

Leviticus 24:1-9 | Sunday September 7, 2025

In chapter 23 God gave Israel their calendar for holidays throughout the year. Each feast was to remind the people of who their God was and what He had done for them. We also saw how the spring feasts pointed to the first coming of Jesus and how the fall feasts point to future second coming of Jesus. Then in chapter 25 God will continue to reveal His desire for their calendar by introducing the Sabbatical year and year of Jubilee. It is chapter 24 that seems out of place. In the middle of explaining the calendar God points out two very important pieces of furniture in the tabernacle and then an issue arises in the camp that needs to be dealt with. While this chapter can seem to break the context, God is continuing to reveal Jesus and His character. Just as the feasts pointed to Jesus these pieces of furniture reveal so much about Him and how we are to walk in relationship with Him.

Leviticus 24:1-9 ESV

- (1) The LORD spoke to Moses, saying,
- (2) “Command the people of Israel to bring you pure oil from beaten olives for the lamp, that a light may be kept burning regularly.
- (3) Outside the veil of the testimony, **in the tent of meeting**, Aaron shall arrange it from evening to morning before the LORD regularly. It shall be a statute forever throughout your generations.
- (4) He shall arrange the lamps **on the lampstand of pure gold before the LORD** regularly.
- (5) “You shall take fine flour and bake twelve loaves from it; two tenths of an ephah shall be in each loaf.
- (6) And you shall set them in two piles, six in a pile, on the table of pure gold before the LORD.
- (7) And you shall put pure frankincense on each pile, that it may go with the bread as a memorial portion as a food offering to the LORD.
- (8) Every Sabbath day Aaron shall arrange it before the LORD regularly; it is from the people of Israel as a covenant forever.
- (9) And it shall be for Aaron and his sons, and they shall eat it in a holy place, since it is for him a most holy portion out of the LORD's food offerings, a perpetual due.”

The first piece of furniture that God draws attention to is the golden menorah or golden lampstand. It was placed in the tabernacle and was on the left side as you entered the Holy place. God gave all the instructions of how it should be built in **Exodus 25. The lampstand is one of the most incredible representations of Jesus in the tabernacle.** The lampstand had three branches on each side and one in the middle for a total of seven. Each branch had intricate details of almond blossoms. When **Titus** destroyed the temple in **70 AD** a large arch was built in Rome to celebrate the victory and on it the golden lampstand and the table of showbread can be seen as they were carried off as plunder from the war.

The lampstand was the only source of light, in the Holy place of the tabernacle. **The Lampstand illuminated the tabernacle, and made worship of God possible.** Without it the priest would have been left in the dark. It was imperative that it be kept burning from the evening to the morning. God could have provided the fuel for this lamp in numerous ways and yet He chose to involve the nation.

Leviticus 24:2 ESV

(2) **“Command the people of Israel to bring you pure oil** from beaten olives for the lamp, that a light may be kept burning regularly.

God could have provided this light in so many ways. The lampstand **could have been** lit once and then been an eternal flame that never went out. Each detail of what God desired is intentional. He had the people bring the highest quality of pure oil. God is inviting His people into worship and having an ownership in the tabernacle. This symbolism is emphasized when we understand that **oil represents the Holy Spirit**. Zechariah had a vision of the lamp stand and notice what God teaches Him from it.

Zechariah 4:1-6 ESV

(1) And the angel who talked with me came again and woke me, like a man who is awakened out of his sleep.

(2) And he said to me, “What do you see?” I said, “I see, and behold, **a lampstand all of gold**, with a bowl on the top of it, and seven lamps on it, with seven lips on each of the lamps that are on the top of it.

(3) And there are two olive trees by it, one on the right of the bowl and the other on its left.”

(4) And I said to the angel who talked with me, “What are these, my lord?”

(5) Then the angel who talked with me answered and said to me, **“Do you not know what these are?”** I said, **“No, my lord.”**

(6) Then he said to me, “This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: **Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, says the LORD of hosts.**

Zechariah did not understand what the lampstand represented. God makes it clear, His plans and will are not accomplished by the strength and ability of men. God’s will is accomplished **through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit**. Israel is invited to bring the oil, as a picture that one day all believers will be filled with the Holy Spirit and invited to serve through His power.

1 Corinthians 12:7; 11 ESV

(7) **To each** is given the **manifestation of the Spirit for the common good**.

