



"[Jesus] was the Prince of Peace, not the Prince of Appeasement.
The two are not the same and should never be confused."
—Mike Adams

14-May-10

Pentecost and the Wave Offerings (Part One)

In Daniel 7, [God](#) foretells of a blasphemous end-time king who will, as it says in the King James Version, "wear out the saints of the Most High" ([Daniel 7:25](#)). While we do not yet appear to be in the midst of that prophecy, it is worth noting that even though this tactic of "wearing out" is being executed by a human ruler, its ultimate source is the spiritual power *behind* that king (see [Revelation 13:2](#)). [Satan](#) is ultimately behind the war against God's chosen people, and the prophecy in Daniel teaches us that one of his approaches is to try to *wear out*—to persecute, to exhaust, to afflict mentally—those with whom God is working.

If we stop and reflect on our own lives, we can easily see evidence of this satanic tactic already at work. We are all well acquainted with the busyness of life, and the hectic pace at which we are living (see [Daniel 12:4](#)). We are probably all familiar with the fears, if not the realities, of not being able to make ends meet. Our digital age allows us to accomplish fantastic things quickly, yet it also requires us to stay on top of an expanding heap of information that threatens to suffocate us. All of this drains our energy and exhausts us.

In addition to [the world](#) spinning frantically around us, Satan also seeks to afflict us mentally by keeping things stirred up in our personal surroundings. He broadcasts anger, suspicion, accusation, loneliness, helplessness, worthlessness, futility, and criticism. He encourages spiritual brethren to be defensive and mistrustful. God generally keeps a hedge around us, as He did for Job ([Job 1:10](#)), so Satan resorts to other devices to get to us. He tries to distract us, deceive us, and weigh us down to wear us out so we will give up the crown that awaits us.

But God does not leave us without hope. Within the annual [Sabbath](#) of Pentecost and its symbols are an implicit promise of God's intervention and an answer to Satan's tactics that we can cling to as the pressure builds and as Satan grows ever more active in his attempts to wear us out. That answer is found in the somewhat obscure sacrifice known as the *wave offering*.

Before delving into the specifics of those offerings, though, it may be helpful to summarize the overall sacrificial system so we can understand where the wave offerings fit. The wave offerings were not offered by themselves, but instead came at or near the end of a specific series of other offerings. The first offering that was made is the [sin offering](#) (Leviticus 4), which acknowledged sin in general and symbolized that sin requires the death penalty. A substitutionary sacrifice paves the way for the sinner to be reconciled with God.

The whole burnt offering is next in the sequence (Leviticus 1), representing the offerer's complete and wholehearted devotion to God. It depicts the first four commandments, which govern our relationship with Him. The sequence teaches that we really cannot be devoted to God until we are first reconciled to Him. From the New Testament, we understand that He must call us and justify us before we can begin serving Him in a meaningful way.

After the whole burnt offering comes the [meal offering](#) or grain offering, as it is also called (Leviticus 2). It symbolizes a man's complete devotion to his fellow man, and corresponds to the last six commandments. Again, considering the sequence, we can learn that it is impossible to [love](#) or behave rightly toward our fellow man until our devotion to God is correct. The order of the sacrifices teaches us that if our relationships are to be successful, our priorities must be in alignment with God's instructions.

Next in the sequence is the [peace offering](#) (Leviticus 3). In modern usage, we speak of a peace offering as a gift that is meant to endear another person to us and to encourage him to be reconciled to us. Today, it is nearly synonymous with a friendly bribe for the sake of mending bridges. The Bible's peace offering, however, is quite different, symbolizing a meal shared among the offerer, the priest, and God Himself. It indicates that there is *already* peace between God and man, and so the offerer is actually giving thanks for the peaceful and satisfying relationship with God. Inherent within this offering is a feeling of thanksgiving. Since the offerer is moving in the same direction as God by being devoted to the same things God is, there is alignment and unity. The offerer, the priest, and God, are all satisfied in this offering; all parties are shown to be contented, pleased, and gratified.

The wave offering fits in right here. When the peace offering was made, the person making the offering took a portion of it and held it up for acceptance before God ([Exodus 29:26-29](#); [Leviticus 7:29-34](#)). After it was "waved" in this way, the offerer then gave the portion to the priest, and he and his family ate it.

All of this may seem a bit technical, but it is very relevant to the day of Pentecost. On Pentecost, more peace offerings were made in Israel than on any other holy day. In addition, the [count to Pentecost](#) begins with a special wave offering, when a sheaf of barley was waved before God for acceptance. Then on the day of Pentecost, another wave offering was made, when two loaves made with yeast were waved for acceptance before God (see [Leviticus 23:9-11](#), 15-17, 20-21).

The two special wave offerings—the barley sheaf and the leavened loaves—are like bookends of a spiritual process. The first wave offering, the Wavesheaf, was fulfilled by [Jesus Christ](#) after He was resurrected and accepted by the Father. [Leviticus 23:14](#) shows that the Israelites' grain harvest could not begin until after the sheaf had been waved and accepted by God. Likewise, the early spiritual harvest—the harvest of firstfruits—could not begin until Jesus had completed His ministry and the Father had accepted His work.

The last stage in the process represented here is the waving of the [two leavened loaves](#), which God also accepts despite their being baked with yeast, a type of sin and its corruption. The two loaves represent the firstfruits of God's spiritual harvest and the completion of the spiritual process.

In this Feast and in its offerings, God is outlining the process He is bringing us through, showing us that at the end, if we continue in His process, we—the firstfruits, symbolized by the leavened loaves—will be acceptable to Him. Our [faith](#), though, is not in the process but in the One who has orchestrated all of this so that corrupt, sinful beings who are baked with leavening will, at the end, be acceptable to Him. Nevertheless, as long as we remain within this process, we can have every confidence that God will complete His good work within us ([Philippians 1:6](#)). We are, after all, *His* workmanship ([Ephesians 2:10](#)).

We will pursue this further in Part Two.

- David C. Grabbe

From the Archives: Featured Sermon

[Unleavened Bread and Pentecost](#)

by John W. Ritenbaugh

In observing the Feast of Unleavened Bread, emphasizing our initiative in putting out sin is wrong. Unleavened bread serves as a memorial of God's initiative of delivering us from the bondage of sin. Like our forebears, we have to realize that our part of the salvation process is to follow God's lead, cooperating with His will. When we metaphorically leave Egypt (a type of the world), we leave the location of our sin, leaving behind anything that will hinder us from reaching the Promised Land. Eating unleavened bread symbolizes following God's lead, doing righteousness, and imitating the righteousness of God.

From the Archives: Featured Article

[The Offerings of Leviticus \(Part Four\): The Peace Offering](#)

by John W. Ritenbaugh

The peace, fellowship, praise, or thank offering was the most commonly given in ancient Israel. John Ritenbaugh explains that it represents God, the priest, and the offerer in satisfying fellowship.

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