

Commentary on Hebrews

Review

I. The Continual Burnt Offering

- A. Made by priests alone – Leviticus 6:8-13; Exodus 29:38-46
- B. A lamb with its meal and drink offerings was to be offered each morning and another at evening – Exodus 29:38-46
- C. It was intended to be a constant reminder and renewal of Israel's consecration to Jehovah as a kingdom of priests.
- D. The fires of the continual burnt-offering must never go out in Israel!
- E. Remember, Christ is foreshadowed in the burnt-offering!
- F. Christians are quite naturally expected to respond in like kind.

Continuation

The Meal Offering

Hebrew *minkhah*, meaning “meal, grain or gift (present)” – offering.

- I. I - The Hebrew word generally means “a gift” or a “present” – Hebrews 5:3
 - A. Mark 7:11 such gifts to God were called “Korban”
 - 1. The same Hebrew word is used in these gifts
 - a. Genesis 32:13 – Jacob sent a *present* to Esau
 - b. Genesis 43:11 – Israel sent a *gift* to his son Joseph
 - c. 2 Samuel 8:2 – *Gifts* sent from the Moabites to David
 - 2. Always in recognition of dignity and authority
 - 3. Often expresses desire to procure the favor of the receiver
 - B. Same word used of both Cain & Abel's offerings – Genesis 4:4-5 (called *minkhah* in Hebrew and can mean “tribute”)
 - 1. Applies to the bloody as well as the bloodless offerings
 - 2. But in Leviticus it is always used of the bloodless offerings
 - C. As in the burnt-offering, so here it is made “by fire”
 - 1. But the differences are substantial
 - a. Bloodless – no life sacrificed – not for atonement
 - b. No confession of sin – it is strictly a gift
 - c. Only cultivated grains – but never in their natural state!
 - i. Ground, sifted and often cooked in various ways
 - ii. Fully prepared to become food for man
 - iii. The minimum requirement was to parch the grain
 - 2. Offered on the altar of burnt-offerings
 - a. Thus manifestly as an act of worship
 - i. Any offering or gift to God is “fumed” to Him from the altar of burnt offerings
 - ii. And such always identifies it as worship to God

- D. As in the burnt-offering, the basic thrust is consecration to God
1. The burnt-offering consecrates to God the person of the devout Israelite – ***all that he is***
 2. The meal-offering consecrates to God the fruits of his labor – ***all that he has***
 - a. This is given in daily recognition of God’s worthiness of Israel’s praise and thanksgiving
 - b. It insists that there is no separation between the religious and the secular life of the people of God
 - i. All of Man’s life – body, soul and spirit are God’s
 - ii. And all the activities of each are seen as religious service to God
 - iii. 1 Cor 10:31 “whether you eat or drink or whatsoever you do, do all to the glory of God”
 - iv. “As unto the Lord” is the thought that must govern all we do – whether men, wives, servants or children
 3. Deut 26:2-11 – Israel is instructed to offer thanksgiving in the land flowing with milk and honey, “And thou shalt worship before Jehovah.”
- E. The amount of meal or flour to be offered is not easy to determine
1. In the day of the anointing of a new priest, the amount of the meal-offering is to be 1/10th ephah of fine flour; see also Leviticus 23:13
 - a. One omer is a tenth part of an ephah – Exodus 16:36
 - b. It is equal to three imperial quarts
 - c. Generally considered the diet of one man for one day
 2. In the daily meal offering, the amount was 1/10 ephah
 3. It seems that most of the meal offerings were prepared in loaves in the oven or made into cakes – patties.
 4. When it is of the first-fruits of the harvest, it was to be parched or at most bruised in the ear –
 - a. Parched – A handful of heads of fully developed grain, with the stalks still attached, are gathered and bound together and then, holding the bunch by the lower ends of the stalks, the heads are toasted over a fire of straw or thorn bush. By the time most of the sheaths are blackened the grain is toasted, and, after rubbing off the husks between the hands, is ready to eat.
 - b. Bruised in the ear – the beating of the ears of corn, and drying of them by the fire, and the grinding of them.

