

Dead Sea Salt

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If salt degrades over time, it is as good as dead and should be discarded because it cannot preserve anything, or enhance the flavor of food. If it contains other compounds that withstand humidity, these compounds will remain while the sodium chloride, which is the main ingredient of table salt, will evaporate over time. When this occurs, all that is left is a white substance that appears to be salt but with none of its flavor. Also, if salt absorbs steam and odors, its ability to add flavor to food is compromised. Therefore, it needs to be kept in a protected container.

Jesus Christ used salt metaphorically to compare some of its characteristics, with spiritual attributes that are important to God. He also mentioned that salt can fail to fulfill the purposes for which it was created, just as spiritual attributes can fail if exposed to adverse conditions.

Salt is good; but if the salt has lost its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? ³⁵It is neither fit for the land nor for the dunghill, but men throw it out. He who has ears to hear, let him hear! (Lk. 14:34-35; NKJV used throughout unless otherwise noted).

If salt does not fail, it acts as an excellent preservative. This is why God uses salt in conjunction with His covenants, or promises, that will be “preserved” forever. One of these covenants involves God’s promise to King David.

Should you not know that **the Lord God of Israel gave dominion over Israel to David forever**, to him and his sons, **by a covenant of salt?** (2Chr. 13:5; emphasis added).

The preservation of God’s covenant with David is confirmed more than once in scripture.

But they shall serve the Lord their God, and **David their king, whom I will raise up** (resurrect) for them (Jer. 30:9; cf. Eze. 34:23-24; 37:23-24; Hos. 3:5; Am. 9:11; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

God’s everlasting covenant with mankind is also preserved forever, as pictured symbolically by salt that is added to the offerings (see study: *The Everlasting Covenant*),

And every offering of your grain offering you shall season with salt; **you shall not allow the salt of the covenant of your God to be lacking from your grain offering. With all your offerings you shall offer salt** (Lev. 2:13; emphasis added).

The principle of willingly sacrificing something of value, in order to achieve something of greater importance or value, was a central lesson of the animal sacrifices during the First Covenant. Preserving this truth is why salt was added to these sacrifices because they foreshadowed the ultimate sacrifice of Jesus Christ, whose death would “provide the way” to everlasting life (Jn. 10:7-18; 14:6).

When you offer them (animal sacrifices) before the Lord, **the priests shall throw salt on them**, and (then) they will offer them as a burnt offering to the Lord (Eze. 43:24; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

Even when the animal sacrificial system was fulfilled by Christ’s death (Heb. 10:4), the principle of being willing to sacrifice is preserved, and will continue forever.

Now you Philippians know also that in the beginning of the gospel, when I (Paul) departed

from Macedonia, no church shared with me concerning giving and receiving but you only. ¹⁶For even in Thessalonica you sent aid once and again for my necessities. ¹⁷Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that abounds to your account. ¹⁸Indeed I have received all and abound. I am full, having received from Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, **a sweet smelling aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God** (Phil. 4:15-18; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

I (Paul) beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you **present your bodies a living sacrifice**, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service (Rom. 12:1; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

All the apostles of Christ were martyred, except John who recorded the book of Revelation. Therefore, they were literally sacrificed while fulfilling the work God gave them.

Yes and **if I** (Paul) **am being poured out as a drink offering on the sacrifice and service of your faith**, I am glad and rejoice with you all (Phil. 2:17; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

Being genuinely thankful to God is regarded as a sacrifice because man's carnal mind is naturally hostile toward God (Rom. 8:7).

Therefore by him (Christ) let us continually **offer the sacrifice of praise to God**, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name (Heb. 13:15; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

The salt of the offerings was an intrinsic part of them; with no separation between the salt and offering intended. Therefore, as the death of a sacrificial animal foreshadowed the death of Christ, who would come to permanently heal the

sins of the world, the salt itself pictured the healing actions of Jesus Christ.

Then the men of the city said to Elisha, "Please notice, the situation of this city is pleasant, as my lord sees; but the water is bad, and the ground barren." ²⁰And he said, "Bring me a new bowl, and **put salt in it.**" So they brought it to him. ²¹Then he went out to the source of the water, and cast in the salt there, and said, "Thus says the Lord: **'I have healed this water; from it there shall be no more death or barrenness.'**" (2Kgs. 2:19-21; emphasis added)

As water often symbolizes the actions of spirit beings, either good or evil (Jn. 7:38-39; cf. Rev. 12:15), the bad water in the above case caused death, and therefore represented the spirit of Satan and his angels (Heb. 2:14). Thankfully, the salt representing Christ's sacrifice "cleansed" the sins that cause the death of everyone affected by Satan's rebellious way of living. These sins are compared to "flavorless food", as the next scripture confirms, and they need to be removed by "salt" that symbolizes the cleansing actions of Christ's sacrifice.

Can flavorless food be eaten without salt? Or is there any taste in the white of an egg? ⁷**My soul refuses to touch them; they are loathsome food to me** (Job 6:6-7; emphasis added).

Because Satan's values permeate this present evil age (Gal. 1:4), mankind has unwittingly absorbed his way of thinking, living, and interacting; just as salt can absorb odors that render it useless. This is why God regards both Satan and mankind as abominable in their current state of rebellion.

And he (Christ) said to them (religious leadership), "You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For **what is highly esteemed among**

men is an abomination in the sight of God.” (Lk. 16:15; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added)

Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶For **all that is in the world – the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life – is not of the Father but is of the world.** ¹⁷And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides (is preserved) forever (1Jn. 2:15-17; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

As mentioned previously, salt is used as a preservative which is why Christ said the following about God’s faithful and obedient servants.

