

Covenant of Salt I

Steve Durham—December 19, 2015

A saltshaker reminds me of something, a joke. Have you ever heard of a group called Mensa? Everyone has to be over 140 I.Q. to be a member of Mensa. They were having a convention and were at a restaurant. About five or six of them were eating at the table. The salt and peppershaker's lids were switched. There was a 'P' on the salt and an 'S' on the pepper.

They said, 'Oh, no. What are we going to do?' They got to thinking about it. Being Mensa, of course, they got their paper out and plotted out a plan and design. They got their heads together and counseled about how they could get the pepper and the salt in the proper containers without making a mess, using just the tools they had on the table.

They finally figured it out. They had a charted out plan. They called the waitress over because they were real excited about how they were going to do this. They said, 'Hey. Did you see this salt and pepper? There's an 'S' on the pepper and a 'P' on the salt.' She said, 'Oh, I'm sorry. Here, let me fix that.' She took the caps off and switched them. I thought that was cute. That's Mensa for you. Just a little bit of logic goes a long way.

I'd like to talk about salt today. There was a reason for that leading in to my sermon. How many have ever heard of the little known covenant of salt? This will be an education for all of us; it was an education for me. I've done a lot of study on this. It actually is probably going to take two sermons to get it all in. It's quite interesting how God weaves His plan into different things. Everything has a purpose.

God is a covenant God and if you want a relationship with God, you need to be in covenant with Him. God sets up a covenant with Abraham (Gen. 15), a couple of places there. God promises Abraham that of his seed they'll be numerous and they'll possess the gates of their enemies. They'll be a great nation and a multitude of nations they'll be as plenteous as the stars of heaven, the *spiritual* application of that.

God repeats the promises given to Abraham to Isaac and Jacob. Jacob becomes Israel; he has his name changed. The twelve sons go on into Egypt and end up being enslaved in Egypt 430 years. Moses comes and they come out of Egypt. They have just come out of Egypt, they're in the wilderness and God has given them the plans to put together a tabernacle in the wilderness (Exo. 40).

Exodus 40:17: "And it came to pass in the first month in the second year, on the first of the month, the tabernacle was set up." It was raised up. It was ready to go.

In Leviticus God gives them the sacrifices that will be done at the door of the temple. Sacrifices were nothing new. Sacrifices began back when Adam sinned. The purpose of sacrifice is because of sin, to have your sins atoned for with the blood and the life that's in the blood (Lev. 17:11). If there is a sacrifice, there has to be blood. There can't be a covenant without blood, without a sacrifice. You can't have a relationship with God without being in covenant with Him. Quite interesting!

God gives them the sacrifices, laid them all out (Lev. 1:2), the bullock (v 3), the sheep and lambs (v 10), the fowl (v 14).

Leviticus 2:1: "And when anyone will offer a grain offering to the LORD, his offering shall be *of* fine flour. And he shall pour oil on it and put frankincense on it." All those are items that have significance in God's thinking.

Verse 2: "And he shall bring it to Aaron's sons, the priests...." whom God has already set up, as the priesthood. That's another thing you've got to add. You've got a temple, a tabernacle and you have offerings and you need a priesthood.

"...And he shall take out of it his handful of flour and its oil, with all its frankincense. And the priest shall burn the memorial of it upon the altar, an offering made by fire of a sweet savor to the LORD" (v 2).

Verse 13: "And every sacrifice of your grain offering **shall you season with salt**...." That might seem odd. You've got the sacrifice, you've got the grain offering that's being burned and God says, 'Oh, wait a minute. *I want every one of those offerings to be seasoned with salt.*' If you're a cook and you're at the stove and you have a pinch of salt and you put it in, it makes things taste good. So, He says that every one of them be seasoned with salt.

"...And you shall not allow **the salt of the covenant** of your God to be lacking from your grain offering. **You shall offer salt** with all your offerings" (v 13). This an interesting addition to the sacrifices that He puts here.

We'll see a little bit more about this. We're going to piece all this together, the spiritual aspect of it along with the physical. There's an interesting point being made in Num. 18:8, that it is *forever*, and He says:

Numbers 18:9: "This shall be yours of the most Holy things, *reserved* from the fire, every sacrifice of theirs, every grain offering of theirs, and every sin offering of theirs, and every trespass

offering... [all the offerings] ...of theirs, which they shall give Me. These *are* most Holy for you and for your sons.”

