

Message #30

Numbers 28:1-31

It does not matter who a person is, the real key to success in life is a proper relationship with God and a proper worship of God. Many people sense this. All people have some religious bent to them.

Many people are on some quest to have some relationship with God. Most people want to try to figure out their own way to have that relationship with God, so they proceed with their own concepts of worship. Some people don't think it is necessary to go to church. They think they can worship God on their own. Some people think they should go to the church of their choosing, depending on what they want and what they like. Some go to a church because they like the music and entertainment. Some go to a church because they like the people. But what most people don't realize is that in order to have a relationship with God, they need to be very serious about God's Word because all that other stuff is not worship.

J. Vernon McGee said back in the 1980's that he heard a lot of talk about worship services. He said he often wondered how much of it was "true worship." He concluded that most of it was just "aimless activity" (*Numbers*, p. 521).

What is clear from Numbers 28 is that if Israel wanted fellowship with God, they had better take worship seriously. They had better know God's Word and carefully follow God's Word even when it came to the demanded offerings.

Let's keep the context in mind. Israel was on the verge of going into the land. The nation had been counted by tribe and things were organized and they were ready to move forward. Moses was going to die and he was turning the keys of the work over to Joshua. But before this would all happen, God wanted to carefully communicate that if you want the blessings to continue, you had better keep Me at the forefront of everything. You better know My Word and obey My Word when it comes to various offerings that cover every day of your life.

Verse 1 says, "then the LORD spoke to Moses." God wanted Israel to remember worship. In the midst of all of the success that she was about to have, do not lost sight of worship. Do not lose sight of your relationship with Me. Do not lost sight of the fact that those offerings that please me are offerings you are to give to Me. You honor Me and I will honor you.

God is basically telling Israel, you are not going to succeed unless you maintain a proper relationship with Me.

GOD WANTS HIS PEOPLE WORSHIPPING HIM BY CAREFULLY AND PRECISELY KNOWING, FOLLOWING AND OBEYING THE WORD OF GOD AND IF HIS PEOPLE WILL DO THIS, THEY WILL BE A SOOTHING AROMA TO GOD AND HE WILL BE PLEASED WITH THEM AND HE WILL BLESS THEM.

Now in order to worship God in a way that is acceptable to Him, offering regulations must be known and carefully observed. Notice that God calls the offerings “My offerings” (28:2). Now these regulations were initially brought out in Leviticus 23. God is reinforcing the importance of this. These are His offerings that belong to Him and wise are those who give God what belongs to Him.

I want us also to notice how many times in this chapter God says this will be a sweet, soothing aroma to Him - 28:2, 6, 8, 13, 24, 27. This is what God wants. He wants His people pleasing to Him.

This is the way God’s people should want God to view them, as a sweet, soothing aroma, not a sinful stench. These offerings would keep God’s people in fellowship with God and keep them favorable in God’s sight.

Now this is addressed to “the sons of Israel” (v. 2), so all the sons of Israel were responsible for maintaining this kind of relationship with God.

Certainly it was the responsibility of the priests to know and follow these worship regulations, but the sons of Israel were to see to it that this happened. This was a key to the blessings of God.

The actual order of the offerings is given here in a list of “descending frequency.” The offerings start with daily offerings and then move toward annual offerings. It must thrill God when He sees His people bringing Him their offerings weekly and even additional offerings yearly. God takes note of that.

God is basically saying every day and every year you need to realize it is imperative that you have a relationship with Me. **Once Israel entered the Promised Land, it was crucial that she maintained proper fellowship with God and this was how she could do it.**

One commentator said if you do the math on this, the annual obligation for Israel every year those priests had to offer, there were 1,086 lambs, 32 rams, 113 bulls, more than a ton of flour and a thousand bottles of oil and wine (R. Dennis Cole, *Numbers*, p. 470).

This does not include any free will offerings or purification offerings or specific sin offerings. What we certainly could conclude from this is that God wanted to be honored in every area of life and not in a cheap way. Communion with God affects everything we are and have.

We may also observe that these are “burnt offerings” which were public expressions of faith that were offered at the altar.

There are five worship offering regulations brought out in this chapter:

WORSHIP OFFERING REGULATION #1 – The observing of the daily offerings. 28:1-8

Notice as this chapter begins, God identifies these offerings as “My offerings”; “My food”; “a soothing aroma to Me.” This is all about maintaining a right relationship with God.

The daily sacrifice required that one lamb that was one-year-old without any defect be offered in the morning and another one offered in the evening (28:3-4). Every morning after daybreak and every evening before sunset this offering was to be made.

This specific offering was to be accompanied with 1/10th of an ephah of fine flour for a grain offering mixed with oil (v. 5) and it also was to include a drink offering of 1/4th of a hin for each lamb. An Ephah is 23 liters or 6 gallons so 1/10th is about 1/2 gallon. A hin was 1.6 gallons so 1/4th hin is about 1.5 quarts.

With this offering was also 1.5 quarts of a drink offering. This drink offering included wine and strong drink. The wine offering was the offering of a drink that came from fermentation and the “strong drink” offering was of a drink that came by distillation. For example, wine is made by grape fermentation and brandy is made by grape distillation. These were intoxicant drinks that were to be given to God as an offering. These drinks were considered blessings of God.

