

Daily Bread with Brother Hwa-Chi (Not reviewed by the speaker, for personal use only)

Leviticus 2:4-10

Brothers and sisters, peace be with you, this is Hwa-Chi. Thank the Lord, it's time to read the Bible again. We will continue to read Leviticus chapter 2. Let's read from verse 4 to verse 10 today.

The grain offering is a sacrifice shared between God and man, and the grain in the offering can be presented in three different forms. Yesterday, we read that in the form of fine flour, it is mixed with oil and frankincense to become a grain offering. The priest is to take a handful of the fine flour, some of the oil, and all of the frankincense, and burn it on the altar as a memorial portion to the LORD. The rest of the fine flour and oil is to belong to the priests.

Yesterday, we also mentioned that fine flour symbolizes the humanity of Jesus Christ, and oil represents His divinity. Thus, fine flour mixed with oil signifies the person of Jesus Christ, while frankincense represents the fragrant and transcendent nature of resurrection. Fine flour mixed with oil and frankincense, placed on the altar and burned, becomes a fragrant offering to God as a memorial. Jesus is the first to offer perfect humanity, enhanced by divinity, through death and resurrection, ascending to heaven, entering into glory, and being remembered by God.

The rich fragrance of frankincense serves as a reminder to God to make every saved believer into a priest of the gospel. By following the example of Jesus Christ and partaking in the fullness of His humanity and divinity, they can, after receiving God's eternal life, also develop God's nature. This is the spiritual significance of each believer offering the grain offering to God.

More practically speaking, through reading, experiencing, and enjoying God's word, we allow God's words to become our spiritual food, helping our spiritual life grow, and manifesting good virtues in our daily lives. On a personal level, it means

displaying a godly life. This is the offering of the first type of grain offering, which focuses on personal growth in life, partaking in God's nature, and living a godly life.

Today we will look at the second type of grain offering. The second type of grain offering has three different preparation methods. We will first read through all three methods and then come back to share in detail.

Verse 4-7: “And if you bring as an offering a grain offering baked in the oven, it shall be unleavened breads of fine flour mixed with oil, or unleavened wafers anointed with oil. But if your offering is a grain offering baked in a pan, it shall be of fine flour, unleavened, mixed with oil. You shall break it in pieces and pour oil on it; it is a grain offering. If your offering is a grain offering baked in a covered pan, it shall be made of fine flour with oil.”

First, we see that there are three different preparation methods: baked in an oven, baked on a griddle, and fried in a pan. Before delving into the details of each preparation method, let's look at their commonalities. There are three common aspects: the first is that they all use the same ingredients, which are fine flour and oil. The oil is added to the fine flour in three different ways: the first method is mixing the oil with the fine flour; the second is pouring the oil on the fine flour; and the third is spreading the oil on the fine flour.

These three different ways of adding oil have distinct spiritual meanings, which we will discuss in detail as we read further. However, the ingredients are the same: fine flour and oil. The second common point is that they all must go through fire. The third common point is that after passing through fire, they are made into breads, which means they take on a fixed form.

Let's look at these commonalities one by one. First, the ingredients are fine flour and oil, without adding leaven. Fine flour represents the tender, pure, balanced, and perfect humanity of Jesus Christ. Adding oil, which represents the supply and support of the Holy Spirit, signifies the intertwining of humanity with the Holy Spirit.

Mixing oil with fine flour symbolizes the integration of the Holy Spirit's supply and support with human nature, allowing the indwelling Holy Spirit to continually support and nourish our humanity. Anointing with oil, where oil is brushed onto the fine flour, represents the anointing of the Holy Spirit, which brings comfort, timely guidance, and encouragement to individuals. Pouring oil on the fine flour signifies the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, empowering individuals to overcome various limitations.

The ingredients are only fine flour and oil; no leaven can be added. Leaven in the Bible represents sin, so it cannot be included in the grain offering that symbolizes Christ. However, we will later read about a few grain offerings where leaven is added. These grain offerings that include leaven usually represent sinful people. We will examine the details of offerings with leaven when we encounter them in our reading. But as a principle, all grain offerings that symbolize Christ must not include leaven.

The second common point is that all of them must go through fire. This signifies that Jesus, who possessed perfect humanity and divine power, also had to undergo a process of testing or trial by fire. Throughout His life, Jesus followed the will of the Father and was constantly tempted by Satan. Before beginning His ministry, He was baptized by John the Baptist and then immediately led into the wilderness to be tempted by Satan for forty days. After overcoming these temptations, Jesus began His ministry, only to face continuous temptations from the chief priests, scribes, and Pharisees, culminating in His crucifixion. In a sense, Jesus lived his entire life in the midst of fire.

