there's no word out of place, there's no extraneous detail, there's no contradictory material anywhere in it. It is of a piece.

The whole barn offering makes perfect sense when you understand what it represents. The grain offering makes perfect sense when you investigate its meaning and its purpose and its reflection of human effort. It's true in every detail and it's something of a conundrum to me.

It is something that people choose to condemn and belittle a thing that they really know nothing about. Why don't you study it at the level that we have studied it and then come and tell me that these dusty old goat herds just made it all up? It just reflects a dismissal without fact. It's something we should never do in any area.

The participation in it is both in its gathering and preparation of the materials and in what happens to the materials. There's a human origin and human effort involved in the beginning and then there is human use and benefit at the end. So where the first chapter whole burnt offering really centers on God and honoring Him and the offerer's relationship with Him, this is

much more the horizontal arm of the cross.

The first one being vertical, the second one being horizontal. And again the order is important. We square away our standing with and relationship to God first, then we are in a position to serve and to benefit and to think about how our efforts can be dedicated to God and pass God's righteous judgment and be satisfying and a pleasing aroma, but they also have that additional blessing effect on those around us.

There is nothing specifically prohibited in the first chapter offering. The positive prescription is bring an animal without blemish, but it doesn't go to great lengths and say do not bring an animal with a milky eye, do not bring an animal with a missing leg, do not bring an animal with a jagged scar, do not bring an animal that's foaming at the mouth. It doesn't have the negative prescriptions in it.

It is positive. This is what you bring. Bring this and bring this and bring this.

In chapter 2 though we have that proscription, that prohibition, do not put honey and do not put leaven. And these are things that might be very pleasing to people, but not to God. Honey of course is used.

I even had, now they've got a flavor of Theraflu that is green tea and honey flavored. I like the sort of bitter combination of lemon and aspirin from the original. It just makes me feel like I'm really getting medicine.

It's got that bitter aftertaste and I think, well, that's got to do me some good. Half of it is probably psychosomatic, but the stuff I had last night was green tea and honey. And you can really taste the honey.

I think even looking at it, the powder had little brown granules in it. And I thought, well, this has got actual honey of some sort in it. And it tastes that way.

It can make anything, you know, they don't say a spoonful of honey makes the medicine go down, but it does. This is a warning to us. This proscription and prohibition means don't do what you do to be pleasing to people.

It will benefit people. It will be a blessing if you do it God's way. But don't with malice of forethought say, well, they're really going to like this.

I'll add some leaven and fluff it up a little so it's not so chewy. I'll put in some honey and make it a little sweeter. And it'll, you know, even as I, when the Lord says do it this way, there's a reason.

So there is this prohibition and what there is to be is salt and frankincense, salt and frankincense. And of course the salt we haven't talked about yet, but salt represents the covenant. Turn in your Bible real quickly to Numbers chapter 18.

There's one book over. Numbers chapter 18. It is talking about redemption and devoted things in the middle of this chapter.

If you look at the beginning in verse 8, the offerings that support the priests, all the best of the oil in verse 12, the best of the new wine, the grain, the first fruits, which they offer to the Lord. I have given them to you priests, whatever first ripe fruit is in the land, which they bring to the Lord shall be yours. Everyone who is clean in your house may eat it.

Every devoted thing in Israel shall be yours. Everything that first opens the womb of all flesh, which they bring to the Lord, whether man or beast shall be yours. Nevertheless, the firstborn of man, you shall surely redeem and the firstborn of unclean animals, you shall redeem.

The firstborn son doesn't go down and become a servant to the Levites. They are redeemed. They are bought and purchased back from that requirement.

And of course this is a reflection of the work of the Lord Jesus. We'll be looking at it a bit later. Firstborn of a cow, verse 17.

Firstborn of a sheep, verse 18, their flesh shall be yours just as the way of breast and the right thigh are yours. All the heave offerings, verse 19, of the holy things which the children of Israel offer to the Lord, I have given to you and your sons and daughters as an ordinance forever. It is a covenant of salt forever before the Lord with you and your descendants with you.

A covenant of salt. Salt in the ancient world primarily, first and foremost, was a preservative. It was renowned and noted for its preservative quality.

If you wanted something to last longer, you would salt it. The British Navy knew this and they put on their ships casks of salt beef. It retarded the decay.

