

Ye are the Salt of the Earth

Written by Joel McNabb

Tuesday, 30 June 2009 13:58 -

Jesus said, "Ye are the salt of the earth" (Matt. 5: 13). The questions then arise, "What does he mean by the term salt? And why are we the salt of the earth?" These are very good questions to ask, and many of you may have these same questions, if you think that the things in the Bible mean anything. Why salt? Isn't it just something that we put in food? This is not a question that can be answered by a short comment or reply. Maybe some would just take for granted that Jesus said it and leave it at that, but we know that there was nothing Jesus said or did that wasn't for a reason or to fulfill prophecies. John 6:38 says, "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." I hope you will have the time, as I proceed to answer what I see in the Bible as to why salt is mentioned here.

Salt is a white powder or colorless crystalline solid, consisting mainly of sodium chloride and used for seasoning and preserving food. The word salary comes from a Latin word meaning salt. In days of the Roman Empire, salt was a precious enough commodity (as a seasoning and as a means of preserving food) that sometimes soldiers were paid in salt, which they could both use on their own food and trade for other things. That is where the expression "worth his salt" came from, meaning that a worker is worth what you are paying him. The shape of salt is also important to note here. The crystal structure of salt is a cube, each side of equal length: foursquare. The use of salt also has a healing virtue, and our consumption of it is a necessity in our daily diet.

According to Shirleys-Wellness-Cafe.com, in its article Salt Deficiency: the cause of many serious diseases, "An eight-year study of a New York City hypertensive population stratified for sodium intake levels found those on low-salt diets had more than four times as many heart attacks as those on normal-sodium diets – the exact opposite of what the "salt hypothesis" would have predicted. (1995). Dr. Jeffrey R. Cutler documented no health outcomes benefits of lower-sodium diets. Both sea salt and rock salt were well known to the ancient Greeks who noted that eating salty food affected basic body functions such as digestion and excretion (urine and stools). This led to salt being used medically. The healing methods of Hippocrates (460 BC) especially made frequent use of salt.□ Hippocrates mentions inhalation of steam from salt-water. We know today that the anti-inflammatory effects of inhaled salt provide relief from respiratory symptoms (c). Thus, 2000 years ago, Greek medicine had already discovered topical use of salt for skin lesions, drinking salty or mineralized waters for digestive troubles and inhaling salt for respiratory diseases!" Everything that God created on the earth reveals to us something about God. "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead" (Rom. 1:20). Everything that God created in the heavens and on the earth, even the salt that we use daily, will reveal something about God, and his work on earth with man (Col. 1:12-29).

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In Matthew chapters 5 through 7, we read that one day Jesus was feeling a little crowded by all the people that were flocking to him. To get away from the multitude, he took a walk up on a nearby mount. Soon his disciples followed him, and he began to teach them a new set of Commandments. If you read carefully, you will see that he is not destroying or taking anything away from the Ten Commandments, but rather enhancing them, and making them stronger. Some think that this sermon was to all the people that were around Jesus at the time, but verse one and two are very clear that the disciples came to him alone, and he taught them, as he would often do. The prophecy foretold that a prophet would arise like Moses. Jesus was that prophet, not coming to destroy the law but to fulfill it: to make it come alive. No longer was it just words on stone or parchment, but the word made flesh. Jesus did everything that was written in the law, the prophets, and the psalms concerning Him.

Remember that the law had a shadow of good things to come and not the very image (Heb. 10:1). As Moses went up to the mount, so Jesus went up to a mount. Both were given commandments, and set up priesthoods. That day on that mountain, Jesus was directly fulfilling the prophecy of Moses, and gave those disciples his new covenant, and made them the priests of that covenant by giving them the covenant of salt, as had also been given to Aaron and his sons (Num. 18:19). "All the heave offerings of the holy things, which the children of Israel offer unto the LORD, have I given thee, and thy sons and thy daughters with thee, by a statute for ever: it is a covenant of salt for ever before the LORD unto thee and to thy seed with thee." To prove this, Jesus calls His disciples "the salt of the earth," because the priest that ministered in Aaron's office in that day had lost the savour. No longer was he bearing the fruits of that Priesthood. "If the salt hath lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men" (Matt. 5:13). God was ready to make a change of the priesthood, and with "the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law" (Heb. 7:12).

