

EXODUS 27 – 31

THESE BARRIERS ARE NOW REMOVED

If you were an Israelite during the time of the desert wanderings you would have gone to the Tabernacle to sacrifice unto the Lord. You would have left your tent with the animal you were going to sacrifice and made your way to the middle of the encampment where you would have seen a white linen fence. It was 150 feet long and 75 feet wide. You couldn't enter it at just any point. You would have had to go to the East end of the fenced area to gain entrance. At that point a priest would have met you in order to inspect your sacrifice to make sure it was without spot or blemish. Upon receiving the sacrifice, you and the priest would make your way to the brazen altar where the animal would be sacrificed. And that is where we find ourselves starting today's lesson.

This part of the Bible is unknown to many. But this is what is nowadays called the backstory to the NT. This drama is extended in the NT as Jesus fulfills the Law and the typology of the Tabernacle and all that it entails. Without this knowledge we are like the annoying guy that arrives late to the movie and keeps asking questions because he is unfamiliar with the set up of the plot. You don't want to be that guy.

The Altar of Burnt Offering

1 "You shall make an altar of acacia wood, five cubits long

and five cubits wide—the altar shall be square—and its height shall be three cubits. 2 You shall make its horns on its four corners; its horns shall be of one piece with it. And you shall overlay it with bronze. 3 Also you shall make its pans to receive its ashes, and its shovels and its basins and its forks and its firepans; you shall make all its utensils of bronze. 4 You shall make a grate for it, a network of bronze; and on the network you shall make four bronze rings at its four corners. 5 You shall put it under the rim of the altar beneath, that the network may be midway up the altar. 6 And you shall make poles for the altar, poles of acacia wood, and overlay them with bronze. 7 The poles shall be put in the rings, and the poles shall be on the two sides of the altar to bear it. 8 You shall make it hollow with boards; as it was shown you on the mountain, so shall they make it.

In chapters 27 – 31 we take back up where we left off on the furniture of the outer court, the courtyard as well as the garments and consecration of the priesthood. We have already walked from our tent to the Tabernacle and entered with our sacrifice. And we entered at the only entrance available.

Everything about the Tabernacle points to Jesus Christ. Everything about the Law shows us how it is impossible to reach the bar that God has established and called holiness. If we brush aside the Tabernacle and all that is in it we do ourselves a disservice in that we can miss out on seeing the typology of the OT, the way that typology came to fruition (which is another evidence of the finger of God having written the Bible) and also just what it was that Jesus did for us when He took our place and died for our sins.

As has already been stated there was only one way into the

Tabernacle. There was a reason for this.

John 10:9

9 I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.

John 14:6

6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

Acts 4:12

12 Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

The exclusivity that is found in Jesus is offensive in our day. Men want to design their own Tabernacle with many entrances. Many don't want any sacrifices at all. Others want a sacrifice but want one of their own choosing. This won't do. God is the architect of the Tabernacle and He has stated that there is but one-way to enter.

It shows the rebellion of mankind when he balks at the idea of one entrance even though the ticket is free. It would be different if we were asked to pay a price that not everyone could afford but that isn't the case. The price of admission was too high, therefore Jesus paid for everyone's admission. Just

think about that – people are fussing about a free gift even though it is priceless.

Let's take ourselves through this section of scripture and please make sure you see the application.

Chapter 27 speaks of the brazen altar and the assembly of the fence that surrounded the Tabernacle. Unlike the altar of incense that was in the Holy Place, this altar was a place of bloodshed. Why was this?

Heb. 9:22

22 And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission.

So there you have it. There is a price to be paid for sin. That price has to be paid. Even if we had managed to slip by the priest at the entrance and then got the laver and washed ourselves we still wouldn't be clean. Even if we managed to make it into the Holy place and eat the showbread we still wouldn't be clean. The path to God, the entrance to the place of God started then and even now with the blood of the innocent being shed for the guilty.

Mt. 26:26 – 28

26 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, " Take, eat; this is My body."

27 Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to

them, saying, “ Drink from it, all of you. 28 For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

Once again it all points to Jesus.

Chapter 28

1 “Now take Aaron your brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister to Me as priest, Aaron and Aaron's sons:Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. 2 And you shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother, for glory and for beauty.

Here we have the first priests of the Levitical or Aaronic priesthood. They wore garments that set them apart for their service in the Tabernacle.

4 And these are the garments which they shall make:a breastplate, an ephod, a robe, a skillfully woven tunic, a turban, and a sash. So they shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother and his sons, that he may minister to Me as priest.

