

Salt of the Covenant
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SALT + COVENANT + NEW COVENANT LIVING

INTRODUCTION

The other day during my Bible reading, I was reading along in Leviticus...ok, skim reading along, as one might do with Leviticus, when all of a sudden I stumbled upon a phrase I had never noticed before! Maybe it's because I've ALWAYS skim read Leviticus. Most of it, to be fair, doesn't seem to apply to my everyday life and way I worship God. I don't sacrifice meat on an altar. Because of Jesus, I live in renewed relationship with God that doesn't need a stand-in system. But, there is still SO MUCH to glean from this book on God's character and the relationship God wants with humanity. God's love for us.

So, getting back to that phrase that caught me off guard:

SALT

Leviticus 2:13 "Season all your grain offerings with salt. Do not leave the **salt of the covenant of your God** out of your grain offerings; add salt to all your offerings."

"Salt of the Covenant of Your God"

Seemed significant. But didn't really know what to make of it.

So...I just kept reading.

The next day. I tried to continue forward on my reading (mostly just to "get through" it). But, I couldn't let the phrase go. So, I went back to it. I mulled on it a bit and then still at a loss, I did a brief Google search for a commentary on the verse.

I jotted the notes down in my Bible. And then the next day I tried to move on. But, my heart kept going back to it...

And so, that's where my mind and heart have been glued for the last 2 weeks...on Leviticus 2:13 and this phrase "salt of the covenant of Your God".

Here's what I learned, that would have been MUCH MORE readily understood to the people at that time and even now to most in the Middle East.

Salt makes food taste better. In the Middle East salt was and is an important symbol of friendship. To "share salt" with someone is like how we might say to "break bread" with someone. You are sharing a meal therefore extending friendship. Culturally, salt serves as a covenant symbol. A great symbol of friendship.

Salt is also a preservative, often used to preserve food.

The nature of salt is contrary to the nature of yeast. Yeast is seen as a putrifier. Salt is seen as a preserver.

So culturally, when people see salt in conjunction with relationship covenants, they think of the incorruptible nature of salt and pledge their allegiance to one another with the same intent to be incorruptible—to remain faithful to one another.

And, salt is used to disinfect. To purify. People did and still do use on wounds. I was thinking of how doctors and dentists will often have us make a salt water mouth rinse.

Now looking back at our verse in Leviticus, when God directs the Israelites to add salt to all their offerings, we have a little bit more understanding of the significance of this Salt Covenant now. God desires the addition of salt to their offerings to serve as a tangible reminder of the covenant relationship they are entering into with God.

Of course, God desires for the people to remain faithful. But, even, if and when they don't, God does. God wants them to ever keep before them the nature of this covenant relationship. That God will remain faithful. God is making an everlasting covenant to them. Just like salt, the love of Yahweh for the People of God is imperishable!

And the sacrifice, in and of itself, is unsavory without the salt. Any and all sacrifices/ offerings made to God, in and of themselves, are completely unsavory to God without this covenant relationship. God doesn't want us to bring just our offering but our hearts—who we are/our everyday real lives into faithful relationship with God and to our world. And what do we do about our unfaithfulness? What is God's response?

COVENANT

Over the years, I've really enjoyed watching videos by the Bible Project. They have a way of taking complicated Biblical concepts and making them a little easier to understand. They have a video on covenant relationship with God that I find very helpful in thinking of the problem we as humans have in being faithful, in God's everlasting faithfulness, and the HOPE we have in God's solution through Jesus: providing an unbroken everlasting covenant relationship with God.

Play Video

[A Way God Wants to Connect With You \(You Might Not Think Much About\)](#) from the Bible Project on YouTube (5:36).

With Jesus being the solution for us to have a NEW COVENANT with God. Besides being right with God, what did Jesus have in mind for us? Since we know God is always faithful, and we always struggle with faithfulness, What does Jesus see the Salt of the Covenant looking like in our lives today?

NEW COVENANT LIVING

During Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, Jesus tells his followers they are like salt.

Matthew 5:13 TPT

"Your lives are like salt among the people. But if you, like salt, become bland, how can your 'saltiness' be restored? Flavorless salt is good for nothing and will be thrown out and trampled on by others."

And in the Message: "Let me tell you why you are here. You're here to be salt-seasoning that brings out the God-flavors of this earth. If you lose your saltiness, how will people taste godliness? You've lost your usefulness and will end up in the garbage."

We should be living our lives in such a way that people make the connection of God's everlasting love to humanity.

Looking at this same sermon in the Gospel of Mark, we see the author points out the qualities we should have in our relating to one another in comparison with the quality of salt.

Mark 9:50 NLT

"Salt is good for seasoning. But if it loses its flavor, how do you make it salty again? You must have the qualities of salt among yourselves and live in peace with each other."

What are those qualities of salt again?

Everlasting, Incorruptible, Preservative, Healing, Savory. Symbolizing Faithful Friendship.

I'll leave you with one more practical verse Colossians 4:6 (NIV)

"Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone."

What would it look like, if we remembered to season our interactions with others with salt?

CONCLUSION

God claimed an everyday element—Salt—to serve as tangible reminder to the Israelites of the kind of Covenant Relationship they were being invited into. Today, we can still use salt as a tangible reminder of God's faithful love to us.

And as representatives of God's love to the world, we are to be salt in our relationships. May our use of salt in our everyday lives remind us to live in relationship with others in ways that offer friendship and bring others to experience healing and faithful love from us and ultimately from God.

In some traditions, there is a salt covenant as part of the wedding vows. The couple puts salt on each other's tongues to serve as a reminder of the covenant of fidelity they are entering into.

So, maybe when you need a reminder of God's faithful covenant to you and God's purpose for your life, maybe take a piece of salt and place it on your tongue and let it serve as a tangible reminder to you.

In our in person service, we are distributing little glass bottles of sea salt as reminder gifts to bring home.

CLOSING PRAYER

God, thank you that you are forever faithful, even when we aren't. Thank you, Creator God, for providing a tangible element in our world to be a powerful symbol of Your incorruptible, imperishable, preserving, healing, flavorful love and presence in our lives.

Jesus, thank you for fixing all the brokenness in our covenant relationship with God. Thank you for being salt to our world and for calling us to be salt in our world.

May we remember this Hope, this Call, and this Love.
In Jesus' name, we pray, Amen.