

Lev 05-06-19a

This is Sunday the 19th of June 2005. We continue our study in the Law of the Offerings in the first six chapters of the book of Leviticus. Let's take a moment as we continue our study to prepare ourselves for it by examining our souls and cultivating the ministry of God's Holy Spirit in teaching us and instructing us in the Word of Truth.

Shall we pray? Father we thank you on this morning for your mercies, for the grace that has been expressed to us most explicitly and most personally in the work of the Lord Jesus Christ who came when we were hopeless and helpless and useless, when we were enemies, when we were without you, without hope in this world. He made a sacrifice of himself on our behalf. He served as our sin offering.

He served as our substitute. He paid the penalty for our sins and paved the way for a relationship with you that will last for all eternity. We thank you for that.

We thank you for his continuing ministry of intercession, for the example that he left us in the pages of your Word. We thank you that because of his faithfulness we too have the opportunity to be faithful and to fulfill your plan and purpose for our lives. We are grateful for the nation in which we live.

We thank you for our leadership and despite attack and despite a lack of support and a lack of appreciation we find that there are biblical principles that are expressed in our domestic policy and in our foreign policy. We pray that you will vindicate, that you will support and justify those efforts and those policies. We pray that we will continue to enjoy the freedom that allows us to assemble, to worship, and to learn and grow in the short time that remains to us in this life.

We ask your blessing on us as we fellowship together. May each one find encouragement, comfort, edification, and may each of us find in your Word that truth that will sustain us, guide us, and strengthen us in the days ahead. We pray these things in Jesus' name.

Amen. Our study of late in the book of Leviticus has taken us through the five major categories of offering. Hopefully if you think about each of those categories there will be some principles and some truths that come to mind relative to each one.

The sweet savor offerings, how many are there? There are three. Each of them emphasizes a different aspect of fellowship and relationship with God, of dedication to God. You have the olah, which looks at the person of the offerer in terms of dedication.

It is the acceptance offering. The second offering, the grain offering, focuses on that which is performed, the works, the fruit, the effort, symbolized by the pressed oil, the ground flour, and so on. Dedication of one's efforts, one's works, one's manifestation of accomplishment in life.

The third offering, the peace offering, is an emphasis on fellowship, on walk, which if you recall

we just reviewed our memory verses in 1 John 1, verse 7 in particular. If we walk in the light, what's the result? We have fellowship. So many people, especially in our strand of Christian tradition, in days past many of us have been beneficiaries of a system of teaching which had many positives, has laid a great foundation in our soul, but one of the areas that created some misunderstanding had to do with 1 John 1, 9 and the confession of sin.

For many, many people under that particular type of categorical teaching, fellowship was associated with confession of sin, and it's incorrect. Certainly confession of sin is necessary, but it is not a means of fellowship. What does 1 John 1 tell us about the means of fellowship? How do we enjoy fellowship? It doesn't say, if we confess our sins, we have fellowship each with the other.

Each and other there is God and us, isn't it? When I was a little boy in Sunday school and first learned 1 John 1, 7, I was given that verse as a way for believers to enjoy fellowship. You're walking in the light, I'm walking in the light, so we have fellowship. It's the fellowship of believers, it's not what's in view.

We walk in the light, He is in the light, therefore we have fellowship with Him and He with us. The one with another there is us with God and God with us. But the means of fellowship, the way to sustain, maintain, cultivate, enjoy, and grow in fellowship with God is walking in the light.

Well, the fellowship offering, the peace offering in Leviticus chapter 3 is the Old Testament picture, the Old Testament illustration of sitting down to table with God. Sharing a meal was the most expressive symbol of fellowship, of hospitality, of peace that you find in the ancient world. Even today, the ancient Semitic understanding of hospitality is reflected in the meal and the emphasis upon hospitality and on goodwill is reflected in that very strong tradition.

