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## Grain and Drink Offerings

### 15: 1-16

**Grain and drink offerings DIG:** How does Chapter 14 speak to the need of these offerings in Chapter 15? Why is the teaching on the sacrifices inserted right after the defeat by the Amalekites? Why do you think the teaching about foreigners is put here? Why do you think that the same mitzvot that applies to Jews also applies to Gentiles in the land of Isra'el? In Acts 15, the question was, "Can these Gentiles really be saved?" How does the Church view Jews today? Does your church have a Jewish outreach? How so? Why not?

**REFLECT:** The LORD's words here to the Israelites can offer hope to us today when we face struggles in our daily lives. We need to raise our eyes to heaven because that will be our ultimate home. The drink offering can symbolize a life poured out for ADONAI. How, practically speaking, can you pour out your life for Him? How important is it that we obey God's Word today? How easy is it for us to ignore clear teaching of Scripture and do what we think best? What are the consequences of that kind of thinking?

**By far, the most significant drink offering was that of the Master's blood, which was poured out on the ground like water.**

This is the beginning of thirty-eight years of wilderness wanderings. There are very few descriptions of historical events. Basically, all we have given to us is the basic description of life during that time. Not a lot of detail, just checking off the days, weeks, months, and years until all **the Exodus generation** had died. However, for some basic descriptions of life during this time, see these six passages (**Deuteronomy 8:1-5 and 29:2-6; Joshua 5:2-6; Ezekiel 20: 15-17; Amos 5:25-26; Acts 7:42-43**).

**Grain and drink offerings (15:1-10):** Now ADONAI spoke to Moshe, saying: **Tell the people of Isra'el, 'When** (not if, became an assurance of **their** ultimate victory) **you have come into the Land where you are going to live, which I**

**am giving to you, your** enemies will not stop **you**, The combining of these verses with the sad ending of **Chapter 14 (to see link click [Cc - Defeat by the Canaanites and Amalekites](#))**, is dramatic. The sins of the people were many; they would be judged. The grace and mercy of **ADONAI** are magnified as **He** points to the ultimate realization of **His** ancient promise to **Abraham**, “**ADONAI appeared to Abraham and said, “To your descendants I will give this land.” So he built an altar there to ADONAI, who had appeared to him (Gen 12:7)**, and **His** continuing promise to the nation that **they** would indeed **enter the Promised Land**.<sup>267</sup>



It is interesting to note that these instructions were only applicable when **they entered the Land**. Which shows that despite the sin of **Kadesh-barnea** (see [Bz - Faith and Obedience](#)), despite the fact that **the Exodus generation** would not **enter the Promised Land**, the covenant of **the Land** is still valid. Ownership of **the Promised Land** is **unconditional** (see the commentary on **Genesis Eg - I AM the LORD, Who Brought You Out of Ur of the Chaldeans to Give You This Land**); however, enjoyment of **the Land** is **conditional**. **God's** Covenant with **Moshe (Exodus 19:3-25)** is a conditional divine pledge to be **Isra'el's God**, protector, the advocate and sustainer of **her** blessed destiny; the condition was **Isra'el's** dedication to **Ha'Shem** as symbolized by observing the 365 prohibitions and 248 commandments in **the Torah** (see the commentary on **Exodus Dd - The Mosaic Covenant**).<sup>268</sup>

**And**, at that time in the future, **when you want to make an offering by fire to ADONAI — a burnt offering or sacrifice to fulfill a special vow** (see the commentary on **Leviticus Fb - Personal Vows**), **a voluntary offering** (see

**Leviticus Ak - The Peace Offerings: At Peace with God), or at your appointed times** (see **Leviticus Dw - God's Appointed Times**), **to make a fragrant aroma for ADONAI that He accepts with pleasure - then, whether it is comes from the herd or from the flock, the person bringing the offering is to present ADONAI with a grain offering consisting of two quarts of fine flour mixed with one quart of olive oil, and the last item was one quart of wine for the drink offering**, a symbol of a life **poured out** to the service of **God (Second Timothy 4:6)**. **This is what you are to prepare with the burnt offering or for each lamb sacrificed" (15:1-5)**. The fellowship between **God** and mankind had not been broken.

**Bread** and **wine** are basic ritual elements familiar to both Christian and Jewish practice. In Christianity, **the unleavened bread** and **the wine of the Master's** last Seder were removed from their Passover context and took on the status of a religious sacrament independent of **Torah** practice. In Judaism, **the bread** and **wine** combination is not only a Passover rite. Every Jewish festival (excepting fast days) is begun with **a cup of wine** and a ritual breaking of **bread**. Every Shabbat is begun with **wine** and **bread**. What is the significance of this ever-present ritual?

At the most basic level, the significance of **bread** and **wine** is that they are food and drink. A meal that if **bread** and **wine** were not served, it was considered hardly a meal. They were staples of diet. Therefore, breaking the bread and sharing **the cup** is still, to this day, the simple intimacy of table-fellowship. It is the simplest human gesture of goodwill toward another. To offer one to eat from your **bread** is to give of yourself. To offer them to **drink** from your **cup** is to give of yourself. It is very different from giving a guest their own **bread** and their own **wine** to drink. It is a level of intimacy that speaks of close relationship.

