

# EXODUS

SO YOU MAY KNOW THAT **I AM** THE LORD



# VOLUME III

Copyright © 2022 Fairhaven Bible Chapel

All rights reserved. No portion of this book may be reproduced in any form without the written permission of the copyright holder

SECTION VI  
THAT THEY  
MAY  
WORSHIP ME





# LESSON EIGHTEEN

EXODUS 24:12-27:19

---

**You have a place to  
MEET WITH GOD**



# SERMON NOTES

## **You have a place to MEET WITH GOD**

Beauty in the barren land. That's what the tabernacle would be. Out in the sea of sand, at the center of a group of wandering nomads, you could find a direct line to God. There sat the throne of very One who was holding all those sand molecules together. It was to be surrounded by incredible beauty and artistic detail made from the finest materials that Egypt had to offer. There would be vibrant colors everywhere, gold and purple and scarlet. And the most beautiful part of all: "I will meet with you there" said the God of the mercy seat.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

It was God's intention from the beginning that mankind would have fellowship with Him

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Discussion Goals

This group discussion is aimed at bringing out the following principles:



Study God's design for His dwelling place among the children of Israel in order to gain insights into His character



See foreshadowing of God's ultimate plan of salvation as pictured in the tabernacle

## Leader Notes

The covenant has been ratified, the celebratory meal has taken place, and the LORD God of Israel is preparing to come and live among His people. But what will that look like from a practical perspective? To what place will He come, and how will that place be prepared for His arrival? In these chapters, we get to listen in as God provides the initial details, the blueprints for His earthly dwelling place among the children of Israel. Some aspects of God's dwelling place will come as no surprise, but others might be different than what we would have expected or would have planned, had we been the designers. Why is there so much gold in the interior? What is the significance of the different coverings for the tent? And how about the design of the gate? We will gain insights into the nature of God as we explore His tabernacle, from the curtains of the outer wall to the specific design of the golden lampstand. And, most exciting of all, we will watch God continue to unfold His wonderful plan of redemption, a plan that will be accomplished over a thousand years later by His Son, Jesus Christ.

## Scripture Reading


This discussion will draw from the first part of God's instructions for the Tabernacle in Exodus 24:12-27:19

EXODUS 24:12-27:19



## Discussion Questions

1. If a stranger walked through your house (or into your room if the whole house is not yours), what would they learn about you simply by looking at the various articles of furniture, decorations, etc. that are present or that are missing? Are there aspects of your personality that would be obvious to someone visiting your home, but that might not be readily apparent during an ordinary personal interaction outside of the home setting?

 2. The Holy of Holies, where the Ark of the Testimony was placed, is the closest Israel could get to the very presence of God. What lesson do you think God was teaching when He had this portion separated off from the rest of the tabernacle by a veil?

3. Continuing to think about the veil, Read Hebrews 10:19-22. What is the believer's position in regards to the presence of God? Do any of the lessons that we talked about in the previous question have applications for us anymore?

4. Inside the golden ark would be the two stone tablets, containing the 10 Commandments (Exodus 34:28). What does this tell us about the character of God? How might an Old Testament saint think about and worship God, knowing that the 10 Commandments were in the heart of His throne?

5. In the holy place, the section of the tabernacle where the daily service of the priests took place, was a table with loaves of bread. This bread would always be before God's presence. What does this tell us about the character of God? This bread would later be food for the priests. If you were a priest, how would you feel and what might you be thinking as you ate the showbread? Is there any application for us today in this?

6. On the golden lampstand, there are branches, blossoms, and buds. It seems that God is picturing a beautiful tree! Think back to Genesis 2:9 and the tree of life in the midst of the Garden of Eden, where man fellowshiped with God before the Fall. What parallels might there be between the lampstand and that tree? In what ways could this be a foreshadowing of Revelation 22:2? Is there any application for us in this? (John 17:3)

7. The first thing you would see upon entering the court of the tabernacle, as you passed through the gate, would be the big, bronze altar. There would be blood at its base and animals being burned on it. What does this tell us about the character of God? As Christians, we never need to offer these kinds of sacrifices again. (Hebrews 10:11-14) What does this tell us about the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on our behalf?

8. Before ever entering the tabernacle, as you approached from the rest of the camp of Israel, you would see a white curtain surrounding the entire structure. What does this tell us about the character of God? There was only one gate in that curtain, and it led straight to the bronze altar. What does this tell us about the character of God?

## CALL TO ACTION

We have seen some aspects of God's character highlighted that we do not often dwell on. What is your favorite part of the tabernacle? What in particular makes it meaningful to you?

What will be important for you to remember this coming week? In what way might it affect the choices you make?

1

**Scripture Reading**

Today's scripture reading is **Hebrews 10:19-22**

2

**Food For Thought**

**Approachable.** I saw the queen of England once. She was riding in a carriage on her way to Buckingham palace, and I was in the middle of a crowd of people lining the street cheering and waving. Technically, I could have pushed through that crowd and tried to run up to the carriage. The thought never crossed my mind, of course, and for good reason! There would have been no welcome for me, only security guards rushing me away before I even got close.

Similarly, the children of Israel were close to God in the tabernacle, but they could only get so close to Him. Most would never go much past the white outer barrier. Only the priests could enter the tabernacle, but even they could not go past the second veil into the Holy of Holies, where the Ark of the Covenant stood, representing God's actual presence. Even the High Priest was only allowed into the Holy of Holies once a year, and then only if he approached exactly in the manner prescribed by God.

But in the first century A.D., all that changed forever. When Jesus died on the cross, God Himself tore the veil blocking off the Holy of Holies. The sins of the world had at that moment forever been paid for, salvation had been fully accomplished, and God was now determined to allow those who accepted His offer of forgiveness into His very presence!

Now you and I do not stand afar off in our sins, trembling in fear of the judgment of a righteous, offended God. Instead, we hear the voice of God, our Father, beckoning us to come - to approach His very presence at any time, something the High Priest himself would never have dared to do, or even dreamed of! And how do we enter? According to this passage, "through the veil, that is, His flesh." The very body of Jesus was torn for us, and now, as a result of His sacrifice, we have been made the righteousness of God, accepted in the Beloved, and invited to approach the God of the universe with boldness! What a privilege we have! Let us never forget this, and let us obey this command, "that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need." (Hebrews 4:16).

3

**Meditations for the Day**

- Why do you think we are commanded to approach God "in full assurance of faith?" Are there times when a believer might not approach God with confidence? Do you need a reminder to approach God confidently?
- Take a moment to look forward to the rest of this week. In what specific situations do you want to remember to draw near to God as we discussed above?

# 1

### Scripture Reading

Today's scripture reading is **Isaiah 53:2**

# 2

### Food For Thought

**Beautiful.** If you were a foreigner who visited the Israelite encampment sometime after Mount Sinai, do you think you would have been underwhelmed as you looked at the Tabernacle? You would have heard about the God of the Hebrews, who had destroyed Egypt with His terrible plagues, and yet His dwelling was a brownish, nondescript tent inside a relatively small enclosure created by simple white linen.

If you were an Israelite, do you think you might have been ashamed at this assessment? Or might you instead have been excited to explain what the foreigner couldn't know? "Yes, this is God really living with us! He has come down to our level, to live among us and to help us to really know Him. Although most of us can't get past that pure white barrier you see, God allows some of our representatives, priests, to go in through that gate and to go inside the tent! And I know that tent doesn't look like much from here, but inside, it's incredible! Gold everywhere, artistic designs of cherubim woven with blue, purple, and scarlet thread, a golden table, a golden lampstand, a golden altar, and behind another veil, a golden ark from above which God Himself speaks! Believe me: you have no idea how wonderful it all is!"

The passage in Isaiah that we read today tells us that, similar to the tabernacle, the Lord Jesus Himself was ordinary in His appearance, though He was God Himself. He was not visibly striking, in fact no different from those around Him. People would jostle into Him and never know that they had rubbed elbows with the Son of God. It was only after they had come to know Him that they would say things like: "You are the Son of God! You are the king of Israel!" (John 1:49).

And we have the same joy in explaining the concept of Immanuel, God With Us, that an ancient Israelite might have had. "Yes, we are talking about a historical figure; a man who lived 2000 years ago, someone who can relate to your ordinary life. Not a king, not a statesman, but an ordinary carpenter. But He is wonderful! So wonderful! I know you can't see it right now, but let me tell you about Him; let me introduce you to Him! Let me introduce you to God Himself, and you will thrill in the joy of a personal relationship with your Creator and your Savior, and you will find Him to be beautiful beyond your wildest dreams!"

# 3

### Meditations for the Day

- In what way is the Lord Jesus beautiful to you? Take some time to meditate on Him specifically in regards to this beautiful aspect that you chose.
- When might you be able to share about the beauties of the Lord with someone who does not yet know Him this week?

## 1

**Scripture Reading**

Today's scripture reading is **Revelation 21:3**

## 2

**Food For Thought**

**Together Forever.** God and man living side-by-side in perfect harmony. We have that beautiful picture for only four chapters of the Bible: two at the beginning, and two at the end.

It was God's intention from the beginning that mankind would have fellowship with Him, and it appears that this was what indeed happened for an unknown length of time, as He would walk with Adam and Eve "in the cool of the day" in the garden of Eden. Imagine what that must have been like.

But then we disbelieved God, rebelled against Him, and were separated from Him as a result of our actions. Our fellowship was broken. No more would He walk with us in the cool of the day. At least, not for thousands of years.

In the interim, God continued to bridge the gap, to reach down to us. The tabernacle was one of the greatest examples of this, where God was still able, at least in some way, to live in the middle of a sinful people. The most wonderful of all, though, was when God Himself became a Man, "tabernacled among us," as it says in John 1:14, "and we beheld His glory" for 33 years.

In both cases, though, the fellowship was infinitely less than what it had been originally, because of our sin. God could never live with us in the same way as in Genesis 1 and 2 while the problem of sin was still present.

But one day, that problem will be entirely removed. Sin will forever be dealt with, our old sinful natures forever gone, and all tears wiped from our eyes. Then we will see, with our own eyes, what we read about today. Brother or sister, you will experience what Adam lost! The tabernacle of God, His dwelling place, will be with men one more time! And this time, forever. We will know what it is to have close, intimate fellowship with God, entirely free from sin. And for eternity! The further we enter that blissful existence, as the ages roll over each other, this time on earth will become a distant memory. And that memory of God's indescribable love for hell-bound sinners will serve as fuel for our sinless love for God as we enjoy His wonderful fellowship forever.

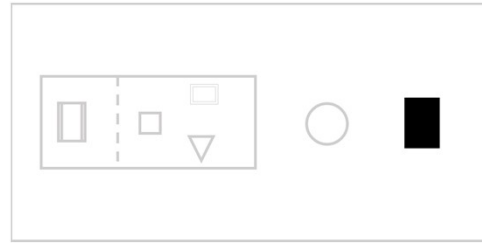
## 3

**Meditations for the Day**

- Place yourself, if you can, many years into the future, when you are bodily in the Lord's presence, at perfect peace. What issues that seem so important to you currently will not even enter your mind then? How could this eternal perspective change the way you live your life this week?



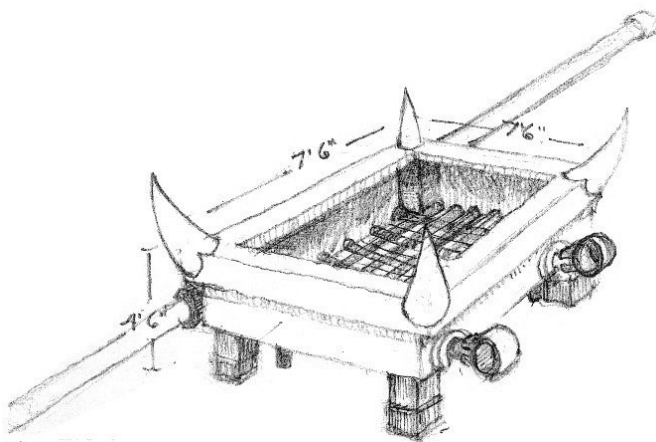
# ALTAR OF BURNT OFFERING



**27** “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. <sup>2</sup> 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. <sup>3</sup> 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. <sup>4</sup> 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.

<sup>5</sup> You shall put it under the rim of the altar beneath, that the network may be midway up the altar. <sup>6</sup> And you shall make poles for the altar, poles of acacia wood, and overlay them with bronze. <sup>7</sup> The poles shall be put in the rings, and the poles shall be on the two sides of the altar to bear it. <sup>8</sup> You shall make it hollow with boards; as it was shown you on the mountain, so shall they make *it*.



**Size:** 5 cubits long x 5 cubits wide x 3 cubits high (7.5 ft x 7.5 ft x 4.5ft)

**Material:** Acacia wood overlaid with bronze

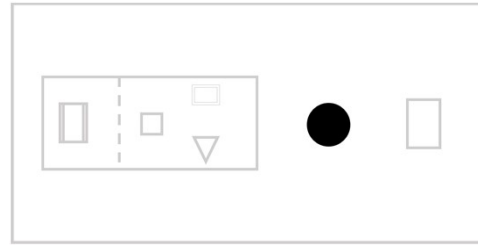
**Utensils:** pans, shovels, basins, forks and firepans

**Uses:** Burnt offerings, grain offerings, peace offerings, sin offerings, trespass offerings

Leviticus 1-6, 7:1-5; Hebrews 8:3, 9:11-22, 10:1-4

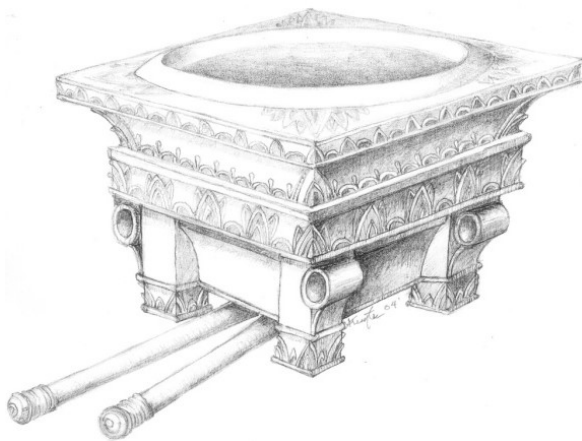
*Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. John 1:29*

# BRONZE LAVER



**30**<sup>17</sup> Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>18</sup>“You shall also make a laver of bronze, with its base also of bronze, for washing. You shall put it between the tabernacle of meeting and the altar. And you shall put water in it, <sup>19</sup>for Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet in water from it. <sup>20</sup>When they go into the

tabernacle of meeting, or when they come near the altar to minister, to burn an offering made by fire to the LORD, they shall wash with water, lest they die. <sup>21</sup>So they shall wash their hands and their feet, lest they die. And it shall be a statute forever to them—to him and his descendants throughout their generations.”