Then, turning from the sweet savor offerings, we looked at the sin offering and the trespass offering. Of the five, which one, this is something I haven't mentioned so you'll have to deduce this or you'll have to arrive at it by calculation, which of the five offerings had the most varieties, had the most classes? You probably remember that the olam or the whole burnt offering had three classes. The grain offering had a similar set of levels.

You have a couple of different kinds of fellowship offering, but by far the greatest variety is to be found in the sin offering. The sin offering and trespass offering, trespass is actually a subset of the sin offering. What is the emphasis of the sin offering as we find it in Leviticus chapter 4? Like Leviticus chapter 1, the focus and the emphasis is on the person of the offerer.

I am sinful. This is why, for example, when there were festivals and great gatherings in Israel for various reasons, there would be sin offerings sacrificed on behalf of the nation. You never find trespass offerings on these festal occasions.

It's always the sin offering because it is an acknowledgment that both individually and as a

nation, there is this problem of sin in the singular. We talked about even in the New Testament, you can often track the distinction between a focus on the nature of sin, singular, versus the commission or omission acts that are labeled sins in the plural. So, for example, in 1 John 1.9, a very simple example, do we confess the fact that we are conceived in iniquity and born in sin and we are inherently fallen in our nature? No, it doesn't say if we confess our sin, he is faithful and just.

It says if we confess our sins, because what is in view there are trespasses. So, there is sort of a view of trespasses in 1 John 1.9. If we say we have no sin in that same chapter, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us, right? So, you can track that distinction even in the New Testament. So, there is a great variety when you look at Leviticus chapter 4. We have spent some time on the sin offering for that reason.

You have the bull, the whole congregation of Israel sinning in verse 13. The elders of the congregation laying their head on it. The trespass offering, which we've been looking at most recently in chapter 5, has to do with individual acts of law breaking.

Some specific incident is in view. So, you would expect that when trespass offerings are brought to the Lord, they would probably be accompanied by a sin offering, in the same way that the grain offering and the peace offering are typically accompanied by an ola, or offered even on top of the ola. Let's take a look at some of the details that are given to the priests, because we have covered pretty much in detail all of the specifications for these offerings up through chapter 6 verse 7. The final details of the trespass offering were given, as we saw last time, in the seven verses of chapter 6. If a person sins and commits a trespass by lying to his neighbor, by something that was delivered for safekeeping, we're looking at a pledge, at some sort of property that is in view and has been lost, and there is the guilt of costing someone something.

So, there is restitution and there is this 20% or one-fifth addition. How many classes of trespass offering are given to us here in this section of Leviticus? There are basically two, depending on how you slice it. There are trespasses against God and trespasses against one's neighbor, trespassing against the holy things, or trespassing against a neighbor.

If you view it in a different light, there are also two classes, because there are trespass offerings without restitution and trespass offerings with restitution. So, you have a restitution and a non-restitution trespass offering. So, two different recipients or victims, if you will, two different classes of those who are sinned against.

It's either a vertical sin or a horizontal sin. And then there are trespass offerings of a non-restitution nature. You can't put a money value on the error.

Or, there is a restitution. Some of the restitution offerings include a 20% overage and others do not. In chapter 6, if a person sins and commits a trespass against the Lord by lying to his neighbor about what was delivered him for safekeeping, a pledge, a robbery, extortion, finds

something lost and lies about it, swears falsely, and any one of these things that he does in which he sins, because he has sinned and is guilty, he shall restore what he has stolen, or what he has extorted, or what was delivered him for safekeeping, or the lost thing which was found, or all that about which he has sworn falsely, he shall restore its full value, add one-fifth more to it, and give it to whomever it belongs on the day of his trespass offering.

He shall bring his trespass offering to the Lord, a ram without blemish from the flock, with your valuation, as a trespass offering to the priest. So, the priest shall make atonement for him before the Lord, and he shall be forgiven for any of those things that he may have done in which he trespasses. So, there are sort of two parts here.

You have the trespass offering, which is essentially the sin offering, right? That's brought to the Lord. Restitution is made to the victim. That's the one we looked at last week.

