

Sermon #9 — *Discovering Christ in Leviticus*

Title: **THE SALT OF GOD**

Text: Leviticus 2:13

Subject: *The Usefulness of Salt*

Date: Tuesday Evening — May 29, 2018

Readings: *Bobbie Estes and David Burge*

Introduction:

Our Lord Jesus Christ was truly the prince of preachers. His preaching was never scholarly, eloquent, or entertaining. It was plain, powerful, and persuasive, simple, instructive, and enlightening. He found common, ordinary, everyday things with which men and women were familiar and used them to illustrate and portray great, heavenly, gospel truths. By the use of the most common things of ordinary life, the Lord Jesus taught eternity bound sinners the gospel of God.

- Sheep and Goats
- Wheat and Tares
- Fishing Nets and Fish
- Shepherds and Sheep
- Lost Coins, Lost Sheep, and Lost Sons
- Pharisees and Publicans

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I want to follow the Lord's example. So, tonight, I'm going to talk to you about one of the most common things in the world — Salt.

If you will open your Bibles to the 2nd chapter of the Gospel of Leviticus, at verse 13 you will find my text and my subject. I want to talk to you about salt, — **THE SALT OF GOD.**

(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.

AN ILLUSTRATION

Let's begin in 2nd Kings 2, with an illustration of salt's usefulness.

(2 Kings 2:1-18) And it came to pass, when the LORD would take up Elijah into heaven by a

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whirlwind, that Elijah went with Elisha from Gilgal. ⁽²⁾ And Elijah said unto Elisha, Tarry here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me to Bethel. And Elisha said *unto him*, As the LORD liveth, and *as thy soul liveth*, I will not leave thee. So they went down to Bethel. ⁽³⁾ And the sons of the prophets that *were* at Bethel came forth to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the LORD will take away thy master from thy head today? And he said, Yea, I know *it*; hold ye your peace. ⁽⁴⁾ And Elijah said unto him, Elisha, tarry here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me to Jericho. And he said, As the LORD liveth, and *as thy soul liveth*, I will not leave thee. So they came to Jericho. ⁽⁵⁾ And the sons of the prophets that *were* at Jericho came to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the LORD will take away thy master from thy head today? And he answered, Yea, I know *it*; hold ye your peace. ⁽⁶⁾ And Elijah said unto him, Tarry, I pray thee, here; for the LORD hath sent me to Jordan. And he said, As the LORD liveth, and *as*

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thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. And they two went on. ⁽⁷⁾ And fifty men of the sons of the prophets went, and stood to view afar off: and they two stood by Jordan. ⁽⁸⁾ And Elijah took his mantle, and wrapped *it* together, and smote the waters, and they were divided hither and thither, so that they two went over on dry ground. ⁽⁹⁾ And it came to pass, when they were gone over, that Elijah said unto Elisha, Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee. And Elisha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me. ⁽¹⁰⁾ And he said, Thou hast asked a hard thing: *nevertheless*, if thou see me *when I am* taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be *so*. ⁽¹¹⁾ And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, *there appeared* a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. ⁽¹²⁾ And Elisha saw *it*, and he cried, My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. And he saw him no more: and he took

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hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two pieces. ⁽¹³⁾ He took up also the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and went back, and stood by the bank of Jordan; ⁽¹⁴⁾ And he took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and smote the waters, and said, Where *is* the LORD God of Elijah? And when he also had smitten the waters, they parted hither and thither: and Elisha went over. ⁽¹⁵⁾ And when the sons of the prophets which *were* to view at Jericho saw him, they said, The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha. And they came to meet him, and bowed themselves to the ground before him. ⁽¹⁶⁾ And they said unto him, Behold now, there be with thy servants fifty strong men; let them go, we pray thee, and seek thy master: lest peradventure the Spirit of the LORD hath taken him up, and cast him upon some mountain, or into some valley. And he said, Ye shall not send. ⁽¹⁷⁾ And when they urged him till he was ashamed, he said, Send. They sent therefore fifty men; and they sought three days, but found him not. ⁽¹⁸⁾ And when they came

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again to him, (for he tarried at Jericho,) he said unto them, Did I not say unto you, Go not?

(2 Kings 2:19-22) ⁽¹⁹⁾ And the men of the city said unto Elisha, Behold, I pray thee, the situation of this city *is* pleasant, as my lord seeth: but the water *is* naught, and the ground barren. ⁽²⁰⁾ And he said, Bring me a new cruse, and put salt therein. And they brought *it* to him. ⁽²¹⁾ And he went forth unto the spring of the waters, and cast the salt in there, and said, Thus saith the LORD, I have healed these waters; there shall not be from thence any more death or barren *land*. ⁽²²⁾ So the waters were healed unto this day, according to the saying of Elisha which he spake.

