

## GOD'S RECIPE FOR THE PERFECT BARBECUE

Leviticus 2:11: No meat offering, which ye shall bring unto the LORD, shall be made with leaven: for ye shall burn no leaven, nor any honey, in any offering of the LORD made by fire.

Leviticus 2:13: And every oblation of thy meat offering shalt thou season with salt; neither shalt thou suffer the salt of the covenant of thy God to be lacking from thy meat offering: with all thine offerings thou shalt offer salt.

This is Memorial Day weekend. This is the weekend that we typically set aside to remember those who have passed on, especially our war heroes. But it is also the weekend that we typically consider the start of summer here in NE Ohio. This is the weekend that the pools open, the grills fire up, and the lawn furniture comes out of the storage shed. The long nightmare we called “winter” is over and we can finally get outside.

Part of this tradition is the “firing of the grill;” when you take the grill outside for the first times this season and start it up. Now people can have strong opinions about the type of grill that they do. There are those who prefer charcoal because of the flavor. There are those who prefer gas because of the ease and the control. There are those who will only use wood such as mesquite or alder.

Then there are the recipes for barbecue. There is wet barbecue where you boil the meat first. There is dry barbecue where you smoke the meat. There are rubs of various spices. There are sauces of various types. You have Carolina barbecue, which is based on vinegar and pork. Texas barbecue, which is beef brisket and a “mopping sauce.” There is Kansas City barbecue, which are usually beef and a sweet sauce.

The one thing that all these places will tell you is that their barbecue is the best. Not only is it the best, but also everyone else is just an untalented hack. God is the same way. In my opening scripture I noted some of the things that God

requires in an offering in the Temple and some of the things he absolutely will not allow.

- Leaven: Leaven (or yeast) is a living organism that feeds on the sugars in the grain. As a result the leaven grows. But leaven is also symbolic of sin. Like leaven, sin may start off small. But if you allow it to continue it will grow within you. If you do not cleanse yourself of sin on a regular basis it will grow and take you places you do not want to go. God says, “When you bring your offering to be burned (judged) before me, don’t mix it with sin.” He wants your offering to be pure. “Don’t burn your toast on my altar.”

Does that mean God expects us to be perfect at all times? No because that would be impossible. But he does expect you go be diligent in cleaning it up. During the feast of the Passover households go through and remove everything in their house that contains leaven or yeast.

**Deuteronomy 16:4: And there shall be no leavened bread seen with thee in all thy coast seven days...**

Since we know that leaven is symbolic of sin, we can see that God is telling us, “Do not bring your sin with you when you appear before me. Sweep it up first and then come to me.” I know that when I come into church I first ask God to forgive me of any sins that I have committed.

- Honey: The second thing that God says not to bring to his fire is honey. Now part of the reason for this is because the worshipers of Baal would offer honey. The reason that they offered honey is as a bribe. They said, “Hey Baal, how about if you do this for me? I brought you some candy.” God says, “Don’t worship me like I’m some god wannabe. Don’t try to bribe me in to accepting your sin.”

I know people who try to manipulate the church and in doing so think that they are manipulating God. I know someone who thinks that she has a call of God upon her life. She also happens to have a lot of money, so she tries to use her money to manipulate the church into running the way that she

thinks it should be run. She is constantly offering her money if the church will do this or that, but withholding her money if it won't. She practices the sin of arrogance, but tries to wrap that sin in some honey to make it seem all right.

But God says, "I will accept your honey as an offering without any strings attached, but I will not accept it as part of your sin."

Leviticus 2:12: As for the oblation of the firstfruits, ye shall offer them unto the LORD: but they shall not be burnt on the altar for a sweet savour.

You can bring any offering you like to God, but don't try to bribe him as part of your burnt offerings – your sin offerings.

#### Covenant of Salt

In spiritual terms, however, salt forms a permanent covenant between two people. Two people would typically eat salt together as a sign that they had overcome their differences and have entered into a new, binding relationship. In fact some eastern countries still use the phrase, "There is salt between us," to signify an everlasting friendship a permanent bond. People dip their fingers into a common bowl of salt and eat it together. By doing so they make the bond permanent.

2 Chronicles 13:5: Ought ye not to know that the LORD God of Israel gave the kingdom over Israel to David for ever, even to him and to his sons by a covenant of salt? (KJV)

2 Chronicles 13:5: Don't you know that Anonai, the God of Israel, gave rulership over Israel to David forever, to him and his descendants, by a covenant of salt [which is unbreakable]? (JNT)

We speak of wedding as being a permanent bond between two people. In the wedding ceremony we have the bride marching down the aisle to the tune of Felix Mendelssohn's "Wedding March" in C major. We have the two mothers (the givers of life) lighting candles at the beginning of the ceremony and then the bride

and groom using those lights to create a single light in the unity candle symbolizing the new life together.

In some ceremonies instead of candles they use salt. The bride and groom take a little bit of salt from separate containers and then put them together. Then they scatter the salt and say that not until the grains are separated again can the marriage end.

The salt is what binds an agreement and makes it permanent. When you brought your sin offering to God, he might accept it but the covenant would not be permanent unless you both shared some salt. It is the salt that makes the burnt offering of Leviticus 2 permanent.