**Size:** unknown

**Material:** Bronze (made from mirrors donated by the women)

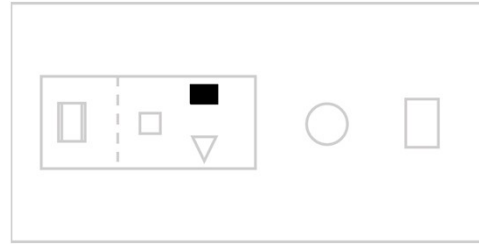
**Utensils:** none

**Uses:** The priests were to wash their hands and their feet when they came to minister at the tabernacle.

Exodus 38:8; Ephesians 5:25-33; Hebrews 10

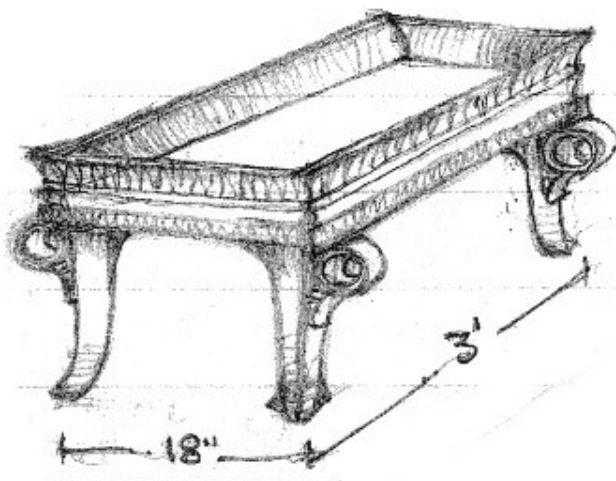
*“But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.” John 4:14*

# TABLE FOR THE SHOWBREAD



**25**<sup>23</sup> "You shall also make a table of acacia wood; two cubits *shall be* its length, a cubit its width, and a cubit and a half its height. <sup>24</sup> And you shall overlay it with pure gold and make a molding of gold all around. <sup>25</sup> You shall make for it a frame of a handbreadth all around, and you shall make a gold molding for the frame all around. <sup>26</sup> And you shall make for it four rings of gold and put the rings on the four corners

that *are* at its four legs. <sup>27</sup> The rings shall be close to the frame, as holders for the poles to bear the table. <sup>28</sup> And you shall make the poles of acacia wood, and overlay them with gold, that the table may be carried with them. <sup>29</sup> You shall make its dishes, its pans, its pitchers, and its bowls for pouring. You shall make them of pure gold. <sup>30</sup> And you shall set the showbread on the table before Me always.



**Size:** 2 cubits long x 1 cubit wide x 1.5 cubits high (3 ft x 1.5 ft x 2.25 ft)

**Material:** Acacia wood overlaid with gold

**Utensils:** dishes, pans, pitchers and bowls for pouring

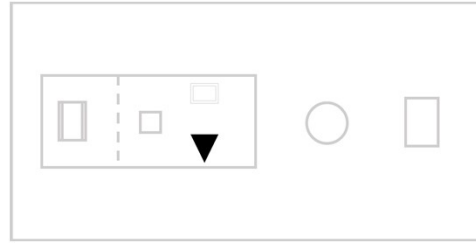
**Uses:** 12 loaves were "presented continually before the Lord." They were eaten and replaced by Aaron's sons each Sabbath

Leviticus 24:5-9, 7; Hebrews 9:2

*"I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst." John 6:35*



# THE GOLD LAMPSTAND



**25** <sup>31</sup>“You shall also make a lampstand of pure gold; the lampstand shall be of hammered work. Its shaft, its branches, its bowls, its *ornamental* knobs, and flowers shall be *of one piece*. <sup>32</sup>And six branches shall come out of its sides: three branches of the lampstand out of one side, and three branches of the lampstand out of the other side. <sup>33</sup>Three bowls *shall* be made like almond *blossoms* on one branch, with an ornamental knob and a flower, and three bowls made like almond *blossoms* on the other branch *with an ornamental* knob and a flower—and so for the six branches that come out of the lampstand. <sup>34</sup>On the lampstand itself four bowls *shall* be made like almond blossoms, each with its ornamental knob and

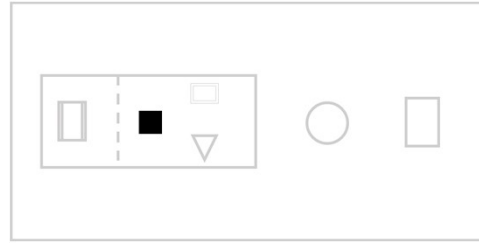
flower. <sup>35</sup>And there shall be a knob under the first two branches of the same, a knob under the second two branches of the same, and a knob under the *third* two branches of the same, according to the six branches that extend from the lampstand. <sup>36</sup>Their knobs and their branches *shall be of one piece*; all of it *shall be* one hammered piece of pure gold. <sup>37</sup>You shall make seven lamps for it, and they shall arrange its lamps so that they give light in front of it. <sup>38</sup>And its wick-trimmers and their trays *shall be* of pure gold. <sup>39</sup>It shall be made of a talent of pure gold, with all these utensils. <sup>40</sup>And see to it that you make *them* according to the pattern which was shown you on the mountain.



**Size:** unknown  
**Material:** One piece of pure gold  
**Utensils:** seven lamps, wick trimmers and trays  
**Uses:** to shine light before the Lord continually. To give light in the holy place by which the priest may do his work  
 Leviticus 24:1-4; 1 John 1:5-2:11

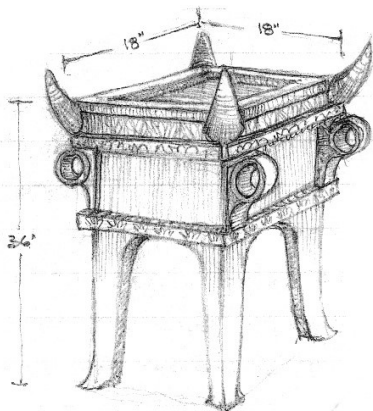
*“I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness but have the light of life.” John 8:12*

# ALTAR OF INCENSE



**30** “You shall make an altar to burn incense on; you shall make it of acacia wood. <sup>2</sup> A cubit *shall be* its length and a cubit its width—it shall be square—and two cubits *shall be* its height. Its horns *shall be* of one piece with it. <sup>3</sup> And you shall overlay its top, its sides all around, and its horns with pure gold; and you shall make for it a molding of gold all around. <sup>4</sup> Two gold rings you shall make for it, under the molding on both its sides. You shall place *them* on its two sides, and they will be holders for the poles with which to bear it. <sup>5</sup> You shall make the poles of acacia wood and overlay them with gold. <sup>6</sup> And you shall put it before the veil that *is* before the ark of the Testimony, before the mercy

seat that *is* over the Testimony, where I will meet with you. <sup>7</sup> “Aaron shall burn on it sweet incense every morning; when he tends the lamps, he shall burn incense on it. <sup>8</sup> And when Aaron lights the lamps at twilight, he shall burn incense on it, a perpetual incense before the LORD throughout your generations. <sup>9</sup> You shall not offer strange incense on it, or a burnt offering, or a grain offering; nor shall you pour a drink offering on it. <sup>10</sup> And Aaron shall make atonement upon its horns once a year with the blood of the sin offering of atonement; once a year he shall make atonement upon it throughout your generations. It *is* most holy to the LORD.”



**Size:** 1 cubit long, 1 cubit wide, 2 cubits high (1.5ft x 1.5ft x 3ft)

**Material:** Acacia wood overlaid with gold

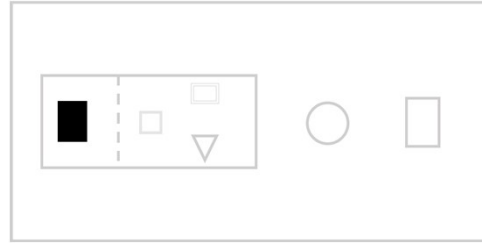
**Utensils:** none

**Uses:** Used to burn sweet smelling incense before the Lord continually. Once a year the high priest would use it for the sin offering.

Exodus 30:34-38; Leviticus 16; Hebrews 9

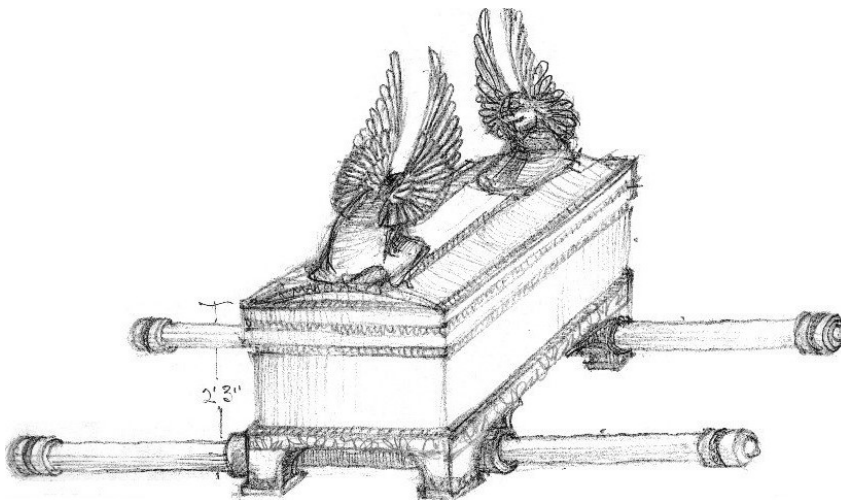
*“Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? ‘Father, save Me from this hour?’ But for this purpose I came to this hour. Father, glorify Your name.” John 12:27-28*

# ARK OF THE COVENANT



**25** <sup>10</sup> “And they shall make an ark of acacia wood; two and a half cubits *shall be* its length, a cubit and a half its width, and a cubit and a half its height. <sup>11</sup> And you shall overlay it with pure gold, inside and out you shall overlay it, and shall make on it a molding of gold all around. <sup>12</sup> You shall cast four rings of gold for it, and put *them* in its four corners; two rings *shall be* on one side, and two rings on the other side. <sup>13</sup> And you shall make poles of acacia wood, and overlay them with gold. <sup>14</sup> You shall put the poles into the rings on the sides of the ark, that the ark may be carried by them. <sup>15</sup> The poles shall be in the rings of the ark; they shall not be taken from it. <sup>16</sup> And you shall put into the ark the Testimony which I will give you. <sup>17</sup> “You shall make a mercy seat of pure gold; two and a half cubits *shall be* its length and a cubit and a half

its width. <sup>18</sup> And you shall make two cherubim of gold; of hammered work you shall make them at the two ends of the mercy seat. <sup>19</sup> Make one cherub at one end, and the other cherub at the other end; you shall make the cherubim at the two ends of it *of one piece* with the mercy seat. <sup>20</sup> And the cherubim shall stretch out *their* wings above, covering the mercy seat with their wings, and they shall face one another; the faces of the cherubim *shall be* toward the mercy seat. <sup>21</sup> You shall put the mercy seat on top of the ark, and in the ark you shall put the Testimony that I will give you. <sup>22</sup> And there I will meet with you, and I will speak with you from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which *are* on the ark of the Testimony, about everything which I will give you in commandment to the children of Israel.



*And she saw two angels in white sitting, one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. John 20:12*

**Size:** 2.5 cubits long, 1.5 cubits wide, 1.5 cubits high

(3.75ft x 2.25ft x 2.25ft)

**Material:** Acacia wood overlaid with gold

**Utensils:** the mercy seat of pure gold

**Uses:** To hold the stone tablets, a jar of manna, and Aaron's rod that had budded. It was the throne of God where He would meet with man.

1 Samuel 6; 2 Samuel 6, 15; 2 Chronicles 35:3; Hebrews 9; Revelation 11

# LESSON NINETEEN

EXODUS 27:20-30:10

---

**You aren't worthy to  
ENTER HIS PRESENCE**





## Discussion Goals

This group discussion is aimed at bringing out the following principles:



Understand our need for a priest



Know how Jesus fulfills the role as our priest



Desire to get as close to God as possible through Jesus

## Leader Notes

The plan for the PLACE to meet with God has been given. God is getting as close to His people as possible at this point in time. That is His strong desire: to be with His people. Israel now needs to know how they should interact with this Holy Place, this place where YHWH dwells. This week they will be given the PROTOCOL so that God can get them as close as possible and we will see that this protocol centers around one man in particular: the High Priest, Aaron. As we look at the high priest, we will see that his clothing is made up of the same threads as the tabernacle, but he also wears the stones of the earth with the names of the children of Israel on them. This shows us that he belongs in the tabernacle, but also that he represents the people while he is there. We see that he is consecrated and serves with those things that are Most Holy. Finally, we see his connection to the altar of incense. This altar of incense is placed in the Holy Place where the High Priest serves and is tied to the Day of Atonement. Later we learn that the incense and coals from the altar of incense enter the Most Holy Place with the High Priest on that day (Lev. 16:12-13). Moses is drawing a connection between the altar and the priest. The altar serves where he serves. The priest goes in to pray for the people, but he has to leave. The altar which represents those prayers can stay there, day and night. All of this makes us think of the protocol that God would follow to get even closer to us than He did to Israel, and how that protocol centers around one man in particular: "our great High Priest, Jesus the Son of God" (Heb. 4:14). This week we will be discussing God's protocol in Exodus and God's plan in His Son, Jesus Christ, our High Priest.

## Scripture Reading

This discussion will draw from the 2<sup>nd</sup> part of God's instructions for the Tabernacle in Exodus 28:1-30:10 and from Hebrews 2:14-18; 4:14-16; 9:24-28

### Discussion Questions


1. If you were separated from people you cared about and your only way of communicating with them was through a person as a go-between, what would you look for in a go-between? What would you like them to know? What character would you want them to have? What would you want them to be like? And why do you find those things important?


In Exodus, God gives protocol for a go-between so that He can dwell in Israel's midst. In the New Testament, we see that protocol points to the final go-between, Jesus. Let's see what God wanted to be true about His ultimate go-between for mankind.

2. In 26:1, we saw that the tabernacle's curtains were made with "woven linen and blue, purple, and scarlet thread." The entrance of the tabernacle and the veil were also made of these materials (vv. 31 & 36). In 28:5, 15, and 33, we see the same thread being used in the priestly garments. In this way, the high priest's clothing showed that he was fit to pass through the entrance and serve in the tabernacle. In Hebrews 4:14-15, where did Jesus pass through to serve as a priest?

3. What is it about Jesus that makes Him fit to serve in the heavenly tabernacle?

4. In 28:9 and 21, we see that the names of the children of Israel were worn on the priest to show that he brought the people near to God in His service. He represented them. In Hebrews 2:14-18, what did Jesus have to partake (share) in, in order to become our High Priest?


 5. Why would it be important that Jesus be human in order to be our High Priest?

 6. Hebrews 2:14-18 and Hebrews 4:14-16, tell us about the character of our High Priest as well. What kind of High Priest is He?