(2 Kings 2:23-25) ⁽²³⁾ And he went up from thence unto Bethel: and as he was going up by the way, there came forth little children out of the city, and mocked him, and said unto him, Go up, thou bald head; go up, thou bald head. ⁽²⁴⁾

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And he turned back, and looked on them, and cursed them in the name of the LORD. And there came forth two she bears out of the wood, and tare forty and two children of them. ⁽²⁵⁾ And he went from thence to mount Carmel, and from thence he returned to Samaria.

Now, let's go back to verse 19.

(2 Kings 2:19-22) ⁽¹⁹⁾ And the men of the city said unto Elisha, Behold, I pray thee, the situation of this city *is* pleasant, as my lord seeth: but the water *is* naught, and the ground barren. ⁽²⁰⁾ And he said, Bring me a new cruse, and put salt therein. And they brought *it* to him. ⁽²¹⁾ And he went forth unto the spring of the waters, and cast the salt in there, and said, Thus saith the LORD, I have healed these waters; there shall not be from thence any more death or barren *land*. ⁽²²⁾ So the waters were healed unto this day, according to the saying of Elisha which he spake.

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Without question, Elisha, in healing the dead and deadly waters of Jericho, was typical of our dear Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Healer of all our death, all our barrenness, and all our Marahs (bitter waters).

- Elisha healed these deadly waters by casting salt into them.
- Some children from Bethel mocked God's prophet.¹
- Elisha cursed them for their mockery (2 Chronicles 36:16).

¹ “The word for ‘children’ is used of persons of thirty or forty years of age. Though these are said to be ‘little,’ they were so well grown as to be able to go forth out of the city of themselves, without any to guide them or to take care of them, and were of an age capable not only of taking notice of Elijah’s baldness, but knew him to be a prophet and were able to distinguish between good and evil. **And, from a malignant spirit in them, (they) mocked at him as such, and at the assumption of Elijah; which they had knowledge of, and to whom, taught by their idolatrous parents, they had an aversion.** Some Jewish writers (x) say, they were called ‘Naarim,’ which we render ‘children,’ because shaken from the commandments, or had shaken off the yoke of the commands; and ‘little,’ because they were of little faith.” — *John Gill*

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(2 Chronicles 36:16) They mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against his people, till *there was* no remedy.

- Two she bears suddenly tore them to pieces.
- Elisha was undeterred by the mockery of these children and by the judgment of God upon them.

Proposition: Salt is here set before us as an emblem of the gospel and of the grace of God proclaimed in the gospel.

JUDGMENT

1st — I should tell you that **salt is sometimes used in the Scriptures as an instrument of divine judgment.**

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- **Genesis 14:3** — The first time we see the word salt is in Genesis 14:3. There we read of the Salt Sea, probably the Dead Sea. It was Siddim, the place where Sodom and Gomorrah once stood.
- **Genesis 19:26** — The next time we see the word salt is in Genesis 19:26. There Lot's wife was turned into a pillar of salt.
- **Ezekiel, Jeremiah, and Zephaniah** all tell us of God's judgment upon lands, making them perpetually barren, by giving them over to salt (Ezekiel 47:11; Jeremiah 17:6; Zephaniah 2:9).
- **David** tells us that the Lord God turns the fruitful land into barrenness (margin – saltiness) (Psalm 107:34).

Salt is set before us in the Scriptures as an instrument of judgment. In that, it is clearly representative of the gospel, the grace of God proclaimed in the gospel, and our Lord Jesus Christ, who soon shall come to sit in judgment over all the earth.

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(2 Corinthians 2:14-16) Now thanks *be* unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place. ⁽¹⁵⁾ For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: ⁽¹⁶⁾ To the one *we are* the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who *is* sufficient for these things?

(Luke 2:34) And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this *child* is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against.

SALT FOR SACRIFICES

2nd — **In Leviticus 2:13 we are told that the Lord God required that every sacrifice offered to him be offered with salt.**

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(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.

It is taken for granted that all true Israelites would bring their oblations and offerings of different kinds to God; and they did. — True Israelites still do!

But how is this to be done? That is the point. We should all say with Paul, “*Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?*” Then we might add another question, — “How will you have me do it?”

- Will-worship is not acceptable with God. If we bring God what he does not ask, it will not be received.
- We must only present to him that which he requires.
- And we must present it to him in his own way, for he is a jealous God.

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In Leviticus 2:13, the Lord God three times expressly commands that with the meat offerings and all other offerings his worshippers were to offer salt. Does the great God that made heaven and earth talk about salt? Does he condescend to such minute details of his service as to declare that the lack of a handful of salt renders a sacrifice unacceptable? Does the holy, Lord God assert that the presence of salt is absolutely necessary to any sacrifice being received by him? He does indeed. **Again, we see here that salt is an emblem of grace and of the Lord Jesus.**

- Our only acceptance with God is Christ.
- We cannot worship God, we cannot serve God, we cannot offer God anything, until first our souls are healed by the salt of his grace.