(11) **All these are empowered** by one and the same Spirit, **who apportions to each one individually as He wills**.

Every person has certain strengths and talents, things that we excel at, that are unique to each person. **These talents are not our spiritual gift because they were still present before we became a believer**. Spiritual gifts are given to us the moment we are saved. **Our gift is not really for us, but for the common good**. It is for the body as a whole. Every spiritual gift is empowered by the same Spirit. Just as everyone in Israel brought the pure oil, and it all came together to empower the light. None of us choose our gift but walk in what the Spirit has provided.

The lampstand would not work without the oil. Jesus perfectly exemplifies this through His life because every miracle and act of obedience came not from His own power **but as He relied on and was empowered by the Holy Spirit**.

1 Peter 4:10-11 ESV

(10) As each has received a gift, **use it to serve one another**, as good stewards of **God's varied grace**:

(11) whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who

serves **by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ.** To Him belong glory and dominion forever and ever.
Amen.

We are called to use our gifts to serve each other. This is one of the **diversified, many colored, variegated** graces that God has given to us. As we walk in the power of the Holy Spirit, God is glorified because anything of value is happening because of Him. This raises a convicting thought. **If the Holy Spirit were to be removed out our lives today would much change?** The answer to this question reveals how much we rely on Him. If we are walking in sin, or in the power of the flesh then not much will change. We have been invited to walk in a fellowship with Jesus through the power of the Spirit. How we do that is tied to the next piece of furniture highlighted.

Leviticus 24:5-9 ESV

(5) “You shall take fine flour and bake **twelve loaves from it**; two tenths of an ephah shall be in each loaf.

(6) And you shall set them in two piles, six in a pile, on the table of pure gold before the LORD. (7) **And you shall put pure frankincense on each pile**, that it may go with the bread as a memorial portion as a food offering to the LORD.

(8) **Every Sabbath day Aaron shall arrange it before the LORD regularly**; it is from the people of Israel as a covenant forever.

(9) And it shall be for Aaron and his sons, and **they shall eat it in a holy place**, since it is for him a most holy portion out of the LORD's food offerings, a perpetual due.”

This describes the third piece of furniture in the holy place. The table of showbread would have been on the right hand side as you walked in. Its name is taken from the bread that was to be kept on it.

Exodus 25:30 ESV

(30) And you shall set **the bread of the Presence** on the table before me **regularly**.

The bread is literally called the **bread of the face, because it was to be in the presence of God.** The Bronze Altar would have been empty at times throughout the day. The bread though was meant to be continually in front of God. It was replaced each Sabbath by the High Priest. The priests were then allowed to eat the bread they just replaced. Frankincense was to be kept with the bread as well. **This bread represents Jesus's constant offer to His people for fellowship.** 12 loaves shows this offer was available to all 12 tribes. Jesus is constantly before God giving us access and fellowship to God. Fellowship is offered to God's people once they are saved.

John 6:47-51 ESV

(47) Truly, truly, I say to you, **whoever believes has eternal life.**

(48) **I am the bread of life.** (49) Your fathers ate **the manna** in the wilderness, and they died.

(50) This is the bread that comes down from heaven, **so that one may eat of it and not die.**

(51) I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone **eats** of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is My flesh.”

Jesus uses the Manna to describe the life giving moment of salvation. If you eat of the bread, you will live forever. If you believe, you have eternal life. This a one time action, it is the moment of salvation. Then Jesus starts to describe the offer of fellowship.

John 6:54-56 ESV

(54) Whoever **feeds on My flesh** and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.

(55) **For My flesh is true food**, and My blood is true drink.

(56) Whoever **feeds on My flesh** and drinks My blood **abides in Me, and I in him**.

Jesus not only changes the word but also the tense. **Eat was a one time action, feeds is a chewing, savoring, ongoing action.** As believers we are offered to remain constantly with God and abide in His presence. We are called priest and are offered to take of this bread and keep eating. You cannot have a vibrant growing walk with Jesus and not spend time with Him. We are called to chew on His word.

Colossians 3:15-17 ESV

(15) And **let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts**, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful.