7. According to these verses, how should His character influence our interactions with Him?

8. What are some ways of thinking or attitudes that might get in the way of us going to Jesus with boldness when we are tempted? Can these verses in Hebrews help us address those? If not, can other verses?

9. In 29:10-14, we see that part of Aaron's consecration as High Priest was to offer a sin offering. How did Jesus, our High Priest, put away our sin according to Hebrews 9:24-28?

 10. How close could God get to Aaron and the people with the offerings they offered? How close can He get to you with the offering Jesus offered according to Hebrews 9:24-28?

### CALL TO ACTION

Your High Priest has done all that is needed to get you as close to God as possible. What is one way that you will seek to use all that He has made available to you as your High Priest this week?

## 1

**Scripture Reading**

Today's scripture reading is **Hebrews 5:1-2**

## 2

**Food For Thought**Gentle High Priest

The high priest was to reflect the heart of God to the people. When the people came to make their offerings, the priest was responsible for not only making the sacrifices on behalf of the people, but also reflecting God's heart toward those who came. And how did God want those who came to the tabernacle to be treated by the high priest? Hebrews tells us that He wanted them to be dealt with gently.

It might be easy to think of approaching the tabernacle of God and meeting the high priest and him being a harsh, stern, severe man - but God wanted a man who could deal gently with those who had sinned in ignorance or who had wandered astray. He wanted the person who brought their offering to be met by one who would be measured and would tenderly handle the person making the offering. Why? Because that reflects the heart of God toward the offerer. He has a gentle heart towards them.

It might be hard for some of us to truly believe that God has a gentle heart, so let's see other places the New Testament tells us about this heart:

1. Jesus tells us in Matthew 11:29, "I am gentle and lowly in heart." The heart refers to the very essence of a person in the Bible. Jesus is telling us who He is. And He tells us that who He is at heart is gentle and lowly.
2. Paul knows this is true about Jesus because he pleads with the Corinthians "by the meekness and gentleness of Christ" in 2 Corinthians 10:1.
3. Timothy must learn that "a servant of the Lord must not be quarrelsome, but be gentle to all" in 2 Timothy 2:24
4. Those who are spiritual are told to restore someone overtaken in a trespass in "a spirit of gentleness" in Galatians 6:1.
5. Then there are all the times that churches are told that part of the character God wants for them is that they be gentle - Galatians 5:23, Ephesians 4:2, Philippians 4:5, Colossians 3:12, James 3:17, and 1 Peter 3:15.

God's heart is a heart that deals gently with the ignorant and wayward.

## 3

**Meditations for the Day**

Think about times in your life when God gently worked to lead you back to Him when you were ignorant or wayward. Then take some time to worship Him for His gentleness today.



## 1

**Scripture Reading**

Today's scripture reading is **Hebrews 10:19-25**

## 2

**Food For Thought****Draw Near, Hold Fast, and Consider**

The book of Hebrews spends almost the entirety of ten chapters explaining the priesthood of Jesus on behalf of His people. The verses above are the conclusion of a large portion of that explanation. Here the author brings many aspects of Jesus' priesthood together in order to encourage us to three very important applications of His priesthood to our lives. Let's look at the aspects of the priesthood that are brought out and then the application to our lives.

Here is a list of the aspects of Jesus' priesthood that are brought out:

1. Jesus' offering as a priest of God
  - a. The blood of Jesus was shed for us
  - b. The body of Jesus made a way for us
2. Jesus' position as the High Priest over God's house
  - a. This reminds us that His position is preeminent (Heb. 3:6)
  - b. It also reminds us of His intercessory work on our behalf (Heb. 7:25)

How should these apply to our lives today? The author gives us three rapid fire applications in the next verses:

1. Let us draw near...
2. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering...
3. Let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works...

The author is reminding us that Jesus is our priest, so we should draw near to God through the way that He made available to us. Jesus is our priest, so we should hold on tight to Him because only He made a way to God. Jesus is our priest, so we should consider our brothers and sisters to encourage their walk with Him.

## 3

**Meditations for the Day**

How have you been applying these three applications to your life? Where do you need to grow? How could remembering Jesus' priesthood help you grow in this area?

1

**Scripture Reading**

Today's scripture reading is [John 17:24-26](#)

2

**Food For Thought****The Prayers of the High Priest**

Security. That is an aspiration that we look for in many aspects of our lives. Security for our homes. Security for our financial investments. Security for our family. Security is one of our top priorities. But where does security for your soul come from?

Some might say that it comes from their good works. I've done enough to be assured of heaven. But the Bible says that our good works cannot get rid of the sin that stains our soul and get us into heaven (Rom. 3:20-26). What can get rid of the stain of sin and usher us into heaven?

Jesus, our High Priest, can.

How does He do this? To start with, He offered up the sacrifice that washed away the stain of sin (Heb. 1:3; 9:13-15, 26; 10:12-14). This speaks of Christ being crucified for our sins, buried, and raised up in bodily resurrection after three days in order to offer forgiveness of sins to all. But He didn't stop working there. The High Priest not only offers the sacrifices, He prays for those who have put their trust in His sacrifice. We see it in John 17: Jesus prays that His disciples (and, by extension, those who will believe through their preaching) will be with Him in glory. Hebrews 7:25 tells us that "He is able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them." Jesus did not just pray once for you. He keeps praying for you.

And it is this dual work that those who come to Jesus to be their High Priest can rest in for their security: His effective offering and His continual prayers.

3

**Meditations for the Day**

John 17 and Luke 22:31-34 are before an extreme time of trial for the disciples. Everything that they have thought about Jesus and His Father for 3 years is going to be called into question with His crucifixion. How could knowing that Jesus prays like this for you help you as you face difficulties in your life?



# LESSON TWENTY

EXODUS 30:11-31:18

---

**You are  
HIS OWN SPECIAL PEOPLE**



## You are HIS OWN SPECIAL PEOPLE

Maybe only the priests could enter the holiest places, but God dwelling in their midst would affect every Israelite. They all had to be holy and set apart, His own special people, a holy nation, a kingdom of priests. God treated this as a matter of deadly seriousness. How could He not? It is a matter of life and death that God's people represent God well. How would it be if the people who had God living in the tent next door acted like all the rest of the nations?  
How would any come to know the living God?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

\_\_\_\_\_ We are studying the priorities of  
\_\_\_\_\_ God as revealed in the tabernacle,  
\_\_\_\_\_ and, as His people, these should  
\_\_\_\_\_ be our priorities as well

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Discussion Goals

This group discussion is aimed at bringing out the following principles:



To review all that God has done to make us presentable to Him.



To see ourselves as God's priests, as His craftsmen.



To recognize that we are studying the priorities of God as revealed in the tabernacle, and that as His people, these should be our priorities as well.

## Leader Notes

Moses' 40 days on Mt. Sinai is coming to an end. In this section, we'll look at the final six instructions of God regarding His tabernacle.

### The Census and "Ransom" (30:11-16)

God ordered Moses to count the people and each one over 20 years of age was to pay one half shekel to the Lord. The money was to be used to pay for the furnishings and operations of the tabernacle. Evidently, it was to be an annual contribution since it was to be a memorial and to make atonement (v. 16). It eventually evolved into the NT "temple tax" (see Mt 17:24-27). Its spiritual purpose was to show man's indebtedness to God resulting from sin; that all people are guilty of being sinners, regardless of wealth or position – each paid the same price. It acted as a confession that their lives were owed to God and depended upon Him. It reminded them of the privilege and responsibilities of being God's chosen people, that they were bought with a price. It was paid in remembrance that "another" paid the ultimate price for their atonement. The payment's usage supported the tabernacle in which God dwelt with His people.

### The Laver (30:17-21)

The laver is simply a large bronze bowl filled with water located between the bronze altar of sacrifice and the tent of meeting. The priests would wash their hands and feet each time they passed the laver while performing their responsibilities. This kept them ceremonially clean, as well as practically clean from all the blood handling of the sacrifices; they must be pure before they enter into God's presence in the tent (holy place). Priests spent much of their time at the laver. In spiritual life, the laver speaks of daily sanctification and represents the need to remain pure before the Lord. As we walk in the world (feet) and handle it (hands), we become polluted with sin and need daily, even hourly or more, cleansing. The lack of dimensions points out there are no limits to God's forgiveness. Water represents the work of the Holy Spirit, the reflection showing who we are, how we need the Lord, convicting us of sin, His purifying work to make us presentable before the Lord. The Holy Spirit's work is to wash us with the word and apply it in our life. The laver pictures how daily confession brings together the work of the cross and the believer's communion with God. The laver is only for the designated priesthood, just as sanctified living is only for believers. It was likely the most used article of furniture in the tabernacle.

### Leader Notes

#### **The Anointing Oil (30:22-33)**

God gives the four-spice recipe for the anointing oil which will be used to anoint (wipe or stroke with the hand) the priests, the tabernacle, the furniture and all the utensils. This declared whatever was anointed to be dedicated to the service of God. This also “atones” for and sanctifies the furnishings for usage in God’s service. They are made holy, so that whatever touches them is also made holy, such as the sacrificial gifts laid on the altar. The preciseness of the recipe points out that service must be done God’s way and represents the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit, whose gifts are represented in the various sweet ingredients. The order of anointing was the tent, the interior furniture, the courtyard furniture, and finally the priests. The priests work, then, as “marked men”, dedicated for God’s service. This concoction is only to be used for sacred purpose, although the ingredients could be used separately for other uses, or even together, just not in the same proportions. The severe consequences reveal how serious this was to God. For the Christian, worship and service must follow God’s directions and cannot take place apart from the Holy Spirit. Christ is our altar and has sent us His Spirit, dedicating us to live to worship and serve Him. The sweet spices picture the sweetness of our anointing by the Holy Spirit (1 Jn. 2:20).

#### **The Incense (30:34-38)**

Similar to the anointing oil, the Lord gave very specific instructions on the ingredients and preparation of the incense to be burned continually on the altar of incense. The act of sacrifice (burning) on the altar foreshadows the sacrificial nature of prayer, and a yielding up of our lives to God. The command was that Aaron should burn sweet incense upon it morning and evening—in the morning when he trimmed, and in the evening when he lit the lamps. The recipe also carried the same warnings about its sacred use. Incense represents the prayers and devotion to be offered to God by the priests, on behalf of the people. It is also a call to the congregation to engage in these spiritual exercises. Prayer is not to be entered into lightly or carelessly. It is to be thoughtful and weighed against the known will of God as expressed in His word. We are to “pray without ceasing”, or continually, even as the incense was continually burned. Part of the incense was to be beaten very small and placed before the testimony (ark). It was not to be lit, but always be ready to be lit, a picture of the believer’s readiness to place his faith in God through prayer. The incense was to be “most holy”, explaining why it was located so close to the ark of His presence, just outside the veil. This is the value of prayers to God. The rising incense also portrays the intercession of Christ, our Great High Priest.

#### **The Craftsmen (31:1-11)**

God now chooses who will do the construction work on the tabernacle and its furniture and follow the instructions for making the anointing oil and incense. He sets apart Bezalel, of the tribe of Judah, and Oholiab, of the tribe of Dan. These two likely had natural artistic talent, and likely received some training in Egypt, but God gave them special wisdom and knowledge, so that they possessed both natural and supernatural abilities suited for their work. For the believer, it's important to acknowledge whatever talents or gifts we have are given to us by God. These are to be used for God's glory, either directly in ministry to His people, or to help inspire mankind to higher thoughts and aspirations, thus helping to advance God's kingdom indirectly. The Holy Spirit distributes God's gifts to His people. All too often, talents and gifts are used for mere self-glorification. Some art impacts an entire generation, either for good or for evil. How are you using your talents and gifts?

## Leader Notes

### **The Sabbath (31:12-17)**

The tabernacle instructions now end with a warning regarding the Sabbath. Sabbath was ordained and sanctified by God at creation (Gen 2:1-3). Thus, the Israelites are commanded to not profane it because it has already been declared holy (Ex. 20:8-11). Here, Sabbath is established as the sign of this Mosaic covenant between God and Israel. It distinguished God's people from the other nations, and God here declares that its desecration was to be punished with death. To defile the sabbath was to do any unnecessary servile work upon it. Works of mercy, works of necessity, and works connected with religious observance were not prohibited. For Israel, Sabbath keeping was an outward commitment to keep the whole Law. It also taught about sanctification: God set the 7th day apart, and the nation of Israel apart. An Israelite would consider how to not just keep the Sabbath day holy, but to keep himself holy. This instruction is placed here at the end to remind those working on the tabernacle that "to obey is better than sacrifice." (1 Sam. 15:22). In other words, don't work on the Tabernacle during Sabbath. For Believers, our outward "distinctives" are baptism and the Lord's Supper, both of which help us to consider how to live holy lives.

### **The Stone Tablets (31:18)**



Called the tablets of testimony, they were intended to be placed in the Ark of the Covenant, in the Holiest of Holies. Engraved on enduring stone, Jesus said not one jot or tittle of the Law shall pass away until the fulfillment of all things (Matt. 5:18). God wrote it with His "finger" on stone, but the moral Law is also written onto our consciences (Rom. 2:15). The Law given consisted of man's duty to God and to his neighbor. It is significant that the tabernacle, the Holy of Holies, and the ark were all designed to receive the tablets of testimony.

## Scripture Reading

This discussion will draw from the 3<sup>rd</sup> part of God's instructions for the tabernacle in Exodus 30:11-31:18




## Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think that everyone had to pay the same amount of "contribution" for the tabernacle? Why is it important to recognize that we are sinners? (See Rom. 3:23 & 1 John 1:8)
-  2. What are the similarities between the purpose of the laver and the promise of forgiveness found in 1 John 1:9?
3. The altar and the incense offered upon it, are declared to be "most holy" (Exodus 30:10, 36). Why do you think prayer is equated with incense in the Bible? Why do you think it is declared "most holy"?
-  4. How have you seen God use the skills and gifts that God has given to either you or someone else to minister to people in His name?
5. The Sabbath was to distinguish the Hebrew nation from all other nations. Christians are called to be separate from the world. In what way is your Christian life different from those around you?
6. How does Christian baptism and the Lord's Supper (Breaking of Bread) help believers to be distinguished from the world?
7. The census, laver, anointing oil, incense, and Sabbath instructions carried serious penalties for violation. Why do you think God put such emphasis on these particular items?

## CALL TO ACTION

The Tabernacle was designed to picture our relationship with God. We have reviewed that as a Christian, you are a redeemed sinner (Census), who requires daily cleansing from living in a sinful world (Laver), who has been set apart for the Lord's service (Anointing Oil), with whom God desires a close relationship (Incense), and desires that you spend time with Him (Sabbath), and who has been given gifts and talents to use in His service (Craftsmen).

