

Offerings & Feasts

Read Leviticus.

Some parts of the Bible are hard to understand. We must slow down, take out our trusty compass, and identify where we have been and where we are to find the direction forward.

**Creation, Fall, Flood, Nations,
Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph,
Moses, Passover, Law, Tabernacle.**

Talking Points

- At Mt. Sinai, God gave more than the Law and the Tabernacle to His Chosen People, the Israelites. He also gave them an entire tribe from which appointed priests would serve Him and them at the Tabernacle, the tribe of Levi.
- Priests represented the people to God and God to the people. They acted as mediators between the two parties.
- Priests oversaw the two ceremonial strategies God gave to the people to help them worship Him and serve others.
- Five offerings and seven feasts established how God and Israel's relationship was maintained and restored.
- Some of the offerings were voluntary. Others were mandatory.
- The feasts were times of national celebration for God's goodness in His nation's history. They also were prophetic, pointing to Jesus' first and second coming.

Background

We have talked our way through the first two books of the Bible, Genesis and Exodus. Today we arrive at Leviticus, a book that knocks many people off their Bible reading plan. Through 27 chapters, it is a mountain-filled mix of God-given regulations for the children of Israel. It contains everything they needed to know about what offerings to give, when to give them, what was clean and what wasn't, how to live together as a people and with their Creator, blessings for obedience, and curses for disobedience. Some of the "don'ts" listed are so blush-worthy and self-evident that it's hard to believe they had to be pointed out. But there they are. God included them for a reason.

Five Offerings

Leviticus 1:1-6:7 detail five different offerings to be made by God's people at the Tabernacle. They fell into two categories.

In-Fellowship

Think about your own home. The kitchen is where meals are prepared. Before eating, many families praise God for providing the material necessities of their lives. The oldest people at the table are served first in the Middle East out of respect and gratitude. The

choicest selections are offered to them. After the elders are served, everyone else fills their plate. Now think about God in the Tabernacle. He is the ultimate elder at the table. The priests presented three offerings to God on behalf of His people.

- **Burnt**
- **Grain**
- **Praise**

After the priests served God at the altar, they took their portion.

Out-of-Fellowship

When an individual, a group of people, or the entire nation of Israel sinned, God provided a way to restore fellowship through the second category of offerings.

- **Sin**
- **Guilt/Trespass**

The sin and guilt offerings graphically illustrated the severity and consequences of sin. These offerings did not remove one's sin. They merely covered them for a while. They pointed to the need for a permanent solution, a sacrifice that removed one's sin for all time.

Holy, Holy, Holy

God established the protocols for how, when, and where the people made their offerings. Moses relayed the information to Aaron, Israel's first high priest.

Leviticus 10:1-11 records an event worthy of notice and consideration. Nadab and Abihu, two of Aaron's sons, arrogantly disrespected God at His table. Read that passage to see what happened to them. Is there anything in this account you should consider regarding your worship of God?

Seven Feasts of Israel

Seven feasts were to be observed each calendar year. Read Leviticus 23:1-44. As the "Light to the Nations," God wanted Israel to provide a continual picture of His redemptive love through their annual celebrations. The feasts were more than an opportunity to rest and contemplate what God had done for His people. They were also prophetic.

Four Spring Feasts

Passover, Unleavened Bread, First Fruits, and Pentecost all looked forward to Yeshua's first coming and the Church's birth.

- **Passover:** Jesus died as the Lamb of God who took away the sin of those who believe.
- **Unleavened Bread:** Leaven is the symbol of sin in the Bible. Jesus was sinless. He is the unleavened Messiah. Jesus' sinlessness qualified Him to be the sacrificed Lamb of God.

- **First Fruits:** Jesus was buried in a rich man's tomb after the crucifixion. Three days later, He rose from the grave, alive again as the first fruits from the dead. Yeshua's resurrection validates His promise of resurrection for all who believe in Him.
- **Pentecost:** Fifty days after Passover, Jesus sent the Holy Spirit, just as He promised. Through His empowerment, the Church that Jesus is building was given birth.

Three Fall Feasts

Right now, the world is in a waiting period. The Gospel is being proclaimed and is accepted or rejected. Three last-day events will occur at a specific time that only the Father knows; all are tied to the fall feasts. In the same manner that the spring feasts prophetically previewed Jesus' first coming, the fall feasts point to His second coming.

- **Trumpets:** When the Good News of the Gospel has been proclaimed to the entire world, an event known as the Rapture will occur. At that moment, all who have believed in Jesus, dead and alive, will be taken from earth to be with Lord Jesus, where He is forever. The Rapture will be preceded by the blowing of a trumpet that all will hear. There will be no Jesus followers on the earth at that moment.
- **Day of Atonement:** Shortly after that, 144,000 Jewish evangelists will proclaim and defend their newfound belief in Messiah Jesus. At the end of seven years, all of the Jewish people who survive the Great Tribulation will accept Yeshua as their Messiah. They will be saved from physical destruction and spiritually saved from eternal separation from God. The atoning blood of Jesus' death on the cross will cover their sin forever!
- **Tabernacles:** With the salvation of all Israel, Messiah Jesus returns from heaven, accompanied by the raptured saints and the souls of Old Testament believers. Old Testament saints will receive their glorified bodies. Yeshua will once again reside among His people for 1,000 years from His Tabernacle in Jerusalem.

Bible Conversations & Questions

- How were the high priest's duties in the earthly Tabernacle similar to the duties of Jesus as the High Priest in the heavenly Tabernacle today? How are they different?
- What are the implications of the fact that Jesus is not a Levite nor a descendant of Aaron, yet He is identified as our High Priest in the book of Hebrews?
- What did the Spring Feasts point to prophetically in the Bible? The Fall Feasts?
- How can you explain the annual "waiting period" between the Spring/Fall Feasts of Israel to students of the Bible today?
- Which book of the Bible places the events associated with the Fall Feasts chronologically?