

THROUGH THE BIBLE STUDY

EXODUS 28-31

The Hebrew word translated “*sacrifice*” is “*korban*”, which means “*to come near, to approach... to become closely involved in a relationship with someone.*”

And this is why God established a sacrificial system... The sacrifices lifted man to a higher awareness of the things of God. The Hebrews approached God aware of the severity of their sin – knowing the reality of their judgment - assured that all life is God-given – overawed with God’s holiness – and thankful for God’s mercy.

Every nuance of *the sacrifices* themselves, *the tabernacle* in which they were offered, and *the priests* who initiated them spoke of a right relationship with God.

Ultimately, Jesus was the fulfillment of the sacrificial system. And in hindsight we can see that very detail of the sacrifices, the tabernacle, and the priesthood spoke of Him. A study through the tabernacle will deepen your appreciation of the effectiveness and sufficiency of the cross and priesthood of Jesus Christ.

Tonight, I want to begin with an overview of the Tabernacle and its furnishings. A lot of this we’ve talked about, but you’ll benefit from the pictorial overview...

When you first approached the Tabernacle you saw a white, linen fence – 7½’ tall - hung on bronze posts and sockets, with silver hooks and bands. Dimensions of *the outer court* were 150’ long x 75’ wide – about half the size of a football

field.

On the east side there was a gate 30' wide – it was a linen tapestry made with blue, purple, and scarlet thread – hung on four bronze posts stuck in four sockets.

When you walked through the gate you came to *the bronze altar*, where the sacrifices were slaughtered. This altar was 7½' square, by 4½' tall... Just inside the altar was *the bronze laver* – or washing bowl – that we'll talk about tonight.

After the laver, you'd be looking at *the inner court* – 45' long, by 15' wide, by 15' tall. The walls of the inner court were wooden boards plated with gold.

The tent itself was made of four tarps. First, *a linen tarp* embroidered with cherubim, or angels. Over that was *goats' hair*, then *ram's skin dyed red*, then black, dark, ugly *badger skin*. The only light in the court came from within.

This inner court was divided into two sections – called *the Holy Place* and *the Holy of Holies* – and they were separated by a linen veil embroidered with angels.

The first 30' of the tent was the Holy Place – and in it were *the altar of incense* in front of the veil - *the table of showbread* on the north side - and *the gold lamp stand* on the south side. The floor of the Tabernacle was always desert dirt.

Inside the veil was a small area – a 15' cube – known as *the Holy of Holies*. Here sat *the Ark of the Covenant* – and over the lid of the Ark rested the physical presence of Almighty God... what the Hebrews called *the Shekinah glory*.

Here's a great visual of the inner court construction...
(animation)

Several years ago our family had an extremely unpleasant experience involving a tent. *I remember it well.* Nick had a couple of 11 year-old buddies over to sleep out in the backyard. We borrowed a tent we thought we knew how to set up.

First Nick tried, but to no avail. Next Zack tried, but he got aggravated and mad at Nick. Next Kathy tried, but she also got irritated with the set-up, and got upset with Zack. Finally, dad came out to solve the riddle behind this mound of canvas and poles - only to discover I was as inept as everyone else. The whole family ended up out in the backyard embroiled in a huge argument over a silly tent.

Guys, that *tent* became the *vent* for frustration and friction. But the tent God told Moses to construct had the opposite effect on the family of Israel. That *tent* was the *vent* of tremendous *peace* and *praise* and *witness*.

And God called one particular family to set up His tent. *Obviously, it wasn't the Adams.* It was the Levites. They offered the sacrifices and conducted the services.

The sons of Levi were the priests. They were in charge of the Tabernacle.

And the family of Aaron, Moses' brother, was chosen to fill the role of High Priest. We'll learn later he was the only person who entered the Holy of Holies.

In chapter 28 God says to Moses, **"Now take Aaron your brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister to Me as priest, Aaron and**

Aaron's sons: Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar.

