

Numbers Chapter 28-29

Re-Giving of the Law of National Sacrifices and Festivals

Read Numbers 28:1-2

What do you notice about this introduction? The instructions to follow repeat, almost exactly, the instructions given at Mt. Sinai and recorded in Leviticus for the public, national Sacrifices and Festivals. The individual sacrifices necessary to restore a right relationship before God are not covered here. Jesus fulfills all of the law of offerings in his death on the cross (Isaiah 53). But his death does not relieve us of our duty of worship.

Read Numbers 28:3-8 *The Daily Offering*

This pattern of morning and evening prayers continued to be a pattern for Jewish and Christian practice for centuries. An ephah was about 3/5 bushel or 22 liters. A hin was about 4 quarts or 3.5 liters.

Read Numbers 28:9-10 *The Sabbath Offering*

The extra burnt offerings on the Sabbath mean that twice as many are offered that day as on other days of the week.

Read Numbers 28:11-15 *The Monthly Offering*

The New Moon Sacrifices. The first of the month, indicated by the new moon, was an important festival; as many sacrifices were offered then as at Passover or Pentecost (see vv. 16–31). It was an occasion for family worship (1 Sam. 20:5–6; 2 Kings 4:23). It was like the Sabbath, a day when trading stopped (Amos 8:5).

Read Numbers 28:16-25 *The Passover Offering*

The Feast of Unleavened Bread immediately followed the Passover. vs. 18, “ordinary work.” This was less strict than the Sabbath prohibition of any work.

Read Numbers 28:26-31 *The Offering for the Feast of Weeks*

The Feast of Weeks (Pentecost). This took place seven weeks after Passover. It coincided with the grain festival in Israel, so it is called the day of the firstfruits (see also Lev. 23:15–22).

Chapter 29 continues in the same way, with detailed instructions for sacrifices on the high holy days of the Feast of Trumpets (Rosh Hashanah), the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur), and the Feast of Booths/Tabernacles (Sukkot).

The primary purpose of this instruction just before entry into the Land is the emphasis on the sacrificial system in Israel. The imagery of sacrifice is drawn from that of a meal: the worshiper must act as the generous host and give to God all that he would give an important guest (Gen. 18:1–8). **Read Psalm 50:12–15**

It has been calculated that, over the course of a year, these sacrifices involved a total of 113 bulls, 1,086 lambs, over a ton of flour, and 1,000 bottles of oil and wine! What impression would this have made on the Israelites?

The people later will fall short of the blessing of this system of worship in two ways. Can you guess how?

Read Micah 6:6-8

In what ways is this passage consistent with God’s instructions for sacrifices in Leviticus and Numbers? The exaggerated numbers, escalating to sacrifice even of children, shows that the people had corrupted the system of sacrifices into a “fee” for right standing with God. God reminds the people of true righteousness. Which is more difficult: to sacrifice animals, or to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God?

Read Malachi 2:6-9

Why is it that the sacrifice of an animal with a blemish is considered disrespectful toward God?

In what ways can we learn from these principles in our worship of God and our assembly together?

On meeting together for teaching and worship: Hebrews 10:25; 1 Cor. 14:26-33

On excellence in the workmanship of worship: Psalm 33:3, Exodus 31:3; Hebrews 12:28

On meeting together for fellowship meals: 1 Cor. 11:20-21, 33-34

On use of spiritual gifts: 1 Cor. 13:11

On sacrifices: Romans 12:1, Mark 12:41-44