

**NOTES**  
**ON**  
**THE BOOK OF NUMBERS**

by

Charles H. MacIntosh

-----

*"Things new and old."*

-----

Copyright © 1862

by

F. H. Revell

edited for 3BSB by Baptist Bible Believer in the spirit of the Colportage Ministry of a century ago

*~ out-of-print and in the public domain ~*

**Numbers 28 - Numbers 29**

These two chapters must be read together; they form a distinct section of our book - a section pregnant with interest and instruction. The second verse of chapter 28 gives us a condensed statement of the contents of the entire section.

**"And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Command the children of Israel, and say unto them, My offering, and My bread for My sacrifices made by fire, for a sweet savour unto Me, shall ye observe to offer unto me in their due season."**

In these words the reader is furnished with a key with which to unlock the whole of this portion of the Book of Numbers. It is as distinct and simple as possible. **"My offering"** **"My bread"** **"My sacrifices,"** **"A sweet savour unto Me."**

All this is strongly marked. We may learn here, without an effort, that the grand leading thought is CHRIST to Godward. It is not so much CHRIST as meeting our need - though surely He does most blessedly meet that - as CHRIST feeding and delighting the heart of GOD. It is GOD's bread - a truly wonderful expression, and one little thought of or understood. We are all sadly prone to look at CHRIST merely as the procuring cause of our salvation, the One through whom we are forgiven and saved from hell, the channel through which all blessing flows to us He is all this, blessed for ever be His Name. He is the Author of eternal salvation to all them that obey Him. He bore our sins in His own body on the tree He died, the just for the unjust, to bring us to GOD He saves us from our sins, from their present power, and from their future consequences.

All this is true; and, consequently, throughout the whole of the two chapters which lie open before us, and in each distinct paragraph, we have the sin offering introduced (See Numbers 28:15, 22, 30; 29:5, 11, 16, 19, 22, 25, 28, 31, 34, 38). Thirteen times over is mention made of the sin offering of atonement; and yet, for all that, it remains true and obvious that sin or atonement for sin is not, by any means, the great prominent subject. There is no mention of it in the verse which we have quoted for the reader, although that verse plainly gives a summary of the contents of the two chapters; nor is there any allusion to it until we reach the fifteenth verse.

Need we say that the sin offering is essential inasmuch as man is in question, and man is a sinner? It would be impossible to treat of the subject of man's approach to GOD, his worship, or his communion, without introducing the atoning death of CHRIST as the necessary foundation. This the whole heart confesses with supreme delight. The mystery of CHRIST's precious sacrifice shall be the wellspring of our souls throughout the everlasting ages.

But shall we be deemed Socinian in our thoughts if we assert that there is something in CHRIST and in His precious death beyond the bearing of our sins and the meeting of our necessities? We trust not. Can any one read Numbers 28 and 29 and not see this? Look at one simple fact which might strike the mind of a child. There are seventy-one verses in the entire section; and, out of these, thirteen allude to the sin offering, and the remaining fifty-eight are occupied with sweet savour offerings.

In a word then, the special theme here is GOD's delight in CHRIST. Morning and evening, day by day, week after week, from one new moon to another, from the opening to the close of the year, it is CHRIST in His fragrance and preciousness to Godward. True it is thanks be to GOD, and to JESUS CHRIST His Son - our sin is atoned for, judged, and put away for ever - our trespasses forgiven and guilt cancelled. But above and beyond this, the heart of GOD is fed, refreshed, and delighted by CHRIST. What was the morning and evening lamb? Was it a sin offering or a burnt offering? Hear the reply in GOD's own words:

**"And thou shalt say unto them, This is the offering made by fire which ye shall offer unto the Lord; two lambs of the first year without spot day by day, for a continual burnt offering. The one lamb shalt thou offer in the morning, and the other lamb shalt thou offer at even; and a tenth part of an ephah of flour for a meat offering, mingled with the fourth part of an hin of beaten oil. It is a continual burnt offering, which was ordained in Mount Sinai, for a sweet savour, a sacrifice made by fire unto the Lord."**

Again; what were the two lambs for the Sabbath? a sin offering or a burnt offering? **"This is the burnt offering of every Sabbath."** It was to be double, because the Sabbath was a type of the rest that remaineth for GOD's people, when there will be a two-fold appreciation of CHRIST. But the character of the offering is as plain as possible. It was CHRIST to Godward. This is the special point in the burnt offering. The Sin offering is CHRIST to usward. In this, it is a question of the hatefulness of sin; in that, it is a question of the preciousness and excellency of CHRIST.