God gives people all kinds of things in life to enjoy. The problem is not in what God gives; it is in what people abuse with what He gives.

As a Bible expositor my job is to teach the truth and not teach my convictions and the truth is these were two drink offerings that were to be offered to the Lord. Notice **verse 7** this was to be offered in the “holy place.”

Now these offerings showed that the people were dependent upon God every day of their lives, both morning and evening. He provides for His people and He blesses His people. He is the God who makes it possible for sinners to have fellowship with Him and He is the one who gives them their food and drink. We never ever want to forget that.

One great lesson to learn from this text is that we need to maintain daily fellowship with God day and night. Israel was to begin the day focused on God and end it the same way. Our daily lives are to be living sacrifices for the Lord.

WORSHIP OFFERING REGULATION #2 – The observing of the weekly offerings. 28:9-10

Not only were there to be daily offerings, but also weekly Sabbath offerings. On the Sabbath day, once a week, the offering amount that was to be given was doubled.

On the Sabbath Day two male lambs one-year-old without defect were to be given along with 2/10^{ths} of fine flour mixed with oil (about a gallon) and drink offering. There should be a double focus on God one day a week.

During the week we run here and there and we need a day when we doubly focus on God. Believers had better realize this - Sunday is a special day that God has given to His Church.

It is a day to regroup from the world and refocus on our relationship with God. We need this day especially as we see the coming of the Lord nearing (Heb. 10:25).

**WORSHIP OFFERING REGULATION #3 – The observing of the monthly offerings.
28:11-15**

Now this monthly offering was not included in the listing of Leviticus 23. The obvious purpose of this was to teach the people that our months, weeks and days are given to us by God and we need to honor Him for all of His provisions and blessings. We are to always include God in everything we are every day of our lives.

On the first day of every month, there was to be a special offering given to the Lord. This offering featured additional animals that were sacrificed. There were to be two bulls and one ram and seven male lambs, one-year-old without defect (v. 11).

Along with that there was to be an offering of 3/10ths (1.5 gallon) of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering for each bull and 2/10ths (1 gallon) of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering for one ram (v. 12). Also 1/10th (1/2 gallon) of the same for each male lamb (v. 13). The drink offering was to be ½ hin (3 quarts) of wine for a bull, 1/3rd (1.8 quarts) for a ram and 1/4th (1.5 quarts) for a lamb (v. 14).

Also at this monthly offering there was to be a male goat sin offering with its drink offering offered to the Lord (v. 15).

This certainly teaches us that God blesses His people and His people are sinners who need continual cleansing.

**WORSHIP OFFERING REGULATION #4 – The observing of the Passover offering.
28:16-25**

All of these offerings were necessary for a wonderful relationship and fellowship with God, but this Passover was the most important of all. This was a family home-gathering that was celebrated in the home (Ex. 12:3-14).

This reminded everyone in Israel of God's salvific power in delivering her from the Egyptians. The Passover and the Unleavened Bread festival were very important for it remembered how the death angel passed over them when he saw the blood.

It is most interesting to observe that few Passovers are actually recorded in the Old Testament. Some have speculated that Israel didn't even celebrate this all of the time. The next Passover we read that was actually celebrated was in Joshua 5:10 at Gilgal, just before taking Jericho. God once again carefully lays out the ground rules of the Passover.

The day was to be celebrated on the 14th day of the first month. **28:16**

On the 15th day unleavened bread was to be eaten for seven days. **28:17**

On the first day of the Passover it was holy and no one was to do any labor or work. **28:18**

There was an offering that was to be presented to the Lord: **28:19-22**

1) A burnt offering consisting of two bulls, one ram, seven male lambs—1-yr.-old, no defect.

2) A grain offering—fine flour mixed with oil. 3/10ths of an ephah for a bull (1.5 gallon);
2/10ths for the ram (1 gallon); 1/10th for each of the seven rams (1/2 gallon).

3) One male goat for a sin offering. This sin offering made atonement for the priests.

These offerings are to be presented besides the burnt offering each morning. **28:23**

These offerings shall be given for seven days. **28:24a**

These offerings shall be given with drink offerings. **28:24b**

On the seventh day there is to be a holy convocation with no laborious work. **28:25**

A convocation day was a special holy day and no work was to be done on that day.

WORSHIP OFFERING REGULATION #5 – The observing of the First fruits offering.
28:26-31

In the fall at harvest time, there was to be a holy day called the “first fruits.” This was to be treated as sacred as the Sabbath day because this was the offering that celebrated the blessings of God.

The Israelites would bring their first fruits of the harvest to the LORD and confess that God had blessed them and given them everything.

At this festival, offerings were offered. It was a time of praise and also a time when God’s people recognized all of the blessings that had been theirs.

Now for us as believers, Paul is very clear to point out that these things all pointed to the one Person who could keep us in fellowship with God. That one Person is Jesus Christ (Col. 2:16-17). Jesus Christ is our Passover (I Cor. 5:7).

Our fellowship with God is completely based on our daily relationship with Jesus Christ.