So it is the opposite of leaven. It is the opposite of a corrupting influence. It is a preserving influence.

And so salt is included in the offering for that reason. There are only a few references to this in the Bible. In 2 Chronicles chapter 13 and verse 5, we have a reference when Abijah is on Mount Zimmarayim in the mountains of Ephraim and says, Hear me Jeroboam and all Israel, 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 promise to David that he would have a son on the throne forever is an imperishable promise. So, there is this idea of a continuing thing, not something that fades, not something that gives up and quits. When you think about King Hezekiah, we recently studied his wonderful efforts at the beginning of his reign.

He did all of these things. There was a great amount of work involved and dedicated to God. But what happens in the latter years of his reign? He falls off and fails and comes short and

goes haywire a bit.

He loses his salt if you will. So this is the idea of salt. In the Millennial Temple and the Millennial offerings that we studied in Ezekiel, you will remember over in chapter 43, even the burnt offerings are going to include salt.

Why? The Millennial offerings as a look back at the completed work of the Lord Jesus, where all of these in the Old Testament were a look forward, are a reminder that these principles are eternal. They are in the eternal future in the Kingdom of the Father. We will still commit ourselves, dedicate ourselves entirely to God and to His service.

That is what we were made for. That is why we exist. Without that existence and without fulfilling that function, we will never have peace.

We will never be truly happy. This is why you have so much self-medication and so much distraction in the world today. People have to be busy.

They have to keep their minds occupied. They have to keep piping information through. You know the idea, be still and know that I am God.

Oh, sorry, I just heard a little note. My text has gone off. My phone makes this little Wanda the good witch of the West or whatever it is, noise.

Whenever a text comes onto my phone, it makes this little sprinkle of pixie dust noise. I haven't figured out how to go in and change it, but I just hear this little bring. It is like, oh, a little tiny blessing.

An angel just got his wings because you got a text or something. Generally speaking, most people know that there are times when it is necessary to communicate, but we need to carve out time for ourselves where we can set things aside, be still. You know what you are like when you are alone.

Can you sit for an hour without any input, without any communication? Can you sit and be alone with your thoughts, be alone with the presence of the Holy Spirit, be alone in reflecting and reviewing the things that we have learned and be in the presence of God. Go through the veil that the Lord Jesus parted for us, His own flesh, so that we could come into the presence of God and be grateful and be appreciative and glorify God and just sit quietly. You look around and see if you see anybody just sitting quietly.

My first instinct still, because I am getting to be such a fossil, I look at people and I think, oh, they are praying. That is my first thought. Then I realize, oh, no, they are looking at their phone.

It used to be when you saw someone in a pose of quietude with their head bowed, they were praying. You would look around the restaurant and think, oh, that family is praying. Well, you look over there now, each of them has their own phone and I know I harp on this a lot, but

there has never been a paradigm shift in society like there has been in the last 20 years, never, in the history of the planet.

And we are here to see it. We are here to watch it. And we are here to not be swept away by it.

So concentrate, focus, remember who we are and why we are here. That is what these offerings remind us. It is the first requirement to come before God and dedicate ourselves.

It is a concomitant and accompanying requirement to dedicate what we do to God, recognizing that that is going to benefit those around us. That is what these are talking about. So salt, it should always be this way.

It should be permanent. It should be a fixture. It should be something that does not change.

And then the remaining details here in Leviticus chapter 2, verse 9, the priest shall take from the grain offering a memorial portion and burn it on the altar. It is an offering made by fire, a sweet aroma to the Lord. What is left of the grain offering shall be Aaron's and his son's.

It is most holy of the offerings to the Lord made by fire. Now why does it say this? It says it is given to Aaron and his sons. It is given to the priests.

And then it says it is most holy of the offerings made by fire. Why does it say that? Once the priests take possession of this offering that was brought by someone in Israel, do they just throw it in a barrel? Does it become a common thing? It is treated as precious. One of the interesting things to me about the ritual practice of your Catholics and your other Catholic derivative ceremonial ritualistic churches is when they do the Lord's table and they've got somebody officiating up at the front and they've got that which represents the Lord's body and they break the wafer and crumbs fall on the table.

