

Numbers 15:1 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,
Numbers 15:2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land of your habitations, which I give unto you,
Numbers 15:3 And will make an offering by fire unto the LORD, a burnt offering, or a sacrifice in performing a vow, or in a freewill offering, or in your solemn feasts, to make a sweet savour unto the LORD, of the herd, or of the flock:
Numbers 15:4 Then shall he that offereth his offering unto the LORD bring a meat offering of a tenth deal of flour mingled with the fourth *part* of an hin of oil.
Numbers 15:5 And the fourth *part* of an hin of wine for a drink offering shalt thou prepare with the burnt offering or sacrifice, for one lamb.

This is another one of those chapters that will be hard for me as it details the different offerings for differing reasons.

The first thing that jumps out is the unequivocal preface of “when ye be come into the land.” Despite the rebellion and unbelief of the current generation, God had purposed that Israel would possess Canaan and so it would be done.

Isaiah 14:24 “The LORD of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand:”

The LORD spoke to Moses to give him instructions to give the people regarding the offerings that they were to make once they had taken possession of Canaan. This seems to imply that the instructions were probably given a few years after the events at Kadeshbarnea since they are only pertinent to those who were nineteen years old and under when those events occurred. Point is made that they will possess the land because the LORD—the one true King of heaven and earth—is giving it to them.

When making an offering by fire—a burnt offering, or a sacrifice pertinent to a vow, or a freewill offering or as a sweet savor offering in connection with one of the solemn feasts—either of cattle or flock (sheep or goats) it is to be accompanied by a meal offering of a tenth of flour (two quarts) mixed with a fourth part of an hin (a quart) of oil. They were also to include a fourth part of a hin of wine for a drink offering in conjunction with the offering by fire. These are the instructions that were to be followed for each lamb offered as a burnt offering.

Numbers 15:6 Or for a ram, thou shalt prepare *for* a meat offering two tenth deals of flour mingled with the third *part* of an hin of oil.
Numbers 15:7 And for a drink offering thou shalt offer the third *part* of an hin of wine, *for* a sweet savour unto the LORD.

If the offering was a ram, they were to include a meal offering of a gallon of flour mixed with 2.5 pints of oil along with a drink offering of 2.5 pints of wine as a sweet savor unto the LORD.

Numbers 15:8 And when thou preparest a bullock *for* a burnt offering, or *for* a

sacrifice in performing a vow, or peace offerings unto the LORD:

Numbers 15:9 Then shall he bring with a bullock a meat offering of three tenth deals of flour mingled with half an hin of oil.

Numbers 15:10 And thou shalt bring for a drink offering half an hin of wine, for an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD.

When the offering is a bull, they were to include a meal offering of 1.5 gallons of flour mixed with two quarts of oil along with a drink offering of two quarts of wine.

Numbers 15:11 Thus shall it be done for one bullock, or for one ram, or for a lamb, or a kid.

Numbers 15:12 According to the number that ye shall prepare, so shall ye do to every one according to their number.

This completes the instructions for the burnt offerings of a bull, ram, lamb or young goat. These guidelines are to be followed for each animal offering that is made.

Numbers 15:13 All that are born of the country shall do these things after this manner, in offering an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD.

Numbers 15:14 And if a stranger sojourn with you, or whosoever *be* among you in your generations, and will offer an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD; as ye do, so he shall do.

Numbers 15:15 One ordinance *shall be both* for you of the congregation, and also for the stranger that sojourneth *with you*, an ordinance for ever in your generations: as ye *are*, so shall the stranger be before the LORD.

Numbers 15:16 One law and one manner shall be for you, and for the stranger that sojourneth with you.

Moses informs us that these guidelines for offerings apply to every natural born Israeli as well as any strangers that had become proselytes and wanted to make offerings to the LORD. Verses 15 and 16 repeat this mandate so that there could be no misunderstanding by Jew or foreigner regarding their participation.

I think this is a clear type or picture of the truth that the LORD has always intended that God's plan of redemption was to be the same for all people—both Jew and Gentile.

JFB offers this helpful information: "The accessory sacrifices were always increased in proportion to the greater worth and magnitude of its principal."

Guzik offers a bit more: "The grain with the drink offering of wine meant to accompany the blood sacrifice speak of thanksgiving and joy...."

