

**CALVARY PANDAN BIBLE-
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

DHW BIBLE CLASS

LESSON 17

THE BOOK OF NUMBERS

CHAPTER 28-30

INTRODUCTION

A second census of young men above twenty years of age, able to go to war in Israel was taken since the first one forty years ago. The previous generation of Israelites had passed away. Now a new one had emerged and the children of Israel had arrived and encamped on the east bank of Jordan directly opposite Jericho. The time had come for them to enter Canaan, the Promised Land. But before they entered the land, there was one fundamental thing that they had to be reminded of, and that was, the centrality and the pre-eminence of the LORD God in the life of the nation. Israel is the special chosen nation of the LORD and the nation would be nothing without the LORD (*Yahweh*). They would be entering into a land inhabited by giants who lived in walled up cities. These settlers worshipped Canaanite gods. So it was necessary for the LORD to remind Israel that they should worship only the LORD, the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, and Him alone. Not only were the children of Israel reminded to worship the LORD their God, they were also instructed of the way the LORD prescribed to them to worship Him. Israel must not imitate the religious ways of the Canaanites.

In chapters 28 and 29, the LORD commanded Moses to rehearse the various offerings and sacrifices that the LORD had previously instituted for them to worship Him. The main things of these offerings and sacrifices were emphasized. The various offerings and sacrifices were presented orderly—daily, weekly, monthly and the five special festive days in a year. Israel was commanded to do these offerings and sacrifices every year. Chapter 30 deals with the vow made by a woman, and since this is placed in the context of worship of the LORD there is spiritual significance.

Our study of these three chapters will result in discovering wonderful theological truths and practical principles of living as children of the Almighty God. Give special attention to the outline below.

OUTLINE

A. Worship is God-Centered (28:1-2).

1. The LORD instructed Moses (28:1).
2. The command to the Israelites to worship the LORD at the appointed time (28:2).

B. The Daily Offering (28:3-8).

1. Two lambs, one in the morning and one in the evening (vv.3-4).
2. Together with the meat offering and the drink offering (vv.5-7).
3. A burnt offering of a sweet savour (v.8).

C. The Sabbath Offering (28:9-10).

1. On each Sabbath day two lambs of the first year without blemish together with the meat offering and the drink offering (v.9).
2. A burnt offering every Sabbath continually (v.10).

D. The Monthly Offering (28:11-15).

1. Each new month a burnt offering of two young bullocks, a ram, seven lambs of the first year without blemish (v.11).
2. Offered together with the meat offering and drink offering (vv.12-14).
3. In addition, one kid goat was to be offered beside the burnt offering (v.15).

E. The Annual Feast of the Passover and the Unleavened Bread (28:16-25).

1. They were to keep the Passover feast on the 14th of the first month of the year (Nisan)(v.16).
2. On the 15th day they were to eat unleavened bread for seven days (v.17).
3. There would be no work on the 1st day of the feast (v.18).
4. The offering consisted of two young bullocks, one ram, and seven lambs of the first year without blemish ((v.19).
5. It would be offered together with the meat offering (vv.20-21).
6. One goat would be offered for a sin offering (v.22).
7. All these offerings would be observed for seven days in the morning (vv.23-24).

8. On the seventh day no work was to be done (v.25).

F. The Annual Feast of the Firstfruits (Weeks) (28:26-31).

1. According to the number of weeks, a fresh meat offering to be done unto the LORD, and no work observed on that day (v.26).
2. A burnt offering of two bullocks, one ram, seven lambs of the first year (v.27).
3. The burnt offering would be accompanied by its meat offering (vv.28-29).
4. One kid goat for a sin offering (v.30).
5. These offerings would be offered together with the meat and drink offerings (v.31).

G. The Annual Feast of Trumpets (29:1—6).

1. The feast was to be observed on the 1st day of the seventh month (Tishri) (v.1).
2. A burnt offering of one young bullock, one ram, and seven lambs of the first year without blemish (v.2).
3. The burnt offering would be accompanied by the meat offering (vv.3-4).
4. A kid goat for a sin offering besides the required burnt offering and meat offering (vv.5-6).

H. The Annual Day of Atonement (29:7-11).

1. It would be observed on the 10th of the seven month (Tishri), and no work to be done (29:7).
2. A burnt offering of one young bullock, one ram,

and seven lambs of the first year without blemish (v.8).