Jesus is the Lamb

Now that we understand the symbolism of salt in the Temple sacrifice, we can understand how it relates to us today. Jesus is the lamb of the sacrifice.

John 1:29: The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

Everything that we read about in the Old Testament about the sacrifices is a “type and shadow” of things that will happen later for Jesus.

Exodus 29:26: And thou shalt take the breast of the ram of Aaron's consecration, and wave it for a wave offering before the LORD

John 12:32-33: And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die.

Or the story of the scapegoat:

Leviticus 16:7: And he shall take the two goats, and present them before the LORD at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

Leviticus 16:8: And Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats; one lot for the LORD, and the other lot for the scapegoat. Leviticus 16:9: And Aaron shall bring the goat upon which the LORD's lot fell, and offer him for a sin offering.

Leviticus 16:10: But the goat, on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat, shall be presented alive before the LORD, to make an atonement with him, and to let him go for a scapegoat into the wilderness.

Compare that to this:

Matthew 27:17: Therefore when they were gathered together, Pilate said unto them, Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus which is called Christ?

Matthew 27:21: The governor answered and said unto them, Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you? They said, Barabbas.

Matthew 27:22: Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ? They all say unto him, Let him be crucified.

Matthew 27:26: Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.

In example after example Jesus is the lamb that takes away the sins of the world. What was symbolism in the Temple became reality through Jesus. Leviticus 2 says we need to offer salt with our burnt offering; Jesus is that offering.

What, then, is the salt?

Matthew 5:13: Ye are the salt of the earth : but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

Remember that I said that it is the salt that seals the sacrifice and makes its effect permanent. You are the thing that makes Jesus' sacrifice on the cross permanent. You, the church, seal the covenant and makes the covenant permanent. Just like the rainbow was the symbol of God's covenant with Noah, so the church is the symbol of God's covenant with mankind.

How do we keep our savor?

Salt is hospitality. When you have guests over, you provide them with salt for the meal. Salt is used to seal covenants between people. Salt reduces conflict and turns old enemies into friends. We should likewise be the most hospitable people on earth. We should be willing to forgive and the first to ask forgiveness. We should give to those in need. We should be willing to invite others over to our house for a cookout.

Salt is pure. Likewise we should be pure. We should not allow ourselves to be corrupted by sin. We should strive to keep ourselves pure and failing that, ask God to make us clean once again.

Under no circumstances should we allow ourselves to be corrupted by false doctrines. We should not allow the sins of the world to come into our churches and our lives. We should not allow after worldly ways of doing business, of seeking only to entertain, of seeking to serve our own lusts. God is pure and we should strive to be pure as well.

Salt purifies. Germs cannot live in salt. That is why salt is used as a preservative. Ezekiel 16:4 says that even babies were salted when first born to kill any germs on them. Likewise we should strive to remove the sin we find in the world around us.

Salt makes you thirsty. People should look at us and want to have what we have. Just two weeks ago I was asked to have work meetings on Saturday and Sunday. I told them I would do Saturday, but since I am a licensed minister and have 3 services on Sunday, I would not do that. On Monday one of the ladies remarked, "Now I know where you get your easy-going nature." You should have a personality that makes people want to have what you have. You should be the salt that makes them thirsty for the Lord.

Likewise you should have "rivers of living water" within you.

**John 7:38: He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.**

So not only should you make them thirsty, but you should be able to satisfy that thirst as well. They say, “There is something about you that I like,” and you respond, “Let me tell you about Jesus.”

Lack of salt makes a civilization collapse. There is scientific evidence that throughout history whole societies have collapsed due to a lack of salt in their diet. Belgian Historian Henri Pirenne suggests that there was a period of global warming during the Dark Ages in Europe that caused the glaciers to melt and the oceans to rise. Since many civilized countries obtained their salt from evaporation beds near the oceans, the rise ruined their only source of salt and caused the people to experience sickness and madness.

We need to be the salt that keeps the rest of the world from going completely insane and collapsing. God rewards a civilization based on the number of people who follow him and punishes a civilization when they fail to do so. Sodom and Gomorrah could have been saved if there had been 10 righteous people in the city. As I have pointed out before, there were at least 10 people in Lot’s family. Because Lot and his wife were not the examples of Godly living that they should have been, God wiped out the entire city. Lot’s wife was turned to a pillar of salt when she looked back, longing to return to that place. If she had been a pillar of spiritual salt all along, the city would have been saved.

Salt is heat resistant. When salt goes through the fire, you still have salt. Salt signifies judgment.

**Mark 9:49: For every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt.**

So everyone will have his or her life judged. But if you are the salt of the earth, you will come through that judgment unscathed.

Conclusion

Throughout this message I have equated the sacrifice of Jesus with a barbecue. I hope I have not offended anyone too badly by doing so. My intent was not to

belittle the sacrifice but rather to try and put the role of salt in perspective so that all of us might understand our role in a way that is easy to remember.

When you bring out the grill this weekend and invite all of your neighbors over for a cookout, I want you to remember two things:

1. Remember that while Jesus is the sacrifice, you are the salt. God does not permit a sacrifice without some salt to seal it. Be that salt to your world, spice up their life with your love. Make them thirsty for the rivers of living water within you.
2. Don't eat the potato salad that has been left out in the sun