

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

Leviticus 02:11-13

Brothers and sisters, peace be with you, this is Hwa-Chi. Thank the Lord, it's time to read the bible again. Today, we will continue to read Leviticus 02:11-13.

Previously, we read about the first type of grain offering, which is fine flour mixed with oil and all the frankincense, burned on the altar as a memorial to God, with the remaining fine flour and oil given to the priests. Symbolically, from the aspect of Christ, this represents the humanity and divinity of Jesus Christ, combined with the fragrance of resurrection, which is remembered by God. From the aspect of the saints, it signifies that the saints should draw from the richness of Jesus Christ's being, enabling their spiritual life to grow and live a life full of virtues.

The second type of grain offering also uses fine flour and oil. The oil can be added to the fine flour in three ways: mixing the oil into the flour, anointing the flour with oil, and pouring oil on the flour. This signifies the Holy Spirit being mingled with, anointed upon, and poured upon humanity. With these two ingredients, the flour and oil, there are three different preparation methods: baking in an oven, cooking on a griddle, or frying in a pan, forming them into breads that can be offered to God as a grain offering.

Symbolically, this can also be understood from both Christ's aspect and the saints' aspect. From Christ's aspect, it represents Jesus Christ's sweet humanity and powerful divinity, undergoing various fiery trials, ultimately producing the church. The church, being the body of Christ, is the grain offering accepted by God.

From the saints' aspect, it signifies that the saints can complete what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ in the work of building the church. This means that in the process of building the church, they endure trials and suffer afflictions. However, during this process, the saints are not alone; they receive comfort, support, and strength through the anointing of the indwelling Holy Spirit. When facing

difficulties, they also experience the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, enabling them to overcome environmental and personal limitations.

The saints grow and build the church in unity, and this built church is the beautiful grain offering that can be offered to God. Today, we will read verses 11 to 13, which mainly address two things that must be avoided and one thing that must not be lacking when offering the second type of grain offering.

Verse 11: "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."

This verse tells us about two forbidden things: when offering a grain offering to the Lord to be burned on the altar, it cannot contain any leaven or any honey. Leaven and honey are not pleasing to God. What do leaven and honey represent? Generally, in the Bible, leaven represents sin, and the definition of sin is based on the Bible, not our general perspective.

In the Bible, the definition of sin, according to the Greek word for sin, is "miss the mark," meaning deviating from the goal. In Romans 3:23, "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." People sin not just because they do something that violates the law or morals, although those actions are sin. The Bible's definition of sin is much higher: anything that falls short of God's glory is sin.

God originally created man in His own image and likeness, meaning man should reflect God inside and out. God's purpose for man is for man to represent Him, managing His created universe. When man deviates from this goal and lives a life that does not resemble God, that is sin. So, sin is not just doing bad things, but failing to live a life that reflects God. Here we must recognize that the Bible's definition of sin is much higher than the world's definition.

The grain offering to God cannot contain leaven, which represents sin—anything that goes against God's holiness, righteousness, and glory. When Jesus Christ was on earth, He often spoke about leaven. For example, in Matthew 16:11-12, "How is it you do not understand that I did not speak to you concerning bread? — but to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees." Then they understood that He did not tell them to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees." Here, Jesus compared the teachings of the Pharisees and Sadducees to leaven.

In Matthew 13, Jesus spoke of the parable of the kingdom of heaven. In 13:33, "Another parable He spoke to them: 'The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened.'" This verse speaks of the outward expansion of the kingdom of heaven. A woman hides leaven in three measures of meal until it is all leavened.

Some Bible interpreters view this verse positively, but I personally do not. The best explanation considers the entire Bible's definition of leaven. This verse speaks of the outward condition of the kingdom of heaven, which corresponds to the outward appearance of the church today. The woman here symbolizes Jezebel, who secretly introduces teachings that cater to people into the church, causing its outward expansion. From the world's perspective, it seems flourishing and successful, but this is not what God desires.

A corresponding passage is Revelation 2:18-28, describing the church in Thyatira. In 2:20, "Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols." Here, leaven represents Jezebel's teaching.

The dough becomes leavened and soft when leaven is added, making it easier to eat. This represents a church that caters to the world, incorporating teachings that people find easy to accept. However, a church that caters to the world ultimately leads to immorality and idolatry.

Therefore, in 1 Corinthians 5:6-7, Paul reminds us, "Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? Therefore, purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened." The church should be this new lump, unleavened, without the teachings of the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Jezebel, as these will leaven the whole lump. Outwardly, it may seem expanded and flourishing, but inwardly it is not solid. Thus, in 5:8, Paul's conclusion is that the church should not have the leaven of malice and wickedness, but should have the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. God desires a church like this, without leaven, as the grain offering to be burned on the altar must not contain leaven.

The second forbidden thing is honey. Honey is the essence of flowers, naturally produced through the collection and fermentation by bees, consisting mainly of glucose and fructose, something people love. In typology, honey represents man's natural life, especially its good aspects. God seems very strict here; even the good aspects of man's natural life cannot be added to the grain offering. This reminds us not to serve God or the church with our natural abilities because man's natural goodness, like honey, cannot please God.