And you shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother, for glory and for beauty. So you shall speak to all who are gifted artisans, whom I have filled with the spirit of wisdom, that they may make Aaron's garments, to consecrate him, that he may minister to Me as priest.” Notice, the first gift of the Holy Spirit mentioned in the Bible is the gift of needlework. When you make a list of spiritual gifts don't just include, prophet, pastor, teacher, evangelist... add *seamstress*.

God gifted certain artists with skill to give the priestly garments some bling-bling. He wanted the priests decked out in beautiful, glorious threads.

Read through the Psalms, and you'll discover one of the psalmists' favorite expressions is “the beauty of holiness”. God is surrounded by beauty.

His holiness is not some drab, dull hospital white. It's a kaleidoscope of color.

That Orthodox Jews today – and even some Christian ministers -dress in black and white and colorless garments shows how they've distorted the concept of His holiness. God likes beauty. He's surrounded by rich, vibrant, dazzling color.

Verse 4, “And these are the garments which they shall make: a breastplate (It was made of 12 stones that rested close to the priest's heart), an ephod (a smock worn over the priestly robes – like an apron), a robe, a skillfully woven tunic (or coat), a turban (or headdress), and a sash (which tied at the waist).”

Two other items get added later in the chapter...

In verse 36 a gold plate is attached to the turban. And in verse 42 a pair of linen trousers are made for the priest.
There were 8 priestly garments in all.

Verse 5, “So they shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother and his sons, that he may minister to Me as priest. They shall take the gold, blue, purple, and scarlet thread, and fine linen, and they shall make the ephod of gold, blue, purple, and scarlet thread, and fine woven linen, artistically worked. It shall have two shoulder straps joined at its two edges, and so it shall be joined together.”

The front and the back pieces are joined at the shoulders.

And the intricately woven band of the ephod, which is on it, shall be of the same workmanship, made of gold, blue, purple, and scarlet thread, and fine woven linen. Then you shall take two onyx stones and engrave on them the names of the sons of Israel: six of their names on one stone, and six names on the other stone, in order of their birth. With the work of an engraver in stone, like the engravings of a signet, you shall engrave the two stones with the names of the sons of Israel. You shall set them in settings of gold. And you shall put the two stones on the shoulders of the ephod as memorial stones for the sons of Israel.”

“So Aaron shall bear their names before the LORD on his two shoulders as a memorial.” The High Priest constantly bore the tribes of Israel on his shoulders.

Shoulders spoke of work. When we say, “put your shoulder to it”, we mean give it extra effort - work at it. The priest needed to remember he worked for the people. His job was

not just to intercede for himself, but for God's people, Israel.

Verse 13, "You shall also make settings of gold, and you shall make two chains of pure gold like braided cords, and fasten the braided chains to the settings."

And from these chains, attached to the ephod, will hang the breastplate.

"You shall make the breastplate of judgment. Artistically woven according to the workmanship of the ephod you shall make it: of gold, blue, purple, and scarlet thread, and fine woven linen, you shall make it." It's made of the same design and material as the ephod. "It shall be doubled into a square: a span shall be its length, and a span shall be its width." The breastplate was folded into a pouch that hung over the priest's chest. Its size was a span squared. A span was about 9 inches.

And on the front of the breastplate were arranged 12 gemstones...

Verse 17, And you shall put settings of stones in it, four rows of stones:

The first row shall be a sardius, a topaz, and an emerald; this shall be the first row; the second row shall be a turquoise, a sapphire, and a diamond; the third row, a jacinth, an agate, and an amethyst; and the fourth row, a beryl, an onyx, and a jasper. They shall be set in gold settings. And the stones shall have the names of the sons of Israel, twelve according to their names, like the engravings of a signet, each one with its own name; they shall be according to the twelve tribes."

Engraved on each of the stones was the name of the tribe it

represented.

There's a lot we could get into with the arrangement of these stones.

Remember the names on the priest's shoulders were the tribes according to birth. This was probably the case with the breastplate. If so, the *sardius* stone stood for *Reuben*, Israel's firstborn. Reuben means "*Behold my son*", which speaks of Jesus' first coming. The last stone, *jasper*, would've represented *Benjamin*, whose name means "*Son of my right hand*" – a name that foreshadows Jesus' enthronement at the right hand of God, and His Second Coming.