3. The offering would be together with the meat offering (vv.9-10).
4. A kid goat for a sin offering together with the meat and drink offerings (v.11).

I. The Annual Feast of Tabernacles (29:12-34).

1. It was observed on the 15th of the seventh month for seven days (Tishri), and no work to be done (v.12).
2. On the first day, a burnt offering of thirteen bullocks, two rams, and fourteen lambs of the first year without blemish, together with the meat offering, and one kid goat for a sin offering together with its meat offering and drink offering (vv.13-16).
3. On the second day, twelve bullocks, two rams, and fourteen lambs of the first year without spot, together with the meat offering and drink offerings, and one kid goat for a sin offering with its meat offering and drink offerings (vv.17-19).
4. On the third day, eleven bullocks, two rams, fourteen lambs of the first year without blemish, together with the meat offering and drink offerings; one kid goat for a sin offering with its meat offering and drink offerings (vv.20-22).
5. On the fourth day, ten bullocks, two rams, fourteen lambs of the first year without blemish, together with the meat offering and drink offerings; one kid goat for a sin offering together

with the meat offering and drink offering (vv.23-25).

6. On the fifth day, nine bullocks, two rams, fourteen lambs of the first year without spot, together with the meat offering and drink offerings; one goat for a sin offering with the meat offering and drink offering (vv.26-28).
7. On the sixth day, eight bullocks, two rams, fourteen lambs of the first year without spot, with the meat offering and drink offerings; one goat for a sin offering with the meat offering and drink offering (vv.29-31).
8. On the seventh day, seven bullocks, two rams, fourteen lambs, with the meat offering and drink offerings; one goat for a sin offering with the meat offering and drink offering (vv.32-34).

J. The Sacred Assembly on the Eighth Day Following the Feast of Tabernacles (29:35-38).

1. On the eighth day gathered together, no work to be done (v.35).
2. One burnt offering of one bullock, one ram, seven lambs of the first year without blemish, together with the meat offering and drink offering; one goat for a sin offering with the meat offering and drink offering (vv.36-38).

K. The Individual Freewill Offerings (29:39-40).

1. Beside the above set feasts, the people could offer their private freewill offerings for their vows (v.39).

2. Moses accurately instructed the people according to the LORD'S commandment (v.40).

L. Making A Vow Unto the LORD (30:1-16).

1. The commandment of the LORD concerning making a vow (v.1)
2. A man who made a vow must keep his vow fully (v.2).
3. The vow of a minor woman (vv.3-5)
 - a) She made a vow (3).
 - b) She was still in her father's charge (3).
 - c) Her father said nothing, her vow would stand (4).
 - d) Her father disallowed, her vow would be null and void, the LORD shall forgive her (5).
4. The vow of a married woman (vv.6-8).
 - a) She made a vow (6).
 - b) Her husband heard it, and kept silent, her vow would stand (7).
 - c) Her husband disallowed on the day she made the vow, her vow would be null and void, the LORD shall forgive her (8).
5. The vow of a widow or a divorcee would stand as she made it (v.9).
6. The vow of a married woman (vv.10-15).
 - a) She made a vow in the presence of her husband (v.10).
 - b) Her husband allowed it, her vow would stand (11).
 - c) But her husband disallowed it, her vow

would be null and void, the LORD shall forgive her (12).

- d) As long as her husband held his peace, she had to fulfil her vow as she had taken it (13-14).

- e) But at some point the husband later disallowed the vow, he had to bear whatever the consequences of the vow (15).

7. These are the statutes of the LORD concerning the relationship between a man and his wife, and a father and his youthful daughter (v.16).

COMMENTARY

GOD-CENTERED WORSHIP

The LORD spoke to Moses to command the children of Israel to keep His offerings and sacrifices (28:1-2). The word from the LORD to Moses is very striking. Observe the repeated personal pronoun: "my offering . . . my bread . . . for my sacrifices . . . for a sweet savour unto me . . . to offer unto me (28:2). That is emphatic. Worship is *from* God, is *of* God, is *unto* God. Worship begins with God and ends with God. All true worship centres upon God and Him alone! Three salient factors about worship are stressed in the LORD'S injunction to Israel. First, God prescribes how He should be worshipped. He commanded that the worshippers must bring "my offering, and my bread." There is a proper and acceptable way to worship God. It cannot be compromised.