From the time of Noah, it was the priest's job to offer burnt offerings on an altar to the Lord, and it would come up before Him as a sweet savour. Throughout the Law of Moses, the Priests were to offer burnt offerings, according unto their manner, for a sweet savour, a sacrifice made by fire unto the LORD. All offerings were to be offered with salt by the priests (Lev. 2:13). By the days of Jesus, the priests had become so corrupt that their offerings no longer had a pleasant smell before God. It was time for a change of the priesthood, and Jesus was setting it up. He gave the covenant of salt to those disciples whom he would leave in charge. Now when Jesus became a high priest after the order of Melchisedec, and gave gifts to men, He would already have the priesthood set in order. We can see that they were doing that job in Acts 6, by ordaining the seven men to take care of the business of the widows; they could now give themselves to continual prayer and ministry of the word, as the new priests of the Lord.

After Israel had taken the land of promise, in the days of the Judges, there was no king in Israel

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and everyone interpreted the law and did what was right in their own eyes. Israel wanted a king so that they could be like all the rest of the nations around them, instead of trying to find out what God wanted. So the Lord gave them a King and chose Saul to rule the kingdom, but his pride got the best of him, and God had to replace him. From the sheepfolds of a man named Jesse, God took one of his sons, a young lad named David, and anointed him King over Israel, and gave him a covenant of salt (2 Chron. 13:5). Now, Israel has two covenants of salt: one given to the priests forever and now to the king, both having to do with the ruling of Israel and governing of God's people. So when Jesus said, "Ye are the salt of the earth," it was to those men whom He had chosen to lead His people under the new priesthood and new covenant. The early church came under that apostles' priesthood, and they abode steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship. They did so throughout the ministries of Peter, James the Lord's brother, and Jude. This fulfilled the allegory of the covenant of salt for the priesthood; but if all the scriptures have to be fulfilled before Jesus can return, then God will yet establish a kingdom with a covenant of salt, and our Lord will sit and reign on the throne of David in the tabernacle of David (Acts 3:21, Isa. 16:5, Amos 9:11, and Acts 15:16).

Jesus will come again, and a throne will be established. He ordered it on the cross. Not only did He shed blood on the cross to save sinners, but He also purchased the church with His blood and gave Himself for it. Most Christians teach and believe we are all the church and the body of Christ. Well if we are, then who will we rule? If Jesus set up leadership in the early church, who is to say that, at this end of the age, He will not do the same thing. Is not Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today and forever? We love to quote Heb. 13:8, but forget verses 7 and 17, "Remember and obey them which have the rule over you." As in the book of Judges, even so today there is no king in Israel. Those who are Israelites inwardly all do that which is right in their own eyes. Why else would we have so many churches and beliefs today? You may say that Jesus is King and Lord of our lives now, but I ask you where is He now? Is not Jesus at the place where Steven saw Him, sitting at the right hand of the Father, as our High priest? Jesus will be King of kings one day and soon, but God has to establish His kingdom once again on earth and give it to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. That kingdom, with the early resurrected saints, will be the Kings and Priests that will rule with Jesus, having the Covenants of Salt, in that city that is foursquare (the shape of a grain of salt). All nations will then come unto the New Jerusalem, and ask to be taught the way of the Lord and His laws. (Isa. 2:2-4, Mic. 4:1, Heb. 12:18-29, Rev. 20:1-5, and Rev. 21:1-29). Then shall every knee bow and every tongue shall confess that Jesus is Lord; and they will have to come to the Feast of Tabernacles, and acknowledge His authority every year or suffer the consequences of famine in their land until they bow and confess that Jesus is the ruler, and also those that are with Him, who have suffered for the right to become kings and priest of the Lord. (Zec. 14:16-21, 2 Tim. 2:12).

"For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as

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calves of the stall. And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the LORD of hosts. Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments. Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse" (Mal. 4:1-6).

The Lord hears our prayers today, but how much more will He hear when He smells the savory scent of their prayers when offered by the priest, the salt of the earth, as Job did for his children and also for his friends that had given him a hard time. God told Job to offer burnt offerings and pray for them, because Job's prayers were acceptable, and God would hear him.

We now wait for that day, when Jesus will send His messenger, who shall prepare the way, even the messenger of the covenant, the salt covenant of the leadership of God's people. Not many preachers and ministers today will want to hear this messenger when he shows up, for he will be like a refiner's fire, and fuller's soap; he will purify the sons of Levi, God's ministry of today, to purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer once again an offering in righteousness. Then will the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant and come up with a sweet smell unto the Lord, as in the days of old, and in the former years, the days of Peter and John (Mal. 3:1-5). Seek the Lord, saints. Be prepared. Continue to send up your prayers for the Lord of Glory to raise up mighty men of God, and that the offering of the Gentiles might come up with acceptance on the altar of God. The Lord bless and keep you and make His face to shine upon you and give you peace.