He says, ‘Okay, Aaron, you’re not to have an inheritance in the land. When we go and we carve up the ‘promised land’ you’re not going to have part of that, but I’m going to take care of you. There’ll be sin offerings and you’ll have the meat of those. Those will be yours forever, but you won’t have an inheritance in the land.’ That’s important. There’ll be priests forever, as well.

Verse 11: “...by a statute **forever**. Everyone that is clean... [another important thing that you must be] ...in your house shall eat of it.”

Verse 13: “The first ripe fruits of all that is in the land, which they shall bring to the LORD, shall be yours. Everyone that is clean in your house shall eat *of* it.”

Verse 19: “All the heave offerings of the Holy things, which the children of Israel offer to the LORD, I have given you and your sons and your daughters with you **by a statute forever**. It is a **covenant of salt**...[He calls it a *covenant of salt*] ...**forever** before the LORD to you and to your seed with you.” He’s introduced the *covenant of salt* along with the sacrifices, an addition to the sacrifices.

- Why has God done that?
- What is the covenant of salt?
- Why salt?
- What does that have to teach us?
- What was He trying to teach Israel?

Exodus 19:5: “Now, therefore, if you will obey My voice indeed, and **keep My covenant**, then you shall be a special... [peculiar people] ...treasure to Me above all people...” Out of all that earth, if you’ll do this, **IF** you will be a ‘special treasure to Me.’ He’s setting Israel up as a special, called out people, a small nation.

Verse 6: “And you shall be to Me a **kingdom of priests**...” Not all of them were priests, there were the Levites, but He’s saying, you shall be *like* a ‘kingdom of priests.’

“...and a Holy nation” (v 6). What makes something Holy? *God’s presence in it makes it Holy!* God was actually saying, ‘I’ll be with you. I’ll be in this nation and I’ll be with you. You’ll be a Holy nation, not like the rest of the nations around you.’

“...These *are* the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel” (v 6). A Holy nation, a model nation that God was setting up.

- He was taking them from captivity

- He was fulfilling His covenant with Abraham
- He was setting them up in the ‘promised land’ and doing certain things
- He was getting them ready to become a nation
- He was also setting up a *covenant of salt* with them

The sacrifices were very important, because with sin you’re out of relationship with God. When you offer that animal you are then, when the blood was shed, in covenant once again with God. That sacrifice is very important for Israel, as it is for us today.

A nation of kings and priests, a Holy nation, that was what Israel was to be. Today, how that fits with us if we think about that, Peter talks about that same concept.

There’s a difference because in 70_{A.D.} the temple was torn down. There was no temple. This is prior to 70_{A.D.} but he’s preparing Israel for something that’s coming. There isn’t going to be a temple so there won’t be any animal sacrifices like there were before.

1-Peter 2:1: “Therefore, having put away all wickedness, and all deceit, and hypocrisies and jealousies, and all slanders.” That’s back-biting, deceit, all the things spoken of in Jude, the things in the world, the fruits of the flesh (Gal. 5). It’s the flesh, the evil, the things that were natural and common in the world.

He says to lay those aside, v 2: “As newborn babes, yearn after the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow, if you yourselves have indeed **tasted** that the Lord *is* gracious” (vs 2-3). There are several places where he talks about the fact that you ‘taste’ the Lord. Keep that in mind—*tasting* the Lord—having to do with the meat and the sacrifice.

Verse 4: “To Whom coming, **as to a living Stone, rejected indeed by men...** [they rejected Christ] **...but chosen by God, and precious.**” Remember, we saw that Israel was ‘precious’ if they would do certain things. He’s saying that you’ll be like ‘living stones,’ precious, as well.

Verse 5: “**You also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house...**” It talks about our being the ‘temple’ (1-Cor. 6:19_[transcriber’s correction]). He’s establishing that if Israel will do these things—not only the Jews but also the Gentiles, whomever—you will be *spiritual Israel*, a temple.

“...a Holy priesthood—to offer up spiritual sacrifices...” (v 5). They’re thinking, ‘Wait a minute. The temple’s right down the road here. What are you talking about?’

“...acceptable to God through Jesus Christ” (v 5). Who was the sacrifice, to become the sacrifice for all mankind.

Verse 6: “For this reason it says in the Scripture, ‘Behold, I place in Zion *the* Cornerstone, chosen *and* precious; and the one who believes in Him shall never be put to shame.’ The preciousness *is* to you, therefore, who believe... [Christ is precious to you who believe] ...but to those who disobey, *the* Stone that the builders rejected has become *the* Head of *the* corner... [Eph. 2:20] ...and a Stone of stumbling...” (vs 6-8). He caused problems because people did not want to do what He said. They didn’t want to acknowledge Him as the Messiah. So, He caused problems.