-  What is one area that we discussed above regarding your relationship with Christ that you would like to see growth or improvement in? What are you willing to do or change to make that happen?

## 1

**Scripture Reading**

Today's scripture reading is **Matthew 17:24-27**

## 2

**Food For Thought****Sons and Daughters Don't Pay**

It was about a month before Passover, which among other things, was the time to pay the temple tax required of every Jewish man. If you were in Jerusalem, you could pay the tax in person at the festival. If you were in another part of the country, collections were made a month earlier. In Capernaum, some men were stationed to collect the tax. They knew Jesus because He had made this town His headquarters for ministry in the region of Galilee. It was natural that they asked Peter about this upon His return, because they knew that rabbis and priests were exempt. So, would Jesus, being a rabbi, claim the exemption this year or not?

Jesus either overheard the conversation, or just divinely "knew", and asked "Simon" Peter an interesting question. "What do you think, Simon? From whom do the kings of the earth collect customs or poll-tax, from their sons or from strangers?"

The customs tax was levied for foreigners crossing the border into the country. The poll-tax may be a bit misleading. Modern democracies sometimes charge a poll-tax for the privilege to vote. The Roman Empire was not a democracy in which the Jewish people participated by voting. A clearer translation may be "head-tax", which was charged for just being able to live in the country. Both of these taxes were charged by the king for becoming or being a citizen of the nation. Would they charge their own family members a tax to be a part of the nation? Absolutely not! Make the strangers pay. The royal sons and family members are free.

But what about this "temple tax"? This "tax" was originally established by God in Exodus 30 as a "contribution" to the support of the tabernacle, and later the temple. It was also referred to as a "ransom". The amount was half a shekel for any man over 20 years of age. It not only paid for tabernacle operations, it served to show each person's need for atonement for sin, that God is holy and cannot tolerate sin in His presence. Thus, the need for the tabernacle/temple where atonement could be made through sacrifices. This "contribution" was part of a census which counted the participant as a member of a nation set apart for God. This "contribution" eventually evolved into the temple tax we see in our passage.

Jesus did not have to pay this tax. As stated before, rabbis were exempt. But there was an even more important reason which Bill MacDonald points out in his commentary: "The point was that the temple was God's house. For Jesus, the royal Son of God, to pay tribute for the support of this temple, which He Himself claimed was His Father's house, would be equivalent to paying tribute to Himself."

Yet Jesus chooses to pay the tax. Here we see Jesus' humility in not wanting to cause unnecessary trouble by claiming His Sonship with the Father and having the Jews accuse Him of blasphemy and perhaps try to kill Him. It was not yet His "hour", and so Jesus adheres to His Father's plan of redemption. In order to not cause offense, He tells Peter to pay the tax for both Peter and Himself, though He Himself has no sin which requires atonement for, nor does He need to prove His citizenship. He is the King!

And He proves it by commanding a fish with a shekel in its mouth, to bite down on Peter's fishing hook and provide the needed money. One half shekel for each of them. Peter needed the coming atonement for his sin. Jesus would soon be providing the perfect sacrifice, once for all, for Peter's sin - and mine, and yours - free of charge or taxes!

### **3** Meditations for the Day

Jesus, the Son of God, made provision for you and I to be adopted into His family as royal sons and daughters, "according to the kind intention of His will." (Ephesians 1:5). No longer strangers, but citizens and part of God's household (Eph 2:19)! He has given us privileges and blessings that are beyond measure. Let's be sure and take time to thank the Lord for what He has done for us!

1

**Scripture Reading**

Today's scripture reading is 1 Thessalonians 5:23; 1 John 1:9

2

**Food For Thought****Sanctification Isn't As Easy As It Looks!**

Sanctification means to be set apart for a certain purpose. My mother's fine china was only used when there was to be a special meal. We would never think of using a piece of her chinaware for such crass purposes as cereal or to hold nuts and bolts! It was set apart for special mealtimes. 1 Thessalonians 5:23 informs us that as Christians, we are to be sanctified "entirely", that is, set apart in all aspects of our lives, and in all aspects of our being: spirit, soul and body. It does not mean we are entirely holy all at once. Rather, it is a progressive process of growth.

The spirit is that part of us which is aware of God and which enables us to commune with God. This is to be set apart for Him. There are to be no other gods before the God of the Bible. The soul is where our values, our will, our desires and emotions reside. It is where we make decisions and determine actions. Each of these must be brought under the control of the Holy Spirit and be sanctified, set apart for God's use, dedicated to His purposes and will. Finally, the body is to be set apart for God's will. It is not to be used for evil, and it is not to be defiled. Instead, it is to be directed to do the good works for which we were created (Ephesians 2:10).

Oh, if only it were that easy! Because even though we are saved, and have been given a new nature and are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, our old sinful nature has not been removed, although its power in our lives is greatly reduced! It is still friendly to our enemies: the world, the flesh and the devil. And we live in a sin-soaked world that seeks to penetrate into our lives through the eyes and ears, through taste and touch, and through our minds. Inevitably, we occasionally fall – perhaps often at first. But as we grow faithfully in our walk with Jesus, as the Word of God occupies more and more of our thinking, and as we learn to listen to the Holy Spirit's gentle voice of warning, correction and encouragement, our propensity to sin diminishes. We see more victory than defeat.

But there are still those times. What do we do? Read 1 John 1:9. What does it say? "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." It has been called the Christian's "bar of soap". We need to confess our sin to Jesus, repent and ask forgiveness. He has promised to forgive us and cleanse us. Yes, just like that! Yes, it is that simple! And yes, it is difficult, because we hate to disappoint the One who has done so much for us. When will we be without this sin? Not until we see Him face to face. Until then, we are to grow in sanctification – we are to be more sanctified this year than we were last year.

The bronze laver (wash basin) which stood in front of the tent of the tabernacle pictures this process of sanctification. The priests would wash their hands and feet each time they passed the laver while performing their responsibilities. This kept them ceremonially clean, as well as practically clean from all the blood handling of the sacrifices; they must be pure before they enter into God's presence in the tent (Holy Place). The priests spent much of their time at the laver. It was likely the most used artifact in the tabernacle.

God pictured our dilemma in the design and operation of the tabernacle. He is not surprised at our weakness and sin nature. His promise of forgiveness has no conditions other than a heart which seeks to be forgiven and cleansed from even the desire to sin. The temptation is to think His forgiveness is somehow limited or overused. That we have gone too far or too long to be forgiven. That is a lie of the devil. Feast instead, on the promises of God to forgive and restore. Read passages such as Romans 6, Romans 8, and Ephesians 1 and 2. Believe what God has said, and shown, in His word; not what your wayward heart is telling you.

# 3

## **Meditations for the Day**

Go to the laver and wash. Believe and claim His promise and be forgiven. Now you may once again enter His presence and seek His direction and blessing. Fellowship is once again restored between the redeemed and the Redeemer. Praise the Lord!

## 1

**Scripture Reading**

Today's scripture reading is **1 Peter 2:9**

## 2

**Food For Thought**

A People for God's Own Possession.

Several times in the Old Testament and three times in the New Testament. God's people are named as God's own possession: They belong to God. The King James version used the word "peculiar", meaning an acquisition, one's own possession. In Exodus 19:5-6a, God told Moses to tell the people: "Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." Notice these are the very same privileges given to believers today! Part of God's kingdom, priests of God, a holy (separate) nation. And the possession of God. What an elevation for those once considered the enemies of God, full of soul-destroying unbelief. Surely then, these people possessed by God, must be different from the world around them! Right? Right!

Peter tells the New Testament saints that they are to "proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;" Moses tells the people to obey God's voice and keep His covenant. How were they to do that? In the wilderness, life revolved around the tabernacle. In Exodus 30 and 31 God describes 5 things which would help describe the distinctiveness of His people from the rest of the nations. The census is for any who would be part of God's people: they must admit their sinnership and need for atonement. The rest of the instructions are for the priests, and regard their relationship with God. The laver shows they must daily be cleansed of sin; the anointing oil points out that they must be sanctified (set apart) for God, and today, we are indwelt and empowered by the Holy Spirit. The incense pictures our dependence upon God in prayer and service. The Sabbath helps them to be clearly distinct, to own their God and put their relationship with Him above all else. These all acted in concert, along with the rest of the tabernacle operations, to provide a physical picture of what God expected their relationship to look like: sacrificial atonement by blood (salvation), on-going cleansing from sin, sanctified living and service resulting from a close walk/relationship with God. To "profane" (to trod under foot) these things, which were so intimate to the Lord with His people, was to result in the severest punishment. Why? Because God loved His people and wanted only the best for them.

These "pictures" were to put all people, not just Israel, on notice that no one could come to the one true God just as they were. It was required of sinners that their sins be done away with, atoned for, before access to God was possible. Then, living as one of God's people meant living differently than other people.

While we don't have a tabernacle or a temple to look at today, the Lord Jesus left us a few New Testament pictures of what our salvation and life with Him should look like.

Baptism – This is a picture of how we entered into the relationship with God through the sacrifice of His Son, Jesus on the cross, His burial and resurrection. Upon salvation (of which baptism is only a picture) the believer is empowered to live a “baptized” life of love and service for the Lord.

Breaking of Bread – Also known as the “Lord’s Supper” or “communion”, it was instituted by Jesus with His disciples on the night He was betrayed. Jesus used the bread and wine as symbols to explain what He was about to do for any who would put their faith in Him as Lord and Savior. The bread represents His body which was crucified on the cross in our place, and the wine represents His blood which was spilt on our behalf. In the breaking of bread meeting, we obey His command to “do this in remembrance of Me.” (Luke 22:19). It pictures how important Jesus’ sacrificial work on the cross is to us, how we are now His people, and how our lives are to center around our love and worship of Him.

Marriage – Ephesians 5:25-27 states: “Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.” How does Christ love the church? He sacrificially laid down His life for her. He continually intercedes for her. He washes her with the Word. He empowers her through His Spirit. And more. A godly marriage pictures what Christ desires to have with each believer. Each for the other. 100%.

Head covered/uncovered – The teaching on head wear is found in 1 Corinthians 11. A man is not to pray or prophesy with anything (like a hat) on his head, and a woman is not to pray or prophesy without her head being covered. The reason? It shows the order of creation and authority that God desires in the church. God created man first, then the woman, who was created for the man. The instruction is intended to be a testimony to the world (and to the angels, v. 10) that these are God’s people, His possession. Different from the rest. Peculiar.

Just like Israel, the church is to reveal God to the world. Just like Israel centered around the tabernacle, we are to incorporate the New Testament church sacraments given to us by Christ and the apostles. And just like Israel, these “pictures” are to reflect a true, loving and worshipful heart and life before God.

May our lives indeed reflect that we are God’s own possession, and that we are proclaiming the excellencies of Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light!

# 3

## Meditations for the Day

In what ways is your life different from the lives of the world around you?  
What is your personal relationship to the “pictures” taught in the New Testament?

# LESSON TWENTY-ONE

EXODUS 32

---

I AM  
spared





## I AM spared

What will God do when the ones opposing His plans are the very people He is trying to save? In the first part of Exodus, we saw God's response to opposition from Pharaoh and Egypt. But now we will see what He will do when the ones stubbornly, actively opposing His great purposes are His own special people.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

This chapter should shock and surprise us! It should leave us amazed with the character of our God.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Discussion Goals

This group discussion is aimed at bringing out the following principles:



Consider what we can learn from Israel's failure



Consider what this chapter tells us about the character of God



Consider what an advocate we have in Jesus

## Leader Notes

The Lord who relents. There was a woman who was brought before Jesus in John 8. She had been caught in the act of adultery and was undoubtedly guilty. The Law said the penalty was death. The religious leaders thought they had set a very clever trap for the Lord by bringing the case to Him, because He would either need to defy the Law or else condemn her to death, violating the rules of the occupying Romans. It was an impossible situation – but all things are possible with God? How could this woman, undeniably guilty, standing there before a holy God, possibly survive? Because our God loves mercy.

The people of Israel were at least as guilty as that adulteress. A mere 40 days after the wedding ceremony they had violated their vows in a most spectacular and brazen way. Moses catches them red-handed – by law they should all be put to death. It was an impossible situation. And yet God “relented of the harm he meant to do to them.” How could that be? The very phrase stretches the mind. God can relent!? This chapter should shock and surprise us! It should leave us amazed with the character of our God. This surprising, impossible pardon of the people of Israel teaches us some key things about God:

1. God loves mercy. Our God is predisposed to mercy. For lack of a better word – He is looking for an excuse to pardon us, not looking for an excuse to punish. We should not think that Moses was successful in talking God out of something He really wanted to do in the depths of His heart. No, as a result of Moses' intercession, God was moved to do something He really wanted to do – something absolutely consistent with His character: to show mercy to the undeserving.
2. God cares about His name. Ezekiel 20:9 says. “But I acted for My name's sake, that it should not be profaned before the Gentiles among whom they were, in whose sight I had made Myself known to them, to bring them out of the land of Egypt.” Making His name known is a big deal to the Lord, who wants to bring the world back into a right relationship with Him. Jesus makes it clear that His name should be just as big a deal to us (Matt 10:22). It is clear from this chapter that the action of wiping out the children of Israel would not be a good representation of His name. His name will not be synonymous with harshness and judgment but with rescue, mercy and tenderness. This is not to say God will be slack concerning justice, far from it! But He wants to be known for salvation.

What an incredible God! His mercies are new every morning. These verses should cause us to wonder and to worship.

There was one other element that was essential for Israel's rescue: an advocate who spoke on their behalf. Moses stood before God and pleaded for them not once but twice in this chapter. He pleads for them first in 11-14 and then decides to go back up and plead for them again in 30-32. In the second instance, he puts his own life on the line for them. God tells Israel in Ezekiel 22:30-31 that He is actively searching for someone to fill this role, for someone to "stand in the gap" for the people of Israel and turn away His wrath. This points us forward to a greater advocate we will have in Christ.

1 John 2:1 "My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."

There is one who goes before God on the behalf of evil, undeserving sinners. One who did not just put His life on the line for us, but who gave His life for us. And God, who loves mercy and who loves the advocate relents of the harm he meant to do to us. Praise God!


## Scripture Reading

This discussion will draw from the story of God's response to Israel's sin of making a golden calf to replace Him with in Exodus 32.


## Discussion Questions

1. Read 32:1. Observe the text: What caused the Israelites to decide they needed to take matters into their own hands?

2. The children of Israel are doing all of this at the foot of Mt Sinai. Despite the imposing sight of the mountain (24:16-18), the Israelites still dare to rebel against God. Apparently they had gotten used to the sight of His glory and the fear of the Lord had faded. Why does fear of God fade in our lives? Do we “get used” to the sight of the glory of God? How can we combat that tendency?

 3. Israel's betrayal of God is especially poignant when you consider that they used the very gold He had given them to craft the idol that they would worship (11:2, 32:2-4). What are some ways people can use the very gifts of God to betray Him?

