

Salt Baby

The Only Son Worth His Salt

December 24, 2023

Today we'll be learning the perfect recipe for Christmas!

But first: **Are you sweet and salty?** Because, as you may recall, we saw that Jesus said:

"You [children of the Lord] are the salt of the earth." – Matthew 5:13 NIV

Not *should* be, *would* be, or *could* be. But, from God's perspective, this is what we are. Because, as we saw, **salt refers to grace with which we season our words.** Which is why Paul says, to:



[Pray] that God may open a door for our message ... [and] let your conversation [regarding our message] be always full of grace, seasoned with salt [i.e. full of the salty seasoning of grace] – Colossians 4:3-6 NIV

But our message comes from God's Word, of which the Psalmist says:



Your words ... [are] sweeter than honey to my mouth! – Psalm 119:103 NIV

[Because] Pleasant words are like a honeycomb, sweetness to the soul – Proverbs 16:24 NKJ



So let's ask ourselves: **Am I sweet and salty?** We'll each have our own unique blend, which will basically depend on our **command of His Word** and our **control of our own words.** We're like Chex Mix. Ever notice how everyone's Chex Mix tastes a little different, even though we follow the same basic recipe on the box? We're like that. Mom used to double the seasoning with a touch of sugar. Well, **God's Word is like honey on our lips that we salt to taste with grace,** so others can "taste and see that the Lord is good." (Ps 34:8) I was doing some last minute Clausmas shopping at Walmart, and I saw this dad pushing a cart with a screaming brat – I mean, boy – in it. And the dad was keeping his cool and graciously saying things like, "We're almost done, Jamie ... I know you hate this Jamie, but hang on and try not to scream." I had to tell him I was impressed with his patience with Jamie. And he said, "I'm Jamie!" None of that actually happened. But, you know what did?



The Word became flesh ... and we beheld His glory, the glory ... full of [the salty seasoning of] grace and [the sweet honeycomb of] truth. ... Of His fullness [of the glory of the perfect mix of truth and grace] we have all received [like the recipe on the box] ... [for] [this mix of salty] grace and [sweet] truth came through Jesus Christ. – John 1:14-17 NKJ

When the Word became flesh. And when the Word became flesh:

The angel said to [the shepherds] ... “There is born to you this day in the city of *David* a *Savior*, who is Christ the Lord. And *this* will be the sign to you: *you* will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger.” [i.e. feed trough] – Luke 2:10-12 NKJ



You know, more than a few folks have left His Place, complaining there’s just too much Scripture on Sunday mornings. Well, all I can say to that, is: I’m sure glad they’re not here today! But I get it; **if you don’t have a sweet tooth for truth, it can get a bit nauseating.** After all, we’ve *been warned!*

[As honey] is *sweet* to your *taste*; so shall ... *wisdom* be to your *soul* ... Have you *found* honey? [Why, *yes I have!*] Eat *only* as *much* as you *need*, lest you be [*overly*] *filled* with it and *vomit*. – Proverbs 24:13-14, 25:16 NKJ

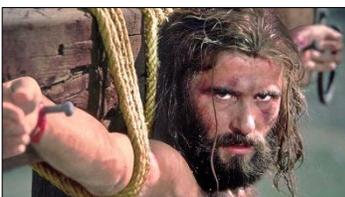
So I’m gonna do my best to stop short of that, and give you only the bit o’ honey you’ll need, in order to see some incredible things! Because, **God uses the word “sign” to refer to things that point to other things.** Usually *prophetically*. And those “swaddling cloths” and that *fodder* “manger” hold a *key* to a long-forgotten *mystery*. Cuz, **know what they both have in common with David’s Savior-baby? Salt, baby!** Ezekiel is the *only prophet* to mention *swaddling cloths*; and it’s when God tells His *rebellious* children in Jerusalem *how* they’ve missed out on *His attention*.