“...and a Rock of offense; *especially* to those who stumble at the Word, being disobedient, unto which *unbelief* they also were appointed.... [here’s the connection]: ...**But you are a chosen stock, a royal priesthood, a Holy nation, a people for a possession of God...**” (vs 8-9)—purchased/peculiar. Christ purchased us with His blood. He disallowed, annulled, or atoned for us with His blood. He purchased us; we’re no longer our own if we accept that covenant.

“...that you might proclaim His *excellent* virtues, Who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; who once *were* not a people, but now *are the* people of God; who had not received mercy, but now have received mercy” (vs 9-10). He’s made that now as:

- a spiritual calling
- a spiritual temple
- a spiritual Holy nation
- a spiritual Israel

You are the temple. He’s taken away the physical and made it focus on the spiritual application of that. Ezek. 37:27-28 talks about the future of Israel, the physical Israel in the Millennium when Christ comes back, and how they will be reinstated. They will be put back into that position of what they were offered.

We’ll see what they were offered in addition to Exo. 19. He says that it’s prophetic for the future, that they will be given that opportunity. They’ll be brought back out of tribulation and placed in that covenant relationship with God once again. God doesn’t want any to perish.

This *covenant of salt* is an eternal, perpetual, forever covenant. When God makes a covenant, He’s serious about it and once He makes that covenant, He calls ‘the things that are not as though they are’ (Rom. 4:17).

Deuteronomy 7:6: “For you *are* a Holy people to the LORD your God. The LORD your God

has chosen you to be a special people to Himself...” The salt covenant, the salt in the sacrifice pictures that. It’s symbolic of this very special calling and treasure that God has given.

“...above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The LORD did not set His love upon you nor choose you because you were more in number than any people...” (vs 6-7). How many times have we heard that the reason the United States and England is so great is because of our ingenuity? We did it. We’re special because some how we’re better than the rest of the world. It says right here:

“...for you *were* the fewest of all people” (v 7). He said, ‘I chose you.’ A lot of times people will think that they can appropriate Christ. That’s a phrase that used in Protestantism. You cannot do that. God is the One Who decides to choose you. We can go through that at some point.

Verse 8: “But because the LORD loved you and because He would keep the oath, which He had sworn to your fathers, the LORD has brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you out of the house of bondage from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. Therefore, know that the LORD your God, He *is* God, the faithful God **Who keeps covenant** and mercy with them that love Him and keep His commandments, to a thousand generations” (vs 8-9).

There’s a part you have to play in that. You see that, ‘them that love Him.’ It talks about obeying Him and if you will do this, then He will do this.

The purpose of that *covenant of salt* was that God was trying to set up a covenant of a Holy nation, a model nation, a showplace for the world to see, that He loved those people and that He could love them; that He could love the rest of the world and He *will* love the rest of the world. There are certain things that they need to do; it’s conditional. You need to do certain things.

For all nations to have the knowledge of God and the example of the Almighty God and how they, too, can come to Him and be His special people in this spiritual application. Remember Paul talking about the Gentiles and there’s neither Jew nor Gentile, bond nor free. He says all men can come to that relationship, into that covenant, but you have to choose to do that.

He wants all the world to know that He is a loving God. He does this by introducing into the very fabric of their lives, and in our lives, through the sacrificial system for sin, a reminder that they are to be a special model people. We know that we need to be doing certain things. That salt covenant is interesting, because when the temple was taken down and the animal sacrifices were stopped... But if you got on your knees today and prayed and asked

God to forgive you of your sins, you are going through the process of offering sacrifices and asking for the blood of Jesus Christ to be shed on your behalf so that your sins could be forgiven. That's a sacrifice—isn't it? You call on that main sacrifice, that one-time sacrifice for all men.

Sacrifices are gone, but is the *covenant of salt* still here today? Did it go with the sacrifices? *No it didn't; it's still here today!* We don't talk about it. We don't actually call it that but the principal of the *covenant of salt* is here today with us. It's in our lives. It's to show the world around us that we are a called-out people, that God loved us first, He loves us and He will do certain things—Deut. 29-30 about blessing and cursing—'If you do this, I'll do all of these things for you, but if you don't do this, these things will happen.'