You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned (fulfill its purpose)? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men (Mt. 5:13; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

Therefore, God’s faithful and obedient servants are to act as a “preservative”, that benefits other people. Abraham’s genuine concern for the preservation of others is a good example of this,

And the Lord said, “Because the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous (1Jn. 3:4), ²¹I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry against it that has come to me; and if not, I will know” (Gen. 18:20-21; Ed. note in parenthesis).

And Abraham came near and said, “Would you also destroy the righteous with the wicked (Ps. 119:172b)? ²⁴Suppose there were fifty righteous within the city; would you destroy the place and not spare it for the fifty righteous that were in it?” (Gen. 18:23-24; Ed. note in parenthesis).

And the Lord said, “If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes.” (Gen. 18:26)

(Then Abraham answered) “Suppose there were five less than the fifty righteous; would you destroy all of the city for lack of five?” And the Lord said, “If I find there forty-five, I will not destroy it.” ²⁹Then Abraham spoke to him again and said, “Suppose there should be forty found there?” And he said, “I will not do it for the sake of forty.” ³⁰And Abraham said, “Let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak: Suppose thirty should be found there?” And he said, “I will not do it if I find thirty there.” ³¹Then Abraham said, “Indeed now, I have taken it upon myself to speak to the Lord: Suppose twenty should be found there?” And he said, “I will not destroy it for the sake of twenty.” ³²And Abraham said, “Let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak but once more: Suppose ten should be found there? And he said, “I will not destroy it for the sake of ten.” (Gen. 18:28-32; Ed. note in parenthesis).

Those who continue the work of Abraham today, will be partly responsible for preserving this planet in the future. The main reason is because they are striving to “preserve” God’s law and commandments, while still expressing a deep concern for the preservation of their fellow citizens,

For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. ²²And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but **for the elect’s sake those days will be shortened** (Mt. 24:21-22; cf. Mk. 13:20; emphasis added).

Because the majority of mankind lives contrary to God’s law and commandments, they have not been seasoned with the salt that is associated with the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Instead, they

will need to go through various fiery trials to bring them to the point where they can be preserved forever through repentance of sin, and newness of life made possible by Christ's shed blood (Rom. 6:1-6; Heb. 9:22),

For everyone (who has not repented of sin) **will be seasoned with fire** (Mk. 9:49a; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

To summarize so far, God's promises, such as His *Everlasting Covenant* with mankind and His covenant with David, are associated with salt because it represents their everlasting preservation. Salt is an intrinsic part of the animal sacrifices which prefigure the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, whose shed blood was necessary to preserve life forever, following repentance of sin (Ac. 2:38). Salt also represents the work of God's faithful and obedient servants who strive to preserve His law and commandments, as well as being genuinely concerned about the preservation of their fellow citizens. As salt improves the flavor of food, God's servants work to improve the flavor of this world's "metaphoric food", which God currently regards as loathsome due to its connection with "consuming Satan's values" (Gen. 2:17; cf. 1Jn. 3:4; 2Tim. 2:19). Prior to his rebellion against God, Lucifer was "the salt of the earth" (Eze. 28:12-15). However, his sins have brought him to the point where he is as useless as "dead sea salt" that has lost all its value. Now it is only worthy of being "trampled underfoot" because it consists of nothing but impurities, or sin (Mt. 5:13; cf. Rom. 16:20; Mal. 4:3).

Finally, and this is not a coincidence, Jesus Christ compared God's faithful and obedient servants to "light", and he did this immediately after comparing them to "salt" in Matthew 5:13.

You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵**Nor do they light**

a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. ¹⁶Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven (Mt. 5:14-16).

One of the reasons the ancient nation of Israel was instructed to create a lampstand for God's temple was to emphasize the importance of shining the light of God's law to the surrounding Gentile nations.

For the commandment is a lamp, and the law is light... (Prov. 6:32a; cf. Ps. 18:28; 19:8; 119:105; emphasis added).

Surely I (Moses) have taught you statutes and judgments, just as the Lord my God commanded me, that you should act according to them in the land which you go to possess. ⁶therefore be careful to observe them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of **the peoples who will hear all these statutes, and say, "Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people."** ⁷**For what great nation is there that has God so near to it, as the Lord our God is to us, for whatever reason we may call upon Him?** ⁸**And what great nation is there that has such statutes and righteous judgments as are in all this law which is set before you this day?** (Dt. 4:5-8; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

Because they failed miserably at this "God-given responsibility", Jesus Christ had to come and fulfill the work they refused to do (Ac. 7:51-53).

I, the Lord (Almighty), have called You (Christ) in righteousness, and will hold Your hand; **I will keep You and give You as a covenant to the people, as a light to the Gentiles** (Isa. 42:6; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

Indeed He (Almighty God) says, "It is too small a thing that You (Christ) should be My Servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved ones of Israel; **I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles**, that You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth (Isa. 49:6; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

He (Simeon) took Him (the young Christ) up in his arms and blessed God and said: ²⁹"Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace, according to Your word; ³⁰For my eyes have seen Your salvation ³¹which You have prepared before the face of all peoples, ³²**a light to bring revelation to the Gentiles**, and the glory of Your people Israel." (Lk. 2:28-32; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added)

In contrast to the failure of the ancient nation of Israel, God's faithful and obedient servants today are diligently applying themselves to teaching the truth about God's law and commandments, by word and personal example. By doing this, they are fulfilling the meaning behind Christ's comparative use of salt and light.

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