

Leviticus 2 • The Grain Offerings

Introduction

Most Christians have some kind of an idea that the animal sacrifices of the Old Testament are symbols of Jesus. They know, for instance, that the Passover lamb—the lamb without blemish—is a picture of what Jesus would be. Many know about the scapegoat on the Day of Atonement which is taught in detail in Hebrews 9-11. The high priest actually put his hands on two goats and symbolically placed sin upon their heads. The goats would be paraded through the streets where people would spit on them, kick them, throw rocks at them, beat them with sticks and curse them for their sin. Then they were escorted outside the city where one would be slaughtered and the other taken to a precipice. It was a symbol of what would happen to Jesus: God put all our sin on Him, He would be paraded through the streets of Jerusalem, then taken outside the city and executed. We have some idea that the blood sacrifices of animals are symbols of Jesus; however, we don't often think this way in regard to the grain offering.

The grain offering is called in Hebrew "matzoth"—unleavened. It is striped and pierced. The Talmud decrees that the unleavened bread used at Passover has to be so, and the rabbis tell us that this corresponds to the flesh of the Passover lamb. This is exactly what Jesus speaks of in John 6 and is a picture of His body. The bread was striped ("...for by His wounds [stripes] you were healed." 1 Peter 2:24) and pierced ("But He was pierced through for our transgressions..." Isaiah 53:5). The grain offering is a symbol of the sacrifice of Jesus for our sins. Because sin contaminates every aspect of our being – our flesh, our soul, and our spirit – Christ had to suffer in each His body, soul, and spirit to be the perfect, whole sacrifice for our sin.

¹Now when anyone presents a grain offering as an offering to the LORD, his offering shall be of fine flour, and he shall pour oil on it and put frankincense on it. ²He shall then bring it to Aaron's sons the priests; and shall take from it his handful of its fine flour and of its oil with all of its frankincense. And the priest shall offer it up in smoke as its memorial portion on the altar, an offering by fire of a soothing aroma to the LORD. ³The remainder of the grain offering belongs to Aaron and his sons: a thing most holy, of the offerings to the LORD by fire.

[Read v.1-3]

Q: What is the first way that the grain can be offered?

A: On a griddle over an open fire.

Q: In what ways does this correspond to Christ's physical suffering?

A: When the grain was offered on the griddle, everyone could see it being consumed just as everyone could see Him being tortured physically: Flogged, nailed, hanging nearly naked in public for everyone to see.

They took Jesus, therefore, and He went out, bearing His own cross, to the place called the Place of a Skull, which is called in Hebrew, Golgotha. There they crucified Him, and with Him two other men, one on either side, and Jesus in between.

John 19:17-18

Point: Jesus got the nails, we got the salvation; the just for the unjust. He suffered in body.

[Read v.7-10. We'll come back to v.4-6]

Q: What is a second way that the grain can be offered?

A: In a skillet or pan.

Q: In what ways does this correspond to Christ's suffering of the soul, of emotional/psychological suffering?

A: The process of the grain being consumed is only partially visible. You can see some of what is going on, but not all of it. This corresponds to the emotional/psychological suffering that the Bible calls "the travail of the soul".

And the people stood by, looking on. And even the rulers were sneering at Him, saying, "He saved others; let Him save Himself if this is the Christ of God, His Chosen One." The soldiers also mocked Him, coming up to Him, offering Him sour wine, and

saying, "If You are the King of the Jews, save Yourself!"
Luke 23:35-37

Point: Only He who looks down from above can see all of it. Other people can only appreciate **some** of it and, at most, empathize; God sees it all. Jesus took our griefs as He was emotionally and mentally tortured.

[Read v.4-6]

⁴Now when you bring an offering of a grain offering baked in an oven, it shall be unleavened cakes of fine flour mixed with oil, or unleavened wafers spread with oil. ⁵If your offering is a grain offering made on the griddle, it shall be of fine flour, unleavened, mixed with oil; ⁶you shall break it into bits and pour oil on it; it is a grain offering.

Q: What is the third way that the grain can be offered?

A: In an oven.

Q: In what ways does this correspond to Christ's suffering in spirit?