4. In verses 11-14 what two things does Moses appeal to, when asking God to relent from His anger against Israel?

 5. Take some time to look at these other cases of God relenting, what do you notice about them? What do they have in common? What does it teach you about God?  
Psalm 106:45  
Amos 7:5-6  
Jonah 3:10-4:2

6. In the last example, Jonah is actually upset about how merciful God is. Consider how far his heart is from God's. What does it mean for a believer to “love mercy”? (Micah 6:8) How can we do that in our lives or communities?


7. Moses advocated for the people twice in this chapter. What made him a good advocate for the people?

8. We have an even better advocate in Jesus:

1 John 2:1 “My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.”  
1 Timothy 2:5 “For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus.”  
Romans 8:34 “Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.”

What makes Him a good advocate for us? Why is He a better advocate than Moses?

## CALL TO ACTION

 We have a God who loves mercy and an unparalleled advocate in Jesus Christ, and yet sometimes we are still slow to repent. We let shame keep us from coming to God and doing business with Him. Describe the steps you will take when you sin or fail this week.



1

**Scripture Reading**

Today's scripture reading is **Ephesians 4:25-32**

2

**Food For Thought**

**Close Enough to Grieve** You can't grieve your barber. You may have a good relationship with the person who cuts your hair. There may be a good relationship there, built on some superficial mutual trust. You trust them to cut your hair, and they trust you to pay on time. But no matter how you may err, no matter what kind of crazy thing you may do, you can't grieve your barber. The relationship is just too superficial to allow for grief. Grief only happens in a deep relationship - when real trust is broken or when real love is betrayed. I really care about a lot of the people I work with, and if they decide to seek work elsewhere, I feel disappointed and maybe even upset, but I don't grieve. My kids, though, could grieve me. The love there runs so deep, the relationship is so strong, that if that love was betrayed, it would move my soul like a rudder moves a ship. I have given them enough of myself that they have that power over me.

What if I told you, believer, that you could grieve I AM? That's what we are warned against in Ephesians 4:30. If we engage and dwell in conflict with other believers, believers who are supposed to be our brothers and sisters, we can grieve the Holy Spirit. We show bitterness, wrath, anger and lying to those who are supposed to be our comrades in arms. The very ones who were redeemed by the blood of the Lamb and who we should be building up - when we tear those same ones down, we cause grief to God Himself.

When we see God's wrath burn hot as it does in Exodus 32, it can be surprising. We think of God as somehow 'above' those kinds of emotions. God doesn't get angry, jealous or upset, does He? If you think of God that way, you've made two mistakes. First, you are conflating God's emotions with human ones. For a human, those emotions are almost always associated with a loss of control and rash actions. God can and does feel those things, but without the sinful tendencies that afflict us when we feel angry or upset. The second mistake is that you've underestimated God's love. God's love is infinite. That word is so hard to wrap your head around. Since it is so disconnected from anything you can reasonably imagine, sometimes it can start to feel like God's love is somehow not real. Instead, we should understand that it means His love is more real than any love we have yet felt. Where our love is passionate, His love is more so. Where our love brings us joy, His love brings Him more. Where our love causes jealousy, His causes more. Where our love makes us at risk of grief, His does more so.

It was not a small thing in God's eyes for His Spirit to seal us for the day of redemption (Eph 4:30). For God to come that close to us, not just with us but in us, that was an act of incredible intimacy and love. Consider how you are loved, believer! Consider what power you have - to delight and to grieve the very heart of God Himself.

3

**Meditations for the Day**

Consider the things that the passage says grieve the Holy Spirit. Why do you think God takes them so seriously?

## 1

**Scripture Reading**

Today's scripture reading is **Ezekiel 20:33-44**

## 2

**Food For Thought****My Name's Sake**

"I have dealt with you for My name's sake, not according to your wicked ways..."

After being in The Book Of Names (Exodus) for so long, my first question in reading this passage is "Which name is God referring to here?" We have seen all throughout Exodus God's desire and pursuit of making Himself known to Israel. And in Exodus 32 (as well as again in this passage in Ezekiel 20) Israel is rejecting Him, but God is unwilling to obliterate them for the sake of His name.

Think back to the last time you were in an argument with someone close to you, maybe your spouse or your parents. What if someone had recorded the things you said in anger during that fight and could play them back to you now? How would you feel? We occasionally (and praise God it is only occasional) have the opportunity to see ourselves in such a clear light. Confronted with the harsh reality of my own failings I find myself agreeing whole heartedly with the judgment God says I deserve. This is exactly what Israel is feeling in the wilderness when God "pleads His case" with them face to face. Imagine hearing God Himself present His evidence against you. God tells us what will happen: "you shall loathe yourselves in your own sight because of all the evils that you have committed." They know as well as He does that they are fully deserving of the judgment that's coming.

And yet, for His name's sake, He spares them. What name!?! God could use this as an opportunity to show that He is a God of Justice - a terrible God to fear and revere. That would convey His name, after a fashion. It would show something about Him to the nations - that He is not to be trifled with. But there is an overriding desire in the heart of God - there is a course of action that shows who He is even better than judgment: mercy.

God brings them to a place where they are utterly convinced of their own guilt. Having heard all the evidence, having seen a clear view of their own faults and failings, they are absolutely certain that they deserve judgment... and it doesn't come. When that happens, says God, "then they will know that I am YHWH." Then they will understand His name, and so will the nations. God showed mercy in a situation where any other person, human or heavenly, would have shown wrath. That is the name He wanted to proclaim. He is the One that has mercy for thousands, new mercies every morning. He is not like any 'god' ever conceived of by human minds or satanic schemes. Our greatest imaginings couldn't conjure up a God like this One. He isn't just loving. He IS love. He is a God who rescues, who turns mourning to dancing, who brings beauty from ashes and life from death. Who is His equal? To whom can we even compare Him?

It's an uncomfortable thing to get a clear view of ourselves, but when we do it presents us with an opportunity: to get a clear view of God. That is undoubtedly worth it.

## 3

**Meditations for the Day**

- If you were to describe/name God as you view Him in your daily life, what names would you use?
- Are these actually the names He would use to describe Himself? Pray through any discrepancies.
- Are you hanging on to any guilt? Bring it before the God

1

## Scripture Reading

Today's scripture reading is **Hosea 11:1-12**

2

## Food For Thought

My heart recoils.

"When Israel was a child I loved him and out of Egypt I called My son. The more they were called, the more they went away...My people are bent on turning away from Me and though they call out to the most High, He shall not raise them up at all. [BUT] How can I give you up, O Ephraim? How can I hand you over, O Israel? ...My heart recoils within Me, My compassion grows warm and tender. I will not execute My burning anger, I will not again destroy Ephraim. For I am God and not a man, the Holy One in your midst, and I will not come in wrath."

If you feel compelled at the end of reading that passage to close this book and sing hymns of praise, I agree and encourage you to do so. Worship is the only thing a person really can do after encountering such a powerful passage.

Indeed it's so beautiful, it's hard to even know where to begin, but let's begin where God does - with Israel's youth and with ours. God told Pharaoh in no uncertain terms that messing with His firstborn son was a deadly enterprise. Then God took Israel by the hand, stumbling, spiritual babies that they were, and led them to freedom. With tenderness in the wilderness He taught them, healed them, and helped them to grow. He treated them better than any loving father has ever treated his son. Yet the more He pursued, the more they abandoned. In abandoning the Father who did nothing but love them, they earned every bit of the judgment that was coming their way. But even as God starts to describe the coming judgment, the passage seems to take a turn. God seems to change His mind about what to say next. "And though they call out to the Most High, He shall not raise them up at all" is followed immediately by "How can I give you up, O Ephraim?" The Alpha and the Omega, the Holy One of Israel cries out to Himself, "How can I hand you over?" God's heart is said to churn, to recoil from His original thought of judgment. Does that surprise you? Does it unsettle your perception of God? Praise Jesus it does! For God is "God and not a man" and "a lion" roaring to bring His wayward and trembling children home.

Oh brothers and sisters, when we come to passages where God 'relents' or 'recoils' from His wrath, let us not explain it away. Let's not spend too much time trying to analyze it into some predictable pattern that we can formulate about how the Holy One of Israel acts and reacts. No, friends, you are meant to marvel here. You are meant to put your nose to the ground and thank the Lord for His goodness. Let it befuddle you into worship and let the gospel do the same each time you gather at the Lord's table. For there, too, we remember a God who relented of the harm that was coming for us.

3

## Meditations for the Day





# LESSON TWENTY-TWO

EXODUS 33:1-34:28

---

I AM  
known





## Discussion Goals

This group discussion is aimed at bringing out the following principles:



God is the goal of life



As we seek God, He reveals Himself (Ex: 34:6-8).  
Moses sought the Lord and the Lord revealed His Name meaning who He is.



God demonstrates his compassion and grace by continuing the journey with His people (the covenant is renewed). God reminds His people His name is Jealous. God has an intense love for His people and wants them to be faithful to Him.

## Leader Notes

God is the goal in life. Romans 11:36 states, "For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be glory forever. Amen." We as people were God's idea, He made us, and we were made to Him, meaning for Him. We also see this idea in Exodus 19:4, "You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself." God is the goal, He brings us to Himself. Dwelling with God is the chief aim. In Exodus 32 the people of God break the covenant and then in Exodus 33 God tells Moses that He will still ensure the people get to the Promised Land despite their sin of idolatry. He'll keep His promise to take them to the land, however; He won't go with them because otherwise He might destroy them on the way. This begs the question, what good is having everything that the land of Canaan has to offer if God is not with you? It's a lot like having the whole world and forfeiting your own soul. To have the whole world and not have the presence of God in your life is to miss the whole goal. It would be better to be in the wilderness with God than in the Promised Land without. As believers, we can at times lose sight of the goal. The other side of this is not so much losing sight of the goal but growing, hungering, and thirsting for it. Wanting to know God more, not just academically, but experientially. Paul in Ephesians 1:16-17 prays for the believers in Ephesus and states, "16 I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, 17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him..." Moses was an example of someone who desired to know the Lord more deeply. Despite all his prior experiences with God, despite the fact he spoke to God face to face as a friend speaks to a friend, he still asked the Lord, "Show me Your glory!" Do we have that same intense desire to know Him or is the fire in our heart merely flickering? Moses sought the Lord, and the Lord revealed His name.

Exodus 34:6-7 "The Lord passed before him and proclaimed, 'The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children's children, to the third and the fourth generation.'"

The amazing thing about this is when we consider the context. The people had broken the covenant. When things seemed to be at their darkest hour, the glory of God shined the brightest. God displayed His compassion by renewing the covenant and continuing with the people. We see His very compassion in that God is with us and continues with us in our journey in this life. The rest of Exodus 33 will remind us that this God who is with us in this journey has another name, Jealous. He loves you intensely and is Jealous. God knows what's down the road in each of our journeys and the kind of threat that might steal our hearts away from Him. He warns His people not to make covenants with the inhabitants in the land because ultimately it will lead to spiritual adultery. He restates the law of the covenant and reminds them to keep His appointed feasts. The feasts will help to keep the people of God focused on the lover of their souls.

### **Scripture Reading**

This discussion will draw from the story of God's response to Moses' prayer to see His glory in Exodus 33:1-34:28

## Discussion Questions

1. Can you think of a time when you really wanted to go somewhere but then you found out that the person you wanted to go with couldn't make it? What happened and how did you feel?

It's interesting that sometimes we really look forward to going somewhere, but then when that one person can't go with us, it completely changes our perspective on the entire event. Missing that person's presence sometimes removes the joy of it all.


2. In Exodus 33:1-5, it's not that God couldn't go with the people to the Promised Land, but that He wouldn't go. Otherwise, He would destroy them. How did the people respond? What does that signify?

3. In Exodus 33:7-11, why does Moses pitch the tent of meeting outside of the camp? How could Moses speak to God face to face (vs 11), when in (vs 20), God says, "you cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me and live."


4. Verse 11 doesn't say, "Moses spoke with the Lord face to face as a man speaks to a friend." No, it puts it the other way around, "The Lord spoke with Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend." What does this tell us about how God viewed His relationship with Moses?

5. In Exodus 33:12-17 the Lord says He WILL go with the people to the Promised Land. What did Moses appeal to? Why do you think Moses touches on those points?

6. In Exodus 33:18-23 Moses says to the Lord, "Show me Your glory." It's interesting that Moses has already had numerous encounters with the Lord and he still wants to know God in a deeper way. In Eph 1:16-17 Paul says, "I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him..." What is glory and how can we strive to know the God of glory more deeply?

 7. God reveals Himself to Moses and answers Moses' request of "Show me Your glory." In Exodus 34:6-7, the Lord declares His name and describes who He is. It is very clear that God is just and will not leave the guilty unpunished. Why do you think He doesn't start by describing Himself that way?

8. How have you heard mercy defined? What does mercy mean? What do we learn about God's amazing mercy in the context of chapters 33-34?

 9. Spend some time discussing how God describes Himself in Exodus 34:6-7. How would you define each quality? Discuss why it's important for people to rightly understand these things about the character of God. How have you experienced some of these attributes of God in your own life?

## Discussion Questions

10) In Exodus 34:10-27 the covenant is renewed. Why do you think God states His name as Jealous at this point in the story? What does it mean that God is Jealous? How is God's jealousy often different from ours?

## CALL TO ACTION

Has the LORD been the goal in your life recently? Can you honestly pray, "Show me Your glory" or is there anything getting in the way from sincerely praying that? If so, confess it and seek the LORD. His mercy is such that, if we draw near to Him, He will draw near to us. The close presence of God through our journey is what we need and is what He jealously longs to have. This week pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give us the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him. Pray from the heart, "Show me Your glory!"



Ask a non-believer how they think God would describe Himself. Ask them if you can show them a few verses in Exodus 34:6-7 where God does describe Himself. Ask them if there is anything different with what they thought compared to what (vs 6-7) actually say.

1

**Scripture Reading**

Today's scripture reading is **Psalm 42:1**

2

**Food For Thought**

**Thirsting for the Glorious LORD.** Maybe you are like me and have never seen a deer pant for water. The thought of a deer desperately searching for a water source, even panting for it, is not hard to visualize. In the same way our souls long for something. Like the deer, there is something in life that we long for, something that we feel we really need. Not just water, food and rest, but something deeper. The Psalmist could honestly say that his soul longed for the Lord God. He thirsts for God, the Living God. He wants more of Him and more and more.

In Exodus 33:18 Moses says to the Lord, "Show me Your glory!" This is the man who was at the burning bush and heard the LORD declare, "I AM that I AM." This is the guy who saw the Lord's power through all the plagues. This is the man who saw the Lord part the Red Sea. This is the man who received the Law from God on Mount Sinai. He has seen the Lord in many ways and speaks with Him face to face as a friend speaks with a friend, meaning God doesn't hide things from Moses, He speaks freely with Him. All of this and yet, Moses wants more.

