

Lev 05-05-01b

Let's resume our study here in Leviticus chapter 2. I think this is very fascinating that God gives us the whole burnt offering first, representing love for God with all the heart, all the soul, and all the strength. Everything goes up. You chop it up, you examine it, you wash it.

What, by the way, do you notice in terms of the Holy Spirit in the first offering versus the second offering? Is there any symbolism of the Holy Spirit in the first one? We don't really see oil present there, do we? The closest you might get is in the washing of the legs and the entrails. And if you think over in the New Testament, we have the washing with water and renewal of the Holy Spirit. But water typically represents the Word in the hands of the Spirit.

Remember, Jesus stood up on the last great day of the feast and said, Oh, he who is thirsty, let him come and drink. Out of his inner being will flow rivers of living water. Oil represents the Holy Spirit in His enabling, empowering, anointing, commissioning presence, typically.

When you see water and the washing of water in particular, the cleansing of water, our hearts having been sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water, this is the application of the Word of God through the power of the Spirit. It has a cleansing effect. It's not just knowing it.

That would be like having a bottle of water or having water in your faucet without turning it on. It is the flow of that water across your body that cleanses it. That's why God blessed the man that invented the hot shower.

Every time I get into one of those, I think about these people that lived... I mean, you think about it. Just a hundred years ago and earlier, think about the 1800s and every century before that. Who had a hot shower at the drop of a hat? Without a lot of work and hauling buckets up into a barrel and trying to heat it or do some such thing.

You and I live better than King Solomon when it comes to hot showers because any time you want, all you have to do is go in there and turn the faucet. As long as your bills are paid, out comes hot water. And there is nothing like a hot shower.

There's nothing like it. No kind of bathing out of a pot. People in the old days had to get up... You've seen these wash basin things in the picture where you heat up the stuff and put it in the pitcher and pour it in the basin and give yourself a little sponge bath.

By the way, I know this seems off the subject, but it's really not because we're talking about aromas here in Frankincense. I don't want to be indelicate, but if you think about the fact that people typically, at best, got a Saturday night bath once a week, there was a whole different climate. There was a whole different sort of aroma landscape for people in olden days.

It was just inevitable. No matter how hard you try, you just don't get the effect of a hot bath or

a hot shower sponging off and doing the best you can with what little water is available. You think about the Israelites out in the desert.

Water is scarce. You're going to pour a couple hundred gallons of it over your head to get clean? They just couldn't do that. So people grew up in an environment where, of your five senses, smell was just as important as sight and sound and the rest of it.

The reason I bring that up is not just entirely off topic. The reason I bring it up is incense and aroma was very much a part of people's daily life, and a sweet-smelling savor. By the way, talking about the sweet smell of this bread, Joseph made an excellent point that when we looked at the compounding of the incense and two of the components of that special incense, now Frankincense is not exclusive to the Tabernacle, but the Tabernacle incense includes components, and we remember in Exodus it said that it smelled like cinnamon.

It has cinnamon-like qualities, and so cinnamon bread and some of these other things would be much closer than flower petals mashed up in your grain. So the idea of a sweet-smelling savor, you might get the idea that if you've got two million Israelites who haven't bathed in a long time that maybe burning flesh does smell good to God when He comes down there to the camp. Something to kind of purge out just probably any open flesh.

That's why God said, keep the altar burning at all times, never let the flame go out. Kind of a candle effect there. But here we have the grain offering.

Anyone who offers a grain to the Lord, his offering shall be a fine flower. We have talked about this flower. It is the end result of a lot of work, and the work is done on the grain, and the grain is transformed by the pressure, and the stomping, and the threshing, and the winnowing, and the grinding of the upper millstone on the lower millstone.

Transformed. We are commanded to be transformed by the renewing of our mind. What does the renewing of our mind do? First and foremost, it drives out pride.

It drives out arrogance. And pride is shifty. Just before we got started here on our break, we reviewed our memory verses, and I threw in an extra one.

Jeremiah 17.9 The heart is deceitful. You never know when the phone rings, who is going to be on the other end. Even with caller ID, the marketing people have gotten crafty now, and it always says out of area.

