

The Offerings The Grain Offering

Objectives:

1. To understand the context of the prescribed sacrificial system.
2. To understand the purpose of the sacrificial system.
3. To understand the Christological symbolism of the sacrificial system.
4. To understand the Soteriological symbolism of the sacrificial system.

Introduction:

It is imperative for the church to understand “A holy God requires a holy people”. All sin is repugnant to the LORD. It is important for the church to understand, that it has been gathered and summoned to be a distinct people. A manifestation of our distinction is seen in our worship of the LORD. However, this distinction is not only in Sunday worship through singing of songs and study of His word, but through our surrendered lives to the LORD. In other words every facet of our lives should reflect our worship of the LORD. Those who belong to the church are the living sacrifice. The study of Leviticus will refresh the church’s recollection of God’s holiness and the call for her to be holy in this age.

The Structure of Leviticus

Sacrificial Code	Priestly Code	Code of Standards	Atonement	Code of Holiness
1-7	8-10	11-15	16-17	18-27

Overview of The Sacrificial Offerings (1-7) ¹

Type of Offering	Scripture Reference	Purpose of Offering	The Offering	Disposal (Result of Offering)
Burnt Offering	Leviticus 1, 6:8-13,9; Romans 12 (<i>living sacrifice</i>)	Worship and Atoning Sacrifice for Sin in General	Unblemished Male Cow, Goat or Sheep, Turtle Dove or Pigeon	Completely Consumed by Fire

¹ Harrison, R. K. (1980). Leviticus: an Introduction and Commentary (Vol. 3, p. 40). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.; Levy, D. M. (1993). The Tabernacle: Shadows of the Messiah: its sacrifices, services, and priesthood. Bellmawr, NJ: Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry.

Grain Offering	Leviticus 2, 6:14-23 Romans 12 (<i>living sacrifice</i>)	Tribute, Giving Thanks	Unleavened Salted Cakes or Grains	A portion burned with the remainder to priests
Peace Offering	Leviticus 3, Hebrews 7:11-21 13:15-16 (sacrifice of praise)	Fellowship	Unblemished male or female animal, the most the worshiper could afford	Fat, liver, kidneys burned; remainder eaten by priest and worshiper in fellowship meal
Sin Offering	Leviticus 4, 6:24-30	Cleansing for Unintentional/ Accidental Sins	Bull (priest or congregation); male goat (ruler); female goat, lamb, pair of doves or pigeons; meal offering (individual)	“Fat burned for God; remainder eaten by priests” (Harrison)
Guilt Offering	Leviticus 5; 6:1-7; 7:1-7	Cleansing for Sins Committed against other persons or the Sanctuary	A female lamb or goat could be brought or two turtledoves or two young pigeons (depending on means)	“Fat burned for God; remainder eaten by priests” (Harrison)

The Grain Offering

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I. The Purpose of the Grain Offering

- A. The word מִנְחָה (*min hah*), translated grain offering, can also mean tribute.
- B. This same word communicates a gift given as a symbol of respect, thanksgiving, homage, friendship, or dependence.²
- C. In Judges 3:15 and 3:17, מִנְחָה (*min hah*) is used to communicate a gift as an act of submission to an overlord.

*(Judges 3:15)*³

But when the sons of Israel cried to the Lord, the Lord raised up a deliverer for them, Ehud the son of Gera, the Benjamite, a left-handed man. And the sons of Israel sent tribute by him to Eglon the king of Moab

(Judges 3:17)

He presented the tribute to Eglon king of Moab.

- D. In other words, it is a gift that acknowledges that someone is your master. It is an affirmation of submission.⁴
- E. This is also seen in 1 Kings 4:21 with kingdoms making payments to Solomon.
Now Solomon ruled over all the kingdoms from the River to the land of the Philistines and to the border of Egypt; they brought tribute and served Solomon all the days of his life.
- F. This also is the same word to describe Cain and Abel's offerings to the LORD in Genesis 4:3-5.

So it came about in the course of time that Cain brought an offering to the Lord of the fruit of the ground. 4 Abel, on his part also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions. And the Lord had regard for Abel and for his offering; 5 but for Cain and for his offering He had no regard.