It's easy to dwell on past times when we really saw the LORD at work in our lives, or dwell on the times when the LORD spoke to us, maybe in a dark time or real time of need; there's nothing wrong with that. Remembering those times often reminds us of His faithfulness. The question is, does your soul still actively thirst and long for the LORD? Does your heart presently beat with intensity for Him? Do you sometimes have moments in your day when you just want to spend more time with Him? Moses' soul longed after the LORD and longed to know Him more deeply. "Show me Your glory" was his request. Do you long to know God more deeply than you ever have?

The apostle Paul prayed for the saints in Ephesus that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory would give them a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him. May this be our prayer as well. If our souls long after other things, now is the time to confess that to the Lord. It's for our own good! May our souls long to know, more and more, of our great God, Jesus Christ.

3

**Meditations for the Day**

- What competes for your longing for the Lord? Why?
- Have you experienced what the Psalmist is describing?
- Pray through Ephesians 1:17



# 1

## Scripture Reading

Today's scripture reading is **James 5:11**

# 2

## Food For Thought

**Compassion, Mercy, and Endurance.** James borrows from Exodus 34:6 "That the Lord is compassionate (merciful) and gracious." In fact, Exodus 34:6-7 is one of the most quoted OT passages that you find in Scripture, probably because the implications are so vast. We see one of the implications in the book of James. James thinks of Job, actually the perseverance of Job. He also thinks of the outcome from the Lord, that the Lord is indeed compassionate and merciful.

The casual observer might wonder how God was compassionate and merciful when He had allowed Satan to destroy Job's possessions and children, and ruin Job's health. However, we need to remember what the Lord finally brought about.

You see, it's a mark of God's compassion that sometimes He humbles us to a low place so that we will see how much we need Him, that He is enough. Job admits that he said some presumptuous things about God (Job 42:3), and after seeing more clearly who the Lord was, he repents (Job 42:5-6). It was also compassionate of God to vindicate Job (Job 42:7-9). He refers to Job as "My servant."

As believers we too undergo spiritual warfare. We suffer disappointment and loss in different ways. We persevere as we trust the Lord, giving Him all our troubles in prayer. James 5:8, "You too be patient, strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near." Be patient, believer, continue to endure. The Lord will vindicate all His people in that day. As Job was blessed in the end, so the Lord in His compassion and mercy will bless us with a new heaven and earth where we will forever dwell in His presence with the Lord Jesus Himself, who is the Blessing above all blessings. What a compassionate and merciful God we have.

# 3

## Meditations for the Day

- What does it mean that the Lord is compassionate and merciful?
- How does the story of Job help us to better understand the Lord's compassion and mercy?
- As a believer, how have you seen the Lord's compassion and mercy in your life?

## 1

**Scripture Reading**

Today's scripture reading is **John 1:14**

## 2

**Food For Thought**

**The Word and the Name.** In Exodus 33:18-23, Moses requests to see the glory of God and God tells him, He will have His goodness pass before him. He then tells Moses no one can see His face and live, and that He will put him in the cleft of a rock and cover him and show Moses His back. To see the face of God, to see the raw glory of God would kill a person. Think about that, there is no one else that can honestly say that. People have made threats, "If you look at me, I'll kill you." However, God is not threatening Moses. The fact is, no one can see God and live. Your heart would stop.

And yet, God tells Moses, "My goodness will pass before you." This God whose face cannot be seen is the definition of Good. This is the God who is "abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness" (Exodus 34:6). In Hebrew, "love and faithfulness" are equally appropriately rendered "grace and truth," which is how John, the disciple, renders them in John 1:14. It seems like John can't contain himself - the Word became flesh and actually dwelt among us. We have seen His glory! The One who can't be seen, sent His Son. It was Jesus who said, "He who has seen Me, has seen the Father."

How true that is! Just as the Father is full of steadfast love and faithfulness, so the Son is full of grace and truth. We can know the Father because the Son has revealed Him to us. If you want to know what the wrath of God is like, or the compassion of God, or whatever you want to know about God, then you need to look at Jesus. The awesome character of Jesus reveals the glory of God. We see what God is like when we hear Jesus say in John 12:23, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified." The hour to come would be His death on the cross. In the world's darkest hour where mankind crucified the Lord of Glory, our Lord shined bright. As He hung on the cross, we saw the goodness of God. There on the cross, His back was torn and His face was unrecognizable, and yet that was when the glory of God was most clearly seen.

## 3

**Meditations for the Day**

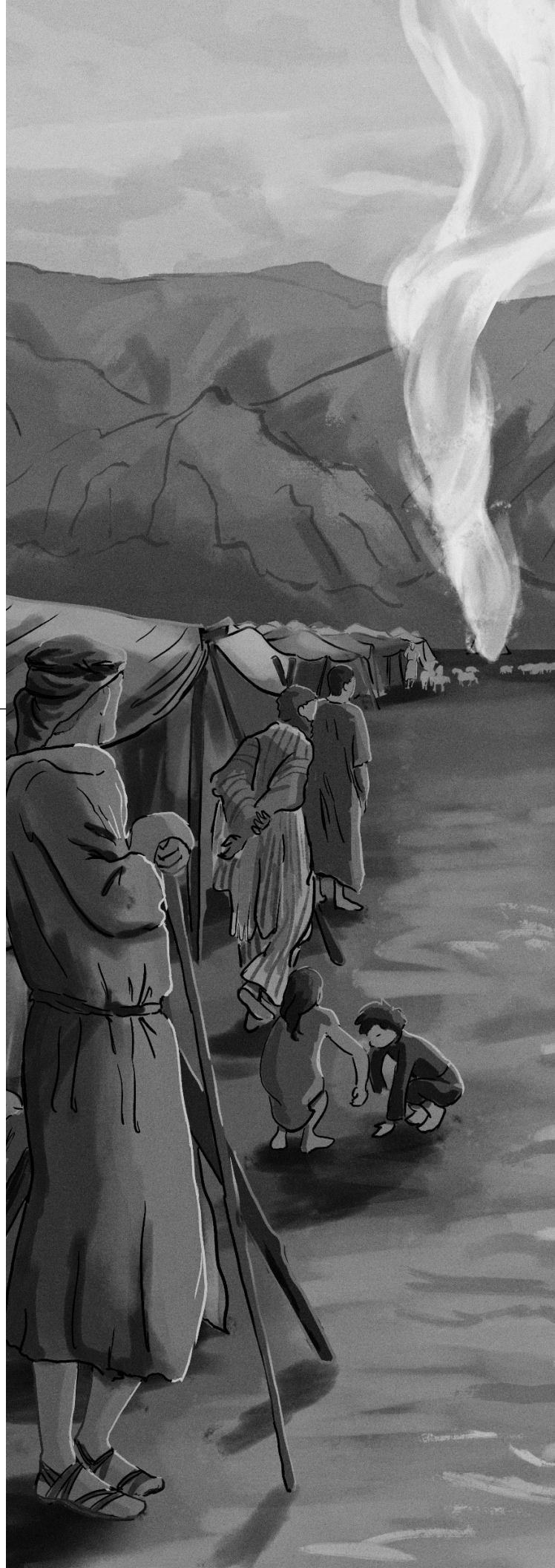
- Think about what the goodness of God means
- Praise Him for His goodness
- In what way was Jesus full of grace and truth?



# LESSON TWENTY- THREE

EXODUS 34:29-35

There is a **GLORY**  
that never fades



## There is a **GLORY** that never fades

The glory of God was present in the giving of the law, and His glory shone from the face of the mediator by whom the law was given. When the mediator spoke God's words to the people, they could see the glory of God in the face of Moses. But that glory faded, and in its fading the law points us to a better covenant and to its everlasting glory.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

It is as we look at the work of Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection that we see the glory of God.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Discussion Goals**

This group discussion is aimed at bringing out the following principles:



Understand why the law was passing away



Understand how the gospel surpasses the law



Desire to seek God's glory in the face of Jesus Christ

**Leader Notes**

We have come to the place in our text where the covenant of the law has been renewed, and the people and God are now going to start their lives together under that covenant of law. When that happens, we get this odd story about Moses veiling his face. We saw that even though many read the text as if Moses veiled his face to hide the glory of it, a careful reading shows that Moses clearly showed his face when it was glorified, then covered it until it was glorified again. The glory of the covenant of law was a fading glory. This caused us to jump over to 2 Corinthians 3:7-4:6 and read Paul's commentary on these verses to see that the glory was fading because a more glorious covenant was coming. And this covenant would not only allow us to see the glory, but to be transformed by it into the glorious image of God. This week we will compare and contrast those covenants, and think through how the covenant we are under should transform our lives.

To do that it is important that we understand the difference between these two covenants. Hebrews 8-10 defines the old covenant as the one that was given to Moses on Mt. Sinai, which is often referred to as simply "the law." This covenant was based on the priesthood of Aaron and his sons, had the earthly sanctuary, included the sacrificial system and feasts, and was bound to the law given to the nation of Israel. The new covenant is the covenant based on the priesthood of the Lord Jesus, has the heavenly sanctuary, is based on Christ's sacrifice for us, and is bound to better promises. The books of Exodus through Deuteronomy contain the terms of the old covenant. Jeremiah 31:31-34 which is quoted in Hebrews 8:8-12 contains the major promises of the new covenant.

We also should understand how to make sense of the very important idea that we "behold the glory of the Lord" and have "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Paul is referring to believing the gospel here and then growing to know who God is through the gospel message. It is as we look at the work of Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection that we see the glory of God. And Paul says that believing the gospel and growing to see who God is through the gospel will transform our lives!

**Scripture Reading**

This discussion will be about Moses' shining face in Exodus 34:29-35 & 2 Corinthians 3:7-18; 4:6

## Discussion Questions


1. Share a time that something has been ruined for you because you experienced something so much better. Maybe you were fine with eating at this restaurant or going to this beach UNTIL someone took you to a better place and made your place seem less in your mind.

In Exodus, we see signs already that the covenant of the law, though glorious, is not the final covenant. We see signs that something better is coming.

Observe the Text:

2. Read 34:29-35. When did Moses put the veil on his face? When did he take it off again?

Observe the Text:


 3. Why does Paul say Moses put the veil on his face in 2 Cor. 3:7-18?

4. Why was the covenant of the law's glory fading?

5. What are some of the differences between the covenant of the law and the new covenant according to Paul in these verses?

6. Why does turning to the Lord "remove the veil" on people of the old covenant's hearts?


7. How do those under the new covenant see the "glory of the Lord" (3:18;4:6)? What does that mean practically?

 8. According to 2 Corinthians 3:18 and 4:6, what effect does believing the gospel and seeing God's glory displayed in the work of Jesus have on our lives?

9. What effect should it have on our interactions and conversations with those who do not know Jesus?

10. What should you do if you do not see these effects in your life?

## CALL TO ACTION

 How will you daily seek to look at "the face of Jesus" this week?

1

**Scripture Reading**

Today's scripture reading is **Romans 3:1-2; Galatians 3:19-25**

2

**Food For Thought****Why give the Law then?**

It is dark. It is not city dark. It's never really dark in the city. No, out in the boonies, with trees all around and above, it is a frightful dark. In that dark, every noise feels like a predator or some monstrous thing is watching, stalking, waiting. The need is simple. Go to the bathroom, get back in the tent. But here, in the dark, with no light, that feels like a deadly task. And when it is done, running back to the tent like something is chasing you does not seem foolish at all. It only takes one or two experiences like this and the flashlight is never forgotten again. A flashlight is not perfect, but it is so much better than the dark.

When Paul writes to the Romans and the Galatians about the relationship between the covenant of the law and the new covenant, he reminds them both that the law was beneficial and necessary. It revealed God and it pointed out evil. Before the law, the world was dark with little revelation from God. The law came like a beam of light shining up the whole dark world around them. The Psalmist rightly said, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." But the law was never meant to be the final light of all time. No, the light of law always pointed to another coming light. It was always working to direct and prepare those with willing hearts for what would come after it.

Paul says that the law was a tutor to lead the people under it to Christ. What a great benefit of the law - to be prepared to receive your Savior! So, when Christ came, there was no reason to stay under the law. By receiving Him, it had accomplished its job. It got the people through the night and brought them to the glorious morning.

If you think about it, not moving on from the law when Jesus has appeared to bring the salvation the law promised, would be like using a flashlight to walk down the street in the middle of the day. There is no need for it now. Rejoice in the daylight!

3

**Meditations for the Day**

- What darkness in your life did Jesus come to save you from?
- How will you express gratefulness to Him today for being the light to you?



## 1

**Scripture Reading**

Today's scripture reading is **John 1:14-18**

## 2

**Food For Thought**

**Glory of the One and Only.** The glory of God on Mt. Sinai was awesome. It was majestic. It caused the ground to shake. It caused the earth to smoke. It caused thunders and lightnings. Moses talked with God, and it was so glorious that his face shone with splendor.

Let's look at a passage that we looked at last week and see how it compares to the glory of Mt. Sinai. In John 1:14-18, we read that when the Word of God became flesh, the glory of God came down again. The disciples beheld it. But it was not ground shaking, smoking, thunder, and lighting glory that they saw in Jesus. It was another kind of glory altogether. What glory did John and the disciples see?

John says that this glory was a glory that only the One and Only from the Father could have. It was unique. It was Jesus' alone. And he tells us that it was a glory that was "full of grace and truth." "Glory full of grace" means that it was full of God's lovingkindness to an undeserving world. "Glory full of truth" means that it was full of God's truth in all He said and in all His interactions with others.

Where did they see that glory full of grace and truth? John says they saw it in the signs that He did, which John says "manifested His glory." In John, we read of the water being turned to wine, the son of the nobleman being healed, the paralytic walking, the bread being multiplied, the walking on water, the blind man seeing, Lazarus' resurrection, and the amazing catch of fish. All eight of these carefully selected signs manifested the glory of Jesus - a glory that was full of grace and truth.

But it was not only in the signs that they saw this glory. The disciples were there when He said, "The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified...Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour. Father, glorify Your name." (John 12:23-28)

The cross. The cross was the moment in time that the glory of Jesus, full of grace and truth, was beheld. No greater display of grace and truth had ever been given. Jesus, dying on the cross, showed us what we could not see. He showed us what was in the very heart of the invisible God.

Truly there was glory when the law was given through Moses, but the glory of the Word outshone that glory. His glory shines on us day by day as we remember His glory, full of grace and truth.

## 3

**Meditations for the Day**

- Read one of the signs from John and think about how it shows the glory that is full of grace and truth.
- Why was what Jesus did on the cross more glorious than Mt. Sinai for you?

## 1

**Scripture Reading**

Today's scripture reading is **Colossians 1:12-14, Daniel 7:13-14, 26-27; 12:1-3**

## 2

**Food For Thought**

**In the Light.** When we came to Jesus we had no idea the kind of blessings we were going to have to look forward to! Man! Most of us just knew we needed to be saved - we did not realize all that would come along with that!