It's a choice. He gives us choice; He never takes that choice from us. He always gives us a choice. He gives the world a choice. They don't know now, but they will be given an opportunity to make that choice. He does this with the *covenant of salt*. That's why that salt in that sacrifice is so important. That's why the covenant continues and it's so important today. We'll look at some other things regarding the physical part of that.

Let's talk about a covenant for a second. Without a covenant, we can't have a relationship with God. Without a sacrifice or blood being shed, there can't be a covenant. Heb. 6:18 says that God cannot lie. I wanted to put that down in reference to Abraham's covenant.

Hebrews 9:22: "Now, almost all things are purified with blood according to the *priestly* law, and without *the* shedding of blood there is no remission of *sins*."

Without a sacrifice—and that sacrifice being Jesus Christ now, Who was promised from the very beginning... Remember in Gen. what the promise was, the introduction of that Seed that would come to be the sacrifice for the world? That was promised back in the Garden of Eden. So, without blood we cannot have a sacrifice.

A covenant gives strength, stability and permanence to an agreement. Think about that with the *covenant of salt*. I'll show you how that works. There are two types of covenants:

1. there's a horizontal covenant, or one between equals

That would be that someone and I would sit down, make out a contract and say I'm going to do this, you're going to do this and we agree on terms and conditions. We sign it and we've got a covenant. We have an agreement or a contract.

2. the covenant that God does are not equal

God is the One Who decides the terms and the conditions. Your part is to accept them.

Cain didn't do that; he wanted to do his own thing. Today, people will accept all of the commandments except the fourth commandment and maybe the second. They do what they want to do because God knows their heart. They're doing fine and everything's great, 'God accepts me as I am.' *No, He doesn't!* You're not in a relationship with God unless you accept the terms of the covenant.

To give you an example: Exo. 31 talks about the Sabbath Day. Do you realize that God created all those days, gave us all those commandments and He stopped on the seventh day and He said:

Exodus 31:13: "Speak also to the children of Israel, saying, 'Truly you shall keep My Sabbaths... [all of them, the act of keeping] ...for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations to know that I *am* the LORD Who... [sets you apart] ...sanctifies you.'" Just like He did with Israel, He does with *spiritual* Israel. In fact, He sets us apart and makes us a Holy nation, a peculiar nation, a precious treasure for the world to see that they have the same opportunity to do that. That God loves us first and we love Him.

Verse 14: "You shall keep the Sabbath, therefore, for it is Holy to you..." He placed His presence in it, by being in it, by creating it, in the others He did work. On that one He rested. That's how He created it.

"...Everyone that defiles it shall surely be put to death, for whoever does *any* work on it, that soul shall be cut off from among his people. Six days may work be done, but on the seventh day is the Sabbath of rest, Holy to the LORD. Whoever does *any* work on the Sabbath Day, he shall surely be put to death. Therefore, the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations... [forever] ...**as a perpetual covenant**" (vs 14-16).

Forever! It's not going away. *You have to accept the terms of that covenant* to be in relationship with God. If you're not doing what God says on the Sabbath Day, you're not in a relationship with God. It's really simple, very simple.

Verse 17: "It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever; for in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He rested, and was refreshed." A covenant is forever. The *covenant of salt* transcends—goes past, goes on, continues on past—the sacrifices and is still in existence today with us.

The animal sacrifices are gone, but Christ is our example and He is our sacrifice. What does He want from us? *He wants us also to see ourselves as a sacrifice as we live our lives!* To give our time, our own pleasures, our own desires up to God, to get out of the way our carnal nature and our carnal mind so that we can observe what God gives us in the terms and conditions of all the covenants that He has for us to do. He says:

Romans 12:1: “I exhort you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, Holy...” That means that you have God’s Holy Spirit in you.

That’s another covenant, that we realize that once God begins working with us that we need God. We all cry out, ‘Help! God, help!’ He begins to work with you. If He is already causing you to get to that point, then you start seeking God and He begins to draw you, He’s drawing you to Him (John 6:44). He puts His Spirit with you and you repent what you need to repent of, first of all, then you’re baptized, hands are laid on you and you’re given the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38). Now you become Holy. You’re a ‘living sacrifice, Holy:’

“...and well pleasing... [acceptable] ...to God, which is your spiritual service. Do not conform yourselves to this world... [around us: the man made world, man’s world, the society] ...but be transformed...” (vs 1-2). It’s a metamorphosis. It’s a change, a complete change. Here’s how you’re changed:

“...by the renewing of your mind...” (vs 2). The cleansing of your mind, renewing it. David said in Psa. 51 to ‘clean my heart. Give me a renewed heart and spirit. Don’t take Your Spirit from me.’