We first see the sharing of bread and wine instituted in the story of **Abraham** and **Melchizedek** (see the commentary on **Genesis Ed - Melchizedek: King of Salem and a Priest of God Most High**). **Melchizedek**, welcomed the victorious **Abraham** by bringing **out bread and wine. He blessed God over the bread and the wine**. It is the first recorded **blessing (of God)** in the Bible. **Abraham** reciprocated by giving **a tithe to Melchizedek**. This story of the **bread** and **wine** ties together the ritual elements of **bread** and **wine** with the priesthood and **the blessing of God. They** are elements of a shared meal, indicating a covenant relationship.

In the Temple, the priesthood was forbidden to drink **wine**, to make sure they didn't

serve while drunk. After the death of **Nadab** and **Abihu** (see the commentary on **Leviticus Bh - The Death of Nadab and Abihu**), **Ha'Shem** commanded: **Don't drink any wine or other intoxicating liquor, neither you nor your sons with you, when you enter the Tabernacle, so that you will not die.** However, both **bread** and **wine** were still very much a part of the priestly ministry of the bronze altar.

Every **burnt offering** and **peace offering** was to be offered to **ADONAI** in conjunction with **grain** and **wine offerings**. A token amount of the offering, **the memorial portion**, was placed on **the** animal **sacrifice** as an offering before **YHVH** (see **Leviticus Aj - The Grain Offerings: Dedicated to God**). Similarly, a **drink offering** was made alongside **the grain offering**. Throughout the course of the day, gallons of **wine** would have been **poured out** over the Temple altar as **drink offerings to the LORD**. The imagery was that of an intimate relationship with **God**. **Isra'el** and **God** shared the same **bread** and **cup**, as it were.<sup>269</sup>

**For a ram, the grain offering is one gallon of fine flour mixed with one-and-one-third quarts of olive oil.** The provision of **fine flour** speaks of costly food rather than ordinary flour. This type of **fine flour** was used in cooking (**Ezeki'el 16:13**), at the table of the king (**First Kings 4:22**), for honored guests (**Genesis 18:6**), and in the worship of **God**. Hence, the attitude toward **the flour** was the same as toward the animals one might bring to **sacrifice** at the Tabernacle; only the best was good enough, for the gift was to **the LORD (15:6)**.

We suspect that **the oil** and **wine** used in these **offerings** were also selected from choice, and not common stocks. **While for the drink offering, you are to present one-and-one-third quarts of wine as a fragrant aroma for ADONAI (15:7).** Another interesting element in these worship mitzvot is the concept of a **fragrant aroma for ADONAI (Genesis 8:21)**. The odor of **the sacrifice**, whether of **the whole burnt offering** or the burning of heavy organs and fat, would be heavy, unpleasant, and pungent. The addition of **fine flour, oil** and **wine** to **the fire** only added an exotic element to the smell. We may ask, would the mere smell and smoke of **the sacrifice** please **God**? Of course not! When any **sacrifice** was brought to the Tabernacle, or later to the Temple, the thing that pleased **God**, the thing that made **it a fragrant aroma**, was **the faith** with which it was brought. **David** would write:

**Sacrifices and grain offerings You do not want; burnt offerings and purification offerings You do not demand. Instead, You have given me**

open ears; so then I said: **Here I am! I'm coming! In the scroll of the book it is written about Me. Doing Your will, my God, is My joy; your Torah is written on My heart (Psalm 40:6-8).**<sup>270</sup> The more valuable the animal, the more costly the offerings given. **When you prepare a bull as a burnt offering, as a sacrifice to fulfill a special vow or as peace offerings for ADONAI, there is to be presented with the bull a grain offering of one-and-a-half gallons of fine flour mixed with two quarts of olive oil. For the drink offering, present two quarts of wine for an offering made by fire, a fragrant aroma for ADONAI (15:8-10).**

**Even if I am being poured out . . . Paul** compared his own life to a **drink offering poured out** over the bronze altar on two different occasions. First, he did so in his letter to the **Philippians**, and secondly, he did so in one of his last letters in **Second Timothy**. To the **Philippians**, Paul compared his life to a **drink offering**, in that he had **poured out his** efforts upon the **Philippians** without any assurance of success. Some would measure his efforts spent on them to be a waste, but Paul saw it as a gesture **sacrifice and service of their faith**, saying: **Indeed, even if my lifeblood is poured out as a drink offering over the sacrifice and service of your faith, I will still be glad and rejoice with you all. Likewise, you too should be glad and rejoice with me (Phil 2:17-18).**

Six years later, near the end of his life, Paul wrote to **Timothy**. He knew he would not survive the murderous intrigues of the court of Nero, and he again compared his life to a **drink offering being poured out** over the bronze altar of **sacrifice**. He knew he was going to die a martyr's death. But from his perspective, it was a noble end in as much as it was a martyrdom for the sake of the Kingdom. In the same way that the **wine offering** was not wasted on the bronze altar, but was offered as a holy service to the **LORD**, in the same way, Paul regarded his own life spent as a **drink offering** to YHVH. **For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come (Second Timothy 4:6).**

