

THE ONE YEAR BIBLE Reading for February 28:

Leviticus 22:17-23:44:

Chapter 22 of Leviticus concludes by instructing priests not to accept any animals for sacrifice with defects. Such would suggest less than wholeness and perfection. Israelites were not only to bring their best, but that which gave a full-fledged picture of wholeness and holiness. This kind of sacrifice also gave the best picture of the ultimate sacrifice to be offered someday—Jesus Christ (Exodus 12:5; Colossians 2:16-17; Hebrews 4:15; 7:26).

Leviticus 23 outlines the different times of rest and holy assembly the Israelites were to keep before the LORD: Sabbath (Seventh day of the week, to commemorate creation, the need to rest and be set apart to the LORD, and their difference from other nations); Passover/Feast Of Unleavened Bread (March/April, to commemorate the deliverance of Israel out of Egypt—the LORD is Savior); Firstfruits (March/April, to dedicate self and produce to the LORD as a blessing from Him); Weeks (Fifty days after Firstfruits, to recognize the LORD as the giver of all the harvest and one's needs); Trumpets (Late September, to prepare for the most sacred of Hebrew months and to recognize the end of one agricultural year and the beginning of another); Day Of Atonement (September/October, to offer up sacrifices of atonement and the scapegoat and to have a priest enter the Holy of Holies only this once in the year); and Booths/tabernacles (October, to help people remember the Lord's deliverance and His guidance through the wilderness).

Though we are no longer under these Laws as New Covenant believers (e.g. Matthew 12:1-8; Colossians 2:16-17), nevertheless the principles behind them of rest, setting aside regular times to be quiet before God and worship Him, as well as the importance of remembering who He is and all He has done are still very applicable to us.

Mark 9:30-10:12:

Here are several points of application in today's New Testament reading: For a second time Jesus predicts His death and resurrection (9:30-32)—thus showing they were divinely planned and He was aware they were coming; the disciple of Jesus is called to be a servant—even to the weakest and most vulnerable, not to make himself greater than all (9:33-37); though followers of Christ may not be part of our group, it does not make them any less followers of Christ (9:38-41); beware of leading astray new and vulnerable believers—even if we are in the midst of hard sufferings or times which might make us justify such behavior—we must remain those who can preserve and help others (9:42-50); though many in the world take marriage lightly and think divorce is not big deal, Jesus does not share their sentiments—those who are married must do all they can in the grace of Christ to grow and preserve their marriage covenant (10:1-12).

Psalms 44:1-8:

Psalms 44 addresses a time when the people of God as a whole face difficulties. Since a few of the lines are in the first person singular (vv. 4, 15) while the rest are first person plural, it seems this is a psalm written about the entire nation of Israel from a collective

perspective (as if they are one person) or it was originally written by a king who represents the whole (but passed on through the sons of Korah). The main point of application in today's reading is that we learn how helpful it is in prayer to focus in praise and thanksgiving upon God's faithfulness and how He has worked in us in the past before we move into praying about our difficulties and needs. Such a focus not only honors God, it increases our faith for prayer.

Proverbs 10:19:

The simple, short lesson of this proverb is that one way our speech needs to be controlled (see James 3:1-12) is not to talk more than we need. Often, for example, we can give an answer or comment before hearing someone out and this is folly (See Proverbs 18:13). We must remember that we will someday be held accountable for all our words (Jeremiah 17:10; Matthew 12:36-37; 1 Corinthians 4:5).