“...in order that you may prove what *is* well pleasing and good, and the perfect... [complete] ...will of God” (v 2). Once we understand that, then we can be in covenant with Him if we choose to do the terms and conditions of the covenant, the *covenant of salt*.

Verse 3: “For I say through the grace that was given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think *of himself* more highly than he ought to think; but to think with sound-mindedness, as God has divided to each one a measure of faith.”

Then Paul talks about being one, many members, all one, exhorting. He goes through seven different things that we are given.

In v 10 Paul talks about the salt. He talks about the things that you’re going to be doing if you’re in covenant with Christ as a begotten son of God, as a Holy son of God. You’ll be like Christ. He says:

Verse 10: “*Be* kindly affectioned toward one another **in brotherly love...**” Jesus talks about loving God with ‘all your heart, soul, mind,’—all of you—and ‘your neighbor as yourself’ (Matt. 22:37-39). To love the *brotherly love*, He talks about ‘a new commandment I’ve given you that you love one another. If you do that, you’ll be My friend and you’ll be with Me. I’ll come and dwell with you, will live in you; God the Father will come in and We’ll be one’ (John 17:11, 21), just like He’s talking right here.

The marriage covenant, another covenant where two individuals with individual thoughts and personalities, come together as one. Is that covenant temporary? *It’s permanent! It’s forever!* It’s serious when you come into covenant like that. What does that covenant picture? It’s not just a physical relationship. That covenant pictures everything—our being one with God forever, the Bride of Christ forever with the Father. He’s not going to divorce us somewhere down the road. He’s with us. He’s committed to that covenant.

He takes these covenants seriously. The *covenant of salt* He takes seriously. He wants us to do these things—have the character of God and Christ in us. These are some of the things, honoring one another.

How do you honor someone? *A very simple thing is when someone is older than you, you get up and give them your chair!* You show respect. You honor them. That’s just a small thing. It’s a physical thing, but it’s in the mind and in the heart, by honoring people.

“...*Let* each esteem the other more highly than himself” (v 10). Esteeming one another it says in Gal. To esteem someone else better than you, that puts you in a position that we’re not comfortable with as physical people, as carnal people

Verse 11: “*Be* not slack in business. *Be* fervent in spirit. *Be* timely in serving. *Be* rejoicing in hope.... [What is our hope?] ...*Be* patient in tribulation...” (vs 11-12). As we’re tried, as we go through life, be patient knowing that God has our back and God’s going to ‘never forsake us.’

“...*Be* steadfastly continuing in prayer” (v 12). Always praying in a mind and attitude of prayer. You don’t have to be on your knees, but you are constantly in contact with God. You’re thankful and grateful to God in prayer in your thoughts.

Verse 13: “Contribute to the needs of the saints, *and* strive to be hospitable. Bless those who persecute you; bless, and do not curse” (vs 13-14). That’s what Christ did on the cross. He didn’t curse them.

Verse 15: “Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep; *be* of the same mind toward one another” (vs 15-16). Have the mind of Christ in us (Phil. 2:5). Have that mind of Christ in you; that He comes and lives in you. *That’s the salt covenant: He comes and lives in you, that you have the character of God, that we’re one with Him!*

“...Do not set your mind on high ambitions; rather, be accommodating with those of low estate...” (v 16). In other words, if someone comes in and they look sharp and you give him the front seat. That’s what it’s talking about. Don’t defer to that person over someone else, not being a ‘respector of persons.’

“...Do not be wise in your own eyes” (v 16). In other words, don’t think things out. Don’t think your own plan. Don’t try to control things yourself. Ask God for that. Have the mind of God in you. God says, ‘My ways are higher than yours, My thoughts are higher than yours.’ (Isa. 55:8). Don’t try to do it on your own. Have the mind of God and Christ in you. *That’s the salt!*

Verse 17: “Do not render to anyone evil for evil, *but* be prepared to do what is right in the sight of all men. If possible, as much as is your part, be at peace with all men. Beloved, do not avenge yourselves; rather, leave *this* to God’s wrath...” (vs 17-19). *Don’t let the sun go down on your wrath* (Eph. 4:26). Don’t give place to wrath.

“...for it is written, “Vengeance is Mine! I will recompense,” says *the* Lord.’ Therefore, if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him drink... [*salt covenant*] ...for in doing this you will be heaping coals of fire on his head. Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good” (vs 19-21)—with the love of God, that’s what it’s talking about.