This is the the horizontal view. And the valuation, who figures out the price so that you can calculate? 120%. The priest does this.

Earlier, in verses 14 through 19, if a person commits a trespass, sins in error in regard to the holy things of the Lord, he brings a trespass offering, a ram without blemish, with your valuation, in shekels of silver, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, as a trespass offering. He shall make restitution for the harm he's done in regard to the holy things, shall add one-fifth to it, give it to the priest. The priest shall make atonement for him with a ram of the trespass offering, and shall be forgiven.

When it's against God, the 120% restitution goes to God. Verse 17, if a person sins, commits any of these things which are forbidden to be done by the commandments of the Lord, though he does not know it, yet he is guilty, shall bear his iniquity, shall bring the priest a ram without blemish from the flock, with valuations, a trespass offering. So the priest shall make atonement for him regarding his ignorance, in which he erred and did not know it, and shall be forgiven him.

Notice there is no 20% addition there for this sin of manifest ignorance. So what does that tell us about the 20%? This is levied as an additional acknowledgement of guilt. It's one thing to sin and you are in fact guilty of a trespass, but if you honestly did not know, this is the kind of thing that the Apostle Paul, as sort of a rough analogy, when he goes before the high priest and they start a dialogue there, and Paul says something and the priest commands that he be struck, and Paul says, God will strike you, you whitewashed wall, and somebody says, do you know you're talking to the high priest, and he more or less apologizes, and he says, I did not know he is the high priest.

The Bible says, do not speak against a ruler of your people, and he acknowledges that he should not have said that, but it was a trespass of ignorance. He did not know the man was the high priest, and that the command of God to not speak ill of a ruler was in view, but he acknowledged that he had done wrong, but if there had been a sacrifice in view for that, Paul

would have done the restitution type, rather than the restitution plus 20% kind, because it was done from a lack of knowledge. Sacrifice would not apply in that case, because there's not a monetary loss involved to the high priest, but you get the idea.

It is a trespass offering. He has certainly trespassed against the Lord. So when you look at these trespass offerings, there are different types, different situations.

Some of them, most of them, have a 20% overage. We talked about why 20%, didn't we? You go back to Exodus, where if a man is guilty, and he should restore double, and so you have the idea that that tithe, or 10%, is doubled in the case of the trespass offering. But now let's continue.

I'm going to use verses 8 and following as our scripture reading this morning, more or less. These are additional details. If you look at the headings, if you have a New King James, and it's got headings there, you can see above verse 8, it says the law of the burnt offering.

Above verse 14, it says the law of the grain offering. And above verse 24, it says the law of the sin offering. At chapter 7, above verse 1, it says the law of the trespass offering.

And then, down in 7.11, you have the law of the peace offerings. A little out of order there, isn't it? The peace offering has been shuffled to last. But these are further instructions to the priests, and this is more aimed at the priests than at the offerers.

This gives the priest some additional instructions. This is the priestly manual, if you will, on how to do his portion of these offerings. The first is, this is what you shall tell the people about these offerings, and tell the people this is what the priest is going to do.

Now, we have the priest sitting there saying, okay priest, when somebody comes and brings this offering, here's the instructions, with an emphasis on what you need to ensure, and what you need to perform. The Lord spoke to Moses, Leviticus chapter 6, verse 8, saying, command Aaron and his son, saying, this is the law of the olah. The burnt offering shall be on the hearth upon the altar all night until morning, and the fire of the altar shall be kept burning on it.

And the priest shall put on his linen garment, and his linen trousers he shall put on his body, and take up the ashes of the burnt offering which the fire has consumed on the altar, and he shall put them beside the altar. Then he shall take off his garments, put on other garments, and carry the ashes outside the camp to a clean place. And the fire on the altar shall be kept burning on it, it shall not be put out.

And the priest shall burn wood on it every morning, and lay the burnt offering in order on it, and he shall burn on it the fat of the peace offerings. The fire shall always be burning on the altar, it shall never go out. Well, we'll take these section by section.

