

What is your apprehension of these things?

A meditation on Numbers 15

It is an exercise to this poor heart that the blessedness of Christ's person and the wonder of His work on Calvary should call forth greater worship and praise from our hearts accompanied by overflowing joy. Is not this brought out emphatically in the following Scriptures?

The offerings of Numbers 15 are divided for three distinct purposes:

- The Freewill offering (Vs. 4-16)
- The Heave offering (Vs. 17-21)
- The Sin offerings for sins of ignorance (Vs. 22-29)
 - For the whole congregation (Vs. 22-26)
 - For the individual (Vs. 27-29)
- There was no offering for voluntary sin (Vs. 30-36)
- The fringe or ribband of blue on their garments served as a reminder to them to keep the law of the Lord. (Vs. 37-41)

THE FREEWILL OFFERINGS:

The **burnt offering** signifies the offerer's recognition of all that the work of the Lord Jesus, in sacrificing Himself on Calvary, means to God the Father.

The **meal/meat offering** was almost never offered alone, but in connection with a blood offering. Is this not because we may be appreciative of the sacrifice while not valuing the perfection of our Lord's blessed person? The **meal offering** accompanied the burnt offering reminding us that in every detail of His life on earth the Lord Jesus, in perfect dependence on God the Holy Spirit, expressed the perfection of righteousness as man. That is why the meal was mingled or mixed with the oil, a type of the Holy Spirit.

The **drink offering** of wine was added symbolizing the joy of the offerer in the offering, that is, our joy in the person of our Lord Jesus and also in the value of His wondrous work.

The different animals, amounts of fine flour and oil, as well as wine accompanying the offerings would perhaps teach us that the greater our apprehension of the sacrifice of Christ by the Spirit, the greater will be our thankful and joyful response.

If a **lamb** was offered for the burnt offering (v.5) the amount of **fine flour** was one-tenth of an ephah, mixed with one-fourth of a hin of **oil** for the meal offering and one-fourth of a hin of **wine** for the drink offering.

In the case of a **ram** being offered for the burnt offering, the **fine flour** was increased to two-tenths of an ephah mixed with one-third of a hin of **oil** for the meal offering and one-third of a hin of **wine** for the drink offering.

When a **bull/bullock** was offered for the burnt offering (v.8), the **fine flour** was increased to three-tenth deals mixed with one-half an hin or **oil** for the meal offering (vs.9) and one-half of a hin of **wine** for the drink offering.

Beloved surely when we get to glory our apprehension and joy will be in the fullness of the bullock with the three-tenth (three representing completeness and ten for human responsibility) deals of fine flour with the half hin of oil and the half hin of wine, but what about now? We are told that we can enter into these deep things now for although "...Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." **1Cor. 2:10**

Jesus said "...Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught. **Luke 5:4**

THE HEAVE OFFERING:

Jehovah again gives instructions to Moses that when they come into the land of promise, as soon as they ate of the produce of that land they were to offer up a heave offering to the Lord, a cake of the firstfruits of their ground meal. This is one case where a blood offering is not mentioned along with a meal offering. The precious application here is that the person of Christ in His perfect humanity (the meal) is now raised from among the dead. We now know our blessed Lord not only as the poor Man on His way to Calvary but the precious and blessed Lord who has risen and even as ascended and seated at the right hand of the majesty on high. As we consider His path on earth we shall partake of His grace and humility, but in His resurrection we see also His power and dignity.

THE SIN OFFERINGS:

Because of our sinful nature there are sins we commit without realizing at the time that such things are sin. God states that sin is sin, no matter what we think about it. Yet if it is done through ignorance, it is much different than when it is boldly committed with the full knowledge of knowing it is wrong.

For the sin of ignorance of the congregation they were to offer to God a sacrifice. The whole congregation of Israel was guilty of the sin, and when afterward it was brought to their attention as being sin, they were to offer **one young bullock** as a **burnt offering**, together with its **meal offering** and **drink offering**, and **one kid of the goats** as a **sin offering** (v.24). The burnt offering speaks of God's glory being the first consideration in this matter, and with it the reminder that the perfect Man, Christ Jesus (the meal offering) is the one standard of sinlessness, who is therefore the only acceptable burnt offering. The drink offering was to symbolize Israel's joy in being now blessed by the offering. The sin offering was essential for atonement of the sin, so that Israel could be forgiven (vs.25-26).

In the case of an individual's sin of ignorance it required only the sacrifice of a **young female goat** (v.27), a type of Christ as the substitute to take our place in suffering for sin. The female indicates a subjective character, showing that the individual is to take deeply to heart the truth that the innocent victim, the Lord Jesus, has taken their place in suffering for sin. This one law again embraces both Israelites and strangers who dwell among them (v.29).

THE FRINGE OF BLUE ON THEIR GARMENTS

Jehovah tells Moses to instruct the children of Israel to make tassels on the borders of their garments attached by a lace of blue (v.38). Similar instruction is given for the high priest's garment (Ex.28:33) being also embroidered with a lace of blue. The borders of the garments were there, so that when one looked downward, he was reminded of heaven (the blue) and would be encouraged to look up. Though Israel required such a physical reminder as this to warn them against the evil toward which their hearts were inclined (v.39), the Spirit of God within us constantly reminds us of our proper heavenly inheritance and conduct allowing us, if we will, to be kept by His power in living communion with the Lord. He is the real power for godliness and we have therefore no excuse for falling into sin.

The chapter closes with the strong declaration, "I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt to be your God: I am the Lord your God." Having been told this so often, how could Israel dare to turn so soon afterwards to other gods but they and we have! Thanks be to God for His faithfulness inspite of our repeated failure.

Beloved brethren do we apprehend the immensity of the Sacrifice and the wonder of His blessed Person? This can only be by meditating on the Word of God in the Spirit and walking uprightly in the fear of God.

Truly, obedience to the Word of God and dependence on God by the Spirit to walk in the truth of it is the only way of communion and when in communion with God we will be able to apprehend in measure "the unsearchable riches of Christ" and say with the apostle Paul "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."

*Stricken, smitten, and afflicted,"
See Him dying on the tree !
'Tis the Christ by man rejected !
Yes, my soul, 'tis He, 'tis He !
Mark the sacrifice appointed !
See who bears the awful load !
'Tis the Word, 'tis God's Anointed,
Son of Man and Son of God*

Little Flock #20 appendix.