Colossians tells us that because of the work of Jesus, God has "qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light." That might sound like a bunch of religious words all mixed together to make us feel good, but it is not. Those words all mean something. They are a reference to Old Testament concepts that we see in Daniel 7 and 12. There Daniel tells us about the inheritance that we will partake in. He says this, "Then the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High." And there he tells us about that light, "And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting contempt. Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament, and those who turn many to righteousness like the stars forever and ever."

Did you know that Jesus was getting you all of this? When you came to Jesus did you know He was going to give you resurrection in glory and rule with Him over the whole earth? We didn't even realize how blessed we would be in "the kingdom of His beloved Son." But here we are - blessed beyond our imagination.

And the best part of this? This glory that He bought for us will never fade. Why? Because "His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom!"

## 3

**Meditations for the Day**

Let's spend some time today giving thanks to the Father for qualifying us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light through what Jesus did for us.

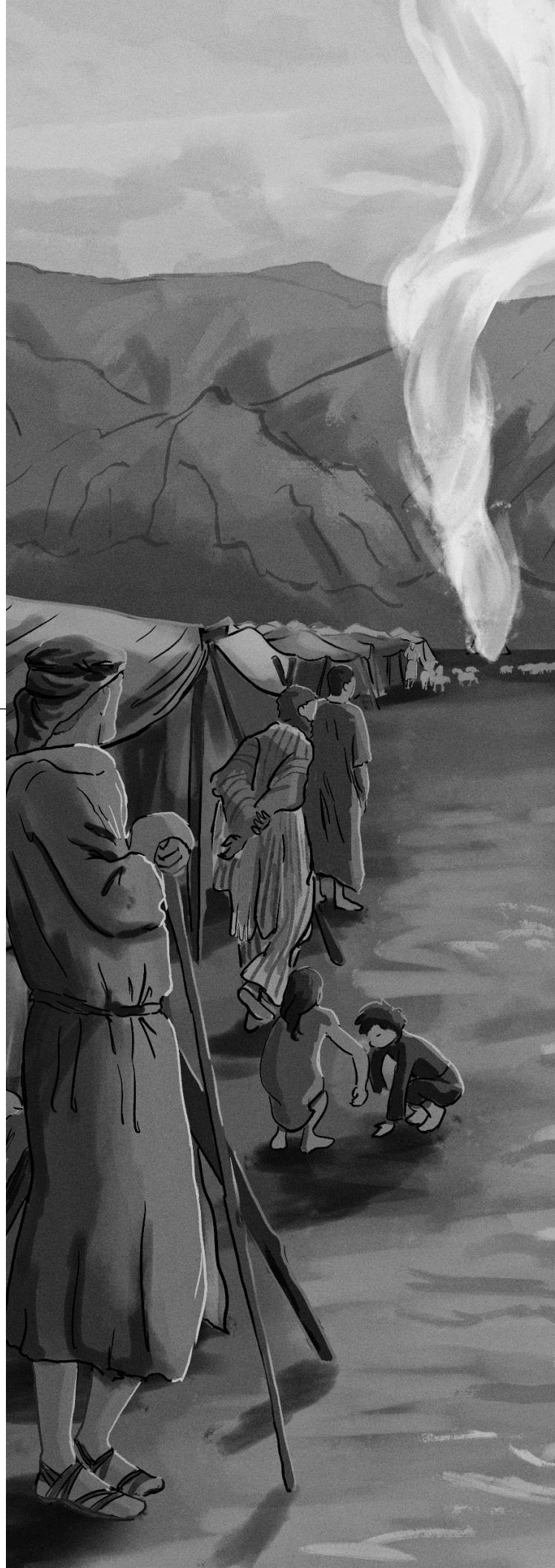


# LESSON TWENTY- FOUR

EXODUS 35:1-36:7

**FOUR**

There are **WILLING HEARTS**  
stirred to give



## There are **WILLING HEARTS** stirred to give

The work is finally underway. After generations of slavery, after walking through the belly of a sea and across a barren wilderness they are finally here. Israel stumbled and bumbled their way to this point. In God's place, each of us would have given up on them long ago but He is not deterred so easily. And we'll see no more of that stumbling now. All that is past, forgiven and forgotten. Now we'll see joy as the gifts that God gave are used to glorify and worship Him. His heart was grieved at their failures but not nearly so much as it is delighted by their obedience.

---

---

---

---

It was essential that God's people do the \_\_\_\_\_  
work according to the commands God \_\_\_\_\_  
had given them – all of His commands! \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Discussion Goals

This group discussion is aimed at bringing out the following principles:



Discover what happens when God tells His people to take an offering for the tabernacle.



See how God gives His people the skills they need to serve Him.



Learn from Moses' leadership how we can help resolve problems that occur.

Leader Notes

Although the construction of the tabernacle was an important God-given project, Moses starts out by reminding the people that they are to only work six days each week, not seven.

The LORD was looking for people with willing hearts to give to His tabernacle. People could give of their time, their treasure, and their talents or skills. Their hearts stirred them to act and their spirits moved them to give. Likewise today, Christians are to give willingly, even cheerfully, and not grudgingly or under compulsion.




The response to Moses' call for an offering to be taken was overwhelming! Many people gave, and the result was they got everything they needed for the project and then some. The skilled women get special notice for the material they spun and brought for the offering. Two men in particular were called to lead the work and gifted by God with His Spirit for that purpose. It was essential that God's people do the work according to the commands God had given them - all of His commands!

Moses kicks off the project by calling the two leading craftsmen and all their skilled helpers to come perform the work. He gave them all the contributions they had received to that point. But the people kept bringing more contributions, so much that the workers had to stop what they were doing and tell Moses not to send them any more. Moses issues a command about this and makes sure it gets communicated through the whole camp. That put an end to the excess contributions, but they still had enough to complete all the work God had given them.

Scripture Reading

This discussion will draw from the story of Israel's preparation to build the tabernacle in Exodus 35:1-36:7

### Discussion Questions

1. What does Moses remind the people of Israel about as he starts his message about the construction of the tabernacle? (35:1-3) What had the Lord told Moses up on Mount Sinai that might have led to these opening remarks? (31:12-17)
-  2. In chapter 25 the Lord told Moses to take a contribution for Him. Now, 10 chapters later, Moses presents this to the people. What was the key requirement for those who gave to this offering? (35:5) What phrases are used in 35:21,22,29 to describe the heart attitudes of those who gave? How does this idea relate to Christian giving in our time? (2 Corinthians 9:7)
3. Besides possessions, what else did the Lord ask people to give? (35:10) Why was this needed for the work?
4. How did the people of Israel respond to the Lord's command to take an offering? (35:21-24,27-28) How did they respond to the Lord's request for skilled workers? (35:25-26) What group of people gets special recognition in verses 25-26 for their part in this? For what skill are they especially recognized here?
-  5. How does Moses describe the men God raised up to lead the work of building the tabernacle? (35:30-35) Which of these qualities would you most like to be known for?
6. What was the key requirement Moses gave all the skillful people who were performing this important work? (end of 36:1) Why do you think this even needed to be said?
-  7. In what two ways does Moses start up work on this major new project? (36:2-3a) What was the first problem they ran into? (36:4-5) How does Moses show good leadership in resolving this problem? (36:6)
8. What was the result of the offerings they took? (36:7) Have someone peek ahead at next week's passage in 38:24-25, and tell the group how much gold and silver was given.

### CALL TO ACTION

- How does this passage encourage us as Christians today to improve our giving?
- We see three ways here that people contributed to the Lord's work, all starting with the letter "T" in English to help us remember them – their Time (six days a week), their Treasure, and their Talents. How will you contribute to the Lord's work in one of these three ways during the next few months?

# 1

## Scripture Reading

Today's scripture reading is **Exodus 35:1-9; 36:2-7**

# 2

## Food For Thought

**What we long for.** Before the ground is broken for the tabernacle, Moses opens up the collection for materials that God mentioned in his first trip up Sinai. But, of course, before a single goatskin is thrown in the pile, Moses makes one last reminder of the Sabbath. At every junction of this project God is emphasizing the need for rest. God doesn't want His people to be burnt out and bitter, He wants willing and cheerful service coming from refreshed souls. He wants their gifts to come from their hearts. The change that has happened in the hearts of the people of Israel is clear. The same people who couldn't wait 40 days before forsaking God and melting their belongings into a veal cutlet, now can't stop giving to the needs of the tabernacle. They are giving so willingly and so excitedly that there is quickly a surplus and Moses has to shut down the collections. Why are the people so eager to give up their wealth? Where did this eagerness come from?

This story comes on the heels of the great failure of Israel in the incident with the golden calf. In the days that followed that great disobedience the people got a glimpse of God's glory reflected in the face of Moses and they were told that God would no longer go in their midst. At once they saw clearly what they could have had and were told that they lost it. Moses told them that they would be going to the promised land – that they would still get their milk and honey, but that God would not be going in their midst. Some would see this as good news! They were going to get the blessing of God, and they weren't going to be wiped off the face of the earth for their great sin. You might think it was a time for rejoicing but instead the people mourned. The wonderful gifts of God did not seem so great compared to the presence of God Himself. In fact, they seemed hollow and empty.

The world is full of people up to their eyeballs in wealth, health, and prosperity, but who are still full of longing. They are searching for something and what they don't realize is they long for that which only God's presence and work can give. The Israelites realized this at last. When they saw the glory of God reflected in Moses' face, they saw something more valuable than all the gems and riches of Egypt. They wanted God as close as they could have Him and so they gave with reckless abandon and did so with much joy. Though Exodus doesn't say it, I have to imagine that after they gave to the tabernacle, they rested on the Sabbath with the peaceful rest that comes with the joy from serving the Lord.

# 3

## Meditations for the Day

- Why did God want Sabbath to be connected to their giving and work on the tabernacle?
- Consider this quote:  
Faith is rest, not toil. It is the giving up all the former weary efforts to do or feel something good, in order to induce God to love and pardon; and the calm reception of the truth so long rejected, that God is not waiting for any such inducements, but loves and pardons of His own goodwill, and is showing that goodwill to any sinner who will come to Him on such a footing, casting away his own performances or goodnesses, and relying implicitly upon the free love of Him who so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son.  
—Horatius Bonar (1808 – 1889)



## 1

**Scripture Reading**

Today's scripture reading is **2 Chronicles 29:1-20**

## 2

**Food For Thought****Whole-hearted giving.**

480 years after the tabernacle was constructed, the Israelites built the first temple for the LORD in Jerusalem (1 Kings 6:1). No longer would God move around with His people in a traveling tent; He would now dwell with them in a fixed location that He had chosen for that purpose.

The construction project to build the temple was massive compared to the tabernacle. And it took way more resources. Note how much David donated himself to the project in verses 3-4, and compare it with the total offering collected for the tabernacle in Exodus 38:24-25. That's quite a difference!

In verse 5 David challenges others to give for the temple construction by asking them the question, "Who is willing to consecrate himself to the LORD?" We see how much the leaders of Israel then gave in verses 6-8, and it exceeded what David had already given. Note their heart attitudes when the offering was taken – rejoicing, willingness to give, and whole-hearted sacrifice of their possessions.

The high point of this passage comes in David's prayer of praise and thanksgiving to the LORD in front of all the people (verses 10-19). He acknowledges that everything in the heavens and on earth belongs to the LORD, and He gives those things out as He sees fit. Everything they offered had in reality already come to them from the LORD! It was all His before, and now it was His again. Yet David emphasizes the willing hearts of God's people in making this generous and abundant gift. He closes by praying for his son Solomon, the next king of Israel, who would be the one to build the temple after David went on to be with the LORD.

The conclusion of that great day was all the people blessing the LORD and bowing down to Him together.

## 3

**Meditations for the Day**

- Are you able to give to the LORD willingly, whole-heartedly, and with rejoicing in your heart? Or do you find it more like a duty you are obligated to fulfill?
- Ask the LORD today to work one of these attitudes in your heart as you give this month.

**1 Scripture Reading**

Today's scripture reading is **Romans 16:1-7, 12 and Acts 9:36-42**

**2 Food For Thought**

Thankful for the sisters in Christ.

This week's passage in Exodus 35-36 specifically mentions the contributions of women five times. We see in 35:22-29 and 36:6 that women gave of their time, talents, and treasure to participate in the offering taken for the construction of the tabernacle. They are especially called out for the use of their skills in spinning the cloth materials used for construction.

In Romans 16 Paul mentions at least seven women by name for their work in the Lord: Phoebe, Prisca, Mary, Junias, Tryphaena, Tryphosa, and Persis the beloved. Yes, their names matter. Phoebe was a servant of the church at Cenchrea and possibly a carrier of the letter to the Romans. Paul describes her as a helper of many and a helper of himself as well. The others are described as workers, with two of them having "worked hard." Clearly these women had used their time, talents, and treasure to serve the Lord Jesus Christ in New Testament times. In Luke 8:3 we learn of several women who traveled with Jesus and contributed to support Him and His disciples out of their private means. Two are specifically mentioned by name – Joanna and Susanna – because the Lord takes notice of all such sacrifices. These women, mentioned nowhere else in Scripture except in Luke, are godly examples to the rest of us.

One woman who deserves special attention is Dorcas at the end of Acts 9. Also known as Tabitha, she abounded in deeds of kindness and charity, WHICH SHE CONTINUALLY DID! Right before Peter raised her from the dead, the widows she had helped showed him all the tunics and garments she had made for them. It seems the Lord still had more work for her to do for His people!

We read in 1 Timothy 2:9-10 that women are to adorn themselves by means of good works, like Tabitha did, as is proper for women making a claim to godliness. Doing good works is supposed to be part of the Christian life for every believer, but it is emphasized here for godly women. The widows in 1 Timothy 5:10 were to have a reputation for good works and devote themselves to every good work. Yes, "good works" appears twice in just that one verse about widows.

Our last example comes from taking a sneak peek ahead at next week's passage from Exodus. The laver of bronze in the tabernacle was made from the mirrors of the serving women who served at the doorway of the tent of meeting. Here the word translated "serve" in the NASB occurs twice in one verse (38:8). That is what these women were known for!

There are many more women who have contributed to the Lord's work over the centuries, most of whose names are not recorded in Scripture. But let's take a moment today to remember those who did get mentioned, knowing the Lord put these women here for us as godly examples for a reason.