What's interesting is that twelve stones also appear in Revelation 21 – they're the foundations of the New Jerusalem. But in Revelation the first stone mentioned is the last stone on the breastplate, *the jasper*. The reason is that John is looking in reverse. He's just seen the second coming, and thus, he mentions it first.

Whatever subtleties you can dig up in these stones don't neglect the obvious... *God sees His kids as precious jewels*. He loves us and values us greatly!

Verses 22-28 describe how the breastplate should hang from the ephod. God wanted it securely attached... You can read these verses on your own...

Verse 30, "**And you shall put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim, and they shall be over Aaron's heart when he goes in before the LORD. So Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel over his heart before the**

LORD continually.” Remember the breastplate formed a pouch, and inside it was carried the Urim and Thummim – names that mean *“lights and perfections”*.

What they were we really don’t know. Some people believe they were two stones – one stood for yes, the other for *no*. When the nation needed guidance the High Priest would reach into the pouch and pull out the answer. They could’ve been diamonds that either *sparkled with a yes*, or *gave off a dim no*.

Folks at the Temple Institute in Jerusalem suggest the name of God was written on a parchment and placed in the pouch. And when the priest needed guidance the name would shine through the breastplate and illuminate certain letters written on the stones, and actually spell out a message to the people.

Here’s what I know for sure. Today, God has already spelled out what we need to know. God’s Spirit guides us through God’s Word. Today, God speaks to His people by the *use’n and thumbing* through the pages of your Bible.

Verse 31, **“You shall make the robe of the ephod all of blue. There shall be an opening for his head in the middle of it; it shall have a woven binding all around its opening, like the opening in a coat of mail (or armor), so that it does not tear.”**

“And upon its hem you shall make pomegranates of blue, purple, and scarlet, all around its hem (these were decorative), and bells of gold between them all around: a golden bell and a pomegranate, a golden bell and a pomegranate, upon the hem of the robe all around. And it shall be upon Aaron when he ministers, and its sound will be heard when he goes into the holy place before the LORD and

when he comes out, that he may not die.” The bells let you know the priest was still active. God had not judged him for his sin and struck him dead. If the people outside stopped hearing the jingle bells they took the priest for a *dead ringer!*

Jewish tradition tells us the High Priest even had a rope tied to his ankle so if he died he could be pulled out without risking harm to his retrievers. It showed how little confidence the Hebrews had of entering God’s presence.

Compare that to our confidence in Christ. Hebrews 4:16 assures us, “Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” Jesus abolishes our sin completely. There’s no reason for those of us in Christ to be fearful in reaching out to God for help!

Verse 36, “You shall also make a plate of pure gold and engrave on it, like the engraving of a signet: HOLINESS TO THE LORD. And you shall put it on a blue cord, that it may be on the turban; it shall be on the front of the turban. So it shall be on Aaron's forehead...” The High Priest wore the plate on his forehead.

This past week I read where a man named Andrew Fischer created a new form of advertisement. Ever the entrepreneur, Fischer realized the space above his eyes was going to waste, so he auctioned it on E-bay to the highest bidder.

A stop snoring remedy rented Fischer’s forehead for 30 days at a price tag of \$37,375... Well, on the High Priest’s forehead was a reminder of God’s holiness.

Before a thought or image entered his mind it had to pass across God's holiness. It would be wise for us to put an imaginary plate on our forehead that reminded us of God's holiness. The spiritual battle is won or lost in our minds!

The plate was on Aaron's forehead, "that Aaron may bear the iniquity of the holy things which the children of Israel hallow in all their holy gifts; and it shall always be on his forehead, that they may be accepted before the LORD."

It's interesting, that not until Jesus came was it the sacrifice itself that covered sin. Bulls and goats were tainted with impurity. The High Priest always brought a less than perfect sacrifice... that God accepted it was only due to His mercy.

