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The Festival Offerings

28:16 to 29:40



Numbers 28 and **29** function as an ancient priestly calendar, a detailed list of the given Tabernacle/Temple **sacrifices** for each **festival** day. Those **festivals** are referred to as *moedim*, or **appointed times**. They are **God's appointed times** when **He** meets with **His** holy ones. They are also **appointed times** for **sacrifice**. We encountered the biblical calendar in **Leviticus 23** (see **Leviticus, to see link click Dw - God's Appointed Times**), but the book of **Numbers** also contains a version of the biblical calendar. **It**, however, is far more detailed regarding **the sacrificial offerings** for **the festival** days. Whereas the calendar in **Leviticus** would say: **You shall present an offering ADONAI** for each of **the festivals**, the calendar in **Numbers** offers the specific details on the number of **lambs, rams, goats, and bulls**. **It** spells out exactly what that **offering by fire** is supposed to be for each **festival**. **It** was a calendar intended for the priesthood to study, memorize and implement.⁶⁵¹

Seven weeks after **the Feast of Firstfruits** (within the eight-day celebration of **Passover**), **the Israelites** celebrated **the Feast of Weeks**. What is interesting about the three major "pilgrimage feasts" (see the commentary on **Exodus Eh - Three Times a Year Celebrate a Festival to Me**) is that each required **the firstfruits** of the various harvests to be offered at the Temple/Tabernacle, but for different crops. **Passover** required **the firstfruits** of **the barley harvest** (see the

commentary on **Leviticus Ea - Rasheet**); **the Feast of Weeks** required **the firstfruits** of **the wheat harvest** (see **Leviticus Ec - Hag Shavu'ot**); and **the Feast of Booths** required **the firstfruits** of **the olive and grape harvest** (see **Leviticus Eg - Hag Sukkot**). As a result of **the firstfruits** being embedded in these three major pilgrimage festivals, **the Feast of Firstfruits itself** is not included in the restatement of **the feasts** in **Numbers 28** and **29**.⁶⁵²

An important feature in each of the **festival** offerings in **Numbers** is the mitzvah of **a male goat** (if you count **Pesach** and **Hag ha'Matzah** as one eight-day festival). **Also a male goat is to be offered as a purification offering to ADONAI** (see **Leviticus Aq - The Chatta'th Offering: Communicating God's Forgiveness**), **in addition to the regular Olah Offering and its drink offering. The goat** was required for every **festival** other than **the Shabbat**. What is the meaning of this single **goat**? The purpose of **the Chatta'th Offering goat** of **the festivals** and **the New Moons** is explained in **the tractate Shavu'ot of the Mishnah** (see **The Life of Christ Ei - The Oral Law**). **The goats were a fail safe measure. They were meant to provide atonement for those who inadvertently desecrated the Tabernacle by coming near to God in a condition of ritual impurity.**⁶⁵³

The restatement of each of these **festivals** in **Numbers** was a necessary part of the transfer of power from **Moses** to **Joshua**. **The wilderness generation** would soon be in **the Land of Promise**, where these **festivals** would take on **their** full meaning in the life of the people. It would be in **the Good Land** that **they** would be able to bring all these sacrifices to **the LORD** because of **His** bountiful provision. The listing of these specific offerings is a mark of faith and trust in **ADONAI** that **He**, at last, would complete **His** promise to bring **His** people into **the Land** that was, and continues to be, **His** gift to **them**.⁶⁵⁴