Even the crumbs are treated with incredible respect. They're very carefully collected and they're very reverentially treated. It isn't like well the cracker broke and a crumb fell on the floor, no big deal, I've got the main part of the cracker.

Every different part of it is treated with respect. All of those things from the beginning, I mean they're just excessively respectful of these things that they associate with the actual transubstantiated body and blood of the Lord. They're treated with that much respect.

God is reminding the priests that these things that represent effort and work and benefit to others that are brought before the Lord should be remembered and treated as such by the beneficiaries. The priests are not to just go toss this in a corner somewhere. It is most holy to the Lord and it is separate and different from any other foodstuffs and any other things that they might have by way of meal preparation.

This is from the offerings to the Lord. This was dedicated first to the Lord and I am the beneficiary. The person who brought this and we think about this in our own, whether it's our

circle of fellowship or just our function as believers in the world.

What we do, we do as under the Lord and hopefully the people who are beneficiaries of that recognize that this was done not, boy I sure hope the priest likes this. I threw a little extra honey on it. It is done to the Lord and the priest receives blessing from it as a byproduct of that.

It's not for the priest. It's God's. It was brought to God.

The priest benefits from it and that is a helpful way to look at the blessings that come to us through fellow believers. This thing was dedicated first to God and I should respect it and reverence it and treat it as such. Most holy of the offerings to the Lord.

You are partaking of an offering that was made to the Lord so act accordingly. Think accordingly. Treasure it and appreciate it accordingly.

No grain offering which you bring to the Lord shall be made with leaven. You shall burn no leaven nor any honey in any offering to the Lord made by fire. These are for people.

It wasn't prohibited to have leaven. People had it all the time. That's why they had to purge the house of leaven during the Passover because it was a regular constituent.

It made bread better for human consumption. Honey makes food better for human consumption. God says this isn't for human consumption.

You are doing it for me. As for the offering of the first fruits you shall offer them to the Lord but they shall not be burned on the altar for a sweet aroma. Every offering of your grain offering you shall season with salt.

You shall not allow the salt of the covenant of your God. The salt of the covenant of your God. This has an intangible element.

It's not just a ritual. It's not just a physical procedure. It reflects covenant, commitment, promise, appreciation.

Two parties on each side of the covenant. One on each side. With all your offerings you shall offer salt.

If you offer a grain offering of your first fruits to the Lord you shall offer for the grain offering of your first fruits green heads of grain roasted on the fire. Grain beaten from full heads. It is beaten and it is roasted.

Do we have any difficulty realizing what this reflects in terms of anticipating the Lord Jesus? Beaten and then the judgment. You shall put oil on it and lay frankincense on it. It is a grain offering.

Then the priest shall burn the memorial portion part of its beaten grain and part of its oil with

all the frankincense as an offering made by fire to the Lord. Of course it is a trivial leap to remember that the wise men who visited the Lord Jesus shortly after his birth recognized his mission from the same prophecy that enabled them to recognize the star in the east. They brought gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

It is a divine child that was expected. The one born King of the Jews is K, the son of David who will rule forever. I think these men understood that and it is reflected in their gifts.

Well that is the grain offering. We will proceed next time to Leviticus chapter three and look at the peace offering. The peace offering.

The order of these offerings is important. Holborn offering first. We first give ourselves.

Secondly, anything that reflects what we do, our efforts, is dedicated to God. Thirdly, the peace offering. What does this reflect and represent? How does it foreshadow the Lord Jesus? We will see that next time.

Let's close here in a word of prayer. Father, thank you for the truth of your Word. Thank you for the clear light that it shines on us to reveal what is good within us and what needs to be purged out, what needs to be replaced, what needs to be refined, and what needs to be made acceptable in your sight so that as we offer ourselves we are in fact pleasing and accomplishing our reasonable service.

We pray that the Holy Spirit will enable us to understand and see the pertinence and the application of what we have seen from your Word to our lives so that what we have remaining to us by way of time and opportunity can be dedicated to you, not just ourselves but our path through this life, the thoughts that we think, the words that we say, and the actions that we perform, that all will be acceptable in your sight. We thank you for the Lord Jesus. We thank you that He is our Redeemer.

We thank you that we are forever in a covenant relationship with you through Him. We pray that our lives can reflect His glory as well as yours. We pray it in Jesus' name.

Amen.