That’s the idea of the *salt covenant*. That’s the difference between the physical covenant between men and the covenant with God. These are the terms and conditions that He talks about.

Ephesians 5:8_[transcriber’s correction]: “...*you are* light in *the* Lord. Walk as children of light, (because the fruit of the Spirit *is* in all goodness and righteousness and Truth); proving what is well pleasing to the Lord” (vs 8-10). He talking about redeeming the time.

Galatians 5:22: “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control; against such things there is no law. But those who *are* Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its passions and lusts” (vs 22-24).

In other words, even though we are still sinning and we still have those pulls, we try to

subjugate them by allowing the Holy Spirit to lead us and guide us into doing these things, doing the right things, having the fruits of the Spirit, have the *salt* in our character, in that covenant that we made with God, He wants us to have those characteristics.

We’re going to get into those characteristics of *salt*. Once you see what they are, it really is amazing how all encompassing this *covenant of salt* is in our lives. It looks like a little thing when we read it in Lev. We just kind of pass over it, but it’s really interesting how God put that there and He put all these other things in as plants in the story for the future for us today. *Amazing stuff!*

Verse 25: “If we live by *the* Spirit... [which we should, we worship in Spirit and Truth] ...we should also be walking by *the* Spirit.” James says to ‘be a doer of the Law’ not just someone who hears it, not someone that speaks it, but do it, write them in the heart, the circumcision of the heart. Again, another symbolism or parallel of the physical to the spiritual; another *covenant of salt*.

If God, Who is a *heart-knowing* God, knows what your heart is, ‘out of the abundance of your heart the mouth speaks.’ You give a guy enough rope, let him talk long enough and you’ll find out what’s in there. God already knows what that is.

Verse 26: “We should not become vain-glorious...” If you have the *covenant of salt* and you’re living that *covenant of salt* and you have the characteristics of God and Christ, you’re not going to be proud and vain. God says, ‘I resist the proud.’ He resists it, but He’s drawn to the humble, to the contrite, another characteristic of salt.

“...provoking one another *and* envying one another” (v 26).

Galatians 6:2: “Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ”—another salt characteristic.

Our part in the covenant as it is in Genesis 26:5: “...Abraham obeyed My voice...” It’s a very simple thing. He gives the terms and conditions. He lays it out:

- Do you want a relationship?
- Do you want to be in covenant with Me?

Then, *obey My voice!* Yield! Submit! Obey! It’s hard for a carnal mind to do, very hard. It sounds simple but it’s a lifetime of overcoming and allowing the Holy Spirit to lead us to overcome, because if we try to do it ourselves we can’t do it.

Ask God to help you overcome, if you’re having problems with something. Ask God to do it and then get out of the way. Turn loose of the control and let God do it. Do the physical things that

you've got to do. Allow God's Spirit to lead and guide you and it will. It will happen!

God uses special qualities and characteristics of salt to teach how He wants us to be in the world. How He wants us to be that 'precious, special Holy people,' that kingdom of 'priests and kings.' When we have lived our life to the end and we come before God, this is what He's done.

We are His 'workmanship' (Eph. 2:10). That's the work of God. The majority of the work is allowing us and helping us to build Holy, righteous character. God will do that if we get out of the way and let Him build that *covenant of salt* in us, those characteristics.

Revelation 5:10: "And did make us... [the saints] ...unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth."

That's the end of the thought in Deut. 7 and Exo. 19, where He called them out as a small nation—physical, precious, Holy—of kings and priests. They've lived their lives and we as spiritual Israel have lived our lives, allowing the Holy Spirit to lead and guide us. We're dead, we're resurrected and that's the end result; that's the reward—kings and priests in His kingdom. So, it's full circle—isn't it? The *covenant of salt* continues.

What are those special characteristics that salt has that we should take on? Let's start to take a look at those so that we see that Christ is on board with the *covenant of salt*, that He is telling us/teaching us how to put those principals into play, how to put those characteristics in our life, He's our example (1-Pet. 2:21) and that we're to follow Him.

Mark 9:49: "For **everyone** shall be **salted with fire**..." James talks about trials in our lives, but don't be surprised about the fiery trial. Don't be surprised that God is going to test and prove you. He says that "...everyone shall be salted with fire..." What's He proving and testing? *It's our character!* It's the *Godly character* in us. He's testing us like you would horses. You would 'prove' a team of horses. Like he did with Abraham when He tested him with Isaac, God wanted to see what he would do.

