

God's People in the Wilderness
Christian Education
Numbers 28 – 29: Sacrifices and Feasts

P. Phillips
28 April 2019

Introductory Notes for Chapters 28 & 29

The Lord calls them “*my offerings*” (28.1) emphasizing he is the one ordering them, not the people. The word “my” appears three times in verse 2 alone along w/ “to me.”

They were a “pleasing aroma” (i.e., acceptable) to the Lord—if conducted properly and w/ a pure heart. Sacrifices without corresponding purity of heart was an abomination (Prov 21.27: “The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination; how much more when he brings it with evil intent!”)

The sacrifices were to be spotless.

Instructions for the offerings go back to Mt. Sinai and meant to be continued (vs. 6).

These are *community* offerings. Personal offerings are separate.

Num 29.39: You shall present these [community offerings] to the Lord at your appointed times, besides your votive offerings and your freewill offerings, for your burnt offerings and for your grain offerings and for your drink offerings and for your peace offerings.

Quantities of yearly sacrifices (Anson Rainey—*Biblica* 51 [1970]: 485 – 98).

113 bulls

32 rams

1086 lambs

Over a ton of flour

1000 bottles of oil and wine

What does this say about the prosperity of Israel to carry this out year after year?

For the Christian, of course, Jesus's sacrifice takes care of all this, for:

2 Cor 5.21: “He [God] made him [Jesus] who knew no sin to be sin [or sin sacrifice] on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in him.”

Heb 7.27: “He doesn't need to offer sacrifices every day, as high priests do—first for their own sins, then for those of the people. He did this once for all when he offered himself.”

The sacrifices were shadows of the good things to come, for by the fact that they were continually repeated showed they never “make perfect those that draw near [to God]” The sacrifices were reminders of sin (Heb 10.2), but they could not take sin away (Heb 10.3, 4)

Jesus fulfilled the entire sacrificial system by “having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God” (Heb 10.12).

By his sacrifice “we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all (Heb 10.10)

[HOW THIS TIES IN WITH THE PRINCE'S OFFERINGS ENVISIONED BY EZEKIEL FOR THE FUTURE (Ezek 45 & 46) IS LEFT AS AN EXERCISE FOR THE STUDENT.]

Keep all this in mind when reading the details of the sacrifices of the OT.

1 Numbers 28

- 1.1 The sacrifices to be offered (vss. 1 – 8; Lev 23)
- 1.2 The Sabbath (vss. 9, 10)
 - 1.2.1 Goes back to creation (Gen 2.1 – 3)
 - 1.2.2 Emphasized in Ex 20 and Dt 5
 - 1.2.2.1 Ex 20.8 – 11: based on creation
 - 1.2.2.2 Dt 5.12 – 15: based on redemption, which gives basis for the change from Saturday to Sunday by the early church. For a discussion of this change, cf. <https://lifehopeandtruth.com/bible/10-commandments/sabbath/saturday-sunday/>. Note that in Acts 20.7 and in 1 Cor 16.2 the church gathered on the “first day of the week,” or Sunday.
 - 1.2.3 Christ is “Lord of the Sabbath” (Mt 12.1 – 14); preached on the Sabbath (Lk 4.16 [as did Paul—Acts 13.42]); healed on the Sabbath (Jn 5 & 9).
 - 1.2.4 The Sabbath of God continues to this day: Heb 4.1 – 10. TODAY = DAY OF GOD’S REST = SEVENTH DAY OF CREATION. *We are in the seventh day!*
- 1.3 Beginning of the month (new moon) (vss. 11 – 15)
 - 1.3.1 How the lunar year differs from the solar year
 - 1.3.2 Now as then the calendar is based on the moon, not the sun
 - 1.3.3 This was a popular and important occasion: 1 Sam 20.4 – 5; 2 Kgs 4.23; Ezek 26.1; 29.17; 32.1 [The word of the Lord came to Ezekiel these times.].
 - 1.3.4 Albeit, when abused, the prophets disapproved: Is 47.13; Amos 8.4, 5)
 - 1.3.5 The early church did not keep the festival of the new moon. In fact, Paul seems to disapprove of its keeping (Col 2.16 – 17)
 - 1.3.6 Today, still kept by Jewish people as a time of joy where Pss 8 (“O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name...”; 104 (“Bless the Lord, O my soul...”; & 148 (“Praise the Lord...Praise him...Praise him...Praise him...”) are sung.
- 1.4 Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread (vss. 16 – 25)
 - 1.4.1 Well-known to Christians because of Easter (Jesus is our Passover—1 Cor 5.7)
 - 1.4.2 Formative festival because of the Exodus
 - 1.4.3 Passover is a family affair on the 14th day (Ex 12.3 – 14, 21, 22)
 - 1.4.4 The Feast of Unleavened Bread is a community affair (Num 28.18)
 - 1.4.4.1 Each day required a sacrifice (two young bulls, a ram, seven yearling lambs: vss. 19 – 25).
 - 1.4.4.2 A male goat offered each day as a sin offering (Lev 4)
 - 1.4.4.3 No work on the first and the seventh days; they were holy convocations.
 - 1.4.4.4 Vss. 26 – 31: First fruits connected w/ unleavened bread (cf. Lev 23.9 – 14. This is NOT the same as the Feast of Harvest—see below)
 - 1.4.4.4.1 Held on the “Sabbath” following the Feast of Unleavened Bread
 - 1.4.4.4.2 Which “Sabbath?” The regular one or the day after the first day of the feast (i.e., 16 Nisan)?
 - 1.4.4.4.3 Basically, a presentation of the barley harvest
 - 1.4.4.4.4 The time to Pentecost is counted from this sabbath.
 - 1.4.4.5 Note passages where Jesus is the first fruits as we are as Christians.
- 1.5 Feast of Weeks (aka Shavuot, Feast of Harvest) (vss. 26 – 31)
 - 1.5.1 Also known as “Pentecost” since the feast occurred 50 days after the presentation sabbath during the feast of the unleavened bread.
 - 1.5.2 Note the significance of Pentecost to the church (Acts 2)