Thus says the Lord God to [abominable] Jerusalem ... “As for *your* nativity, on the day *you* were born *your* navel cord was *not* cut, nor were *you* washed in water to *cleanse* you; [but *Jesus was!* and] *you* were *not rubbed* with *salt* [which was used as a *disinfectant*] nor wrapped in swaddling cloths.” [But *Jesus was!*] – Ezekiel 16:4 NKJ

And the prophet Isaiah lays our *sweet Savior-baby* in a *salted manger!*

^{1:3} An ox knows its owner, and a donkey [knows] its *Master's manger* ... ^{7:14} Behold, the virgin will be with Child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel. [God with us] ... ^{8:18} Behold, [we] are for *signs* ... ^{9:6} For a *Child* will be *born* to us, a *Son* ... ^{9:7} on the *throne of David* [cuz He’s the *everlasting Son of David*] ... *forevermore* ... [See all those *ellipses* (the “...”s)? I’m *condensing Isaiah’s first thirty honey-dripping chapters!*] ^{12:2} Behold, God is my Yeshua/ [Heb.] *Jesus*/ [Eng., and literally] *Salvation* ... *and* He has become my *Jesus/Yeshua/Salvation*. ... [But] ^{28:20} The bed is too short on which [a *man* is able] to *stretch out*, [cuz it’s a *manger* for a *donkey’s Master*] and the *blanket* is too narrow to *wrap* oneself in. [Cuz it’s *Ezekiel’s salted swaddling cloth*; and] ... ^{30:24} [On that day] the *donkeys* ... will eat *salted fodder* [from the *Master’s manger*] – Isaiah 1-30 LSB

So, the “sign” of Ezekiel’s “swaddling cloths” along with Isaiah’s “manger” point to the virgin birth of Jesus, God *with us*, *coming to save us*, immediately **having His tiny body rubbed with salt, and being laid in a manger of salted-straw.** Because, before the cross, He reminded ‘em all, that:



“Every [OT] *sacrifice* will be *seasoned* with *salt*.” – Mark 9:49 NKJ

Because God commanded it in the *Law*, in *Leviticus*, saying:

You shall *not* let the *salt* of the *covenant* with your *God* be *missing* ... with *all your offerings* you shall offer *salt*. – Leviticus 2:13 ESV

[But, as Hebrews points out in the NT] The law, having a [fore] *shadow of the good things to come*, and *not the very image* [earlier saying *Jesus is “the very image of God” (1:3) to come!*] ... can never with *these same [old] sacrifices ...* make those who approach *perfect*. ... Therefore, when *He* [as Paul says, “emptied himself ... taking the form of a servant,” (Phil 2:7) and] came into the world, [“being born in the likeness of men” (Phil 2:7)] He said: “*Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, but a [salted] body You have prepared for Me*. ... Behold, *I have come*— in [the signs in] the volume of the book it is written of *Me*— to do *Your will, O God*.” ... [And] By that will we have been sanctified through the *offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all*. – Hebrews 10:1-10 NKJ



This is *the most significant Christmas Scripture*, that you'll *rarely-if-ever find* on a Christmas card, or in Christmas pageant or program or play. But **the crucifixion isn't just part of the Christmas story, it's the reason for it!** The “reason for the season” is His birth; but **the reason for His birth was the gift of His death.** About that, He himself was quite clear, saying:

“I came here ... to *serve others*, and to *give My life*” – Matthew 20:28 NLT

Our *Omnipotent Creator* took the *plunge* into a *tiny pool of amniotic saltwater*, because **the OT law required innocent creatures to be sacrificed to make obvious the subtle consequences of sin**, as an *illustration* and a *foreshadow*, not a *permanent solution*. For that, we'd need a *perfectly innocent human*. And so, when the Law had served its purpose, **God himself made himself into a salted sacrifice, to satisfy the justice that reality itself demands.**

[You see] Since the children [us] have *flesh and blood*, He too [God] shared in their humanity so that *by His death [as one of us]* He might ... *free* those who all their lives were held in *slavery by their fear of death*. ... For *this reason* He had to be made like His brothers in every way, in order [to] become a merciful and faithful High Priest ... [and to] make *atonement* for [all] the sins of [all] the people. [Once and for all] – Hebrews 2:14-17 NIV