The priest would wear a breastplate with 12 stones engraved with the names of each tribe of Israel. This kept the whole nation before the Lord at all times. He had a stone on each shoulder. Each stone had the names of six tribes engraved on it. In a pouch were two items known as the Urim and Thummim or lights and darks. These were possibly two stones: one light and one dark. After a prayer the priest would pull out one stone. The answer would be given according to which stone was withdrawn from the pouch. This was only used for yes or

no questions that concerned Israel as a nation.

All of these details also show us that worship is important. The details show us that there was a wrong way and a right way to worship God. All these implements that were used in worship were portable. That shows us that under the New Covenant we are not limited to worshipping God just while we are at Church. Our bodies are temples because the Spirit of God resides in the believer.

We should also see that the priests were set apart for service. This is why they didn't look like everyone else. We are also priests.

Rev. 1: 5b, 6

To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, 6 and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen

We are also to be set apart for service and in so doing we are not to look like everyone else. There is supposed to be a visible/ discernable difference between the believer and the unbeliever. The priests had to be clothed in righteousness. We will be clothed in robes of white. The book of Revelation tells us that these robes represent the righteousness of God. The righteousness we wear has been given to us. That is what sets us apart.

But it doesn't stop there. The priesthood of the OT is no longer necessary. Why? Because our High Priest is Jesus.

Heb. 10:19 – 22

19 Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, 20 by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, 21 and having a High Priest over the house of God, 22 let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

The major role of the priest was to intercede for the sinner in order to stave off the judgment of God. That is what Jesus does for us.

Heb. 7:22 – 25

22 by so much more Jesus has become a surety of a better covenant.

23 Also there were many priests, because they were prevented by death from continuing. 24 But He, because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood. 25 Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

The items in chapter 30 have already been covered.

Ex 31: 1 - 5

1 Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying:2 “See, I have called by name Bezalel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah. 3 And I have filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, in knowledge, and in all manner

of workmanship, 4 to design artistic works, to work in gold, in silver, in bronze, 5 in cutting jewels for setting, in carving wood, and to work in all manner of workmanship.

We should all look at this verse. It shows us that God's calling is His enabling. When God calls us to a work He imparts to us the ability to go about that work. That is, He gives us the aptitude for the work He has called us to do. Therefore if we find ourselves in some sort of ministry God is faithful to equip us for it. We can also see that God uses people in order to achieve some of the equipping. We all need teachers and mentors. We should seek them out on the human level but it is God that gives us our innate aptitude for what He has called us to do. We have all known people that could tear up a steel anvil with a rubber mallet. They shouldn't be mechanics, or doctors for that matter. You don't want someone that is visually impaired as a school crossing guard either. You don't want me as your accountant because I am not good at math.

Ex. 31:12 - 17

12 And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 13 "Speak also to the children of Israel, saying: 'Surely My Sabbaths you shall keep, for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I am the Lord who sanctifies you. 14 You shall keep the Sabbath, therefore, for it is holy to you. Everyone who profanes it shall surely be put to death; for whoever does any work on it, that person shall be cut off from among his people. 15 Work shall be done for six days, but the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord. Whoever does any work on the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. 16 Therefore the children of Israel

shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant. 17 It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever; for in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed. ”

We just read that the Sabbath was for the Children of Israel to keep, not the Church. But there is an application for us. The fact that God rested on the seventh day is mentioned here. God wasn't tired. The word means 'to cease' and was a time for the king, in this case, God to rest and look out upon His kingdom. God has invited Israel to do this also. God ceased His creative works on that day. He ceased only once. Keep that in mind.

Heb. 4:9, 10

9 There remains therefore a rest for the people of God. 10 For he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works as God did from His.

When Jesus gave up the Ghost on the cross His final words were, "It is finished." The work that it took in order for us to be seen as holy by a holy God was done. There was and is no more work to do. We can't work ourselves into Heaven and therefore don't have to do so. I have seen people work themselves into a tizzy trying to work themselves into Heaven. If we have faith in the completed work of Jesus we enter into a sort of Sabbath rest. We can cease trying to work our way into Heaven.

I began today's study by speaking of what it was like to go to the Tabernacle to worship. If you go back through what we talked about in chapters 25 and 26 you can see just how much 'work' it was to become clean. We don't have to go through that

anymore because Jesus – the one that all this pointed to, has paid the price for us. He did all the work so we can rest in Him. Our worship is so easy compared to what they did.

That fence was put around the Tabernacle not to keep God inside but to keep those that were unclean outside. Jesus has removed all those barriers for us. And for that we should all be grateful.