The third common point is that they are made into breads. Flour mixed with oil, originally without a fixed shape, takes on a specific form after being exposed to fire and becomes bread. Thus, the final product is mature and shaped. The second type of grain offering is to present to God bread with a fixed shape. Having reviewed these three common aspects, we will now read each passage in detail.

Verse 4: “And if you bring as an offering a grain offering baked in the oven, it shall be unleavened bread of fine flour mixed with oil, or unleavened wafers anointed with oil. “

This verse describes the preparation of the offering in an oven. In an oven, the fire comes from all directions; although there is no visible flame, there is a high and even temperature, which reflects the inner experience of a person in tribulation. Even if the external flames are not visible, the internal pressure and distress are intense, especially when the pressure comes from all sides and feels inescapable. This is akin to Jesus’ experience in the Garden of Gethsemane.

In Luke 22:44 it is recorded, "And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground." Jesus, like the fine flour bread mixed with oil, was formed and matured under the inescapable high heat. Note that the reference here is to fine flour mixed with oil, meaning the fine flour and oil are blended together. This is a physical mixing, where the elements remain fine flour and oil without creating a third element. However, after mixing, the fine flour and oil become inseparable, symbolizing how the humanity and divinity of Jesus Christ are closely blended into one new entity. This mixture of fine flour with oil is then placed in the oven to be baked into bread.

What is the bread? We need to refer to Matthew 26:26, which recounts the last Supper. After the Passover meal, Jesus instituted another meal: "And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, 'Take, eat; this is My body.'" The bread symbolizes the body of Jesus Christ, and the body of Christ is the Church, so the bread represents the Church. This baked fine flour bread is to become a shared food between God and man.

The fine flour bread mixed with oil cannot contain leaven, making them quite dense and substantial. They are suitable for adults but may be difficult for infants who cannot eat solid food. In God's meticulous arrangement, those baked in the oven can also be unleavened thin crusts brushed with oil. This involves rolling the fine flour mixed with oil into thin crusts before placing them in the oven at a slightly lower temperature. To prevent the thin crusts from cracking during baking, oil is

brushed on them until they are fully baked and formed, making them suitable as food for less mature believers.

The thin crusts are easy to consume and dissolve into fragments as soon as they are chewed, making them tasty, easy to digest, and absorb. The thin bread brushed with oil represent the early part of Jesus' ministry on earth. He was not welcomed by the people of Nazareth, not believed by His own brothers, and even after John the Baptist was imprisoned, they sent messengers to ask Jesus if He was the One to come. Despite these doubts and rejections, Jesus not only accepted them willingly but also responded with grace under the anointing of the Holy Spirit, even publicly praising John the Baptist. In Matthew 11:11, Jesus praised John, saying, "Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist."

The thin crusts of unleavened bread with oil are for the spiritually immature saints, allowing them to also enjoy Jesus Christ as the grain offering. Generally, in churches during Sunday communion, the bread used is unleavened and thin. It is easy to consume after it is broken up. It takes into account that there are often spiritually immature saints within the church. The breaking of bread during the gathering is intended for every redeemed saint to come together, share, and remember Jesus Christ.

Verse 5-6: "But if your offering is a grain offering baked in a pan, it shall be of fine flour, unleavened, mixed with oil. You shall break it in pieces and pour oil on it; it is a grain offering."

These two verses describe the second method of preparation, which is the grain offering made using a flat iron griddle. The iron griddle is a large flat plate with a direct flame underneath. The plate has a large surface area and a relatively low but even temperature. The fine flour mixed with oil is poured directly onto the plate and cut into small pieces with a spatula. Once one side is cooked, oil is poured over it, and then it is turned over, continuing until fully cooked and formed.

This seems to point to Jesus' experiences during Passion Week. After He cleansed the temple, He faced continuous challenges and attacks from the chief priests, scribes, Pharisees, Sadducees, and Herodians. After being arrested, He underwent three trials before the Jewish Sanhedrin and three trials before the Roman courts—these were external persecutions. He was also betrayed by Judas, denied three times by Peter, and forsaken by His disciples—these were internal wounds. Jesus was ruthlessly cut and put on the fire to be roasted, yet in these circumstances, He was anointed by the Holy Spirit. His divinity and humanity were made into pieces of grain offering, becoming food that could be shared between God and man.

Verse 7: “If your offering is a grain offering baked in a covered pan, it shall be made of fine flour with oil. “

This is the third method of preparation: the griddle is placed over a large fire, oil is added first, and then the prepared fine flour bread are cooked directly on the high heat. This method involves high temperature and quick cooking, seemingly pointing to Jesus' experience on the cross. During the first three hours, His body endured immense suffering and scorn from passersby, who mocked Him, saying He saved others but could not save Himself. In the next three hours, with the sins of the people laid upon Him, even the Father had to judge Him. He could not help but cry out, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" This was an intense trial, but in a short time, it matured and formed the fine flour into food that could be shared between God and man.