So you don't know who it is. You pick it up, and it might be a recording. It might be some person that's been paid to do telemarketing.

And what do you often hear? Congratulations! You have been selected to receive a prize, a trip, a new car, or whatever it may be. And I was driving down the road here the other day, and looked over, and there's a building right over here on Custer, and it says something along the lines of the Fellowship Hall of the Church, or some such thing. Well, the operative word there is

Hall.

H-A-L-L Now, they don't call it the Kingdom Hall of the Jehovah's Witnesses anymore. Now it's the Fellowship Hall of the Church. It's the JW's.

It's bigger than Dallas. They're right over there, about a half a block from here. But they are deceitful.

Why are they changing their name? Why do they come to your door now, and they don't say, Hi there, I'm a Jehovah's Witness. They say, Do you believe that Jesus came to save us from our sins? And of course, 90% of the American public, if they're not Muslim, would say yes. And then they proceed to insinuate themselves into your home, and into your thinking, and hand you a bunch of literature.

You look at the literature. It doesn't say anything about the Jehovah's Witnesses. It doesn't say anything about Kingdom Hall.

It doesn't say anything about the Watchtower. It's just all church, and Jesus, and Bible. Well, we believe just like you do.

And we're a fellowship of believers who love God and love His Word. Deceit. Deceit.

One of the most deceitful things is our own heart. And the deceitful agent within our heart is pride. And pride takes a lot of forms.

There is a form of humility that is actually pride, where we get tripped up by not wanting to look bad, not wanting to sound bad, not wanting to embarrass ourselves. Nobody wants to be embarrassed. But if you're excessively worried about embarrassment, that's pride.

If you are excessively interested in making a good impression, if you constantly feel defensive, if you feel like you need to explain, if you feel like you need to make sure nobody has the wrong view and the wrong impression, you have to really examine that closely, because many times at the root of it is pride. I am too important for anyone to think badly of me. I am too important to be misunderstood.

I am too important to not be appreciated. It's pride. I don't want to be ill thought of in any way, shape, or form.

You have to watch out. On the one hand, that sweet-smelling savor, our good ought to look like good to those around us. But on the other hand, if you're worried about it on a personal level, that can be pride sneaking in.

So the washing in the first offering tries to make sure that there is no defilement as that entire life is offered up to God as a sweet-smelling savor. In this second offering, this fine ground flour, you make sure there's nothing, the grain, the bread speaks of the flesh. What did Jesus say about bread? He said, this is my body.

This is my flesh. Where did Jesus bear our sins? In His own body on the tree. God did not have Jesus' spirit nailed to the cross.

It was His body. It is His body that bore our sin. Why? That is where sin manifests itself.

It's our body that is sinful. That's where our sinful nature resides. That's where it operates.

It is the lust of the flesh that gets us in trouble. It is the, you know, the old King James, what was the word he used? Concupiscence? I don't know where you put the accent. Concupiscence? Is that it? Anyway, it always reminds me of concubines.

If you read the old King James and you get to this word concupiscence, and I always thought, well, that's like concubines. That's just somebody indulging the lust of their flesh there. And it's pretty close.

But it's in our flesh. It's our body that needs to be cast off and renewed when we are resurrected. Because that is where a lot of the sin resides.

So this fine flour is ground and the oil is poured on it. The flour by itself is no good. It's got to have that oil.

And then the frankincense. By the way, one of the properties of frankincense is that its aroma is released most efficiently in the presence of heat. It smells best when you heat it up or when you burn it.

You know, there are these little incense sticks that you can buy at the store. Somebody can buy them. And a lot of people who, you know, wound up with the smell of burning grass in their house would buy incense to try to cover it up.

I remember when Patty and I were looking at houses a long time ago, we went into one and, boy, as soon as you walked in there, you smelled this combination of perfume and lawn clippings burning. And, well, you know, somebody's feeling pretty relaxed about it now. So they use incense as a cover-up for, you know, recreational drug usage.

But the idea of incense, you can go down to the store and find these little incense sticks. I'm sure people use them for other things. Typically, people who like dark purple walls in their house.