*Dear Heavenly **Father**, What a wonderful privilege to be **Your** child! **You** are the absolute best **father** that ever could be. There is nothing that could make **You** better, for you excel in all areas: abounding in steadfast love (**Psalms 85:15, 63:3**), gracious in gift giving (**Romans 5:17, Ephesians 2:8-9**), slow to anger/patient (**Exodus 34:6, Numbers 14:18**), completely Holy (**Isaiah 6:3**), totally wise for **You** know the future before it happens (**Genesis 40, Daniel 2, 7,8, 11-12, Rev 19**) and many other positive qualities! To be a **drink offering poured***

*out for You, is a privilege for me to have the opportunity to give back to **You** my love in a way that shows how deep and sincere my love for **You** is. **You** left heaven's glories (**John 17:5**) for pain and shame on earth (**Hebrews 12:2**). **You** are so worthy of all my love! In **Messiah Yeshua's** holy name and power of **His** resurrection. Amen*

But, by far the most significant **drink offering** was that of **the Master's blood** which was **poured out** on the ground like water. **Yeshua Himself**, when **He** took the seder meal, makes an allusion to **the drink offering** when **He** said: **This cup is the New Covenant in My blood, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of Me** (see the commentary on **The Life of Christ Kk - The Third Cup of Redemption**). In **Mark**, **Yeshua** says that **His blood is poured out for many** (**Mark 14:24**), and in **Matthew**, **He** adds that **it is poured out for forgiveness of sins** (**Matthew 26:28**).<sup>271</sup>

**The summary (15:11-12): Do it this way for each bull, ram, male lamb or kid. For as many animals as you prepare, do this for each one, regardless of how many animals there are.**

**The application (15:13-14): The Torah** makes it clear that the mitzvot of the Levitical sacrificial system (as well as all the mitzvot of **the Torah**) are binding on **the native** as well as upon **the foreigner**. **All who are native** (Hebrew: *ezrach*) **are to do these things in this way when presenting an offering made by fire as a fragrant aroma for ADONAI**. If a foreigner (Hebrew: *ger*) **stays with you - or whoever may be with you, through all your generations - and he wants to bring an offering made by fire as a fragrant aroma for ADONAI, he is to do the same as you**. So, the door was always open to proselytes who desired to identify with **Isra'el, their faith, and their God** (see the commentary on **Acts Bb - An Ethiopian Asks about Isaiah 53**).<sup>272</sup>

**The principle of equality (15:15-16): For this community** (Hebrew: *qahal*) **there will be the same Torah for you as for the foreigner living with you; this is a permanent regulation through all your generations; the foreigner is to be treated the same way before ADONAI as yourselves. The same Torah and standard of judgment will apply to both you and the foreigner living with you**. This sounds a lot like **Paul's** declaration: **There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor freeman, neither male nor female; for in union with the Messiah Yeshua, you are all one** (**Galatians**

**3:28).** It is the rule of the invisible, universal, Church. It does not mean that the distinction between **Jew** and **Gentiles** has been done away with (see the commentary on [Jeremiah Eo - I Will Make a New Covenant with the People of Isra'el: The Church's Relationship to the B'rit Chadashah](#)). But in terms of our standing before **YHVH**, the native and foreigner were **to be treated the same way before ADONAI**.

**The Jewish practice:** Every Jewish home is regarded as a small sanctuary (see the commentary on [Exodus Fi - The Sanctuary in the Tabernacle](#)). Their homes are viewed as holy places, set apart to accommodate **the Presence of God** (that is what makes the October seventh 2023 slaughter of families in their own homes so horrific). In the same way, the kitchen table is the symbolic equivalent of the bronze altar. The family seated around their table is regarded as the symbolic equivalent of the priesthood. The meal on the table is regarded as a symbol of **the sacrifices**. These analogies help explain the presence of the Sabbath **bread** and **cup**. Just as every **burnt offering** and **peace offering** was brought to the bronze altar with **grain** and **drink offering**, so too the Sabbath table is set with **bread** and **wine**.

As the early believers met from house to house (see the commentary on [Acts Ao - The New Covenant Community Begins](#)), breaking **bread** together from Sabbath to Sabbath, Messianic associations were inevitable. It would have been impossible for them to take **the Sabbath cup** of redemption together without remembering **the Master's seder cup**. It would have been impossible for them to break **bread** and bless **the Lord** without remembering **the Bread of Life** (see [The Life of Christ Fr - Jesus the Bread of Life](#)).

As believers, we will do well to diligently keep the Sabbath rituals alive, remembering the altar of **ADONAI**, **the drink offering poured out** on our behalf, and **the bread of life**, descended from heaven, in which we have all shared. These ingredients are the very basis of our Shabbat shalom.<sup>273</sup>