2 Numbers 29

- 2.1 Civil new year (vss. 1 – 6; Lev 23.23 – 25)
 - 2.1.1 First day of seventh month (Tishri)
 - 2.1.2 Inaugurated by the blowing of the trumpets [show slide of the site]
 - 2.1.3 A sabbath to the Lord

- 2.1.4 Sizable sacrifices made
- 2.1.5 Ten “days of awe” when sins are forgiven by God and by individuals
- 2.2 The Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur—“Day of Covering”) (vss. 7 – 11; Lev 16; 23.26 – 32)
 - 2.2.1 Tenth day of the month
 - 2.2.2 A day of mourning (only one of the feasts that calls for mourning)
 - 2.2.3 A day of great humility and no work
 - 2.2.4 Referred to as “the fast” in Acts 27.9
 - 2.2.5 Only day the high priest entered the holy of holies
 - 2.2.6 Day of the “scapegoat”
 - 2.2.7 Day of ritual cleansing of the sanctuary, of the tent of meeting, of the altar, and of the priests
 - 2.2.8 Note how Jesus Christ fulfills all the injunctions of the high priest (Heb 9)

THE FOLLOWING WILL BE/WAS COVERED THE FOLLOWING WEEK (5 May 2019)

- 2.3 Succoth (aka Tabernacles, Booths, Feast of Ingathering [fall fruit—figs, olives, grapes, pomegranates]) (vss. 12 – 38)
 - 2.3.1 Starts the 15th of the month w/ a holy convocation
 - 2.3.2 Lasts for eight days
 - 2.3.3 Sacrifices made on each day of the first seven (Note the decrease in the number of bulls from 13 to 7.)
 - 2.3.4 Ends on the 8th day w/ a holy convocation (“The great day of the feast”—Jn 7? Or was the “great day” the seventh day? Debate exists.)
 - 2.3.5 Talmud: “He who has not seen Jerusalem during the Feast of Tabernacles does not know what rejoicing is.” (Sukkah 5.1)
 - 2.3.5.1 Other happenings during Succoth
 - 2.3.5.1.1 Begin the prayers for rain
 - 2.3.5.1.2 Pouring water at the temple each day from the Pool of Siloam
 - 2.3.5.1.3 Torches lit that illumined much of the temple and its surrounding area reminding people of God’s presence in light and in fire in the OT
 - 2.3.5.2 Jesus and the feast
 - 2.3.5.2.1 Comes to Jerusalem on the “great day” (eighth [or seventh] day—Jn 7.37)
 - 2.3.5.2.2 Tell those that are thirsty to come to him to drink (Holy Spirit) (Clearly a Messianic declaration. Cf Zech 14.8: “And in that day living waters will flow out of Jerusalem, half of them toward the eastern sea and the other half toward the western sea; it will be in summer as well as in winter,” which happens after the Lord returns to Mt. of Olives.)
 - 2.3.5.2.3 Calls himself “the light of the world” (Jn 8.12)
 - 2.3.5.2.4 Declares himself the “I am” (Jn 8.58) Combine this w/ “light of the world”—a declaration of Jesus’s equivalence to the light in the wilderness.
 - 2.3.5.2.5 Heals the man born blind (Jn 9)
 - 2.3.5.2.5.1 Starts at the temple
 - 2.3.5.2.5.2 Washes in the Pool of Siloam
 - 2.3.5.2.5.3 Note the parallel w/ Gen 1: water then light
 - 2.3.5.2.5.4 God sends the son *down* to earth, the son sends the blind man *down* to the pool
- 2.3.6 This festival continues after Jesus’s second coming (Zech 14.16, 18, 19)
- 2.3.7 Probably emphasizing the joy that will be present after the Lord’s return

3 Conclusions—see introductory notes