It's just my observation. But if you go to the store and see these, you can pick them up and smell them, and they have a smell, but it doesn't overwhelm you. But if you light one of those, it permeates the whole area, which is by design.

Frankincense is such a perfume. It does not suffer by being put in fire. In fact, it enhances its perfumery, its perfume-like qualities.

So, as you take this memorial portion and present it to God, and it is burned, this aroma is

going to permeate the area. It's going to go up in the smoke to God, and it's going to be smelled by the priest and anybody else who happens to be in the area. Then the rest of this is given to the priest, and it is a sweet-smelling aroma for them.

And they will bake this or whatever, and it's going to once again have... It's like walking into the bakery and smelling that wonderful baking bread smell or cinnamon bread smell or whatever else it might be. Well, the priest shall burn it as a memorial on the altar, an offering made by fire. This is a fire-based offering.

Fire always speaks of the judgment of God. God is looking at this offering. It is coming up before Him, and this fire approves the offering.

It's not burned because it's worthless. It's not burned because it's chaff. It's burned because in the judgment of God, it is acceptable.

It has the flour. It has the oil. It has the frankincense.

By the way, why do you think this burns so well? What do the Israelites use in their lamps? Oil. They anoint... I mean, if you think about this, it's a little bit scary that the fuel for the lamp also gets poured over your head when you're commissioned. Maybe they had a lot of no-smoking signs in Israel because if you're anointed and the oil is running down Aaron's beard and that kind of thing, well, you don't want to be getting too close to the altar right after that because it's flammable.

It burns. One of the things George Washington Carver, if you've ever read his biography, fascinating career, but in his research with peanuts and finding out the reason peanut butter has so many calories, peanut oil is a great fuel. It burns real well.

Of course, everything smells like a burning peanut butter sandwich, but it has a lot of power in that oil and so does olive oil, which is typically what this oil is. And that's what they used in their lamps. And so this makes the flour and the frankincense.

This is the fuel that ignites the thing, so it's going to have a life of its own once it ignites. It's going to burn in a way that the flesh does not. Flesh, until you get it real hot and dry it out, doesn't really want to incinerate that well.

But this, once that oil catches fire with the flames from the altar, it is going to be sort of an incendiary offering. And this is the power locked up in the presence of the Spirit. I don't want to go off into the... It only takes a spark to get a fire burning.

But that is the idea here. The rest of the grain offering, Aaron and his sons. Most holy of the offerings of the Lord made by fire.

If you bring an offering of grain baked in the oven... Now, I mentioned in the Scripture reading that there are three classes of this offering just as you had with the other. Now, you can figure

this out just by looking. Look at verse 4. The offering of grain is baked in the oven.

So, was there any specification of how much fine flour and how much oil and how much frankincense? It doesn't say, does it? How can you tell whether it's a bushel basket of flour or a big bowl of flour or just a handful of flour? Look at the receptacle in which it is baked. If it's baked in the oven, this is where you put your big turkey broiler sized pan. It's big.

There's a lot of it. It's a big offering. If you bring it baked in the oven, it shall be unleavened cakes of fine flour mixed with oil, unleavened wafers anointed with oil.

Secondly, you have the pan. And thirdly, you have this covered pan which you would call a skillet. These are descending order of size.

This is oven, pan, skillet. Just as we had descending levels of ability and detail and understanding between the bullock, the ram of sheep or goats and then the birds in chapter one here, this doesn't really change so much in terms of composition as it does in quantity. The emphasis here is on quantity.

How much ground flour and oil and frankincense are you able to bring? And so when it's baked in the oven, it's a lot. And it can take different forms. It can be a single lump or it can be cakes, several smaller ones put together.

There's a variety here. There's different types of baked goods that can come out of the oven. If it is an offering baked in the pan, it says find flour unleavened, mixed with oil.

You shall break it in pieces and pour oil on it. It is a grain offering. You cook it in the pan and you've got kind of like a piece of pita bread or a pizza crust type of thing.

And so you break it, you pour the oil, pour more oil on it and offer that. It was made with oil to make a cake. You can't make a cake without mixing oil.

So it was composed with oil and then it is offered with oil. So you have sort of an application of the Holy Spirit when the cake is made and also when it is offered. Back to the one in the oven.

