

# Leviticus 23:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the priest shall wave them with the bread of the firstfruits for a wave offering before the LORD, with the two lambs: they shall be holy to the LORD for the priest.

## Analysis

**And the priest shall wave them with the bread of the firstfruits for a wave offering before the LORD, with the two lambs: they shall be holy to the LORD for the priest.**

This verse falls within the section on **Appointed Feasts**. God's sacred calendar including Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles, marking redemption and agricultural blessings.

The central theme of Leviticus is God's holiness and the call for His people to be holy. The Hebrew word qadosh (קָדוֹשׁ) means 'set apart' or 'sacred,' emphasizing both separation from sin and consecration to God's purposes. The Aaronic priesthood mediated between God and Israel, offering sacrifices and maintaining the tabernacle. This prefigured Christ's superior priesthood after the order of Melchizedek. The five main offerings (burnt, grain, peace, sin, and guilt) addressed different aspects of relationship with God, all fulfilled in Christ's comprehensive sacrifice.

Every sacrifice and ritual in Leviticus points forward to Jesus Christ, who fulfills the entire sacrificial system as both perfect sacrifice and eternal high priest.

## Historical Context

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God's sacred calendar including Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles, marking redemption and agricultural blessings. Chapters 17-27, often called the 'Holiness Code,' expand covenant obligations beyond ritual to encompass all of life—sexuality, economics, justice, and relationships. The repeated refrain 'I am the LORD' grounds these laws in God's character and covenant relationship with Israel. Israel received these laws while encamped at Sinai, before entering Canaan. The laws prepared them for life in the promised land, distinguishing them from Canaanite practices and establishing their identity as God's holy nation. The portable tabernacle, central to Levitical worship, accompanied them through wilderness wanderings and eventually found permanent form in Solomon's temple. Ancient texts like the Code of Hammurabi show that law codes were common in the ancient Near East, but biblical law uniquely grounded ethics in God's character rather than merely social convention.

## Related Passages

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**Romans 2:1** — Judging others

**Matthew 25:31** — Final judgment

## Study Questions

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1. How does God's holiness, as revealed in this verse, shape your understanding of worship, obedience, and daily living?
2. How does Christ's superior priesthood, prefigured in this verse, assure you of access to God and effective intercession?
3. What does this verse teach about the costliness of true worship and dedication to God?

## Interlinear Text

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|                     |                |        |           |                     |                    |
|---------------------|----------------|--------|-----------|---------------------|--------------------|
| שָׁאַל              | לִפְנֵי        | עַל    | לְקָם     | בָּבֶר              | יְמִינָה           |
| shall wave          | And the priest | H853   | H5921     | them with the bread | of the firstfruits |
| H5130               | H3548          |        |           | H3899               | H1061              |
| כְּבָשָׂעַם         | שְׁנַי         | עַל    | לִיהְיוֹת | תְּנוּפָה           |                    |
| for a wave offering | before         | H3068  | H5921     | with the two        | lambs              |
| H8573               | H6440          |        |           | H8147               | H3532              |
| לִפְנֵי             | לִיהְיוֹת      | בְּיַד | לִפְנֵי   | לִפְנֵי             | לִפְנֵי            |
| they shall be holy  | H1961          | H3068  | the LORD  | And the priest      |                    |
| H6944               |                |        | H3548     |                     |                    |

## Additional Cross-References

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**Deuteronomy 18:4** (Parallel theme): The firstfruit also of thy corn, of thy wine, and of thine oil, and the first of the fleece of thy sheep, shalt thou give him.

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