

THE LEVITICAL OFFERINGS

4. MEAL OFFERING (Leviticus Chapter 2)

The Meal Offering was unique among the five offerings: it was BLOODLESS. It was **never offered alone** but with Burnt and Peace Offerings and was accompanied by a **drink offering** (Numbers 15:1-5).

1. THE NAME

The A.V. translates the Hebrew *MEAT offering*, because in 17th century (this is still true in some rural parts of the U.K.) *meat* did not necessarily refer to animal flesh but was a general term for *food*.

Thus Martin Luther called it the *FOOD* offering.

Today it would be more accurate to speak of the *MEAL* or *GRAIN* offering.

Full name was *oblation of a meal offering*.

2. INGREDIENTS

- The main ingredient was *fine flour*, which gives it its name.
- Isaiah 28:28 tells us how it was produced: *Bread corn is bruised*, that is, it was pounded and then sifted.
So *fine flour* was flour that had been thoroughly pounded and sifted so that it was pure and free from all unevenness, roughness or inconsistency.
It was twice as valuable as barley flour (2 Kings 7:16).
- *Oil* was poured on the fine flour and mixed with it.
- *Frankincense* was added to the handful of the offering that was burned on the altar.
It was a fragrant gum or resin whose perfume was fully released by the action of fire.
- *Salt* was indispensable to every Meal Offering (Leviticus 2:13).
- **Prohibited ingredients: honey and leaven** (Leviticus 2:11).

3. THE RITUAL

- The offerer took fine flour, oil and frankincense and brought them to the priest.
- The priest mixed the oil and the flour, took a handful of it and put all the frankincense on it.
- Then he burned this *memorial* on the altar of burnt offering as a *sweet savour unto the Lord*.
- The remainder was baked in an oven (Leviticus 2:4) or on a *pan or fire plate*, like a griddle, (verse 5), or cooked in a *fryingpan* (verse 7), a shallow earthen vessel for boiling food went to the priests for food. (**Note an exception:** Leviticus 6:19-23).

There were variations of the Meal Offering, but these were the basic steps in the ritual surrounding its offering.

4. THE IMMEDIATE SIGNIFICANCE

- Where other offerings were blood offerings that emphasized the work of atonement, the Meal Offering emphasized the **righteous character** that God looked for in His people.

- The fact that they had to bring such an offering showed that they did not meet His standard.
- The trouble with them was not merely that they did not do what they ought to have done, or that they did what they ought not to have done, **but that they were fatally flawed in their very nature.**
- But the good news was that the Lord had provided a perfect sacrifice that was a sweet savour to Him—that is, that satisfied Him—and that He accepted the sinner who offered the sacrifice on the merits of its perfection.
- In Numbers 5:15 we read of a *jealousy offering*, which was a Meal Offering without the oil, frankincense and salt.
Note its significance: ***It is an offering of jealousy, an offering of memorial, BRINGING INIQUITY TO REMEMBRANCE.***
From this we may safely conclude that the Meal Offering with its oil, frankincense and salt does the very opposite: **it brings RIGHTEOUSNESS to remembrance.**

5. THE ULTIMATE MEANING

- The true meaning of the sacrifice is found in *the man, Christ Jesus*.
- The *fine flour* denotes His sinless perfection and therefore of His consequent fitness to be our Saviour.
- As the *oil* was poured on and mixed into the *fine flour* so the Holy Spirit was present and active at every stage of the development of *the man Christ Jesus* and in every part of His work (Matthew 1:18,20; 3:16; Luke 1:35; 4:18; John 3:34; Acts 10:38; Hebrews 1:9; 9:12).
- His perfection was fully demonstrated by the fiery testing He endured in body and soul and was free from all that would sour or corrupt (as *honey, leaven* would).
- Considered in isolation, His sinless character and life are not atoning, but they are essential to His atonement, just as the Meal Offering was essential to the Burnt Offering and Peace Offering. **Consider the sacrifices of Cain and Abel in this light.** Without His vicarious death Christ's life could not save sinners.
But without His life of righteous obedience His death would have had no saving virtue or power.
God is perfectly satisfied with His Son—not merely with what He did but with what He **was** (Matthew 3:17; 17:5).

6. THE MESSAGE FOR US

- Undergirding all that the Lord Jesus did and continues to do for us lies His absolutely perfect person. The dignity of His person is what gives infinite value to His work.
- As our Meal Offering, Christ ***brings His righteousness to God's remembrance as having been performed to satisfy divine justice on behalf of His people.***
All He did and suffered was in order that His perfect righteousness might be **imputed** to His believing people.
- God accepts His Son and His righteousness and thus accepts those who come to Him on the basis of that righteousness, placing all the virtue and value of Christ's perfect person and work to their account. See Ephesians 1:6.
- And that is what makes the truth of **Christ's imputed righteousness** so glorious. See Romans 5:18, 19 and note Numbers 13:21; Isaiah 61:10.