II. Ingredients to be added

- A. **Frankincense** – or incense – always used as expression of worship
1. Symbol of prayer – the offering to be presented with an accompanying prayer to God for acceptance
 - a. Psalm 141:2 “Let my prayers be as incense...the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice” (or meal-offering)
 - b. Exodus 30:8 candle-lighting service as incense
 - c. Luke 1:10 at the hour of incense the multitudes were in prayer

- d. Rev 5:8 Bowls of incense – the prayers of the saints
 - e. Rev 8:3 added intercession to the prayers of the saints
 - f. Isaiah 1:13 “incense is an abomination to me”
 - 2. All the incense must go into the part that is burned to God as stated in Lev 6:15, as also 2:16; 2:2.
 - 3. Since the incense is symbolic – so must the other ingredients be
- B. **Oil** – must be included in every sacrifice
 - 1. Biblically an ingredient symbolic of anointing by God
 - a. Psalm 133:2-3 – like the oil that ran down Aaron’s beard
 - b. Isaiah 61:1 – prophetically Jesus was to be anointed with the Holy Spirit for His messianic mission
 - c. Thus Jesus was “anointed with the oil of gladness above His fellows” – Hebrews 1:9
 - 2. Used to inaugurate and consecrate religious and political dignitaries into office
 - a. Kings anointed – and judges – Judges 9:8-15; 1 Sam 9:16; 10:1; 2 Sam 19:10; 1 Kings 1:39, 45; 2 Kings 9:3, 6; 11:12
 - b. High Priests were called “the anointed priest” – Ex 29:7; Lev 4:3; 8:12, et al, used to sanctify Aaron in his office
 - c. Prophets – 1 Kings 19:16
 - d. Cleansing of the leper – to re-consecrate him to God’s use – Lev 14
 - 3. Perhaps used to inaugurate the use of the crops, giving God the first-fruits
 - 4. May also involve all religious service thru the medium of the Holy Spirit
 - a. Eph 6:18 and parallels – “in the Spirit”
 - b. Hebrews 9:14 – Christ offered himself “thru the Eternal Spirit”
 - c. Romans 15:16 The Gentiles are seen as a mean-offering to God “sanctified by the Holy Spirit”
- C. **Salt** – “Of the covenant of thy God”, Lev 2:13, a covenant forever, Numbers 18:19
 - 1. The covenant idea is symbolized by the salt – Num 18:19; 2 Chr 13:5 and possibly Mark 9:49-50 with footnote reading
 - a. No non-covenant sacrifices to be offered – Genesis 15:9
 - b. No non-covenant people accepted
 - 2. Ezekiel 43:23 renewal of covenant sacrifices by adding salt to those sacrifices not normally offered with salt
 - 3. The preserving nature of salt suggests the enduring qualities of God’s covenant with His people
 - a. So sacrificial duty is not to be seasonal, but continuous
 - b. Matthew 5:13 suggests the enduring covenant lasting nature of the Christians example to the world

III. **Ingredients to be avoided in the meal-offering**

- A. **Leavening** – for “ye shall burn no leaven” Lev 2:11
 - 1. Principle of decay and corruption – therefore symbolic of sin
 - 2. In Egypt it was a symbol of the old corrupt ways of Egypt in contrast with the new ways of the new relation to God