Verse 39, "You shall skillfully weave the tunic of fine linen thread, you shall make the turban of fine linen, and you shall make the sash of woven work.

For Aaron's sons you shall make tunics, and you shall make sashes for them.

And you shall make hats for them, for glory and beauty. So you shall put them on Aaron your brother and on his sons with him. You shall anoint them, consecrate them, and sanctify them, that they may minister to Me as priests."

Verse 42, "And you shall make for them linen trousers to cover their nakedness; they shall reach from the waist to the thighs." Notice two characteristics about the priestly pants... First, they were *Bermuda shorts*. They reached only to the thighs.

And they started at the waist – *not the hips*. The priests

were forbidden to sag. To my knowledge this is the only pants God ever designed, and they didn't sag.

Verse 43, **“They shall be on Aaron and on his sons when they come into the tabernacle of meeting, or when they come near the altar to minister in the holy place, that they do not incur iniquity and die.”** The pants were designed for modesty. If the priest exposed himself it would desecrate the Holy Place.

“It shall be a statute forever to him and his descendants after him.”

Hebrews 7 explains that we have a better priest. Jesus is our great High Priest. But notice the contrast between His garments and those of the Jewish priesthood.

Jesus wore a purple robe for mocking – *not a beautiful ephod.*

Jesus had no precious gems on His shoulders – *only a cross of wood.*

Jesus had no breastplate – *yet He had a love for Israel and all humanity.*

Folks around Jesus didn't hear the jingling of bells – *just the pounding of nails.*

No fine linen turban adorned Jesus' head – *only a crown of thorns.*

No head plate read holiness – *yet Jesus' life and death shouted His holiness.*

No linen trousers hid His nakedness – *rather Jesus bore our guilt and shame.*

Chapter 29 "And this is what you shall do to them to hallow them for ministering to Me as priests..." In other words, here's how you are to dedicate the priests...

"Take one young bull and two rams without blemish, and unleavened bread, unleavened cakes mixed with oil, and unleavened wafers anointed with oil (you shall make them of wheat flour). You shall put them in one basket and bring them in the basket, with the bull and the two rams. And Aaron and his sons you shall bring to the door of the tabernacle of meeting, and you shall wash them with water." And I'm sure they were excited. This was their priestly commission.

"Then you shall take the garments, put the tunic on Aaron, and the robe of the ephod, the ephod, and the breastplate, and gird him with the intricately woven band of the ephod. You shall put the turban on his head, and put the holy crown on the turban (The plate of gold that read "HOLINESS TO THE LORD")."

Notice the priest is fit for God only in the robes God provides for him. The same is true with us. We stand before God only in the righteousness provided by Jesus.

"And you shall take the anointing oil, pour it on his head, and anoint him. Then you shall bring his sons and put tunics on them. And you shall gird them with sashes, Aaron and his sons, and put the hats on them. The priesthood shall be theirs for a perpetual statute. So you shall consecrate Aaron and his sons."

Verse 10, "You shall also have the bull brought before the tabernacle of meeting, and Aaron and his sons shall put their

hands on the head of the bull.”

The laying on of hands symbolized the transference of sin. But the Hebrew word implies more than a light touch. It was emotional. You placed your hands on the head of the bull and pressed hard. The priest thrust all his sin on the sacrifice.

“Then you shall kill the bull before the LORD, by the door of the tabernacle of meeting. You shall take some of the blood of the bull and put it on the horns of the altar with your finger, and pour all the blood beside the base of the altar. And you shall take all the fat that covers the entrails, the fatty lobe attached to the liver, and the two kidneys and the fat that is on them, and burn them on the altar.”

Verse 14, “But the flesh of the bull, with its skin and its offal, you shall burn with fire outside the camp. It is a sin offering.” Jesus too was sacrificed outside the camp. The place of the skull was just outside the northern wall of Jerusalem.

Verse 15, “You shall also take one ram, and Aaron and his sons shall put their hands on the head of the ram; and you shall kill the ram, and you shall take its blood and sprinkle it all around on the altar. Then you shall cut the ram in pieces, wash its entrails and its legs, and put them with its pieces and with its head.