Application: Every offering we give and/or sacrifice we make as we serve the LORD should be done with joy and thanksgiving!

Numbers 15:17 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

Numbers 15:18 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye come into the land whither I bring you,

Numbers 15:19 Then it shall be, that, when ye eat of the bread of the land, ye shall offer up an heave offering unto the LORD.

Numbers 15:20 Ye shall offer up a cake of the first of your dough *for* an heave offering: as *ye do* the heave offering of the threshingfloor, so shall ye heave it.

Numbers 15:21 Of the first of your dough ye shall give unto the LORD an heave offering in your generations.

Once again the LORD speaks to Moses with instructions for the people applicable to *when* they entered the land He had promised to give them. When they begin to eat of the produce of the land, they are to offer a heave offering to the LORD. The offering is to consist of a cake of their first dough in the same way they had been instructed to offer a heave offering of the firstfruits of grain. This instruction is to be followed by all succeeding generations of the people dwelling in the land.

Exodus 23:19 "The first of the firstfruits of thy land thou shalt bring into the house of the LORD thy God."

The NIV Commentary adds the following insight: "The concept of the firstfruits symbolizes that all blessing is from the Lord and all increase belongs to him."

Numbers 15:22 ¶ And if ye have erred, and not observed all these commandments, which the LORD hath spoken unto Moses,

Numbers 15:23 *Even* all that the LORD hath commanded you by the hand of Moses, from the day that the LORD commanded *Moses*, and henceforward among your generations;

Numbers 15:24 Then it shall be, if *ought* be committed by ignorance without the knowledge of the congregation, that all the congregation shall offer one young bullock for a burnt offering, for a sweet savour unto the LORD, with his meat offering, and his drink offering, according to the manner, and one kid of the goats for a sin offering.

Numbers 15:25 And the priest shall make an atonement for all the congregation of the children of Israel, and it shall be forgiven them; for it is ignorance: and they shall bring their offering, a sacrifice made by fire unto the LORD, and their sin offering before the LORD, for their ignorance:

Numbers 15:26 And it shall be forgiven all the congregation of the children of Israel, and the stranger that sojourneth among them; seeing all the people *were* in ignorance.

This section of verses addresses sins of ignorance applicable to the congregation as a whole. Once the congregation realized that they had committed a sin in ignorance, they were to bring a young bull to offer as a burnt offering for a sweet savor to the LORD along with the prescribed meal and drink offerings and a young goat for a sin offering. The priest was to offer these sacrifices on behalf of the people. Point is made that they would be forgiven. This forgiveness would apply to every member of the congregation—both Jew and foreign proselyte.

Numbers 15:27 And if any soul sin through ignorance, then he shall bring a she goat of the first year for a sin offering.

Numbers 15:28 And the priest shall make an atonement for the soul that sinneth ignorantly, when he sinneth by ignorance before the LORD, to make an atonement for him; and it shall be forgiven him.

Numbers 15:29 Ye shall have one law for him that sinneth through ignorance, both for him that is born among the children of Israel, and for the stranger that sojourneth among them.

This section of verses addresses sins of ignorance committed by an individual. Upon realizing his sin, the offender was to bring a she goat of the first year for a sin offering. Once again when the priest offers the prescribed sacrifice in accordance with God's command, it is noted that the sinner is forgiven. As with all the other sacrifices addressed so far, this law applies to both natural born Israeli and proselyte.

It is my opinion that a female goat was specified in light of the fact that it was Eve that was deceived by the servant (sinning ignorantly so to speak) and that ultimately resulted in Adam's willful sin against the LORD.

1 Timothy 2:14 "And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression."

Guzik offers a wise observation concerning unintentional sin: "Many today think and live as if an action is unintentional, it cannot be sin. But many of the worst sins are committed with the best of intentions. Intentions matter nothing when the result is sin." He then offers the following example: "Especially in the 20th century, all sorts of horrific atrocities and terror have been committed by those dedicated to honorable causes; Communism sought to establish a just, fair economy where each worked according to his ability and received according to his need - and became the instrument of the genocide of tens of millions of people."

Numbers 15:30 ¶ But the soul that doeth *ought* presumptuously, whether he be born in the land, or a stranger, the same reproacheth the LORD; and that soul shall be cut off from among his people.