OTHER THINGS REQUIRED

As we read this 2nd chapter of Leviticus, we see that other things were also required in connection with

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the sacrifices brought to God's altar. The people's sacrifices were imperfect. **They had to have frankincense when they offered their sacrifice to God.** God did not smell sweet savor in the bullock, or the ram, or the lamb, unless sweet spices were added. — The best performances of our hands must not appear before his throne without the merit of Christ's blood and righteousness. There must be that mixture of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, with which the garments of our Prince are perfumed, to make our sacrifices a sweet savor to the Most High.

They also had to bring oil with their sacrifices. That oil was typical of the blessed Spirit of God. What is the use of a sermon if there is no unction in it? What is unction but the Holy Ghost? What is prayer without the anointing that comes of the Holy Spirit? What is praise unless the Spirit of God is in it to give it life, that it may rise to heaven? **That which goes to God must first come from God.** We need the oil. We must have the oil. We cannot serve God

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without it. But only God can give us his oil, his Spirit and his grace in Christ!

Then came a third requisite, namely, salt. **If you read the preceding verses, you will see that the Lord forbids them to present any honey.** — **No Leaven and No Honey!** — *“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 an offering of the LORD made by fire. 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 savor”* (vv. 11-12). God does not ask for sweetness, he asks for salt. I’ll say more about that as we proceed. Not honey, but salt, must be added to all the sacrifices which we present before the living God.

I really wish that some of our brethren who are overdone with honey would notice that. There is a kind of molasses godliness which I simply can’t stomach.

- Religious Clichés
- Pretentious Pious Talk

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- Religious Greetings

Do not come to God's altar as a hypocrite, with honey. Come to God with honesty and sincerity. Serve God with honesty and sincerity.

God will not accept honey at his altar; but he requires salt, the bitter salt of a broken spirit, a broken and contrite heart!

COVENANT OF SALT

3rd — **Salt is used in Scripture with reference to God's covenant.** God's covenant with Aaron was a covenant of salt; and God's covenant with David was a covenant of salt (Numbers 18:19; 2 Chronicles 13:5).

(Numbers 18:19) All the heave offerings of the holy things, which the children of Israel offer unto the LORD, have I given thee, and thy sons and thy daughters with thee, by a statute forever:

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it *is* a covenant of salt forever before the LORD unto thee and to thy seed with thee.

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

Blessed be God, we have acceptance with him in Christ by a covenant of salt, an everlasting, immutable covenant of salt! — We come to God, not on the footing of works but on the footing of grace in an everlasting covenant of salt!

- The salt of the covenant is **purifying** salt — Justifying, Sanctifying Grace!
- The salt of the covenant is **preserving** salt. — Keeping Grace!

COMMUNION

4th — **Salt is the token of communion.** In ancient times, salt was shared between men who were sworn

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friends. Once a man took a little salt from another and ate it, he was committed never to harm his friend.

- We serve God in union with Christ.
- We serve God in fellowship with him, seeking his will and his glory.
- We serve God in fellowship of his people.
- We serve God in the Spirit, by the Spirit of his grace, in harmony with God himself, as friends committed to one another.

GOD'S PROVISION

5th — **Salt, like grace, is God's provision not man's production.** — God only accepts what God provides (Genesis 22).

- Christ's Righteousness
- Christ's Atoning Blood
- Christ's Intercession
- Christ's Grace

CHRIST

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6th — Salt heals, preserves and saves from corruption, cleanses and purifies. Salt was never to be omitted in the offerings of God. Grace is “*the salt of the covenant of thy God.*” — **Salt figuratively sets forth the Lord Jesus Christ and the free grace of God in him.** God’s requirement of salt was intended to show in type and picture the importance and preeminence of Christ, his person, his blood, and his righteousness in all things.

Where Christ is not, there is no sweet-savor. It is his blood which gives a fragrancy and a perfume to our most holy things. If Christ is the salt of the covenant of our God, and with all our offerings he is first and last presented, both the Alpha and Omega, in our view as he is in the view of God our Father, then is that Scripture blessedly fulfilled which the Lord delivered by the prophet: — “*In mine holy mountain in the mountain of the height of Israel, saith the Lord God, there shall all the house of Israel, all of them in the land, serve me. There will I accept them, and there will I require your offerings,*

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and the first fruits of your oblations, with all your holy things. I will accept you with your sweet savour; and ye shall know that I am the Lord” (Ezekiel 20:40-42). **Behold, your sweet savor, the Lord Jesus Christ, our Sacrifice, our Salt, our sweet-smelling savor** (Ephesians 5:2).

Christ crucified is Salt for God’s Altar and Salt for the Gospel Table. Let this Salt be sprinkled everywhere on everything always and unsparingly!

- Salt Heals!
- Salt Cures!
- Salt Purifies!
- Salt makes things tasty, savory!

Job asks, “*Can that which is unsavory be eaten without salt?*” (Job 6:6). Our poor souls can never be accepted of God but in, with, and by Christ Jesus, our Savior. Our souls cannot be cured and preserved from everlasting corruption but by the Lord Jesus. So take God’s Salt (Christ crucified) and come to God. In Christ, with Christ God will accept you as a

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sacrifice of a sweet-smelling savor.

Amen.