

4 Offerings for JESUS

28 Jan. 23



Ice-Breaker: *What's an offering and, what's a sacrifice? What's the difference?*

2 Corinthians 9:6-15 cev ⁶Remember this saying, “A few seeds make a small harvest, but a lot of seeds make a big harvest.” ⁷⁻⁹Each of you must make up your own mind about how much to give. But don't feel sorry that you must give and don't feel that you are forced to give. God loves people who love to give. God can bless you with everything you need, and you will always have more than enough to do all kinds of good things for others. The Scriptures say, “God freely gives his gifts to the poor, and always does right.” ¹⁰⁻¹¹God gives seed to farmers and provides everyone with food. He will increase what you have, so that you can give even more to those in need. You will be blessed in every way, and you will be able to keep on being generous. Then many people will thank God when we deliver your gift. ¹²⁻¹⁵What you are doing is much more than a service that supplies God's people with what they need. It is something that will make many others thank God. The way in which you have proved yourselves by this service will bring honour and praise to God. You believed the message about Christ, and you obeyed it by sharing generously with God's people and with everyone else. Now they are praying for you and want to see you, because God used you to bless them so very much. Thank God for his gift that is too wonderful for words!

- *How important is verse 6 to the rest of the passage?*
- *Why should we love to give (rather than want to receive)?*
- *What will we be able to do as a result of God's blessing to us?*
- *In what way is our generosity a form of evangelism?*
- *Why is thanks so important in this passage?*

Deuteronomy 16:1-17 cev ¹⁻⁴People of Israel, you must celebrate Passover in the month of Abib, because one night in that month years ago, the LORD your God rescued you from Egypt. The Passover sacrifice must be a cow, a sheep, or a goat, and you must offer it at the place where the LORD chooses to be worshipped. Eat all the meat of the Passover sacrifice that same night. But don't serve bread made with yeast at the Passover meal. Serve the same kind of thin bread that you ate when you were slaves suffering in Egypt and when you had to leave Egypt quickly. As long as you live, this thin bread will remind you of the day you left Egypt. For seven days following Passover, don't make any bread with yeast. In fact, there should be no yeast anywhere in Israel. ⁵⁻⁷Don't offer the Passover sacrifice in any town where you happen to live. It must be offered at the place where the LORD chooses to be worshipped. Kill the sacrifice at sunset, the time of day when you

left Egypt. Then cook it and eat it there at the place of worship, returning to your tents the next morning. ⁸Eat thin bread for the next six days. Then on the seventh day, don't do any work. Instead, come together and worship the LORD. ⁹⁻¹²Seven weeks after you start your grain harvest, go to the place where the LORD chooses to be worshipped and celebrate the Harvest Festival in honour of the LORD your God. Bring him an offering as large as you can afford, depending on how big a harvest he has given you. Be sure to take along your sons and daughters and all your servants. Also invite the poor, including Levites, foreigners, orphans, and widows. Remember that you used to be slaves in Egypt, so obey these laws. ¹³⁻¹⁵After you have finished the grain harvest and the grape harvest, take your sons and daughters and all your servants to the place where the LORD chooses to be worshipped. Celebrate the Festival of Shelters for seven days. Also invite the poor, including Levites, foreigners, orphans, and widows. The LORD will give you big harvests and make you successful in everything you do. You will be completely happy, so celebrate this festival in honour of the LORD your God. ¹⁶⁻¹⁷Each year there are three festivals when all Israelite men must go to the place where the LORD chooses to be worshipped. These are the Festival of Thin Bread, the Harvest Festival, and the Festival of Shelters. And don't forget to take along a gift for the LORD. The bigger the harvest the LORD gives you, the bigger your gift should be.

- *What attributes about God do the three festivals celebrate?*
- *Why do you think those attending Passover are different to the other festivals?*
- *How can we make our celebrations of God evangelistic events?*
- *For what reasons, do you think, God instituted the festivals?*
- *How do we have fellowship, celebration, making sacrifices and offerings?*

Psalms 116 cev ¹⁻⁴I love you, LORD! You answered my prayers. You paid attention to me, and so I will pray to you as long as I live. Death attacked from all sides, and I was captured by its painful chains. But when I was really suffering, I prayed and said, “LORD, please don't let me die!” ⁵⁻⁷You are kind, LORD, so good and merciful. You protect ordinary people, and when I was helpless, you saved me and treated me so kindly that I don't need to worry any more. ⁸⁻¹¹You, LORD, have saved my life from death, my eyes from tears, my feet from stumbling. Now I will walk at your side in this land of the living. I was faithful to you when I was suffering, though in my confusion I said, “I can't trust anyone!” ¹²⁻¹⁵What must I give you, LORD, for being so good to me? I will pour out an offering of wine to you, and I will pray in your name because you have saved me. I will keep my promise to you when your people meet. You are deeply concerned when one of your loyal people faces death. ¹⁶⁻¹⁹I worship you, LORD, just as my mother did, and you have rescued me from the chains of death. I will offer you a sacrifice to show how grateful I am, and I will pray. I will keep my promise to you when your people gather at your temple in Jerusalem. Shout praises to the LORD!

- *What do you think of how the psalmist begins his song of praise?*
- *For what does the psalmist praise God? Why do we praise God?*
- *How does the psalmist view humans in relation to God?*
- *Other than writing a song, how else does the psalmist wish to honour God?*
- *When we give offerings to whom do we give them?*
- *How has the Holy Spirit spoken to you today?*
- *What are you most impressed with and thus want to share with others?*