Find flour mixed with oil, oil unleavened, wafers anointed with oil. These are larger than what you can make in the pan. These wafers would, in my mind, be something more along the lines of a large loaf.

This is the jumbo. This is the family super-sized version. You can't make one of those in a smaller pan.

You have to make that in an oven. So this, no real difference in quantity or method of offering is strictly, or in quality or method of offering is strictly the quantity. Then finally in verse 6, you break it in pieces, pour oil on it.

It is a grain offering. Verse 7, if your offering is a grain offering baked in a, what it says here,

covered pan, this is the smallest of the cooking receptacles, made of fine flour with oil. Bring it, made of these things to the Lord.

And then it goes back to talking generally. Bring it to the priest. He will bring it to the altar.

The priest will take from the grain offering a memorial portion and will burn it on the altar. Notice, the priest takes his own selection. The offerer doesn't break off and say, here's your piece and here's what I'm giving to God.

The offerer brings it. The priest takes it. He breaks off his portion and gives the rest to God.

Now when you think about this offering representing what we do that is beneficial for our fellow believers who are in this dispensation, all priests, just as God designed Israel to be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. But the priests here sort of represent the fellow Israelites. You can't very well bring a grain offering and then bust it up and hand it out to everybody in Israel.

So just as the Levites and the priests stand in for the firstborn in Israel who represent everybody in the land, the offering that is given to the priests and the sons of Aaron in this case, they stand in as proxies for all of Israel. So this is essentially being offered to their fellow believers, fellow children of God. But they take the portion.

You bring the whole thing. They figure out what they're going to keep and they figure out what portion is going to be offered to God. You think about when in our fellowship or in the fellowship of your family or in the rubbing elbows with believers that goes on in all of our past life, you recognize that people do things all the time.

There are stewardships. There's washing the feet of the saints. There's prayer.

There is the desire to be a blessing and to be a benefit that is expressed by our fellow believers toward us. And a lot of times it isn't always easy to do like the world does and say, well, now I owe you one and you invited me over so I'm going to invite you over. You did this for me so I'm going to do that for you.

And we have to sort of commit the blessing of an individual who has been a blessing to us to God. Many times there's no way the thoughtfulness that someone has expressed toward us can be repaid in material terms. You can't just say, well, you met a need.

You were such a comfort or an encouragement or a blessing in some way. And so now here is the exact worth of that blessing recompensed back to you from me. We don't have the ability to do that.

And most of the time when someone is a blessing to us or has been meaningful to us or helpful to us, sometimes they just serve as an example and it may last for years. There are believers stuck in my mind who have no idea who I am and yet they have been an example and a

blessing to me down through the years every time I remember their witness, the witness of their daily faith, the witness of their enthusiasm, the witness of their faithfulness in their particular area. I think of people who sing or play an instrument or whatever and their dedication to that particular area of ministry to believers makes me want to be equally dedicated and faithful in my area of ministry.

And I'm not a musician and I'm not a singer. I'm not a person who is an evangelist or is a particular kind of believer that I've seen elsewhere, but they are a blessing to me. Well, I can't go down to them and say, Oh, let me just tell you what a great influence you've been on my life or whatever.

The only thing I can do is commit them to God and I say, Lord, please bless them and make sure they know that their life is appreciated and that they have made a difference. And it doesn't have to be that they know that they've made a difference to me but bless them and give them a sense of your presence and a sense that they are productive and their life is bearing fruit and there are people that are benefiting from their offering of themselves before you. And that's as much as I can do.

And I see that happening when the priest receives this offering from the offerer, breaks off his portion, breaks off the Lord's portion, puts the Lord's portion on the altar and sends it up as a sweet aroma. This is what we have to do when we receive blessing from our fellow believers is go to God and say, Lord, look at this wonderful blessing. Thank you for it.

Thank you for what I have received through the agency, through the instrumentality, by this avenue of a fellow believer. I know that all good things come from above, but here is a person who has been faithful and who has allowed themselves to be used by you to be a blessing. And we offer that up to God in the incense of our prayers.