And you shall burn the whole ram on the altar. It is a burnt offering to the LORD; it is a sweet aroma, an offering made by fire to the LORD.” We’ll discuss the difference between the sin offering and burnt offering when we get to Leviticus.

“You shall also take the other ram, and Aaron and his sons

shall put their hands on the head of the ram. Then you shall kill the ram, and take some of its blood and put it on the tip of the right ear of Aaron and on the tip of the right ear of his sons, on the thumb of their right hand and on the big toe of their right foot, and sprinkle the blood all around on the altar.”

Notice, the extent to which we all should be dedicated to the Lord - *from head to toe...* God wants to possess all of us.

Dedicate your ears to God – *to hear only His Word.*
Dedicate your hands to God – *to do only His will.* Dedicate your feet to God – *to walk only in His ways!*

Verse 21, “And you shall take some of the blood that is on the altar, and some of the anointing oil, and sprinkle it on Aaron and on his garments, on his sons and on the garments of his sons with him; and he and his garments shall be hallowed, and his sons and his sons' garments with him.”

Priests were always covered with blood. Their job was to butcher sacrifices. Here they're breaking in a new uniform.

Notice too, the anointing of blood and oil. Spurgeon wrote, “We need to know that double anointing, the blood of Jesus which cleanses, and the oil of the Holy Spirit which perfumes us. It is well to see how these two blend in one...”

“Also you shall take the fat of the ram, the fat tail, the fat that covers the entrails, the fatty lobe attached to the liver, the two kidneys and the fat on them, the right thigh (for it is a ram of consecration), one loaf of bread, one cake made with oil, and one wafer from the basket of the unleavened bread that is before the LORD; and you shall put all these in the hands of Aaron and in the hands of his sons, and you shall wave them

as a wave offering before the LORD.” Here is the first time in history a group of people do *the wave!* They presented a wave offering to God.

Notice, the fat always belonged to the Lord, but the meat of the sacrifice fed the priest. Verse 25, “You shall receive them back from their hands and burn them on the altar as a burnt offering, as a sweet aroma before the LORD. It is an offering made by fire to the LORD. Then you shall take the breast of the ram of Aaron's consecration (this was a good cut of meat) and wave it as a wave offering before the LORD; and it shall be your portion. And from the ram of the consecration you shall consecrate the breast of the wave offering which is waved, and the thigh of the heave offering which is raised, of that which is for Aaron and of that which is for his sons.” Get a two piece dinner from KFC and you’ll get a breast and thigh.

Verse 28, “It shall be from the children of Israel for Aaron and his sons by a statute forever. For it is a heave offering; You wave a wave offering. And you heave a heave offering. You just thrust it, or heave it upwards to the Lord.

“It shall be a heave offering from the children of Israel from the sacrifices of their peace offerings, that is, their heave offering to the LORD.”

"And the holy garments of Aaron shall be his sons' after him, to be anointed in them and to be consecrated in them. That son who becomes priest in his place shall put them on for seven days, when he enters the tabernacle of meeting to minister in the holy place.” The succession of the High Priest will pass down among Aaron’s family. Here he describes the dedication of a new High Priest.

Verse 31, "And you shall take the ram of the consecration and boil its flesh in the holy place. Then Aaron and his sons shall eat the flesh of the ram, and the bread that is in the basket, by the door of the tabernacle of meeting.

They shall eat those things with which the atonement was made, to consecrate and to sanctify them; but an outsider shall not eat them, because they are holy.

And if any of the flesh of the consecration offerings, or of the bread, remains until the morning, then you shall burn the remainder with fire. It shall not be eaten, because it is holy." In ancient culture eating was the strongest expression of unity and cooperation. The priest eating his portion was his affirmation of his dedication.

Verses 35, "Thus you shall do to Aaron and his sons, according to all that I have commanded you. Seven days you shall consecrate them." This whole dedication procedure we've just read about was repeated 7 straight days.

Verse 36-42 lists some *daily sacrifices* that are to be carried out by the priests.

