

June 5

Scriptures: Read Numbers 28 & 29

Key Verse: “Command the children of Israel... My offerings... you shall be careful to offer to Me at their appointed time.”(Numbers 28:2)

Overview

In these two chapters, the calendar for the whole religious year is described. It is similar to Leviticus 23m but here we find stressed the definite quantities of the offerings and the exact dates for each occasion. The priests were to carefully observe these on behalf of the whole nation.

It appears that during the time of the wilderness wanderings, because of adverse conditions, any of the regular sacrificial laws had been suspended. At this point in their history, when they were to become settled in the Promised Land and able to fulfill these laws, the reaffirmation of these laws was necessary. Also, even though Joshua was soon to replace Moses as leader, everyone was to know that the laws God had given through Moses were still binding.

There were to be continual, regular sacrifices daily, weekly (on the Sabbath), monthly (at the beginning of each new month), and yearly (the 7 great annual feasts). The priests were kept busy with continuous activity unto the Lord. Theirs was an enormous task. We today, as the priests of God, likewise need to devote our time to Him and keep busy in the calling He has for us in His service. The grace and love through His son, Jesus. Rest and relaxation are necessary, but idleness is not.

The Lord God described His offerings as “My food” (28:2). Offerings went up to God in smoke upon the altar as a “sweet aroma” to the Lord, for they expressed devotion and obedience to Him and caused Him to see the offer as acceptable in His sight. Just as we require food at certain times in the course of the day, so God requires that we give Him regular and continuous expressions of our love and devotion.

The twenty-nine chapter deals with the festivals in the very busy seventh month, a month containing more solemn feasts than any other month (Trumpets, Day of Atonement, and Tabernacles). Only here do we read of the offerings for the eight days of the Feast of Tabernacles. These and the other offerings we read of were requirements in addition to the vow and freewill offerings (29:39). The Lord took much pleasure in what was done over and above the basic requirements.

The priest’s activities would always remind the people of their spiritual needs. In fact, the whole year and the life of the community were built around these sacred times. Especially stressed is the burnt offering which was to be offered twice daily as a sweet aroma to the Lord (28:3, 6), expressing dedication, surrender, and communion with Him. These regular offerings would keep the people aware of their covenant relationship with God and the importance of continual communion with Him made possible by the sin offerings.

Those in the covenant relationship with God today must never neglect to devote time to Him every day by prayer and reading His word. This wonderful fellowship with God was made possible by the one Sin Offering of Jesus that never again needs to be repeated. It is striking to read of the great numbers of animals required as sacrifices, yet this was because they were insufficient, perfect, and ultimate sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ, who willingly gave Himself upon the altar of the cross. His blood alone, shed once and for all, can make atonement for our sins today.

Prayer

Thank You, Lord, for the great privilege of prayer. Help us never to take this for granted, but to value our access to You most highly.