"...and every sacrifice shall be **salted with salt**" (v 49). Once again He goes back to that *covenant of salt*. This is New Testament. This is Christ talking about everyone is going to be salted. Every sacrifice was salted. Then He says:

Verse 50: "The salt *is* good... [this is good stuff; salt is good] ...but if the salt becomes tasteless, how will you season it? **Have salt in yourselves**..." This is Christ saying, 'I want you to have salt in you. I want you to get on board with the *covenant of salt*. Accept the terms and conditions

and agree to them, be part of that covenant because it's forever and your rewards are forever.' There's a lot to be had; or if you want to look at it from a physical standpoint, which we don't, the end result.

"...and be at peace with one another" (v 50). It's interesting that He says, 'with one another.' One way you can have peace with one another is by implementing the characteristics of Christ, the fruits of the Spirit in your life and allowing God to build those up. Peter talks about 'growing in grace and knowledge,' (2-Peter^[transcriber's correction]3:18) to grow in understanding of how to put those characteristics into practice.

Christ talks about that in the beatitudes or the Sermon on the Mount. After He gives all these things to His disciples, He says that these are the things that you are going to have if you have the salt in you, you're going to:

- be poor in spirit
- mourn when you see injustices
- be meek
- hunger and thirst after righteousness
- want that *covenant of salt*
- be merciful or tender-hearted
- be pure in heart or sincere
- be peacemakers

Christ just said that that's how you become at peace with your brothers. He said, 'My peace I leave you.' In other words, 'My Spirit, I'm going to leave with you. My character, I'm going to leave with you. I'm going to show that have to be a peacemaker and be at peace.' That's how we become at peace.

Matthew 5:11: "...when they shall reproach you, and shall persecute you, and shall falsely say every wicked thing against you, for My sake." That's tough to take. It's hard enough when you've done something wrong, but it's really bad when you didn't do anything and they're talking about you and putting you down.

Verse 12: "Rejoice and be filled with joy... [here's why]: ...for great *is* your reward in heaven..." We just read about one of the rewards: kings and priests. Christ says, 'I'm going to bring your reward with Me when I come. I'm going to give you that reward when I come' (Rev. 22). How are we given on our rewards? Salvation is a gift. It's a gift given to everyone but your reward is different.

"...for in this same manner they persecuted the prophets who *were* before you. **You are the salt of the earth**, but if the salt has become tasteless, with what shall it be salted? For it no longer has any strength, but *is* to be thrown out and to be trampled upon by men" (vs 12-13).

Do you know how salt loses its savor? I didn't know this. I'll bet you can remember back

when you were young, they used to dig the salt out of the earth, the dirt and everything, the impurities. They got the salt because it was in a deposit or an area where you could go. Kind of like a rock. It was in a rocky area. You dig it out and you put it in a bag. You tie the bag and hang it by the stove. When you're cooking, you take that bag and drop it and test it. Drop it in some more, a little bit more until you get it just right. Then take it out and hang it up again. You get just the right amount of salt in whatever it is that you're cooking.

After a while that bag of salt doesn't work anymore. It's lost its savor. What you do is you take it out to the path and you drop it on the path where it kills the grass as you walk over it and it's under your feet. If salt has lost its savor, it's good for nothing but to be thrown out and to be trampled upon by men. What you do is go back and get more salt and put it in the bag.

It's kind of the same way with us. We need to be renewed daily. We're not 100% all the time. Very seldom are we ever 100%. As the Holy Spirit is used, you renew it, daily. Sometimes our faith is more than at other times. We have to ask God to renew our faith in us and renew all these other spiritual gifts and all these other Holy ingredients and characteristics, they have to be renewed. That bag has to be filled up again because it will not salt the porridge anymore. Salt is pretty good about having some endurance to it, but eventually, you have to throw it out.

It's important in God's chosen people, Holy, to be like Christ, to have His mind. Christ says that He gave all these helpers for the perfecting of the saints, for the completion, or for the love, loving them and helping them get to perfection.

Ephesians 4:12: "...for *the* work of *the* ministry, for *the* edifying of the body of Christ; **until we all come into the unity of the faith...**" (vs 12-13). Just think about that in the Body of Christ today, the unity of faith.

"...and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man..." (vs 13).

Matthew 5:48: "Therefore, you shall be perfect, even as your Father Who *is* in heaven is perfect." That's our goal. The *covenant of salt* helps us do that.

