

Chapter 2

The Grain Offering

Leviticus 2:1 *Now 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.*



The grain offering, sometimes called the meal offering, was presented as a symbol of **dedication** to God. The Hebrew word is used of the tribute offered by the vassal kings to Solomon to show their dedication to him and his authority over them (1 Kings 4:21). So this seems to be an offering which stresses dedication. As salvation is followed by dedication, so also the burnt offering is followed by the grain offering.

The grain offering came from the field, not the flock. And that made it even more precious to the average individual Israelite, since most Israelites were Bedouins whose primary living was raising animals. This was also an offering that could be presented by either men or women. In the text, *whenever any man* is replaced by *when anyone*. In any case, it was probably usually prepared by the women. It came not just from the field but from the home. It could not be presented as it grew, as was the case with the animals. It needed preparation before it could be presented. Here it needed to be reduced to *fine flour*, with *oil* and *frankincense on it*. So whatever the reason for the grain offering, it was the only one which came from the home, rather than directly from the herd or the flock.

Leviticus 2:2-3 *He 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. The remainder of the grain offering belongs to Aaron and his sons: a thing most holy, of the offerings to the LORD by fire.*

As with all the offerings, the grain offering must be delivered to, and made by, *Aaron's sons the priests*. The other individual Israelites could not offer their own sacrifice to God. There was no priesthood of the believer.

- During this Age of Grace, all believers are priests (Revelation 1:6).
- All those purchased by the blood of Christ are priests (Revelation 5:10).
- During the future Millennial Kingdom, all believers are priests (Revelation 20:6)

But this was not true for Old Testament Israelites. They had to come to God through the Levitical priesthood of Aaron. This is also the first offering to be consumed, except for one handful, by the priests.

Leviticus 2:4-7 *Now 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. If your offering is a grain offering made on the griddle, it shall be of fine flour, unleavened, mixed with oil; you shall break it into bits and pour oil on it; it is a grain offering. Now if your offering is a grain offering made in a pan, it shall be made of fine flour with oil.*



[Photo from www.rndalldsmith.com.]

It seems that the meal offering could be presented in one of four ways:

1. It could be presented as fine ground flour with oil and frankincense.
2. It could be unleavened cakes of fine flour mixed with oil.
3. It could be an unleavened cake made on the griddle, broken in peaces, with fine flour and oil.
4. It could be fried in a pan, made with fine flour and oil.

Leviticus 2:8-16 The Specification for the Grain Offering

The grain offering was always a mixture of fine ground flour and oil. But also:

- It could be offered in a cooked or uncooked form.
- If it was cooked, no yeast could be used.
- It was always to be fine flour, meaning it was from the center of the grain and ground up.
- It was always presented with oil, which would have been olive oil.
- Every grain offering must be presented with salt.
- It must be *fresh heads of grain ... grits of new growth*.

It should be noted that grain offerings continued on through Israel's history. Joshua presented grain offerings (Joshua 22:23). Grain offerings were presented though the time of the Judges (Judges 13:19, 23). Solomon presented grain offerings during his dedication of the Temple in Jerusalem (1 Kings 8:64). Nehemiah presented grain offerings after they rebuilt Jerusalem. And there will be grain offerings in the future Millennial Kingdom (Ezekiel 44:29; 45:15, 17, 24, 25).

AS AN APPLICATION: There are several areas of possible application, but none are very specific.

- Since we know that Solomon used the same word to describe the **dedication** offering of his vassal kings (600 years later), we can assume that the grain offering indicated a dedication to God. Our dedication to God requires a sacrifice from the center of our daily living. Jesus said: *If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me* (Matthew 8:34).
- It is interesting that all cooked grain offerings were to be without **leaven**. In Matthew 13:33 Jesus said: *The kingdom of heaven is like leaven*, but references to leaven are generally negative. Jesus also used leaven to refer to the false teachings of the Pharisees (Luke 12:1), and, for Paul, leaven was symbolic of sin (1 Corinthians 5:8). In any case, leaven has a permeating affect that would diminish the purity of the grain offering. The application is that our dedication to God should be without the impurities of a sinful lifestyle.
- All grain offerings were to be presented with **salt**. Again, it's hard to be certain what to make out of that. Salt was a purifier and a preserver, but here it most likely has to do with the taste. God only mentions the smell of the offering, but the priests would eat most of it. Actually, with the salt, this was probably a very tasty offering. It may have been something like our fast food "chips." Jesus spoke of salt on at least two different occasions. In Matthew 5:13, we read: *You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has become tasteless, how can it be made salty again?* And in Mark 9:50, He says: *Salt is good; but if the salt becomes unsalty, with what will you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another.* Clearly Jesus connects salt with taste. But He applies it to the quality of our lives. We should present ourselves as a salty, interesting, shrewd, appealing, sacrifice to God.

FULFILLMENT IN CHRIST: I see no special fulfillment in Christ except that He fulfills all sacrifices.