We can move a little bit more quickly through these sections because we have already decoded the symbolic elements, haven't we? We know what ashes represent, we know what fat

represents, we know what the altar represents, we know what the blood represents, we know what the fire represents, right? So let's see if we can exercise our discernment having studied these elements and go through these instructions and see what it is telling us. The first idea is the burnt offering shall be on the hearth upon the altar, this is the grill or the place where the sacrifices actually rest, all night until morning. And the fire of the altar shall be kept burning on it.

So what are we saying here? This is an *ola*, a whole burnt offering. You've divided the meat of a bullock, let's say, we'll use the first class of this offering and it has been put on there. Now if you've ever used your charcoal grill or your gas grill and you put a bunch of steaks on there and you're having a gathering, a confabulation of some kind, you're trying to talk and visit and run out and check the steaks and you know something might happen and you get busy and the fire runs away with your steaks, your meat, hamburgers, especially the more fat there is, that fat starts dripping down and catches fire and the flames go up and pretty soon the whole thing becomes sort of an *ola*.

Well if you can imagine, most of the time it gets real crisp on the outside but you don't actually incinerate the meat, you don't go out there having forgotten about it for ten minutes and there's just nothing left on the grill. There's something there, it's just becoming less and less edible. It takes time, in other words, for large chunks of meat to fully incinerate and be reduced to ashes on a fire.

So why does God specify to the priest these offerings are to remain on the altar all night? This is basically saying you don't reach sundown and say okay well that's we've had a full day of offerings here, let's get the wire brush and scrape the grill and we'll bank the fire, we'll cover the coals and ashes so that they'll last all night and we'll get up in the morning and start again. The whole burnt offering is always burning on the altar. It is ceaseless.

The fire is to never go out and there is never to lack an offering, only long enough to change it out basically. You leave an offering burning all night long on the altar and in the morning you take those ashes off and put a fresh whole burnt offering on there and put the fat of the peace offerings on. But the idea here is, if I can sort of stretch a word, perpetuality.

It's perpetual, it's ceaseless, it's constant, it never changes and everything here speaks of completeness. The you leave it there until it is incinerated, until it is fully reduced to ashes. You don't take charred chunks of partially burned meat off.

It is entirely incinerated, it is entirely reduced to ashes and this goes on 24 hours a day. Somebody has the watch on the altar and they get up periodically and go check and make sure that it's still burning. So knowing what we know about the *Ola*, what does that sacrifice represent? Basically it's our Romans 12 1 and 2 idea.

Present yourselves a living sacrifice. It is the full dedication of self to God with a view toward acceptance. We looked at this in Hebrews chapter 11.

Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham receiving a testimony from God. You are acceptable, you are righteous, I am going to be your deliverer. Be not dismayed, I am your God.

I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you at the right hand of my righteousness because you are dedicated to me. You have expressed this in a physical way by bringing this sacrifice. So the idea there is of fullness, completeness and perpetuality.

This isn't something in other words that we should approach like you see happening at church camp or revival once a year in a traditional denominational church where somebody comes and preaches a hellfire and brimstone come to Jesus type of sermon and then all right all you who want to rededicate your life come down. I've been in churches where about once a year somebody would walk the aisle and say I'm rededicating myself to God. Well no, your all is supposed to be on the altar all the time.

This is supposed to be a way of life not a spasmodic occasional kind of dedication. It ought to be a constant attitude. We ought to always be burning on the altar is the idea.

Now how about the clothing? I think it's funny when the, I shouldn't think it's funny but it amuses me to see when the Bible talks about the priest's linen trousers. I don't know why I find that amusing but it just seems strange to me. I try to picture you know you think of biblical characters walking around in robes and they look very elegant graceful and and then it says he's got linen trousers and linen you know is not a real thick material so these strike me as being sort of like pajama bottoms.

The priest is going to put on his his pajama bottoms and he's probably irreverent but linen trousers just seems to me to be inherently amusing and only the only the priest has to wear these trousers. Why is that? It's all the way back in the garden. What's the first thing that had to be taken care of after sin came into the world? Awareness of nakedness, cover-up.