A: The process of consumption within the oven is not visible to anyone. Likewise, something happened between the Father and the Son on the cross, something within the Godhead. The Father turned His back on the Son, unable to look upon sin.

Now from the sixth hour darkness fell upon all the land until the ninth hour. About the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "ELI, ELI, LAMA SABACHTHANI?" that is, "MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME?"

Matthew 27:45-46

Point: Terrible as was His physical suffering and excruciating His emotional torment, what happened spiritually was even worse. For the sake of our sin, Jesus was cut off at that moment from His Father.

Overall

Q: What is the ingredient required to be ADDED to each of the grain sacrifices?

A: Oil and incense.

Q: What does it represent?

A: Anointing.

Point: The word "Christ" comes from the Greek word "Christos", the Greek way of expressing the Hebrew term "ha Mashiach", or "the Anointed One"—the Messiah.

Q: What are examples of Jesus being anointed that apply to this teaching?

1. Jesus was anointed by Mary at Bethany for burial. (Mark 14:3-9)
2. When Jesus was born the Magi brought gold because He was a King, myrrh because He would die (see John 19:39 to verify this is what dead bodies were anointed with for burial), and frankincense because incense, we are told in Revelation 5:8, is the prayers of the saints.

Point: When Paul speaks of the proof of his anointing and ministry in 2 Corinthians, he speaks not first of the miracles or signs of an apostle, but speaks first of having been abandoned, shipwrecked, stoned, etc., etc. The first and foremost proof of a real anointing—an anointing that comes from Christ—is a crucified life.

But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves; we are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying about in the

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body the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body.

2 Corinthians 4:7-10

Anointing in this context is defined as a life lived by someone who does not trust in this life or this world, but who will trust God for the grace to suffer anything that they need to if it's God's will; someone who does not love their life in this world even if it should come to death.

Jesus was anointed for burial in order to bring the acceptable sacrifice in the same manner as required for the grain offering.

Summary

Christ suffered in body, in soul, and in spirit just as the grain was offered:

- On a griddle where everyone could see it
- In the skillet where it could be partially seen but only fully observed from above
- In the oven where no one could see it

Application

- If Christ went through so much to pay the price for and atone for your sin, how does that speak to you personally about the areas of your life that you continue to allow sin a foothold?
- Do you see that you need to be rid of sin not just in your spirit, but your body and soul as well?
- How might these areas of suffering correspond to our struggles and suffering in this life?

[Read v.11]

¹¹No grain offering, which you bring to the LORD, shall be made with leaven, for you shall not offer up in smoke any leaven or any honey as an offering by fire to the LORD.

Q: Although the grain offering included oil and incense, it could have neither honey nor leaven. Why could it have no leaven?

A: Leaven is a repeated biblical symbol of sin, in particular the sin of pride.

Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump of dough? Clean out the old leaven so that you may be a new lump, just as you are in fact unleavened. For Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed.

1 Corinthians 5:6-8

Q: Does leaven—or yeast—contribute anything to the nutritional value of bread? What is its purpose?

A: It adds no nutritional value; it only puffs it up.

Point: *Pride is the sin that gives rise to other sin. Isaiah 14 explains that the first sin was pride, found in Satan's desire to be God. Christ was not only completely free of sin, but totally devoid of pride. Just as there is no leaven in the grain sacrifice, there is no sin or pride in the person and sacrifice of Christ.*

Q: What does it mean in Luke 12:1 when Jesus states, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees"? How might this also apply?

A: False doctrine is the result of spiritual pride. Jesus had no false doctrine, no heresy; every word He taught was 110% true. There was no such leaven in Him, else He would not have been able to die for our sins.

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Application: How does this teaching speak personally as to your own ego and self-worth? Just as the grain offering can have no leaven, can you continue even with just “a little” pride without addressing how to remove it? Do you see that pursuing sound doctrine is not just an issue of “knowledge” but spiritual protection from sin?

Q: Why could the grain sacrifice have no honey?