Second, worship is to be directed to Him, and Him alone—"a sweet savour unto me." Worshipers must remember that they do not ascribe to any 'god' or someone the adoration and praise that is the LORD'S.

Third, worship is to be at God's appointed time. It is not any old time that suits the people. It must be in the time God appoints—"to offer unto me in their due season."

We recall in Leviticus (chapters 1-7) that there were two kinds of offerings, namely, a sweet savour offering, and a sin offering. The LORD commanded the people to offer to Him "a sweet savour offering" which was His. This phrase "a sweet savour" is used eleven times in chapters 28 & 29 (28:2, 6, 8, 13, 24, 27; 29:2, 6, 8, 13, and 36). The word "savour" can also be translated "aroma" which means "a pleasing smell." These offerings and sacrifices the LORD commanded the children of Israel to perform were the burnt offering, the meat offering and the peace offering. These offerings were a sweet aroma to the LORD. It means that when the children of Israel offered these sacrifices according to the LORD'S prescribed manner, it pleased God and delighted His heart. It was His offering as He had declared to them.

In the New Testament we are familiar with these words, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matthew 3:17). The voice from heaven, undoubtedly, the voice of God the Father who said these words concerning His only Begotten Son, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ at His baptism. These words were repeated when Christ was transfigured on the mountain where

Peter, James and John were with Him. This teaches us that the sweet aroma offerings in the Old Testament speak of the *person* of the Lord Jesus Christ. The sin offering then speaks of the *atonement* of Christ on the cross. That offering and sacrifice on the cross was God's ultimate act of divine love for us and it was a sweet aroma unto Him, pleasing in His sight! And our worship, if it is to ascend to God the Father, a sweet aroma and pleasing in His sight, it must be done in the Name of Christ Jesus and for His glory and honour. Our whole being and mind and heart should be centred and focused on God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour! How can we present a sweet aroma offering when we ourselves are not joyful and delighted to worship God privately and publicly? Each one of us must deeply and joyously desire to worship God with all our heart, soul, mind and spirit! This can come only when we approach Him with clean hands and a pure heart. This requires a life of faith lived in complete obedience to His holy Word. **Psalms 24:3-4**, "*Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.*"

DAILY, WEEKLY, MONTHLY OFFERINGS

Every day of the year without fail, the priest must offer a yearling lamb without spot for a burnt offering to be accompanied by a meat (grain) offering and a drink offering in the morning, and the same in the evening. It would be a sweet savour to the LORD. The

day in the life of the nation began and ended with the worship of the LORD. The people lived through each day for the LORD and unto the LORD. It was not merely performing a ritual in the morning and in the evening in themselves. This was quite possible since they did it daily and it could just become a mere ritual which can easily turn into a burdensome chore. But that was not what it should be. We learn from this commandment of the LORD that we, whom Christ Jesus had offered Himself as the sacrifice for us, should do a personal and private devotional time of praise and thanksgiving unto the LORD every morning before we do anything and every evening before we retire.

Then **on every sabbath**, not one but two lambs without blemish must be offered in addition to the daily morning and evening offerings (28:9-10). Every week the children of Israel would observe this burnt offering for a sweet savour unto the LORD—a double portion. The lesson we learn today is so obvious. Every Sunday is our sabbath unto the LORD. We gather together to worship the LORD in addition to our daily morning and evening devotions. We must come with much joy to worship the LORD and we should bring a double portion of our gifts and offerings. We worship every week to delight and please God. This double portion does not mean exactly two times but rather do not come before the LORD empty handed and do so with cheerfulness.

Next **every beginning of a new month**, or a new moon, children of Israel was required to offer a bull, a ram, and seven lambs without spot. This offering was accompanied by the meat

(grain) offering and the drink offering (28:11-14). The amount of offering and sacrifice was increased. Some Christian congregations worship the LORD by observing the Lord's Supper once a month on top of the daily devotion, and the Sunday worship service.

SPECIAL DAY OFFERINGS

On the fourteenth of the first month of the Jewish religious calendar (around March/April) the Jews celebrate the Passover and **the Feast of Unleavened Bread**. Seven days the Jews would eat only unleavened bread. No work was to be done on this day. The Jews had to offer two young bulls, one ram, and seven lambs, together with the meat (grain) offering and the drink offering. In addition to this, they must also sacrifice a kid goat for a sin offering to the LORD. The daily offerings in the morning and the evening still had to be done. On the first and seventh day no work would be done. That was **the first feast** in the first month of the year.