² Koehler, L., Baumgartner, W., Richardson, M. E. J., & Stamm, J. J. (1994–2000). The Hebrew and Aramaic lexicon of the Old Testament (electronic ed., p. 601). Leiden: E.J. Brill.

³ Unless otherwise noted, all biblical passages referenced employ New American Standard Bible, 1995 Edition: Paragraph Version. (1995). La Habra, CA: The Lockman Foundation

⁴ James Allman, Tribute Offering, Lev 2, (class notes for BE102, Dallas Theological Seminary, SP2015).

- G. This grain offering is an offering from the first fruits of the ground, which acknowledges the LORD owns all and only the best should be offered to the LORD.
- H. The LORD's welcoming heart flows throughout the text.
- I. The word שֵׁשֶׁת (ne pesh), translated anyone, can also be translated breath, life or soul.
- J. This word שֵׁשֶׁת (ne pesh) is an inclusive term meaning either male, female, Israelite or Non-Israelite.
- K. In other words, anyone, any soul, is invited to pay homage (tribute) to the LORD.

II. The Types of Grain Offerings and Restrictions

A. Uncooked Grain

1. The word סֹלֶת (sōlet), means "fine flour" or the "finest wheat."⁵
2. The finely milled flour may picture Christ's earthly ministry, wherein He was sifted by Satan, beaten, scourged, crucified; yet no sin was found in Him (Luke 22:63, Matthew 4:1, John 19:1, 17-18, Hebrews 4:15).⁶

Matthew 4:1: Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

Luke 22:63: Now the men who were holding Jesus in custody were mocking Him and beating Him.

John 19:1: 1 Pilate then took Jesus and scourged Him.

John 19:17-18: They took Jesus, therefore, and He went out, bearing His own cross, to the place called the Place of a Skull, which is called in Hebrew, Golgotha. 18 There they crucified Him.

Hebrews 4:15: For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.

3. The purity of Christ is in view.

⁵ Rooker, M. F. (2000). Leviticus (Vol. 3A, p. 94). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.

⁶ Levy, D. M. (1993). The tabernacle: shadows of the Messiah: its sacrifices, services, and priesthood. Bellmawr, NJ: Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry.

4. In addition, the motive of the worshiper may be in view.
5. In order for any sacrifice to be truly efficacious, the offeror must present his or her sacrifice with pure motives (Psalm 51:17).

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise.

6. Fine flour was used to show honor to guests who were held in high esteem. For example, Abraham's instructions to Sarah to prepare a meal for the three visitors in Genesis 18:6:

So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah, and said, "Quickly, prepare three measures of fine flour, knead it and make bread cakes."

7. Fine flour is also analogous with opulence and high living. In reference to God's blessing of Israel, Ezekiel notes in Ezekiel chapter 16:1:

Thus you were adorned with gold and silver, and your dress was of fine linen, silk and embroidered cloth. You ate fine flour, honey and oil; so you were exceedingly beautiful and advanced to royalty.

8. Olive oil was poured over the flour, which helped the combustion process during the offering on the fire.
9. Olive oil, at times, is a metaphor connected with the power of the Holy Spirit (Isaiah 61:1, Luke 4:18).

Isaiah 61:1: The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, Because the Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the afflicted.

Luke 4:18: 18 "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, Because He anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor.

10. Accordingly, the olive oil in the offering may symbolize the Holy Spirit who played an active role in the ministry of Jesus Christ.
11. The Holy Spirit was involved in the conception of Jesus (Matthew 1:18-20).
12. The Holy Spirit was present at the Baptism of Jesus (Matthew 3:16).
13. The Holy Spirit empowered Jesus (Luke 4:18, Acts 10:2).
14. The Holy Spirit also is credited with raising Jesus from the dead (Romans 8:11)

15. Olive oil also is a “product of human labor”.⁷
16. Likewise, this offering may symbolize the dedication of man’s work to God.⁸
17. Frankincense was spread on the offering.
18. Frankincense was costly and its value, like the fine flour, symbolized the offeror giving the LORD his or her best.
19. In addition, the fragrance of the frankincense was a soothing aroma.