Each day a bull should be sacrificed to freshly dedicate the altar to God.

Every morning and every evening a lamb – along with a grain offering and a drink offering (or flour and wine) - should be offered as an expression of the people's desire to please the Lord. As "a sweet aroma... to the LORD."

In verse 43 the Lord promises that at the tabernacle, "I will meet with the children of Israel, and the tabernacle shall be

sanctified by My glory.

So I will consecrate the tabernacle of meeting and the altar. I will also consecrate both Aaron and his sons to minister to Me as priests.

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.”

In chapter 30 God instructs Moses to build more furniture for the Tabernacle.

“You shall make an altar to burn incense on; you shall make it of acacia wood. A cubit shall be its length and a cubit its width - it shall be square - and two cubits shall be its height.”

It was small – 1½’ long, by 1½’ wide, by 3’ tall.

As we mentioned earlier, the table of incense sat in front of the Ark – outside the veil. The smoke from the incense represented the prayers of God’s people.

Its horns shall be of one piece with it. 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. 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. You shall make the poles of acacia wood, and overlay them with gold. 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.”

God clearly states that the altar of incense was placed before the veil, yet in Hebrews 9:3-4 the writer says the altar of incense was behind the veil with the Ark. Which is it? It was both. The altar itself was in front of the veil, but the incense waft through the air behind the veil into the presence of God. And this is a lesson for us.

In Ephesians 2:6 Paul says we've been seated in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. *Well, if that's true why will I be stuck in traffic tomorrow morning?*

Hey, the altar of incense is a model for every believer. We're also in two places. Physically we're on earth, but spiritually we're in Christ. And by living in a constant awareness of His presence we can experience heavenly blessings even on earth.

Verse 7, **“Aaron shall burn on it sweet incense every morning; when he tends the lamps, he shall burn incense on it. And when Aaron lights the lamps at twilight, he shall burn incense on it, a perpetual incense before the LORD throughout your generations.”** A sweet smell always emanated from the Tabernacle.

Remember, all the pieces of Tabernacle furniture speak of Jesus, and the altar of incense is no exception. The table of showbread reminds us Jesus is the bread of life - the Menorah that He is the light of the world - likewise, the altar of incense speaks of the priesthood of Jesus – He makes intercession to God on our behalf.

Verse 9, **“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.” This was not a place of sacrifice, except for once a year... “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.”

Here’s the spiritual lesson... It’s not prayer that saves us. It’s the blood of Jesus. Prayer only appropriates the blood. Atonement always requires a sacrifice.

Verse 11, “Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: “When you take the census of the children of Israel for their number, then every man shall give a ransom for himself to the LORD, when you number them, that there may be no plague among them when you number them.” This was a required offering.

This is what everyone among those who are numbered shall give: half a shekel according to the shekel of the sanctuary (a shekel is 20 gerahs). The half-shekel shall be an offering to the LORD. Everyone included among those who are numbered, from 20 years old and above, shall give an offering to the LORD.

The rich shall not give more and the poor shall not give less than half a shekel, when you give an offering to the LORD, to make atonement for yourselves.” This was truly a *flat tax*. No deductions for the poor – no penalties for the rich.

“And you shall take the atonement money of the children of Israel, and shall appoint it for the service of the tabernacle of meeting...” (The sacrifices, oils, and incense needed in the Tabernacle cost money.) “That it may be a memorial for the children of Israel before the LORD, to make atonement for yourselves.”

God paid the Tabernacle expenses with a flat tax. Which is exactly the principle behind the tithe - whether you're rich or poor the ratio is the same – ten percent.

“Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: "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, for Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet in water from it. 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. 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."

In the outer court – between the bronze altar and Holy Place – was a bronze laver, or washing bowl. Here the priests washed-up before entering the tent.

In Scripture there are two types of cleansing - spiritual cleansing affects the inner man. It occurs at the altar – the penalty of sin is paid and the blood applied.

The outer man is cleansed at the laver. Here the mind and hands are washed and renewed with the water of God's Word. At the laver you prepare for worship.