**3 Meditations for the Day**

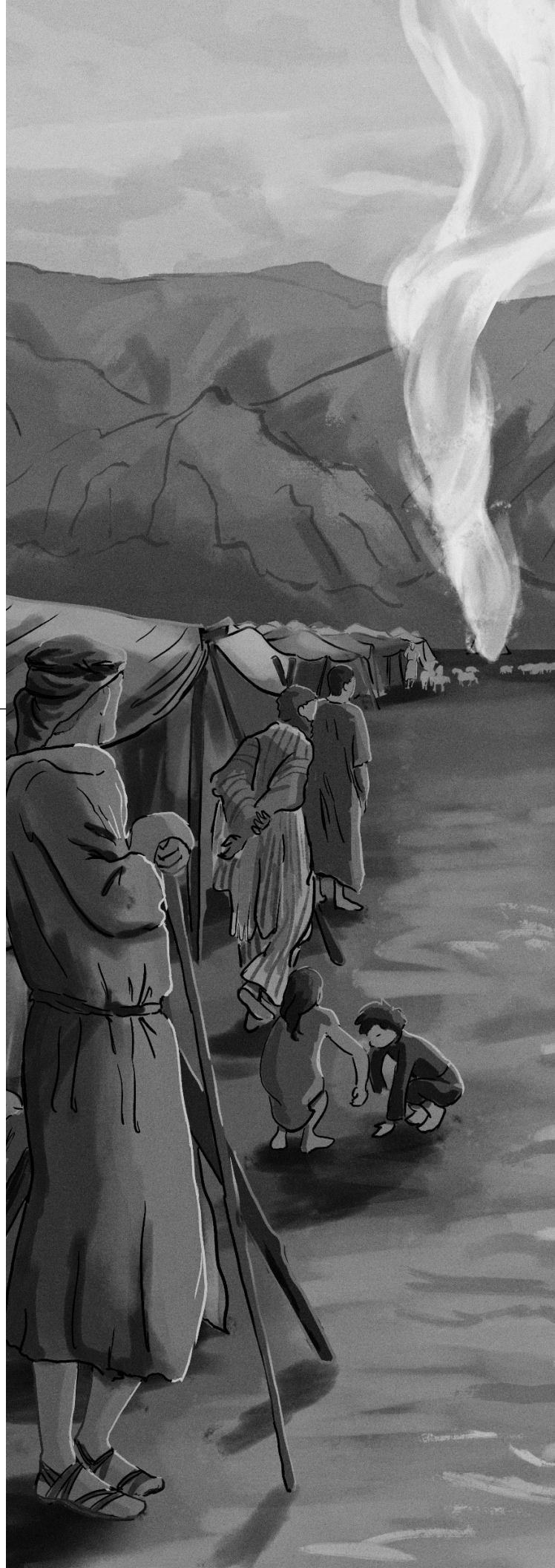
- For women: How can you better use your time, talents, and treasure to serve the Lord this year?
- For men: How can you encourage the women in your life to be their best for the Lord? Consider how you can commend them for what they are already doing, as well as help them see how they can use their skills and resources to do good works in Christ's name.



# LESSON TWENTY- FIVE

EXODUS 36:8-40:38

I AM  
here



## I AM here

If the Bible didn't say it, I wouldn't believe it. God dwelling with man! This is a great work, long in the making, that bends the mind to even contemplate. God is in a tent in the middle of a camp of His people in the desert with only a few tent flaps and some fabric between them. I imagine the ink flew freely from Moses' pen as he wrote this section of scripture as he recalled the work done with such precision, beauty and skill. It was exact in every detail - man and God working in perfect unison. Believe it or not, this is pointing to an even greater truth. He would come even closer yet.

---

---

---

---

It was not man clamoring to be in God's presence that made this tent possible but rather God desiring to be in the presence of man.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Discussion Goals

This group discussion is aimed at bringing out the following principles:



See how God took the initiative in building the tabernacle



Reflect on Exodus and how God has made Himself known

## Leader Notes

Why would God take four chapters to say what could be said in a paragraph? Exodus 39:32-43 pretty much sums up chapters 36-39 perfectly. Everything God said to do, they did. So, why spend three chapters going through each article, pole and stake? What is God telling us?

1. He is emphasizing the importance of the tabernacle. Hebrews will tell us this tabernacle is a shadow of eternal, heavenly realities. This is an incredibly significant work – significant in all its details – and God uses repetition to impress that upon His readers.
2. He is emphasizing the importance of exactness in obedience. The tabernacle was a shadow of things that the children of Israel had not yet imagined. It was displaying the truth about God and pointing to truth about Christ. The symbols God gave them carried meaning they did not yet understand. Therefore it was vital for them to follow the pattern they were given in every detail, otherwise the picture would have been lost. There are only a handful of symbols given to the New Testament believer: the bread, the cup, baptism, the covered and uncovered head. Just a handful. We may not see why the details matter, but it could very well be that those details are pointing to truths that you have not yet seen the significance of. If you ignore the details, the picture will be lost.
3. Celebrating the culmination of the covenant relationship. After four chapters of Israel mostly failing tests in the wilderness (14-17) and the whole covenant hanging by a thread for two chapters (32-33) these chapters are such a relief! Israel walking in step with God is such a beautiful thing and it accomplishes so much. When man obeys God the result is glory and beauty (Exodus 28:2). A place was made where humans could come to meet with God. Each paragraph seems to be celebrating the work that was accomplished just as the Lord commanded Moses, and just as God had pictured it. This work mattered to God.


The Lord had taken the initiative to see this tabernacle built. It was not man clamoring to be in God's presence that made this tent possible but rather God desiring to be in the presence of man. He planned it, He prepared his man to lead the work, He brought the people out of slavery, He equipped the people with the resources they would need, He gifted the artists to complete the work. God built this tent where His presence would rest so He could dwell with His people. What an amazing culmination to all this work to see Him come dwell in it in chapter 40!

There is another house that God built with just as much initiative and just as much care. 1 Peter 2 tells us God is erecting a building out of living stones. Jesus cared so much for this work that He gave His very life for it – becoming the chief cornerstone. In the New Testament we will not find God's presence in the tabernacle or the temple, we will find it in the church.

## Scripture Reading


This discussion will draw from the final chapters of Exodus when God comes to dwell among Israel in Exodus 36:8-40:38

## Discussion Questions

 1. Why would God take four chapters to say what could be said in a paragraph? Exodus 39:32-43 pretty much sums up chapters 36-39 perfectly. Everything God said to do, they did. So, why spend three chapters going through each article, pole and stake? What does this tell us about God? What does it tell us about man?

2. Why was it so important for Israel to follow God's instructions in every detail? Can you think of any examples, personal or that you've observed in others, when following God's instructions didn't make sense at first but turned out to be a wise choice?

### Read 1 Peter 2:1-10

 3. If you are part of this new building that Christ is building, what does 1 Peter 2:9-10 say about your identity? How should that change your actions?

4. Why is it so important that your actions change? Are there any lessons from question 1 that we can apply to His building the church?

5. Why did the people in Exodus build the tabernacle with such enthusiasm? What was so exciting about the work?

### REFLECTING ON EXODUS


Our title for the series is "so that you may know that I am the Lord." Exodus 29:45-46 are key verses in our study of Exodus.

"I will dwell among the children of Israel and will be their God. And they shall know that I am the Lord their God, who brought them up out of the land of Egypt, that I may dwell among them. I am the Lord their God."

The book of Exodus follows a group of slaves to the point where God is dwelling in their very midst. He makes it clear that this was His goal and aim all along - to dwell with them.

6. In what ways did God make Himself known in Exodus? What is something that you learned about Him, or that struck you anew in this study?

7. When God says "they shall know that I am the Lord their God," it does not seem that He is just saying they will pay intellectual assent to this fact. What does He mean? In what way will they know?

 8. Have you ever thought about the goal of your salvation as "dwelling with God"? How might/should that change our perspective of our time on this earth?

## CALL TO ACTION

- What is one way you want to know God more? How will you pursue that?

## 1

**Scripture Reading**

Today's scripture reading is **Isaiah 4:2-6**

## 2

**Food For Thought****How well He knows me.**

The very last verse of Exodus says; "For the cloud of the LORD was above the tabernacle by day, and fire was over it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel, throughout all their journeys." In a very real sense, God was present in the house that Israel had prepared for Him, in the tabernacle right at the center of their camp. But even though God was so close, there was still distance separating Him from His people. As an ordinary, non-priestly Israelite living during that time, you would see the cloud and fire above the tabernacle and know that the closest you could ever get to that Presence would be from behind the linen barrier around the courtyard of the tabernacle. God's presence would be closer to you than it was to a person of any other nationality on earth, and yet you yourself could never be close – really, truly close – to the LORD's presence. You were not holy enough to approach God – you would always be held at a distance from that cloud.

But one day, all that would change. In our passage today, God, looking forward to the time of Christ's reign on earth, when His people will be truly sanctified, promises that the cloud of His presence would be over "every dwelling place" (NKJV) or over "the whole area" (NASB) of Mount Zion! Distance is not something that God ever desired; He wants His people to be close to Him. But as long as His people are not truly holy, as He is holy, they can never be as close to Him as He wants. In the Millennium, God will purify His people – really and truly purify them, in their very hearts. And on that day, all will be holy, and God's presence will not only be over the temple, but over the homes of the individual inhabitants of Jerusalem!

We, though, brothers and sisters, do not have to wait for the Millennium to experience God's nearness. In John 14:23, Jesus promised His presence to believers using words that are reminiscent of the tabernacle – God's "tent on earth." He said: "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him." Because of the work of Christ, we are already holy before God positionally. And when our everyday lives reflect that holiness, when we are dedicated to Him, we can know that closeness to Him in a special way, the closeness that God always intended for His people. We do not need to plead with the Lord for His presence; He wants to be close to us! The onus is on us; let us seek to make our lives holy, just as He is holy (1 Peter 1:15-16), and then enjoy that special closeness with Him on this side of Heaven!

## 3

**Meditations for the Day**

- The blessing of God's presence is a gift that we New Testament saints can tend to devalue because we are so accustomed to the concept. How have our studies in the book of Exodus given you a fresh appreciation for the opportunity that we have to be close to God?
- Is there a lack of sanctification in a specific area of your life right now that keeps you from experiencing God's nearness as He intended it?



## 1

**Scripture Reading**

Today's scripture reading is **Psalm 139**

## 2

**Food For Thought**

**If I knew how well He knew me.** The title of our study in Exodus is "So that you may know that I AM the Lord." God knowing His people and being known by them, is one of the primary themes in Exodus. Like many themes in the book, this one comes to a crescendo in chapters 33-34. In that passage, as Israel's national fate hangs in the balance, the narrative zooms in on the personal relationship between Moses and YHWH. Moses says these words:

You have said, "I know you by name, and you have also found grace in My sight." Now therefore, I pray, if I have found grace in Your sight, show me now Your way, that I may know You and that I may find grace in Your sight." Exodus 33:12-13

How far Moses has come! He was once a shepherd in the wilderness who thought his life had no purpose and no future, who hid his face from God, and who did not even know what name to give when people asked who had sent him. He now says God knows him "by name."

Have you ever thought that God knows you "by name"? Not just that He knows your name, but that He is on a first name basis with you. Throughout this entire book God is moving toward His people, desiring to be closer to them, to know them. He states as His express goal:

"And they shall know that I am the Lord their God, who brought them up out of the land of Egypt, that I may dwell among them." Exodus 29:45

The reason given for this whole enterprise of redemption and salvation is so that He may dwell with them. God wants to know His people and He is actively pursuing closer relationship with them. The language of Psalm 139 tells us the same thing when it says "Oh Lord, You have searched me and known me." This is not passive language. It doesn't say You started out with knowledge of me because You are omniscient, but instead that He has searched it out. He has pursued knowledge of you, He has desired to know you and has acted on that desire to know you better.

One of the most fundamental human desires is to be known. There are countless cases of people on the brink of ending their own lives because they feel "no one understands me." It is often the case that just one genuine human connection stays their hand. To feel that even one person knows you can make all the difference. To know that God knows you? That should change everything about you. It certainly did for Moses. Since the garden of Eden, the enemy has been trying to get us to believe that God doesn't really know you. He doesn't really know what will make you happy, He doesn't really know what will make you feel satisfied. When the people were under the bondage of Pharaoh they thought perhaps God didn't know what they were going through. When they encountered testing in the wilderness they thought that God didn't really know what they needed, how to heal them, or how much they could handle. When they made the idol at the foot of the mountain they thought God didn't really know what they wanted, or what they were up to. Each one of these are lies. He knows you. And if that is really true it should make trusting Him that much easier.

## 3

**Meditations for the Day**

- Think back over Exodus and consider how God conveyed that He knew His people
- Think back over your own life; when has God shown how well He knows you?

1

**Scripture Reading**

Today's scripture reading is **John 17:1-6**

2

**Food For Thought****To Know Him.**

The title of our study in Exodus is "So that you may know that I AM the Lord." God knowing His people and being known by them, is one of the primary themes in Exodus. Like many themes in the book, this one comes to a crescendo in chapters 33-34. In that passage, as Israel's national fate hangs in the balance, the narrative zooms in on the personal relationship between Moses and YHWH. Moses says these words:

You have said, "I know you by name, and you have also found grace in My sight." Now therefore, I pray, if I have found grace in Your sight, show me now Your way, that I may know You and that I may find grace in Your sight." Exodus 33:12-13

What a bold request! What is so fascinating about Moses' journey in his relationship with God, is that he is never satisfied. The more he learns, the closer he gets, the more he wants to know! Throughout the book of Exodus we see God revealing more and more of His name to His people. He tells Moses His name on the mountain, and explains the meaning of it after Moses' first failed confrontation with Pharaoh. He tells the children of Israel that He is the God who heals in the wilderness and they call Him "the Lord our banner." They have learned so much about God that the forefathers never knew! But Moses isn't done. He wants to know more. And it is this request that leads to God articulating his name in Exodus 34, which becomes the most quoted scripture in the entire Bible. Exodus tells us so much about the heart and character of God. But more than just telling us about Him, it encourages us to know Him.

God is not done revealing Himself at the end of Exodus. Jesus says, "I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given me out of the world." Jesus came to reveal God's name above and beyond any we have learned before. And we can know it. We can know Him - not in the sense of having Him figured out, or being able to describe Him, but in the sense of being able to call on Him like you'd call on a father or a friend. We can say, like Moses, "I know Him by name." A fundamental and defining feature of a relationship is that you have some level of access to the person to communicate with them. We are told that if we ask anything in Jesus' name God will hear it. A mere child can bend his knee in faith to make suggestions, and the God of the universe who spun out the galaxies will bend His ear to listen.

Jesus tells us in John 17 that to know God does not merely lead to eternal life but that it IS eternal life. It's as though He's telling us the point of it all. What it has all been about - our lives and God's work and the whole of history are aimed at one thing - to know Him. If you're going to boast about something, boast about that. If you're going to set a goal, target that. It won't grow old or stale. The more you know Him, the more you'll want to know.

3

**Meditations for the Day**

- Think back over the book of Exodus - what have you learned about God in this study?
- Think about a time in your life when something about God really 'clicked' for you - when you understood something significant about Him in a new way or for the first time. After that, were you satisfied, or were you hungry to know more? What do you think that will be like in eternity?

## The End of Volume III