3. Symbol of evil influences that contaminate God's people
 - a. Matt 16:6 "beware of the leaven of the Pharisees"
 - b. Luke 12:1 "which is hypocrisy"
 - c. 1 Cor 5:6-8 therefore "purge out the old leaven"
 - d. Gal 5:9 "know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump..."
4. Not always an evil symbol – could be good
 - a. The people of Israel ate leavened bread all time except during "the days of unleavened bread" without the suggestion of contamination
 - b. Matt 13:33 the spread of the kingdom of Christ is good, penetrating and expansive qualities to be desired
- B. **Honey** – same principle as the leaven
 1. Liable to fermentation, to sour and hence to corrupt
 2. Both leaven and honey were required as gifts of the first-fruits
 - a. But neither could be offered on the altar as a sweet-smelling sacrifice to God – see Lev 2:12
 - b. This confirms that their intrinsic nature is not evil – ONLY their symbolic nature
 3. Honey makes leaven work more rapidly
- IV. Meal-offerings were given by the poor for atonement – in lieu of the bloody sacrifices normally required – Lev 5:11ff
 - A. But it may be implied in v13 that the priest then "shall make atonement for him – perhaps with a bloody sacrifice
 - B. Otherwise Hebrews 9:22 would not be universally true – for it affirms that "according to the law without the shedding of blood there is no remission"
- V. The "gift" must be brought by the worshiper himself
 - A. It must be a voluntary act of worship
 - B. Even if through the mediation of a priest
 1. The offerer must never exclude the priest or personally lay any sacrifice on the altar – see Heb7:13-14
 2. Therein Jesus is seen as the mediator of our worship
 - a. "Through him..." – Hebrews 4:16; 10:21; 13:15
 - b. "Acceptable through Him..." 1 Peter 2:5
 - c. "In His name" – Colossians 3:17; Eph 5:19
- VI. Only part of the 1/10 ephah was burned to God. Why?
 - A. In the burnt offering the burning of the "whole" symbolized the consecration of the whole
 - B. How then are we to understand the consecration of the "whole" meal offering if only a part is burned?
 1. It is all given to God and He then in turn gives the major part back to the priest for his needs and as compensation for service
 2. 1 Cor 9:13 clarifies this point – "they that wait upon the altar have their portion with the altar"
 - C. Romans 11:16 states that "if the first-fruits be holy, so is the lump"

1. The priest in Lev 2:2, 9, 16 shall offer only “a memorial part”
 2. According to Lev 6:15 the “memorial part” is one handful – and the rest goes to the priest
 3. The larger portion of our earnings are allowed us as priests but all we have is as much a gift from God as the part we give Him
- D. To be noted, all the incense goes in the handful that is burned – as worship to God – and none remains for man’s part
- E. Kellog, pg 79 of Leviticus series: “we are not accepted because we consecrate our works – but our consecrated works are accepted because we are first accepted in the Beloved” According to Eph 1:5
- VII. **The Daily Meal Offering** – Lev 6:19-23 – see Exodus 29:39-40
- A. As in the burnt offering – so also the meal offering
 1. The priest represents the nation
 2. But the nation was expected to identify with the prayers of thanksgiving offered at the time of the daily offering
 - B. The amount of meal was a “tenth part of an ephah”
 1. The same ingredients are included and excluded
 2. Half the ephah was offered in the morning (2 Kings 3:20) and half in the evening (1 Kings 18:36)
 - C. This was “by a statute forever, it shall be wholly burned unto the Lord...” – not just on the day of the anointing of the priest as some assume – it is “a statute forever” as Exodus 29:39-40 indicates.
- VIII. Christ is herein foreshadowed
- A. Every meal-offering pointed to Christ’s daily consecration of all His works to the Father – John 17:19 “I sanctify myself...”
 - B. Christ had no fields from which to offer “first-fruits” so what did He offer? Put John 12:24ff together with Is 53:10 and you will see:
 1. To man, He offered healing to the lame, sight to the blind “gifts to men” (Eph 4:8, the “earnest of the Spirit” (Eph 1:13), heavens goods in the form of every “spiritual blessing” (Eph 1:3), the “abundant life” (John 10:10)
 2. But to God He offers the redeemed, the fruits of His cross
 - a. James 1:18 – “we are the first-fruits of his creatures”
 - b. Eph 2:10 – “we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus”
 - c. 2Cor 2:15 – “For we are a sweet savor of Christ unto God”
 - d. Jude 24 – “you stand in the presence of his glory blameless...”
 - e. Rev 14:4 – those purchased by the blood of Jesus are called “the first-fruits unto God and unto the Lamb.”
 3. Just as Jeremiah 2:3 states that Israel was “the first-fruits of God’s increase”
- IX. What meal-offerings do Christians today have to offer?
- A. Romans 15:16 the “offering up of the Gentiles...made acceptable”
 - B. Phil 4:18 – giving – an “odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable”
 - C. Hebrews 13:15-16 – praise, communicating, doing good – “for with such sacrifices God is well pleased”

- D. 1 Peter 2:5, 9 “spiritual sacrifices, acceptable through Christ” and the “showing forth of the excellencies of Him who called us”
- E. Acts 4:32 – Giving all one has.