B. Cooked Grain

1. One could also bring מִנְחָה (*min hah*), grain offering, מֵאֲפֶה (*ma a peh*) translated baked.
2. מֵאֲפֶה (*ma a peh*) communicates something baked in an oven.⁹
3. This oven, תַּנּוּר (*tan nur*), is a portable large ceramic pot which could be placed in a hole in the ground.
4. The pot was heated by a fire fueled with dried grass.¹⁰
5. One could make חֻלָּה (*hallah*) translated cake, which is a ring shaped piece of bread or or one could make רִקִּיק (*ra qiq*) translated wafer, which is a thin piece of bread.
6. One scholar noted that the baked grain offering pictures “the unseen suffering of the Lord at the hand of God the Father (Mt. 27:45-46)”.¹¹

45 Now from the sixth hour darkness fell upon all the land until the ninth hour.

46 About the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?” that is, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?”

7. One could also bring מִנְחָה (*min hah*), grain offering, made on a מַחְבַּת (*ma ha bat*) which is a “a flat cake or a pancake, grilled on a metal plate”.¹²
8. Perhaps here, the intense suffering of Christ is in view (Genesis 3:15).

⁷ Harrison, Vol. 3, p. 53.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Koehler, 541.

¹⁰ Hartley, J. E. (1992). Leviticus (Vol. 4, p. 31). Dallas: Word, Incorporated.

¹¹ Levy

¹² Ibid.

*And I will put enmity Between you and the woman,
And between your seed and her seed;
He shall bruise you on the head,
And you shall bruise him on the heel.” (Ge 3:15)*

9. Before it is offered, the offering made in the the מַחֲבַת (ma ha bat), is broken into pieces and oil is poured on it.
10. In addition, one could also bring a grain offering made in a מַרְחֶשֶׁת (mar he set), which is a baking or a frying pan with a lid.¹³
11. It is suggested that the dough was placed in boiling oil and fried until crisp.¹⁴
12. Some have suggested the offering cooked in the מַרְחֶשֶׁת (mar he set) resembled “a modern deep-fried doughnut”.¹⁵
13. It has been suggested that the visible pan frying of the offering may picture the public suffering of Christ, at the wicked hands of mankind (Matthew 27:27-31).

27 Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole Roman cohort around Him. 28 They stripped Him and put a scarlet robe on Him. 29 And after twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand; and they knelt down before Him and mocked Him, saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!” 30 They spat on Him, and took the reed and began to beat Him on the head. 31 After they had mocked Him, they took the scarlet robe off Him and put His own garments back on Him, and led Him away to crucify Him.

14. Please note the grain offering offered to be burned on the altar could not contain leaven or honey.

¹³ Holladay, W. L., & Köhler, L. (2000). A concise Hebrew and Aramaic lexicon of the Old Testament (p. 215). Leiden: Brill.

¹⁴ Hartley, Vol. 4, p 31.

¹⁵ Harrison, Vol. 3, p 55.

15. Some have suggested that leaven and honey were excluded due to the possibility of fermentation, which would alter the nature of the offering.¹⁶
16. In addition, perhaps leaven and honey were excluded because pagan cultures used leaven and honey in their worship practices.
17. It was important for the Israelites to be a distinct people. Likewise for believers, we should abstain from every appearance of evil (1 Thessalonians 5:22).
- But examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good; 22 abstain from every form of evil.*
18. There is debate among scholars regarding the prohibition against leaven in the grain offering. Some assert the restriction is based upon leaven being a symbol of evil or impurity.
19. It is admitted that there are instances wherein leaven pictures impurity and false teaching (1 Corinthians 5:6-8, Matthew 16:8-12, Mark 8:15).

1 Corinthians 5:6-8

6 Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump of dough? 7 Clean out the old leaven so that you may be a new lump, just as you are in fact unleavened. For Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed. 8 Therefore let us celebrate the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

Matthew 16:8-12

You men of little faith, why do you discuss among yourselves that you have no bread? 9 Do you not yet understand or remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets full you picked up? 10 Or the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many large baskets full you picked up? 11 How is it that you do not understand that I did not speak to you concerning bread? But beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees.” 12 Then they understood that He

¹⁶ Rooker, p 97.

did not say to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

Mark 8:15

And He was giving orders to them, saying, "Watch out! Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod."