Adam and Eve recognized it, tried to do it with the leaves. God recognized it, did it with animal skins but interestingly to me the priests wear no animal skins do they? None of the priestly garments involve animal skins. You got lots of them on the tabernacle.

You got lots of them used in other places. You got prophets wearing animal skins. Why do you suppose Elijah and John the Baptist, the two iconic prophets of the Old Testament, John the Baptist is the latter-day Elijah when just before Jesus comes, why does he wear skins? By the way what tribe is John the Baptist from? The tribe of Levi.

His father was a priest, Zacharias remember? Mute, names him, all the rest of it. So what kind of clothing does a priest wear? Linen trousers. So what's John wearing? A skin.

Why? Think about it. What is the wearing of animal skins hark back to? When's the first time it ever happened? We are sinful, we are naked, we have to be clothed, a sacrifice has to be made. You see John the Baptist who is both a prophet and a priest by the way, picturing, symbolizing, you see the prophets doing this all the time and you have some other priestly prophets don't

you if you think back? Think about Ezekiel and all of the symbolic acts that he performs.

Laying on one side, laying on the other, chopping stuff up, burning things, attacking things, scribbling things on the ground, sitting there mute, losing his wife and all the rest of it. He becomes a picture for the nation doesn't he? So if you have a prophet coming to the people and saying prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his path straight and he's dressed in animal skins, what does it remind people of? Where do those skins come from? What are those skins for? There is a sin issue, how do you prepare the way of the Lord? Get right with God. Acknowledge and bring the sin offering, the trespass offering and then move on and get to the Olah and the Minkah and the Shalomim offerings.

Move through that spectrum of offerings. The animal skin speaks of an animal that gave its life, speaks of the garden, speaks of the fall. Here though, the priest puts on his linen garment.

He puts on his linen garment. It doesn't say the priest shall go get a sheep skin. It would be very interesting if God had organized it that way.

He says no, put on the linen trousers, put them on his body, take up the ashes of the burnt offering which the fire has consumed on the altar, put them beside the altar. Then he has to change clothes, take off his garments, put on other garments and carry the ashes outside the camp to a clean place. Now we're not going to go back and review all of the accoutrements and the dressing regulations for the priest that we saw back in the latter part of Exodus, but the linen trousers are a part of the holy garments.

These are the priestly garments that they wear when they're performing their functions in the tabernacle arena. So a priest, and of course they did this ultimately in orders and courses and they had assignments. The same priest didn't do the same thing every day.

The same cadre of priests didn't do the same thing month after month. They rotated through. So somebody has the duty.

Somebody is on the duty roster and they go and they look and they say, okay, well, it's Monday, second day of the week, and it's my turn to go tend the altar first thing in the morning. So what does he do? He says, well, I've got to do the ashes task. I put on my priestly linen trousers.

I will go to the altar and I will remove these accumulated ashes that are still present. You know, you're going to have lots of crisp remnants of desiccated and incinerated meat. So he's going to use these pans and shovels that are described elsewhere in the word of God to shovel the ashes.

Some of them are going to have fallen down through the grate. And any time you see a fireplace or a wood stove or anything else that has a grate that supports wood and then beneath it you have a place to trap the ashes, you can move the coals around and separate the ashes from the live coals and shovel those out. He's going to shovel all of that out, all of these ashes, and put them beside the altar.

Now, he changes clothes. Why? He's the priest. These ashes, as they are associated with the altar, are holy.

Once he removes them from the altar, that which did not go up, that which was separated out in the process of burning, there was something that, symbolically speaking, wasn't fit to go up to God. The carboniferous remains, whatever it is there, didn't go to God. It's a whole burnt offering.

Everything is supposed to go to God, but some of it inevitably did not go. I.e., it will never perfectly burn. It will never perfectly burn.

There will always be some portion, just by the nature of meat and the nature of fire and the nature of the altar, you can never fully incinerate the animal. There will always be something left over. It is a holy function.