And then there is a portion of that blessing that we keep for ourselves. And that's what you see in this. It is permeated by the Holy Spirit.

It is righteous and acceptable in the judgment of God. The fire that burns it finds it pleasing in God's sight. It is sweet-smelling to God.

It is sweet-smelling to us. Sometimes it is a big thing. Sometimes people are such a blessing or they do so much for us.

It might be our parents. It might be family members. It might be our children when we get older and our children do something for us.

And it's wonderful. And we just feel completely inadequate to express how grateful we are for this. And it's an oven offering.

It's big. And we feel benefited proportionally to the size of this sacrifice. I look at John Wycliffe.

I look at the men who translated the Word of God into English so that we could have a copy of it. Who gave their lives. Who were burned.

Whose ashes were scattered. Who were denigrated. Whose families were persecuted.

Who were hounded and lived the life of a fugitive and a vagabond because of their dedication to the Word of God. And we stand on their shoulders. There are men who have dedicated their lives to studying different aspects of God's Word.

And they managed to get it down in writing and preserve it so that we can look at their labors and receive the benefit of their work. I have learned amazing things about the Levitical offerings from the fellow I mentioned a week or two ago, Andrew Jukes, who lived 150 years ago and was a diligent student of God's Word and had great insight. And his book is long out of print.

You'd have to search the earth to find a copy of it. But God brought me a copy through a strange intermediate agency. An elderly missionary who was retiring and didn't have room for all of his library and asked me to come in and select what I wanted and the title caught my eye.

It's been on my shelf for years. And I've just now, in this study, had the opportunity to really go through it. And I learned an incredible amount going through it, just as I did with C.H. McIntosh, just as we have done with Ken Wiest and many others who have been faithful and diligent and are a blessing.

And their grain offering comes to us and we partake and then we thank God for them whenever they lived, whatever they did. Sometimes it's large and makes a huge difference in our lives. Other times it's intermediate.

Sometimes it's very small. But whatever it is, it is acceptable when it is fine flour, when it's mixed with oil, when it has that frankincense and God is acknowledged first and then the priest takes his portion. God gets his portion first.

The priest doesn't sit there and snack on the wafers and then take what was left over and burn it on the altar to God. God's portion comes first. And it is the recipient, it is the priest who burns it before the Lord because it is given from the offerer to the priest.

And that's the way we should think of receiving the benefits and the blessings that come from fellowship and the encouraging of one another to love and good works and the forsaking not of our assembling together. So we have these three different classes. Once again, in the literal world, this would have been based on economics, on how prosperous in the material world the offerer was.

And in the same way, how prosperous are we spiritually? How full grown or not full grown are we as believers? Are we a 30-fold field? Are we a 60-fold field? Are we a 100-fold field? That is going to dictate what we can bring that is a blessing to others, that reflects the glory and the

grace of God. But in any case, it is an offering made by fire, a sweet aroma to the Lord. Look at verse 11.

No grain offering which you bring to the Lord shall be made with leaven. What does leaven universally speak of in Scripture? Sin. It is the corruption agent.

When you leaven bread, it gives off gases which cause the bread dough to bubble up and it looks more substantial than it really is. It blows it up into something bigger than what it is full of air. And if you compress it down, it is not as much as what it looked like.

It is a process that was viewed in the Old Testament as corruption. It is a corruption. And nothing in this offering containing leaven is to be offered.

Now, we are going to see before we finish our study that there are times when leaven is a part of the offering. It may surprise you to learn that we are going to see a couple of different occasions where leaven is specified. Just to tweak your interest, one of those is if you had to pick a feast of Israel that is associated with the church, which one would you pick? Pentecost, right? The day of Pentecost is day one of the church age.

Well, when we get to the offerings associated with Pentecost, you are going to find leaven is specified. It is very interesting. We don't have time to look at it right now.

These are without leaven. 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. What is fascinating about this is there are two components that can be mixed with the flour that are acceptable and there are two which are unacceptable.

The acceptable ones, in fact the required ones, are oil and frankincense. The unacceptable ones are leaven and honey. Leaven is an agent which alters the nature of the flour just as oil is, but in a completely different way.