A: Honey speaks of affection and emotion, but there was no emotion in the work of the cross between the Father and the Son when the Father turned His back on the Son. The emotion—the love—was all ours even though our actions deserved otherwise. The crucifixion was Jesus submitting to God’s will rather than bending to the emotions and pressures that all that suffering otherwise brought to bear.

*Have you found honey? Eat only what you need,
That you not have it in excess and vomit it.
Proverbs 25:16*

*It is not good to eat much honey,
Nor is it glory to search out one’s own glory.
Proverbs 25:27*

Point: Eating too much honey represents people that are ruled by their emotions, people that are steeped greatly in spiritual pride. They seek their own glory, coming to the belief that they are more spiritual than others. They have come to substitute the Word of God with their feelings.

[Read v.12]

Q: Why could the first fruits of grain NOT be offered – burned – as a sacrifice?

A: Because Jesus Himself is the firstfruit offered once and for all. Once He died for our sin and arose from the grave, He would never die again. It’s a parallel symbolism of the one-time work of Christ who died for our sin, arose from the grade, and would never die again.

*But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep.
1 Corinthians 15:20*

Point: The firstfruit was a feast during Passover week, the same week during which Jesus was crucified. On the Sunday of that week, the high priest would go into the Kidron Valley which lies between the Temple Mount and the Mount of Olives. Exactly at sunrise, when he saw the first ray of light coming up from in back of the Mount of Olives illuminating the first shoot of grain, it would be called the firstfruit. The high priest ceremonially harvested it and brought it into the Temple; that would be the firstfruit. All four Gospels tell us that Jesus rose around dawn, the very hour at which the high priest was bringing the firstfruit into the Temple. At that exact instant Jesus was rising from the dead as the Firstfruits of the resurrection.

¹²As an offering of first fruits you shall bring them to the LORD, but they shall not ascend for a soothing aroma on the altar.

¹³Every grain offering of yours, moreover, you shall season with salt, so that the salt of the covenant of your God shall not be lacking from your grain offering; with all your offerings you shall offer salt.

[Read v.13]

Q: Why must the grain offering be salted? What is the function of salt?

A: Salt was the only preservative in the ancient Near East. The Word of God—the salt—preserves.

Point: Somewhere in the process of abandoning Christ you will abandon His Word. Salt preserves as does His truth, His Word.

Application: Do you fully appreciate the relationship between clinging to God's Word in your daily walk with being preserved from sin for His service?

[Read v.14-16]

¹⁴Also if you bring a grain offering of early ripened things to the LORD, you shall bring fresh heads of grain roasted in the fire, grits of new growth, for the grain offering of your early ripened things.

¹⁵You shall then put oil on it and lay incense on it; it is a grain offering. ¹⁶The priest shall offer up in smoke its memorial portion, part of its grits and its oil with all its incense as an offering by fire to the LORD.

Q: What are the two forms of the grain brought for the offering?

A: The whole grain and the crushed (or "grits").

Q: What do the two forms of grain both represent?

A: The different forms of the Word of God.

Point: When the Word of God is taught under the true anointing of the Holy Spirit, that is crushed grain. It is taking the Word, crushing it up, and giving it to the people in digestible form. But the whole grain comes first. No Bible teacher nor any Christian book will ever replace our reading of the Word of God.

Overall Summary

- He is the Word.
- He is the grain which was offered in three ways:
 - Consumed on a griddle, representing His suffering of the body
 - Consumed in a skillet, representing His suffering of the soul
 - Consumed in the oven, representing His suffering of the spirit
- He was anointed for burial before He was anointed for dominion.
- He brought the acceptable sacrifice to the Lord.
- No honey – There was no affection at the cross. The Father turned His back on His Son for my sin. I deserved nothing but hell, yet I received the affection. Jesus took my sin so that I do not have to go to hell.
- No leaven – There was no false doctrine, no pride, no sin.
- Salt – The salty grain that would preserve a society, a nation, a denomination, a church, a family, and our life. Salt preserves.
- The whole grain and the crushed grain – this is what God has for us and wants for us, suitable to be consumed and life sustaining.
- Watch out for too much honey. Do not withhold affection, but also do not be governed by it. The solution is the grain.

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