Interestingly, the laver was the only piece of furniture given no dimensions.

In the Tabernacle it was a small bowl. In the Temple it's called "*the brazen sea*". It was a huge reservoir that sat on the back of 12 stone oxen. In Revelation 15 the real laver

appears in heaven as even larger. It's called "a sea of glass".

Verse 22, "Moreover the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: "Also take for yourself quality spices - 500 shekels of liquid myrrh, half as much sweet-smelling cinnamon (250 shekels), 250 shekels of sweet-smelling cane, 500 shekels of cassia, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, and a hin of olive oil.

And you shall make from these a holy anointing oil, an ointment compounded according to the art of the perfumer. It shall be a holy anointing oil." According to verses 26-31 this oil was used to anoint the Tabernacle, the Ark, all its furniture, and the priests. It was made of special ingredients and skillfully concocted.

Verse 32 tells us the oil "shall not be poured on man's flesh;" Remember the anointing oil was symbolic of the Holy Spirit – and the Spirit will never anoint and empower our flesh – our selfish ambitions. The Spirit always seeks to glorify God.

"Nor shall you make any other like it, according to its composition. It is holy, and it shall be holy to you." The work of the Spirit shouldn't be imitated. God frowns on those who attempt the work of the Spirit through their own power.

And "Whoever compounds any like it, or whoever puts any of it on an outsider, shall be cut off from his people." The Spirit is not a mysterious force accessible to just anyone. The power of the Holy Spirit is a gift exclusively for God's children.

The rest of the chapter is a recipe for the incense that's to be burned in the Tabernacle. It too should not be duplicated. It's also holy to the Lord.

Chapter 31, “Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: “See, I have called by name Bezalel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah.

And I have filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship, to design artistic works, to work in gold, in silver, in bronze, in cutting jewels for setting, in carving wood, and to work in all manner of workmanship. And I, indeed I, have appointed with him Aholiab the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan; and I have put wisdom in the hearts of all who are gifted artisans, that they may make all that I have commanded you...”

Imagine, the skilled labor required in building the Tabernacle? Moses needed talented people able to work with metals, embroidery, fabric, leather, wood, oils, incense... Hey, I get bent out of shape when we're short a few nursery workers.

But *where God guides He provides* – and that was true with the Tabernacle.

God supernaturally gifted, then raised up the workers. Bezalel and Aholiab were filled with the Holy Spirit so they could mold metal, cut jewels, and carve wood. Again, these were spiritual gifts... *wood-worker* and *diamond-cutter*?

In verses 7-11 God renames the various items that need to be constructed.

Then in verse 12, “The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, “Speak also to the children of Israel, saying: 'Surely My Sabbaths you shall keep, for it is a sign between Me and you

throughout your generations, that you may know that I am the LORD who sanctifies you.” Notice, God has given Moses a monumental job. Remember the Tabernacle was a small-scale model of heaven itself – it spoke of the future Messiah Who would save the world. This was a significant undertaking.

Yet as important as the work might be - and before the first task was assigned - God made it clear to Moses that they still needed to rest one day in seven.

The sign of their Covenant with God was not the Tabernacle, but the Sabbath.

“You shall keep the Sabbath, therefore, for it is holy to you. Everyone who profanes it shall surely be put to death; for whoever does any work on it, that person shall be cut off from among his people.” For the Christian, Jesus has become our Sabbath rest. We’re no longer under the law of the Sabbath.

Yet it’s still a healthy principle... “Take a break, or life will break you!” We all are wise in setting aside one day in seven to *pray* and *play*. And trust me, the person who overworks may indeed “be put to death” by a massive coronary.

Verse 15, “Work shall be done for six days, but the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the LORD. Whoever does any work on the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. Therefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever; for in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was

refreshed."

“And when He had made an end of speaking with him on Mount Sinai, He gave Moses two tablets of the Testimony, tablets of stone, written with the finger of God.” And as Moses descends from the mountain something happens to these two tablets. He’s the first man to break all Ten Commandments at one time.