Following that, seven weeks after the Feast of the Unleavened Bread, the Jews would celebrate **the Feast of Weeks** or **the Feast of Harvest** or **the Feast of Firstfruits** (around Mid-May). In addition to the daily offerings in the morning and evening, the Jews would offer two young bulls, one ram and seven lambs. One kid goat was offered as a sin offering. They were the same number of animals as for the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. This is **the second feast** which was celebrated in the beginning of the year.

The third feast was celebrated on the first day of the seven month,

which is the first month of the Jewish civil calendar. It involved the blowing of trumpets. This is **the Feast of Trumpets** (around Mid-September). The Jews would offer one young bullock, one ram, seven lambs of the first year without blemish. The offering was accompanied by the meat (grain) offering and the drink offering. In addition to this, one kid goat would be offered for a sin offering. This offering was done in addition to the daily offerings morning and evening, and the monthly offering. Today the Jews celebrate it as *Rosh Hashanah* (their New Year).

Nine days after the Feast of Trumpets, the Jews **celebrate the Day of Atonement** (*Yom Kippur*, around Mid-October). It was a time of afflicting their souls—a time of sorrowing for sin, confession and repentance. The Jews would offer one young bull, one ram, and seven lambs of the first year without spot; and one kid goat for a sin offering.

Then on the fifteenth of the seventh month the Jews celebrated **the Feast of Tabernacles or Booths**. They would sacrifice thirteen bulls, two rams, and fourteen lambs of the first year without blemish. This feast was celebrated for seven days. And one kid goat for a sin offering. Each day one bull less was offered, but the number of rams and lambs remained the same, two and fourteen respectively; and also the offering of the kid goat. If we judge by the number of animals to be sacrificed, this feast is the most important and joyous of all the feasts. It had a twofold significance. It marked the completion of the barley harvest, thus celebrating the greatness and goodness of God's blessings and provisions to them.

Secondly, it reminded them of their wanderings in the wilderness and their dwellings in tabernacles or booths. It reminded them of God's graciousness, provisions and protection, and deliverance and favour upon them.

In summary, these are the offerings and sacrifices the children of Israel would do throughout the year unto the LORD God as a sweet savour pleasing in His sight. We see that Jewish calendar year is filled with the worship of the LORD. They offered to the LORD on a daily basis morning and evening, every week, and every month.

On top of that in the first month of their Jewish calendar they celebrated two feasts—the Passover and Unleavened Bread, and the Feast of Weeks. Six months later, in the seven month, they celebrated three feasts—the Feast of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement and the Feast of Tabernacles. We see that the life of the nation Israel is centred on the worship of God. The worship of God is the heart of life of the Israeli community. God is the reason and foundation of their life. It is the same for Christians. Worshipping God should be the top priority of our life as individuals as well as a Christian community, the church. If we faithfully learn these teachings and apply them in our worship of God in order to glorify and please Him, what God can and will do to the church would be beyond our expectation and imagination! So, let us do it and experience the outpouring of the God's blessings upon us, as we delight and please Him.

VOWS OF WOMEN

God did not require the children of Israel to make vows or oaths. Vows and oaths were voluntary promises to do certain things by the people. They were good in themselves provided they were carried out as promised. In Leviticus 27, women's vows were generally referred to. In this chapter details concerning their vows are given. A reading of the chapter will reveal four cases of vows: 1) vow made by a young woman who was still under the jurisdiction of her father; 2) vow made by an unmarried woman at the time the vow was made and then married when the vow was not yet fulfilled; 3) vow made by a widow or a divorced woman, and 4) vow made by a married woman..

In the case of a vow made by a minor (one who was still under the care of the father), and if the father of the woman disallowed it, the woman was released of her vow. In the case of a woman who made the vow at the time she was unmarried, but having entered marriage before the vow was fulfilled, if her husband did not agree with it, she was released of her vow. A widow or a divorced woman who made a vow would stand just like the vow of a man. She had to fulfil her vow. In the case of a married woman, it was the husband who made the final decision. If the husband disallowed it, her vow was null and void.