Numbers 15:31 Because he hath despised the word of the LORD, and hath broken his commandment, that soul shall utterly be cut off; his iniquity shall be upon him.

These are hard verses; there is no path to forgiveness for the offender. The instruction pertains to one who willfully chooses to blaspheme the LORD showing contempt for His word and refusing to obey His commands. Such a person is to be "cut off"—the Hebrew indicates to destroy, to perish. In light of the following incident, I have no problem believing that the death sentence is the correct understanding.

Numbers 15:32 And while the children of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man that gathered sticks upon the sabbath day.

Numbers 15:33 And they that found him gathering sticks brought him unto Moses and Aaron, and unto all the congregation.

Numbers 15:34 And they put him in ward, because it was not declared what should be done to him.

Numbers 15:35 And the LORD said unto Moses, The man shall be surely put to death: all the congregation shall stone him with stones without the camp.

Numbers 15:36 And all the congregation brought him without the camp, and stoned him with stones, and he died; as the LORD commanded Moses.

At some point during the wilderness wanderings, a man was observed gathering sticks on the Sabbath day. I think it is important to note that this was public, blatant disregard for God's law. Those that saw him brought him to Moses and Aaron in the sight of the people. They put him under guard until it was determined what was to be done. They knew (or should have) that he should be put to death from previous instruction.

Exodus 35:2 "Six days shall work be done, but on the seventh day there shall be to you an holy day, a sabbath of rest to the LORD: whosoever doeth work therein shall be put to death."

They just didn't know how. The LORD informed Moses that the man was to be put to death by stoning, and that all the congregation was to take part in his execution outside the camp. Judgment was carried out as declared by the LORD, and the man died.

My mind made a direct connection to Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5). In both instances, the LORD is making a powerful statement about the importance of honoring Him with sincere obedience. In both instances the sentence seems to be excessive for the sin committed. The wilderness wanderings had shown that God's people needed to understand that God is holy and must be honored accordingly. Blatant disregard of His commands had to be dealt with swiftly and harshly to serve as a deterrent to others. In the early days of the church, the Christians needed to realize that very same truth; so the blatant lies of Ananias and Sapphira were dealt with swiftly to serve as a deterrent to others.

Numbers 15:37 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

Numbers 15:38 Speak unto the children of Israel, and bid them that they make them fringes in the borders of their garments throughout their generations, and that they put upon the fringe of the borders a ribband of blue:

Numbers 15:39 And it shall be unto you for a fringe, that ye may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the LORD, and do them; and that ye seek not after your own heart and your own eyes, after which ye use to go a whoring:

Numbers 15:40 That ye may remember, and do all my commandments, and be holy unto your God.

Like a the wonderful Father He is, the LORD provides a way to help the people remember what He expects of them. He instructed Moses to have the people to add fringes to the borders of their garments to serve as a reminder of all His

commandments. The fringes were tassels that were attached to the hem by blue twine or thread. Point is made that the reminder was intended to promote obedience. They were to seek to do God's will—not their own. This would ensure that they remain holy before God.

Once again Guzik offers some possible insight: "Perhaps a blue thread was commanded because the ark of the covenant was covered with a blue cloth, blue curtains adorned the tabernacle, and blue was in the high priest's garments. The color blue was full of holy reminders."

Coffman also offers helpful information: "The garment utilized multiple knots in the fringe in order to be able to identify each thread (with the knots), and each knot with a particular commandment.

Numbers 15:41 I am the LORD your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: I am the LORD your God.

The chapter closed with a declaration by the LORD of who He Is and His relationship to the people of Israel.

- "I am the LORD" - the self-existent, eternal One.
- "your God" - the supreme authority
- your Deliverer – "which brought you out of the land of Egypt"
- "to be your God" – acknowledged by you as your supreme authority

And then an exclamation point—"I am the LORD your God." No matter what you do or what you choose to believe, that fact will not change. In spite of their rebellion, in spite of their unbelief, He will honor His covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Genesis 17:4–8 "As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God."

The same is true today. The LORD our God is the all-powerful Creator and the Supreme Authority over all the reality of creation—both the seen and the unseen. It doesn't matter what people choose to believe in spite of all the evidence staring them in the face. He is also our one and only Deliverer—the only way to heaven and eternal life in the presence of our Savior. That is the truth, and truth never changes. What we may think to be true may change—but truth never changes.