

# LEVITICUS

## Chapter 2

### *Laws for Grain Offerings*

**“When anyone brings a grain offering as an offering to the LORD, his offering shall be of fine flour. He shall pour oil on it and put frankincense on it 2 and bring it to Aaron's sons the priests. And he shall take from it a handful of the fine flour and oil, with all of its frankincense, and the priest shall burn this as its memorial portion on the altar, a food offering with a pleasing aroma to the LORD. 3 But the rest of the grain offering shall be for Aaron and his sons; it is a most holy part of the LORD's food offerings. 4 “When you bring a grain offering baked in the oven as an offering, it shall be unleavened loaves of fine flour mixed with oil or unleavened wafers smeared with oil. 5 And if your offering is a grain offering baked on a griddle, it shall be of fine flour unleavened, mixed with oil. 6 You shall break it in pieces and pour oil on it; it is a grain offering. 7 And if your offering is a grain offering cooked in a pan, it shall be made of fine flour with oil. 8 And you shall bring the grain offering that is made of these things to the LORD, and when it is presented to the priest, he shall bring it to the altar. 9 And the priest shall take from the grain offering its memorial portion and burn this on the altar, a food offering with a pleasing aroma to the LORD. 10 But the rest of the grain offering shall be for Aaron and his sons; it is a most holy part of the LORD's food offerings. 11 “No grain offering that you bring to the LORD shall be made with leaven, for you shall burn no leaven nor any honey as a food offering to the LORD. 12 As an offering of firstfruits you may bring them to the LORD, but they shall not be offered on the altar for a pleasing aroma. 13 You shall season all your grain offerings with salt. You shall not let the salt of the covenant with your God be missing from your grain offering; with all your offerings you shall offer salt. 14 “If you offer a grain offering of firstfruits to the LORD, you shall offer for the grain offering of your firstfruits fresh ears, roasted with fire, crushed new grain. 15 And you shall put oil on it and lay frankincense on it; it is a grain offering. 16 And the priest shall burn as its memorial portion some of the crushed grain and some of the oil with all of its frankincense; it is a food offering to the LORD.**

### 2:1–3 “Most Holy” Foods for Priestly Consumption

<i>Offering</i>	<i>Food Item</i>	<i>Reference</i>
Private grain offering	Flour	2:3
Private grain offering	Bread	2:10
Public grain offering	Flour	6:17–18; 10:12
Sin offering	Meat	6:17, 25, 29
Guilt offering	Meat	6:17; 7:1–7
Showbread	Loaves	24:5–9 (TLSB)

**2:1** *grain offering*. It was made of grain or fine flour. If baked or cooked, it consisted of cakes or wafers made in a pan or oven or on a griddle. It was the only bloodless offering, but it was to accompany the burnt offering (see Nu 28:3–6), sin offering (see Nu 6:14–15) and fellowship offering (see 9:4; Nu 6:17). The amounts of grain offering ingredients specified to accompany a bull, ram or lamb sacrificed as a

burnt offering are given in Nu 28:12–13. A representative handful of flour was to be burned on the altar with the accompanying offerings, and the balance was to be baked without yeast and eaten by the priests in their holy meals (6:14–17). The flour that was burned on the altar was mixed with olive oil for shortening, salted for taste and accompanied by incense, but it was to have no yeast or honey—neither of which was allowed on the altar (vv. 11–13). The cooked product was similar to pie crust. The worshiper was not to eat any of the grain offering, and the priests were not to eat any of their own grain offerings, which were to be totally burned (6:22–23). The Hebrew word for grain offering can mean “present” or “gift” and is often used in that way (see Ge 43:11). The sacred gifts expressed devotion to God (see v. 2). (CSB)

Only freshly gathered grain was used in a grain offering. Since God provides all we have, He wants the best we can offer. (TLSB)

*fine flour.* Grain that was milled and sifted. (CSB)

Usually means finely milled flour, though the definition is not certain. The grain used was most likely wheat or, in some instances, barley. (TLSB)