Instead of rendering it into a dough which can be shaped into wafers and cakes and adding to the combustibility which will send it up to God as an acceptable sacrifice, leaven does just the opposite. Leaven changes the way that cake is going to act. It's going to have some kind of moisture to turn it into dough, but with that leaven, as soon as that leaven gets activated, it's going to start to, you know, the little microorganisms start giving off their waste products and that's what bloats the dough and makes the air bubbles.

And honey corresponds to the frankincense. It is sweet tasting. It's universally a picture of that which is sweet to the taste in scripture.

But what's the problem with honey? When you burn it, unlike frankincense, burning releases the power of frankincense. Honey, when you burn it, is nasty. Honey is also the basis for the fermented drinks in the ancient world.

This is something the Vikings, I think, figured out. You know, mead is a drink made, isn't it? Am I right? Mead isn't mead? Fermented honey drink? I believe that's right. I know there's a fermented honey drink and I'm pretty sure it's mead.

But fermentation is associated with honey. It's sweet to the taste, just like frankincense is sweet to the smell, but it doesn't have the same qualities. And when you subject it to the fire, honey doesn't last.

Nobody burns honey to make their house smell good. Nobody says, oh, look on the candle shelf, we've got cinnamon, we've got bayberry. Nobody has honey candles to burn.

Never seen it. Because burning honey, try it sometime. See if you can get some honey to burn and see what it smells like.

It's awful. So, God says, no leaven, no honey. Don't have something that's temporarily sweet to the taste, but only to people.

Honey tastes sweet to the people. Honey on your bread. You know, everybody has dribbled honey on a good hot biscuit, dripping with butter.

At least anybody in their right mind ought to. You've got a biscuit there, put genuine cream butter on there, and then dribble honey all over it. It's just hardly anything better.

Tastes great to people, but you can't get that honey to go up and be acceptable to God. You can't burn it and get the sweet smelling aroma. God says, don't be burning that stuff in front of me.

When you go to the offerings where leaven is a part of it, at Pentecost and elsewhere, it says, yes, you can use leaven here, but it's never burned. The leavened cakes are never burned. No leaven goes up before God.

No honey goes up before God. Might taste good to people, but that's not what counts. It's got to be pleasing in God's sight as well as pleasing to people.

And that's the frankincense, not the honey. So, there's a great picture here of the importance of looking at the things that we do and making sure that they are in the power of the Spirit, that they are acceptable in God's sight first, and that they are offered freely and people can take them and do with them what they will. They can decide as priests to take their portion and present it to God and pray over that and make it a part of the incense that goes up from their soul.

They can receive that portion. The offeror doesn't say, now, I made this especially for you and I want you to eat this three quarters of a piece here and here's what you're going to eat. Now, I'm going to stand here until you finish every bit of that because I worked hard on it.

And by golly, when I work on a piece of bread, I don't want people throwing it away or having it

fall off the table and have the dogs lap it up. I made this for you and I made it especially for you and I'm going to stand here until you eat it. It is given and you're done.

Your part is done. You've made the offering and the priest now does his part. And God is going to be looking at that priest as to whether he is obedient in fulfilling the rest of that.

And that's the way we have to do our good. We do it before the Lord. We do it in the power of the Spirit.

It needs to be a sweet smelling savor as a result of being threshed and ground. And then we turn loose of it and give it to God. And now it's God's problem.

I have done my part. The priest has to do his part. God will do his part.

I've done my part. I let go of it. I don't expect the priest to come back and say, Boy, that was good.

Here's your thank you note. Or here I made you a... I hooked some flesh out of the pot with my three pronged hook and here's your big steak to take home for that bread. There's no thought of that.

The offeror comes and brings it. It's acceptable and it's gone. Finally, what is the other item that we see here in verse 13? I'm going to skip the first speech for the moment.

We'll come back to it. 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 for your grain offering.

Why salt? Aside from the fact that a little bit of salt helps an awful lot of things. There's salt in most recipes to some extent. And we use it as a flavoring and a seasoning.

But why salt? What would salt represent in the ancient world? Preservation. And it comes to connote durability, permanence. What does the New Testament say about our conversation? Let your conversation be seasoned with salt.