We see that the first type of grain offering focuses on what Jesus Christ is. The second type emphasizes the various processes Jesus went through in His being, producing different forms of bread. This bread represents the universal body of Christ, and each local church is a part of this universal body of Christ, formed through various fiery trials. Therefore, each church is precious to God and should be cherished by us. Jesus went through various processes and was made into bread to meet everyone's needs. Just as Jesus declared in John 6:51, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever.”

Verse 8: “You shall bring the grain offering that is made of these things to the Lord. And when it is presented to the priest, he shall bring it to the altar.”

The person offering the sacrifice must present the prepared bread—whether it was baked in the oven, cooked on a griddle, or fried on a pan. Although the outward appearance may differ, all are acceptable as a grain offering to the Lord. Symbolically, this grain offering has two aspects: The first aspect is that the grain offering symbolizes Jesus Christ, who was the bread being made through various processes in His humanity and divinity, and shared between God and man. This bread represents the body of Jesus Christ. In other words, Christ went through these processes to obtain a body, which is the Church.

The second aspect is from the perspective of the offerer, who personally uses different instruments to make various breads. This signifies that in the building up of the Church, he dedicates himself and undergoes various trials. As Paul states in Colossians 1:24, "I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for the sake of His body, which is the church." This means that for the purpose of building up the Church, he endured some sufferings.

The first type of grain offering emphasizes the personal experience of Jesus Christ, with the richness of His divinity and humanity, leading to the growth of life. The second type of grain offering focuses on our participation in the building up of the Church and experiencing fiery trials in the process: some involve internal pressure, some external persecution, some long-term suffering, and some sudden calamities.

In these trials, the indwelling Holy Spirit continuously anoints us, providing support and comfort. At times, there is also the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, helping us to overcome environmental and personal limitations. Ultimately, a sweet and refined humanity is produced in us, becoming a grain offering acceptable to God.

Dear brothers and sisters, Christians cannot live in isolation; they must participate in the building up of the Church. While one might advance in truth alone, a sweet and refined humanity can only be perfected through service within the Church. God's will is to have a fully built Church. The Apostle Paul preached the Gospel

among the Gentiles and built up the Church; he was often placed in the fire, baked on a griddle, or fried on a pan.

In 2 Corinthians 11:24-29, Paul describes his experiences: "From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep. In journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. " These are the external matters. He went to say : "Besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to stumble, and I do not burn with indignation?" Paul, serving the Church and building it up, was often tested by fiery trials for the sake of the Church, and through these trials, he was made into a beautiful grain offering, acceptable to God. The offerer would present their prepared grain offering to the priest, who would then bring it before the altar.

Verse 9: "Then 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."

The grain offering is a sacrifice shared between God and man. The priest is to take a portion of it as a memorial, which belongs to God, and burn it on the altar. This becomes a pleasing aroma to the Lord, a burnt offering that, once consumed by fire, turns into a fragrant aroma that reaches God's presence and is remembered by Him.

Verse 10: “And what is left of the grain offering shall be Aaron’s and his sons’. It is most holy of the offerings to the Lord made by fire.”

The remaining portion is to be given to Aaron and his sons, meaning it is for the priests. In the Old Testament, only the family of Aaron was qualified to serve as priests. However, in the New Testament, every believer is a priest of the Gospel. Our role is to preach the Gospel, lead people to salvation, and continue assisting those who are saved to learn to pray, read Scripture, and serve, until they grow and mature. When they offer a grain offering to God, the portion that belongs to God is burned on the altar, becoming a pleasing aroma to the Lord and remembered by Him. The remaining portion is then given to the Gospel priest.

In this regard, Paul set the best example. In Romans 15:16, Paul declares, "that I might be a minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit." Such a grain offering to God is most sacred when it is part of the burnt offering to the Lord. As mentioned earlier, it is considered most holy because it leads others to be sanctified. The Gentiles Paul offered were made holy. Every priest, through their offerings, must also become holy. May God help us in this.

Let us pray together: Lord, thank You! In Your perfect humanity and mighty divinity, You went through various fiery trials and became bread, which is Your body, representing the Church. For the sake of the Church, You endured many hardships. Help us to appreciate our church, which was formed through Your many sufferings. The apostles of the early church also went through numerous trials, and for the purpose of building up the Church, they themselves became beautiful grain offerings. Today, this baton is passed to us. Help us to willingly dedicate ourselves for the Church. Through various trials, may the Church be adorned and may we offer our grain offerings to You. Bless the church we belong to. We pray in the holy name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.