*oil.* Olive oil is often mentioned in connection with grain and new wine as fresh products of the harvest (see Dt 7:13). Used extensively in cooking, it was a suitable part of the worshiper’s gift. (CSB)

*frankincense.* Frankincense was the chief ingredient (see Ex 30:34–35). (CSB)

Aromatic gum resin procured from three types of trees found in southern Arabia and East Africa. For the Israelites, frankincense was mixed with the grain offering and also provided a central ingredient to the sacred incense burned twice daily in the incense altar inside the tent of meeting (cf Ex 30:34). (TLSB)

**2:2 memorial portion.** Substituted for the entire grain offering. “The eucharistic sacrifices were the grain offering, the drink offering, thank offerings, firstfruits, tithes [Leviticus 1–7]” (Ap XXIV 21). (TLSB)

**2:3** After the memorial portion was offered to God and burned on the altar (v 2), the remaining portion of the grain was dedicated to God, consecrated, and given to the priests as food. (TLSB)

*most holy part.* For this reason, the priests were to eat it in the sanctuary area proper and not feed their families with it (6:16–18). (CSB)

Offerings presented to the Lord became “most holy” and provided sustenance for His priests. Only the priests were allowed to eat “most holy” food, and only in the sanctuary (courtyard of the tent of meeting). (TLSB)

**2:4–10** The Lord gave the Israelites regulations for presenting an acceptable grain offering. If the flour was presented as bread, olive oil had to be used in its preparation. Olive oil served to make the memorial portion of the offering flammable. Bread was baked in an oven (2:4) or on a flat plate (2:5). Round cakes were fried in oil (2:7). Frankincense provided a second ingredient to the grain offering (2:1–2), as did salt. (TLSB)

**2:4 unleavened loaves.** Leavening agents were associated with sin, decay, corruption, sickness, and even death. All baked items offered to God as a grain offering were unleavened. The bread of the Passover meal was also unleavened. This significant Israelite feast is also called the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Ex 13:3–16). (TLSB)

**2:5** *griddle*. A clay pan that rested on a stone heated by a fire. Later, iron pans were sometimes used. (CSB)

**2:8** *he shall bring it to the altar*. When the officiating priest brought the memorial portion before the Lord and burned it, it became His property. (TLSB)

**2:11** *honey*. It was forbidden on the altar perhaps because of its use in Canaanite cultic practice. (CSB)

Hbr word for “honey” likely refers to “fruit syrup.” Fruit syrup, like leavened dough, is subject to fermentation and could become putrid; it could not be used as a grain offering. (TLSB)

**2:12** *firstfruits*. See 23:10–11; Ex 23:16, 19; Nu 15:18–20; Dt 18:4–5; 26:1–11. (CSB)

First vegetables and grains of harvest belonged to God. These were dedicated and presented to Him during the Feast of Firstfruits celebrated on the 16th day of Abib. (TLSB)

**2:13** *salt of the covenant*. In ancient times salt was often costly and a valuable part of the diet. Perhaps this is why it was used as a covenant sign and was required for sacrifices. (CSB)

Salt was produced by drying seawater from mineral deposits near the Salt Sea. Salt preserves, so it reminded the Israelites that God would preserve His covenant with Abraham, including the messianic promise that through Abraham “all the families of the earth” would be blessed (Gn 12:1–3). Ultimately, this was fulfilled in the life and teaching of Jesus Christ. Cf Mt 5:13. (TLSB)

**2:14** Fire-roasted grain was commonly eaten in ancient times and is still eaten in Syria and Egypt. (TLSB)

**Ch 2** God provides His OT priests with food through the grain offering. The remaining grain becomes most holy once the priest burns the memorial portion. By grace, the priests are permitted to eat a sacred meal at God’s table. In this, God’s people may see a foreshadowing of Holy Communion. Today, at Christ’s invitation, we come to the Lord’s Table, where we receive the true body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, a holy meal God Himself prepares for the forgiveness of sins. • We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen our faith toward You and love for one another. Amen. (Adapted from *LSB*, p 166.). (TLSB)