(16) **Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly**, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

(17) And whatever you do, in word or deed, **do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus**, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

We are to let the peace that Jesus secured for us on the cross become a daily reality to enjoy. We are to feed on His word and be nourished by it. **It is through the Word that we can learn how to glorify God and be empowered in the Spirit in everything we do.** When we view Jesus this way it is a relationship with a loving caring savior. I want to encourage you to feed on Him consistently. **Too often we replace walking in the power of the Spirit for human effort and feeding on Jesus daily for rules.** There is a story in David's life that shows both of these principals very well.

1 Samuel 21:1-3 ESV

(1) Then David came to Nob, to Ahimelech the priest. And Ahimelech came to meet David, trembling, and said to him, "Why are you alone, and no one with you?"

(2) And David said to Ahimelech the priest, "**The king has charged me** with a matter and said to me, '**Let no one know anything of the matter** about which I send you, and with which I have charged you.' I have made an appointment with the young men for such and such a place.

(3) Now then, **what do you have on hand?** Give me five loaves of bread, or whatever is here."

David is fleeing out of fear from King Saul, and seeks refuge at the Tabernacle that is in Nob at the time. David acts out of His flesh and lies to the priest.

He was not on a mission from the king but is running away from the king. **David is not relying on God for wisdom, power or guidance but is figuring it out himself.** He is a warrior and thinking like one. He is conniving and relying on his own wits and it has only made things worse. Now He is starving and in desperate need of food and pleads with the priest for anything He can give.

1 Samuel 21:4-6 ESV

(4) And the priest answered David, **“I have no common bread on hand, but there is holy bread—if the young men have kept themselves from women.”**

(5) And David answered the priest, “Truly women have been kept from us as always when I go on an expedition. The vessels of the young men are holy even when it is an ordinary journey. How much more today will their vessels be holy?”

(6) **So the priest gave him the holy bread, for there was no bread there but the bread of the Presence**, which is removed from before the LORD, to be replaced by hot bread on the day it is taken away.

The priest only had the bread that had just been switched out from the table of showbread. David and His men were not allowed by the law to eat this bread, they were not priests. **Which makes our position as a priest all the more amazing.** In spite of the law Ahimelech gave David and his men the bread to eat. Jesus will give us insight into how to view this.

Matthew 12:1-8 ESV

(1) At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath. His disciples were hungry, and they began to pluck heads of grain and to eat.

(2) But when the Pharisees saw it, they said to him, **“Look, your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath.”**

(3) He said to them, “Have you not read what David did **when he was hungry**, and those who were with him: (4) how he entered the house of God and ate the bread of the Presence, **which it was not lawful for him to eat nor for those who were with him, but only for the priests?**

(5) Or have you not read in the Law how on the Sabbath **the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath and are guiltless?** (6) **I tell you, something greater than the temple is here.**

(7) **And if you had known what this means, ‘I desire mercy, and not sacrifice,’** you would not have condemned the guiltless. (8) For the Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath.”

Jesus is clear that David broke the law when He ate the bread. What David did was not lawful to the letter of the law, but **the heart of God was being missed.** This is the problem with rules. Rules are always easier and yet there is no life or heart in them. The Pharisees misunderstood what the law pointed to.

Jesus does not desire heartless ritual, and rule following. He desires **mercy, kindness, compassion.** This is why the oil and the bread are described right after the calendar of feasts. Israel was going to be tempted to fall into one of two ditches. They would pursue these feasts out of their own strength and eventually fall and forget them altogether. The other ditch is to get so strict with the rules about them and miss what they were actually about. **God wanted to remind them of the oil and the bread of presence.** The holy Spirit empowers us as believers to walk in a daily fellowship with Jesus. This is not out of our strength and is not rules.

Isaiah 1:14-18 ESV

(14) Your new moons and **your appointed feasts My soul hates**; they have become a burden to Me; **I am weary of bearing them.**

(15) When you spread out your hands, I will hide My eyes from you; even though you make many prayers, I will not listen; your hands are full of blood.

(16) **Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean**; remove the evil of your deeds from before My eyes; cease to do evil,

(17) learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless, plead the widow's cause.

(18) "Come now, let us reason together, says the LORD: **though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool.**

The feasts that were supposed to be such a joy became something God hated because of how Israel followed them. They used their own strength and made rules out of them. So, in the end their actions were sinful because **they would check their heart at the door and go through the motions.** God wanted His people to wash afresh in Him. To walk in a fellowship with Him. The same offer stands for us today. Let us walk fresh with God living in His power, as we abide in Him.