Cuz *perfect justice* knows a *good deal* when it sees it! How many crushed Rolex watches, ruined beyond repair, would you trade for a priceless Rolex in *mint condition*? All of 'em! *Easily!* Which is why **a perfect, sinless, Son of Man had more trade-in value than every broken human together.** Ever. But *why* did God want *all* this salt added to every sacrifice in the first place? Well, *that* has *everything* to do with the *secret story* of how the *Son of David*, from the *tribe of Judah*, could become a “faithful High Priest” without being from the *only* tribe God *allowed* to become His priests – the *Levites!* We gotta take the *long way* around the *barn* for *this* one; so *stick with me*, cuz it's a *sweet ride!* In the *beginning ...* of the *Gospels*, the *Son of God* is called:

Jesus Christ, the *Son of David*, the *Son of Abraham* – Matthew 1:1 NKJ

But, in the OT, **SON and SEED and CHRIST are interchangeable;** like when God promised *David*:

“I will set up *your Seed ... forever ...* and *He shall be My Son.*” – 2 Samuel 7:12-14 NKJ

But **sometimes seed means future generations of OFFSPRING**, which can get a bit *confusing*, so *Paul* thankfully *sprinkles* some salt on our *path* to keep us from *slipping up*, revealing that:

To Abraham and his Seed ["Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham"] were the promises made. He does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, [i.e. future generations] but as of one, [saying] "And to your Seed," who is Christ. – Galatians 3:16 NKJ

[And then] The Lord God of Israel gave the dominion over Israel to David forever, to him and his sons, [but ultimately His Seed] by a covenant of salt – 2 Chronicles 13:5 NKJ

What covenant of salt? The only one: when God gives all that's His to His priests ... and the Seed!

"All the contributions of the holy gifts ... I have given to you [Levite priests] and your [Levite] sons and your [Levite] daughters ... It is an everlasting covenant of salt ... to you [all] and your Seed ["your Seed, who is Christ"] ... for an inheritance." – Numbers 18:19, 24 LSB

This is huge! Because, not only does God give Jesus the right to inherit everything holy, but by a pledge of sacrificial salt, appoints His Son to become the one and only non-Levite High Priest! And, why a pledge of sacrificial salt? Because, He'll not only be the High Priest, but the sacrifice!

[As Hebrews puts it] If perfection were through the Levitical priesthood ... [what] need was there that another priest should rise? ... For He [their Seed] of whom these things are spoken belongs to another tribe, from which no man has officiated [David's] ... [For] our Lord arose from Judah ... For such a High Priest was fitting for us ... who does not need daily, as those [Levite] high priests, to offer up sacrifices ... for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself. For ... the word of the oath, [to give dominion to David's Seed forever ... by the priestly covenant of sacrificial salt (2 Chr 13:5)] which came after the law, [of God's priestly covenant of sacrificial salt with His Levite priests and their Seed] appoints the [one and only] Son [of David] who has been perfected forever. – Hebrews 7:11-28 NKJ

And so, to keep this prophetic priestly promise, about the Seed to come, in the forefront of their minds, God made all Israel add to every offering, "the [sacrificial] salt of the [priestly] covenant with God" ... until the everlasting Son arrived in salted swaddling cloths in a salted manger, to become our perfect High Priest, and sacrifice, and King, who, with us, His kingdom of priests, inherits everything! (Rev 1:6, 21:7) And, if all of this has made you feel a bit queasy, suffice it to say:

The [sweet] Word became [salted] flesh ... and we beheld His glory ... full of [perfectly seasoned] grace and [flawlessly sweetened] truth. ... [For] [this glorious mix of] grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. [Our High Priest and Sacrifice] – John 1:14-17 NKJ



Who came to earth to conquer death to rise again. But that's the Easter story. Christmas is all about the salted Sacrifice who came to save His children. And that we do find on Christmas cards, and in Christmas pageants and plays and programs, because that angel told Joseph to:



"Give Him the name Jesus [Yeshua/Salvation] because He will save His people from their sins ... [and] call Him Immanuel (which means God with us)" – Matthew 1:21-23 NIV

Cuz He's on our side. So, check your mix as you mix it up with friends this season, and sweeten it up or season it up till you find the blend that keeps your friends from throwin' it up! Because that just happens to be, the only recipe for a perfect Christmas!