So also,

- at the beginnings of their months (ver. 11),

- in the feast of the Passover and unleavened bread (ver. 16-25),
- in the feast of firstfruits (ver. 26-31),
- in the feast of trumpets (Numbers 29:1-6),
- in the feast of tabernacles (ver. 7-38).

*In a word, throughout the entire range of feasts, the leading idea is CHRIST as a sweet savour.*

The sin offering is never lacking; but the sweet savour offerings get the prominent place, as is evident to the most cursory reader. We do not think it possible for any one to read this remarkable portion of Scripture and not observe the contrast between the place of the sin offering and that of the burnt offering. The former is only spoken of as "**one kid of the goats**," whereas the latter comes before us in the form of "**fourteen lambs**," "**thirteen bullocks**" and such like. Such is the large place which the sweet savour offerings get in this Scripture.

But why dwell upon this? Why insist upon it? Simply to show to the Christian reader the true character of the worship GOD looks for, and in which He delights. GOD delights in CHRIST; and it should be our constant aim, to present to GOD that in which He delights. CHRIST should ever be the material of our worship; and He will be, in proportion as we are led by the Spirit of GOD. How often, alas! it is otherwise with us the heart can tell. Both in the assembly and in the closet, how often is the tone low, and the spirit dull and heavy. We are occupied with self instead of with CHRIST; and the Holy Ghost, instead of being able to do His own proper work, which is to take of the things of CHRIST and show them unto us, is obliged to occupy us with ourselves, in self-judgment, because our ways have not been right.

All this is to be deeply deplored. It demands our serious attention both as assemblies and as individuals - in our public reunions and in our private devotions.

- why is the tone of our public meetings frequently so low?
- why such feebleness, such barrenness, such wandering?
- why are the hymns and prayers so wide of the mark?
- why is there so little that really deserves the name of worship?
- why is there such restlessness and aimless activity?
- why is there so little in our midst to refresh the heart of GOD?
- why so little that He can really speak of as "**His bread, for His sacrifices made by fire, for a sweet savour unto him?**"

We are occupied with self and its surroundings - our wants, our weakness, our trials and difficulties; and we leave GOD without the bread of His sacrifice. We actually rob Him of His due, and of that which His loving heart desires.

Is it that we can ignore our trials, our difficulties, and our wants? No; but we can commit them to Him. He tells us to cast all our care upon Him, in the sweet and tranquillizing assurance that He careth for us. He invites us to cast our burdens upon Him, in the assurance that He will sustain us. He is mindful of us. Is not this enough! Ought we not to be sufficiently at leisure from ourselves, when we assemble in His presence, to be able to present to Him something besides our own things? He has provided for us. He has made all right for us. Our sins and Our sorrows have all been divinely met. And most surely we cannot suppose that such things are the food of

GOD's sacrifice. He has made them His care, blessed be His name; but they cannot be said to be His food.

Christian reader, ought we not to think of these things - think of them, in reference both to the assembly and the closet? - for the same remarks apply both to the one and the other.

Ought we not to cultivate such a condition of soul as would enable us to present to GOD that which He is pleased to call "**His bread?**" The truth is we want more entire and habitual occupation of heart with CHRIST as a sweet savour to GOD. It is not that we should value the sin offering less; far be the thought! But let us remember that there is something more in our precious Lord JESUS CHRIST than the pardon of our sins and the salvation of our souls.

What do the burnt offering, the meat offering, and the drink offering set forth? CHRIST as a sweet savour - CHRIST the food of GOD's offering - the joy of His heart. Need we say it is one and the same CHRIST? Need we insist upon it that it is the same One who was made a curse for us that is a sweet savour to GOD? Surely, surely every Christian owns this. But are we not prone to confine our thoughts of CHRIST to what He did for us, to the virtual exclusion of what He is to GOD? It is this we have to mourn over and judge - this we must seek to have corrected; and we cannot but think that a careful study of Numbers 28, 29 would prove a very excellent corrective. May GOD, by His Spirit, use it to this end!

Having, in our "*Notes on Leviticus*," offered to the reader what GOD has given to us in the way of light on the sacrifices and feasts, we do not feel led to dwell upon them here. That little volume can be had of the publisher, and the reader will find in chapters 1-8 and chapter 33 what may interest and help him in reference to the subjects treated of in the two chapters on which we have been dwelling.

~ end of chapter 28, 29 ~

<http://www.baptistbiblebelievers.com/>

\*\*\*