It is a sanctified function to wear those linen trousers and remove from the place of God's table, if you will. That altar is sort of God's table, isn't it? That's where he partakes of his portion of these sacrifices. So you take what did not go, what was not perfect enough, what was not acceptable enough to rise in the smoke, and you remove it.

That's a priestly function. Now, you take off your priestly garments, put on your common clothes, and haul the ashes to the dump. You go to the place outside the camp that is not holy, and discard that which did not go.

Does that make sense? It's a priestly function for us to look at ourselves as we seek to do that which is encouraged, is an imperative in Romans 12, 1 and 2. Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God. This is your reasonable service. Holy and acceptable.

The whole idea is the Ola. Holy and acceptable. This is your reasonable service.

Be not conformed to this world. Be transformed by the renewing of your mind. That's what we're doing this morning.

That's what we do every time we meditate on the Word of God. I hasten to emphasize that Bible class does not make your spiritual life. It is necessary for it, but it is not a substitute for it.

Bible class is the means to an end. It is not the end in itself. We don't leave our notebooks sitting on our chair.

We learn the Word of God, but the bulk of the focus and the emphasis of our spiritual life is what we do when we're not in Bible class. Are we putting our sacrifice on the altar? Are we the Ola? Are we looking for that acceptance by God that is going to be blessed and rewarded and qualify us to partake of an inheritance in the eternal future? Part of that, part of our priestly function, since we serve as our own priest, is to look at that process, that offering of self, and find where it's not complete. We are inherently sinful.

We cannot ever get a perfect sacrifice to go. We will never lay ourselves on the altar and say, you know what? That was 100% dedication to God. There's nothing left, not even an ash.

Why? It's our nature, just like it's the nature of that meat that it will never fully incinerate, given the heat of an altar. We can never fully accomplish. There's always going to be something left over.

We take those ashes as a part of our priesthood. We look and say, what didn't go? What was still not acceptable to God? What is the remnant and the leavings, the residue? We identify it. We shovel it out.

We remove it and take it away from the place of offering to God. Then change in clothes, i.e., although it's still an assignment for the priest, he's not wearing his symbolic priestly garb, take it to the dump. Remove it.

This is something that only applies while we're in our fallen state. When we are resurrected, when we are perfected, when we are ultimately sanctified, this part will no longer be in view. There won't be a less than perfect aspect to our dedication to God.

So this is something for time. So every morning, regularly, in other words, after this has burned, on a consistent daily basis, the priest would go to the altar and find that which did not go up to God and remove it. Change his clothes and then take those ashes outside the camp.

They are first put beside the altar, then the clothes are changed and the ashes are carried outside the camp to a clean place. This clean place, what happens out there? What do we know about that clean place from Leviticus chapter 4? Come on now, where is the sin offering burnt? Where is the place of ashes outside the camp? So isn't it interesting that these ashes and the sin offering end up in the same place? The incineration of the sin offering and the ashes from the sweet savor offerings outside the camp, that's the place where sin is dealt with. And these ashes mark that spot.

So it speaks of lack of sin offering. And sin offering is the place of righteousness, lack of perfection, the leavings and the residue of the unavoidable sinfulness in which we dwell. Fallen nature, fallen world, and so on.

The fire on the altar shall be kept burning on the altar. It shall not be put out. The priest shall burn wood on it every morning.

Lay the burnt offering and order on it. He shall burn on it the fat of the peace offerings. The fire shall always be burning on the altar.

It shall never go out. It's a little bit of a deduction, but if you look at the way the sacrifices were first initiated at the completion of the tabernacle and the inauguration of the altar and the sacrifices, there were some sacrifices made and so on. And then Aaron goes and lays that first sacrifice on the altar and it says fire came out from the Lord and consumed that first sacrifice.

And that seems to be the way the altar was lit. The fire in the altar is fire from the Lord and that fire is to never go out. So it is not a strange fire.