20. However, loaves from the first fruits of wheat during the Feast of Weeks, could contain leaven (Leviticus 23:17).

You shall bring in from your dwelling places two loaves of bread for a wave offering, made of two-tenths of an ephah; they shall be of a fine flour, baked with leaven as first fruits to the Lord.

21. Also in Matthew 13:33, Jesus compares the kingdom of heaven with leaven.

The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three pecks of flour until it was all leavened.

22. Here Jesus is comparing the dynamic power of leaven which affects the whole, to the kingdom of heaven's growth power.

23. Salt was required for grain offerings.

24. Salt preserves and accordingly is a symbol of the eternal covenant.

25. The covenant is indestructible, able to withstand fire and time, without decay (Leviticus 2:13, Numbers 18:19, 2 Chronicles 13:5).

Leviticus 2:13

Every grain offering of yours, moreover, you shall season with salt, so that the salt of the covenant of your God shall not be lacking from your grain offering; with all your offerings you shall offer salt.

Numbers 18:19

All the offerings of the holy gifts, which the sons of Israel offer to the Lord, I have given to you and your sons and your daughters with you, as a perpetual allotment.

It is an everlasting covenant of salt before the Lord to you and your descendants with you.”

2 Chronicles 13:5

Do you not know that the Lord God of Israel gave the rule over Israel forever to David and his sons by a covenant of salt?

C. Offering of First Fruits

1. The offering of first fruits is distinguished from the other grain offerings.
2. The *בִּכּוּרִים* (bik ku rim), first fruits grain was roasted with oil and incense.
3. After roasting it was crushed into meal, *גֵּרֶשׁ* (ge res) (grits).
4. This offering was reserved for harvest time.
5. This offering is also discussed in Exodus 23:16 in describing the Feast of the Harvest which is also called the Feast of Weeks.

16 Also you shall observe the Feast of the Harvest of the first fruits of your labors from what you sow in the field; also the Feast of the Ingathering at the end of the year when you gather in the fruit of your labors from the field.

6. It is also mentioned in Numbers 28:26

26 ‘Also on the day of the first fruits, when you present a new grain offering to the Lord in your Feast of Weeks, you shall have a holy convocation; you shall do no laborious work.

7. This offering pictures Christ who is the first fruits (1 Corinthians 15-20-23).

20 But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep.

21 For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead.

22 For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive. 23 But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ’s at His coming, 24 then comes the end, when He hands over the kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power.

8. Believers are also called first fruits in James 1:18.

In the exercise of His will He brought us forth by the word of truth, so that we would be a kind of first fruits among His creatures.

III. The Disposal of the Offering and Additional Typology

1. The officiating priests pinched a handful of the uncooked grain offering, or the cooked grain offering and offered it on the alter as a memorial.
2. The handful represented the entire offering.
3. The memorial is a recognition of God's grace in providing for the offeror.
4. The priests could eat the remainder in a designated place in the temple (Leviticus 6:16).

What is left of it Aaron and his sons are to eat. It shall be eaten as unleavened cakes in a holy place; they are to eat it in the court of the tent of meeting.

5. The first fruits offering was reserved for the LORD only (Leviticus 23:9-14).
6. The priests could not eat the sacrifice on his behalf.
7. The grain offerings point to Jesus being the bread of life in John 6:47-51. Here is the picture of the gospel.

47 Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life. 48 I am the bread of life. 49 Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. 50 This is the bread which comes down out of heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. 51 I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread also which I will give for the life of the world is My flesh."

8. The grain offerings point to Jesus in 1 Corinthians 10:16 and 17, with Jesus being the means of unity within the body of Christ.

16 Is not the cup of blessing which we bless a sharing in the blood of Christ? Is not the bread which we break a sharing in the body of Christ? 17 Since there is one bread, we who are many are one body; for we all partake of the one bread.

9. In addition, the grain offering is pictured in our remembrance of Christ (1 Corinthians 11:23-24).

23 For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread; 24 and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me."