I will never forget one of the reasons God ran me through the Marine Corps is having to go to commander's call, officer's call. The CO would bring everybody over, all the lieutenants, mandatory to attend. You go there and they've got the cocktails and the little things on toothpicks.

And you're just having to stand around in your uniform and engage in idle chit-chat. It's enforced social life. You have to go.

The colonel's wife went through a lot of trouble. So you're standing around there and you make an appearance. And I remember thinking at the time, probably next week, I'm not going to remember a single word that was said in any of these conversations.

And for the rest of my life, this time that I have spent in this idle sort of command performance here will be a complete waste. And the only use I've ever gotten out of it is an illustration in my own mind of a waste of time. But there is conversation that can go on for minutes and hours.

And we are free to talk about all kinds of things. My goodness, listen to our breaks. We cover the gamut.

We go from A to Z, from Alpha to Omega, and everything in between. And it's great. Not a thing wrong with it.

But the thing that is wonderful about the fellowship that we enjoy together is it's always seasoned with salt. Sooner or later, it is related to permanent things. Things that count.

Things that look forward to the kingdom. And what is our perspective? What is the flavoring of our fellowship? Even when we're talking about exploding toads or whatever it might be. The basis and the ground of our fellowship and our interest in each other's views and what we can share with one another is the common bond of covenant.

We are the covenant people of God and we are bound together. There is a friend that sticks closer than a brother and there is a spiritual family, the Adelphoi, that are constantly addressed in the New Testament. Brethren count it all joy.

We are privileged to enjoy that covenant relationship with God that also binds us to one another. Romans 8, God wants him to be the firstborn among many brethren. And that's what we are.

This is the covenant of salt. Salt is permanent. Salt was used as a preservative.

Salt never loses its saltiness. Jesus used that. How can you be salt and lose your saltiness? You'd be thrown out and trodden underfoot by men.

And so in that sense, this offering, not the first offering, the whole life given before God, but our works, what we do, and specifically what we do with one another in view, needs to have that taste of the covenant. It isn't, I'm doing this based on who and what I am. It isn't, I'm doing this based on who and what you are.

I am doing this because it is in the realm of the covenant. It is a part of our common relationship with God. We are bound together by a covenant of salt.

It's permanent. It's everlasting. It cannot be unsalted.

It's real difficult to, they spend a lot of time perfecting the technology of getting fresh water out of salt. Because once you get brine, once you get salty water, it pretty well stays salty. If you ever had the lid come off when you were trying to salt something, I don't care how hard you try with your spoon, that is going to be too salty.

People used to do that at college at the table or wherever. Unscrew the lid and wait for you to dump it all in your plate. I mean, salt has a very lasting permanent quality.

So that's why it's associated with this. Do not allow the salt of the covenant of your God to be lacking. And notice the specific phrasing of this command.

Do not allow the salt of the covenant of your God to be lacking. It's a good way to think of it. Because you have to be diligent to make sure it's there.

To make sure that it's not missing. And it's easy sometimes for us to get busy or get distracted or get caught up in something, and we forget the salt. You know, you set the big table, everybody sits down, you're ladling out the gravy, you're passing the mashed potatoes, and somebody says, Pass the salt, please.

You look around, there is no salt. Ooh, I forgot. Why does that happen? Too busy thinking about other things.

We have to remember the context of all of our work. Our production is based on that covenant with God. Well, we'll come back and talk about the first fruits next time.

And then we'll be ready for chapter 3 and look at the peace offering, the third, in a series of great offerings that so clearly represent for us not only what the Lord Jesus has done for us and the example that he set for us, but also what God expects of us relative to himself and to each other. So we'll pick up there next time. Let's close in a word of prayer.

Father, thank you for presenting for us so clearly the opportunity that we have as believers to be pleasing in your sight, to offer ourselves as an acceptable sacrifice just as the Lord Jesus did in offering the perfect sacrifice of himself. We pray that God the Holy Spirit will impress these truths on our hearts, help us to see the applicability and to remember what we have learned when opportunity comes to apply it. We pray it in Jesus' name.

Amen. Yes.