It's not a fire, they don't keep a box of matches out there. You think about this, I don't know that they had huge blinding rainstorms out there in the wilderness, but it wasn't the desert that it seems to be today either. So you can imagine the priests getting nervous about torrential downpours and here's the altar.

I tend to think about things in practical terms and you think, boy, you've got to take some steps here to make sure that fire doesn't go out because that fire was lit by the Lord and any other fire is a strange fire. So they are to never let it go out. This process, this command and this whole concept is from God.

The fire represents the judgment of God, not the judgment of man. And we have to always keep our eyes on the fact that this is God's fire and it is never to be changed out for any substitute fire. I think of it in terms of who do you live your life to please? Who is it you are putting yourself out for? Who is it you sacrifice yourself for in the ultimate sense? We love God first and foremost and then we love our neighbor as ourselves.

We love our family. We love everyone else. But it all has to be in the light of dedication to God and it is God's judgment that counts.

It is God's view of us that counts. Verse 14 moves on to instruct the priests about the law of the grain offering. Leviticus chapter 2, this is additional light on it.

This is the law of the grain offering. The sons of Aaron shall offer it on the altar before the Lord. He shall take from it his handful of the fine flour of the grain offering with its oil and all the frankincense which is on the grain offering.

He shall burn it on the altar for a sweet aroma as a memorial to the Lord. The remainder of it Aaron and his sons shall eat. With unleavened bread it shall be eaten in the holy place in the court of the tabernacle of meeting.

They shall eat it. It shall not be baked with leaven. I have given it as their portion of my offerings made by fire.

It is most holy like the sin offerings and the trespass offering. All the males among the children of Aaron may eat it. It shall be a statute forever in your generations concerning the offerings made by fire to the Lord.

Everyone who touches them must be holy. This came into view, you remember, 400 years later when David was fleeing from Saul and went to the priests at Nob and show bread was there. The issue of who is qualified to eat the show bread is sort of a parallel.

Who is qualified to eat these grain offerings? Only the sons of the priests and only when they

are in good standing. They are not defiled. They are not in a period of disqualification.

The sons of Aaron bring the grain offering and offer it on the altar before the Lord. They take their handful and the frankincense on the grain offering and they burn it on the altar. The remainder they eat.

So these largely support the priests. We talked about before that this frankincense seems to have been sort of a cinnamon type of fragrance, a cinnamon type of flavoring. So you get the idea that the priests ate a lot of cinnamon bread perhaps.

It shall not be baked with leaven. We know that leaven throughout the Bible consistently represents sin and the pervasive insidious spreading nature of sin, the defiling nature of sin, not just its presence but its tendency to corrupt. Leavening, the gas that is formed by these little living organisms, that is what causes bread to rise.

This is a sign of corruption. It is thought of in the same terms as that which causes a carcass to swell after it dies. Carcasses don't die but a dead carcass swells because of the action of these little unseen agents.

So leaven is a picture of sin with particular emphasis on its spreading nature. It is a spreading, corrupting, pervasive nature. That is not to be present in that of which the priests partake.

It is a special provision for them and there is the concept in the word of God that the laborer is worthy of his hire, do not muzzle the ox that treads out the grain. Paul says I am an apostle, do not have a right to be supported by the churches but I don't avail myself of that right. In situations where you have a church of say 50 families or greater, it is legitimate for that group to support their pastor.

We thankfully are free of that obligation. We are small enough and God has provided in other ways and I actually prefer it this way because I am free to say what I want and I don't have to worry about somebody not writing a check next month. Honestly that is a big consideration in a lot of churches.

Some men cannot say everything that needs to be said from the word of God because they risk losing their support and that is an awful thing. I think the apostle Paul was unfettered because he did not rely on good will for his support and it is a great thing. The principle is enshrined here.

Those who labor for the benefit of the people of God are provided for in this way when necessary. Well, we have a few other things to say about this law of the grain offering and we will continue looking at the remainder of chapter 6 and then chapter 7 of Leviticus when we come back from our break.