Ephesians 4:13: "...**unto the measure...** [your measuring, you got your tape] ...**of the stature of the fullness of Christ...** [our example] ...so that we no longer be children, tossed and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the sleight of men in *cunning* craftiness, with a view to the systematizing of the error... [here's the salt again]: ...but **holding the Truth...** [having that

Spirit of Truth in us through the Holy Spirit] ...in love, may in all things grow up into Him Who is the Head, *even* Christ from Whom all the body, fitly framed and compacted together by *that which* every joint supplies, according to *its* inner working in *the* measure of each individual part, is making the **increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love**" (vs 13-16). Love, the *covenant of salt*. Again, Christ tells us to:

- have salt in yourself
- have peace with one another
- love one another (John 13:34)

He says that *you are the salt of the earth*.

I just want to say that I have three or four pages of characteristics that salt directly applies to Christ's example, Christ's character, the things that create in us Holy, righteous character, which is the goal! That's the *covenant of salt*. The purpose is not for our benefit. The purpose is not for us. *The purpose for God putting the salt in the sacrifice and our becoming a living sacrifice is for the world*.

The showpiece for the world, to show them that God loves them, because they don't know God. Remember the veil that was put over their eyes? There's a period of time where they're not going to know God and He does that on purpose. The parables where they didn't know God; they didn't understand that. He does that for a reason: to save this world.

Eph. 2:2 says that Satan is 'the god of this world, the prince of the power of the air.' He wants to take this world and destroy it. He wants to take the plan of God and destroy it and that means mankind. He doesn't like the fact that our potential is greater than what his is, that we'll be the very sons of God (Rom. 8:14-16). That's what we're going to be, if we're led by the Spirit, **if** we choose to do the terms and conditions of the covenants that God gives us.

Matthew 24:21: "For then shall there be great tribulation, such as has not been from *the* beginning of *the* world until this time, nor ever shall be *again*." A time is coming very soon that's going to be amazing! Nobody has ever seen it or will see it again. That's why your reward as a first fruit is so amazing, because there'll never be another time like this. The people who live into the Millennium won't have this situation that we're in right now. They won't have the demands that are:

- on our character
- on our growth
- on the things we do,
- on the trials we go through
- on the things we have to put up with in society

The *covenant of salt* that we're trying to develop for the work for the purpose. Here's what would happen if we were not here.

Verse 22: "And if those days were not limited, there would no flesh be saved; **but for the elect's sake**... [for us] ...those days shall be limited." That's because we're here and we're trying. We're agreeing to the *covenant of salt* that God has set up with Israel when He established Israel, the tabernacle and the sacrifices.

He's given us the charge to help usher in that Kingdom of God and to help to be an example and a light unto the world. That's our job. That's our calling. That's our commitment and our commission.

- How are we doing?
- Are we yielding?
- Are we submitting?
- Are we fighting it?
- How are we doing?

We have to ask ourselves those questions. The rewards are great and the world is worth it.

Everyone that you see driving up and down the road that you get upset with, think of them as your *potential brother in the Body of Christ* and in the Kingdom of God as a spirit being. You'll look at them a little differently.

That's the covenant of salt that we have to develop with in us!

All Scripture from *The Holy Bible In Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter.

Scriptural Reverences:

- 1) Exodus 40:17
- 2) Leviticus 2:1-2, 13
- 3) Numbers 18:9, 11, 13, 19
- 4) Exodus 19:5-6
- 5) 1-Peter 2:1-10
- 6) Deuteronomy 7:6-9
- 7) Hebrews 9:22
- 8) Exodus 31:13-17
- 9) Romans 12:1-3, 10-21
- 10) Ephesians 5:8-10
- 11) Galatians 5:22-26
- 12) Galatians 6:2
- 13) Genesis 26:5
- 14) Revelation 5:10
- 15) Mark 9:49-50
- 16) Matthew 5:11-13
- 17) Ephesians 4:12-13
- 18) Matthew 5:48
- 19) Ephesians 4:13-16
- 20) Matthew 24:21-22

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Genesis 15
- Leviticus 17:11; 1:2-3, 10, 14
- Numbers 18:8
- 1-Corinthians 6:19
- Ephesians 2:20
- Ezekiel 37:27-28
- Romans 4:17
- Deuteronomy 29; 30
- Hebrews 6:18
- John 6:44
- Acts 2:38
- Psalm 51
- Matthew 22:37-39
- John 17:11, 21
- Philippians 2:5
- Isaiah 55:8
- Ephesians 4:26; 2:10
- 1-Peter 2:21
- 2-Peter 3:18
- Revelation 22
- John 13:34
- Ephesians 2:2
- Romans 8:14-16

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