What God desires is the power of resurrection life, symbolized by frankincense. We must recognize that natural goodness cannot last. Married believers know that although they loved each other before marriage, they often argue after marriage. This is because human love, like honey, cannot endure. Any sweet thing, when left for a long time, ferments, leading to all kinds of bad consequences.

Natural goodness and badness are not absolute and often change. Therefore, natural goodness, like honey, cannot be added to the grain offering. Dough with leaven becomes soft and easy to eat, increasing its texture, and adding honey makes it sweet and desirable. However, these desirable things cannot be offered to God as a pleasing aroma. Offerings to God must be according to His will, not according to what we think is good; they must be what God considers good. We must learn from Cain's lesson and offer sacrifices according to God's will.

Verse 12: "As for the offering of the firstfruits, you shall offer them to the Lord, but they shall not be burned on the altar for a sweet aroma."

These items refer to leaven and honey. This verse is quite difficult to understand. The Bible clearly tells us that leaven and honey cannot be added to the grain offering and burned on the altar for a sweet aroma, meaning leaven and honey are not pleasing to God. However, they are to be offered to God as the firstfruits. This means bringing leaven and honey before God as a firstfruits offering.

Leaven and honey were commonly used in the daily lives of the Israelites. Every year, the first batch of leaven and the first honey harvested were to be offered to God as the firstfruits. But because they are not pleasing to God, they cannot be added to the grain offering and cannot be burned on the altar.

This raises a question: If God does not delight in them, why offer them as the firstfruits? Isn't this contradictory? Let's try to explain. Leaven and honey are things people like, and in His mercy, God allows their use. Especially for children who cannot eat hard food, adding some leaven makes it easier to eat; for those with poor appetite, adding some honey makes the food sweet and palatable. These enjoyments in life are allowed by God.

On the other hand, God wants people to bring these firstfruits of leaven and honey before Him, as they cannot be burned on the altar. So, leaven and honey remain there. Every time you come near to God, you see them, as if God is waiting for the day when you grow in your spiritual maturity, start partaking in God's nature, and begin to find delight in what God delights. At that point, you can say that leaven and honey are good things of the earth, but because they are not pleasing to God, you are willing to lay them aside and no longer use them.

This aligns with Paul's declaration in Philippians 3:7-8: "But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ." God wants us to consider what we once regarded as valuable as rubbish for the sake of Jesus Christ. Perhaps this is God's intention. Offering leaven and honey as the firstfruits

to God, though not burned on the altar, serves as a reminder. Until one day, we can consider leaven and honey as rubbish. Having discussed the two prohibited items, let us now look at the essential item that cannot be omitted.

Verse 13: "And 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 from your grain offering. With all your offerings you shall offer salt."

This verse speaks about seasoning every grain offering with salt. Salt has the functions of flavoring and preserving. In ancient times, salt was extremely precious and indispensable for preparing food. It enhances flavor, making food more palatable, and preserves food, allowing it to last longer. Though only a small amount of salt is used, it is essential. The grain offering, intended as food shared between God and humans, must therefore be seasoned with salt.

This verse specifically emphasizes that this salt is the salt of the covenant. Since salt preserves food, symbolically using salt during a covenant signifies that the covenant will endure. This was a customary practice in ancient times. Here, God views the grain offering as a covenant between Him and His people because a portion of the grain offering is burned on the altar as a sweet-smelling memorial, reminding God of His people. Salt represents God's unchanging nature and signifies the enduring covenant between God and His people.

Salt also has antibacterial and preservative functions, eliminating negative and corrupt elements. This prefigures the all-inclusive death of Jesus Christ on the cross, which eradicates all negative and corrupt elements. All offerings must be presented with salt, symbolizing the crucifixion's power to eliminate any negative and corrupt aspects of the offerings, making them acceptable to God.

To summarize, the main components of the grain offering are fine flour and oil, symbolizing the humanity of Jesus Christ combined with the Holy Spirit. Additionally, two essential elements are salt and frankincense—salt representing the cross and frankincense representing resurrection. This signifies that Jesus

Christ's humanity and divinity, through the cross and resurrection, produce a sweet aroma that satisfies God. On the other hand, two prohibited items are leaven and honey, which are earthly delights pleasing to humans but not acceptable to God and therefore cannot be burned on the altar. When we offer sacrifices to God, it must be according to His will and methods to be accepted by Him.

Let us pray together: Lord, thank You for clearly instructing us that the grain offering, burned on the altar, must not contain leaven or honey because these do not please You. However, it must contain the salt of the covenant, representing Your unchanging covenant with Your people. Because of the sweet aroma of Jesus Christ's resurrection reaching the heavenly throne, You will remember Your people because of Jesus Christ. This is the new covenant You have made with Your people. Help us live in the reality of this new covenant, partaking in the richness of Jesus Christ's divinity and humanity, and living a life filled with the grain offering that pleases You. Bless my daily life, I pray in the holy name of Jesus Christ.