It is clear that the point of these instructions asserts the headship of the man in the family. The father or the husband makes the final decision. But it is not just simply that. There is more to it. The father or the husband takes upon himself the responsibility of his decision. If the vow is unwise, his decision is

commendable. But if the vow is good, and he disallows it, then he is accountable to God.

One more thing that we can draw from this treatment of vows is that our speech or what we say is very important. We should think carefully whenever we express any kind of opinion or make any kind of decision. In the context in which this passage is placed, it suggests that commitment to worship the LORD must come from the heart. **Ecclesiastes 5:4-5**, "*When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed. Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay.*" **Matthew 5:37**, "*But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.*"

SUMMARY

These chapters provide a pattern for the worship of God in churches today. Pastors, Elders and Deacons of a church should daily pray in the morning and in the evening for the congregation whom they have the spiritual oversight. The sabbath worship of the LORD corresponds with the weekly church Sunday Worship. Once a month, some churches observe the Lord's Supper. Then on special days in the year, the churches have the Christmas service in commemoration of the first advent of Christ Jesus, the Light of the world. In April, the churches commemorate the death and the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, even His second coming. On the last day of the year, the

churches celebrate a Thanksgiving Service unto the LORD our God.

The main thrust of the lesson learned in these chapters is that God is the centre of the life of the Christian, and also the life of the church. All our other activities and occupation are peripherals and means to an end—that goal is the worship and service of God for a sweet aroma pleasing in His sight. AMEN

DAILY READING & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

MONDAY: Numbers 28:1-15; Romans 12:1-2; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18.¹

1. What evidence do you find to show that the central focus of worship is God?

¹ Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service. 2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

1 Thessalonians 5:16 Rejoice evermore. 17 Pray without ceasing. 18 In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

2. What four things about worship did God mention in 28:2?

3. Name one significant difference between the daily and the weekly sacrifices? What does it mean to you?

TUESDAY: Numbers 28:16-31; 1 Corinthians 5:7-8.²

4. State the time in which the first two feasts were to be observed?

² 1 Corinthians 5:7 Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: 8 Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened *bread* of sincerity and truth.

6. What were the purposes of these two Feasts?

8. What was the significance of these three feasts?

WEDNESDAY: Numbers 29:1-11; Hebrews 9:6-14.³

7. State the time in which the three feasts were observed?

THURSDAY: Numbers 29:12-40; Romans 8:32; John 1:14.⁴

9. State the time in which this feast (Tabernacle) is observed? What does the lengthy detailed account of the sacrifices imply?

³ Hebrews 9:6 Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. 7 But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people: 8 The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: 9 Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; 10 Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation. 11 But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; 12 Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. 13 For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: 14 How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

⁴ Romans 8:32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

John 1:14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

FRIDAY: Numbers 30:1-16; Ephesians 5:22-27; Judges 11:29-35.⁵

10. What practical principles can we learn from this chapter about making and keeping our commitments?

⁵ Ephesians 5:22 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. 24 Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so *let* the wives *be* to their own husbands in every thing. 25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

Judges 11:29 Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon Jephthah, and he passed over Gilead, and Manasseh, and passed over Mizpeh of Gilead, and from Mizpeh of Gilead he passed over *unto* the children of Ammon. 30 And Jephthah vowed a vow unto the LORD, and said, If thou shalt without fail deliver the children of Ammon into mine hands, 31 Then it shall be, that whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, shall surely be the LORD'S, and I will offer it up for a burnt offering. 32 So Jephthah passed over unto the children of Ammon to fight against them; and the LORD delivered them into his hands. 33 And he smote them from Aroer, even till thou come to Minnith, *even* twenty cities, and unto the plain of the vineyards, with a very great slaughter. Thus the children of Ammon were subdued before the children of Israel. 34 And Jephthah came to Mizpeh unto his house, and, behold, his daughter came out to meet him with timbrels and with dances: and she *was his* only child; beside her he had neither son nor daughter. 35 And it came to pass, when he saw her, that he rent his clothes, and said, Alas, my daughter! thou hast brought me very low, and thou art one of them that trouble me: for I have opened my mouth unto the LORD, and I cannot go back.

11. If someone were to say to you that it is possible to truly worship God without an understanding of Him, what would your response be in the light of Numbers 28 & 29?

12. What one thing can you say that impresses you deeply in the study of Numbers 28-30?
