

Sent: Wednesday, March 10, 2021 5:04 PM
Subject: Last Nite's MOB Study on Exodus 25

"But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel, after those days," declares the LORD, "I will put My law within them and on their heart, I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people!" (Jeremiah 31:33)

Last week, we saw, in Exodus 24, the "ratification" of the Mosaic covenant, between God and the children of Israel, at the base of Mt. Sinai, sealed with the blood of a young bull sprinkled (or "poured out") on the altar, then on the people, after they heard the words of the "book of the covenant," and committed themselves (without reservation!) to obeying all that God had spoken! Officially becoming the "people of God," and called as a "light to the nations"! All of this foreshadowing the day--many years later--when Jesus, in celebrating the Passover, "in the "upper room" (in Matthew 26:26-29) would "take the cup" and announce to His disciples that it was the "blood of the covenant" that would be "poured out for many for forgiveness of sins," and that He would become the "mediator" or a "better covenant" through His sacrificial death on the cross! Something we, as "His people," now celebrate "in remembrance of Him" every time we participate in the "Lord's Supper"! And so, we saw the connection between the account in Exodus 24 and God's great plan of redemption, recorded in the New Testament, planned before the foundation of the world!

But the "connection" (and "foreshadowing") goes further, as we left Exodus 24, with Moses up on the mountain-top with God, for "forty days and forty nights"! As Constable notes: "Now that Israel had entered into a blood covenant with God, God purposed to dwell among them, as His people!" And, having given directions, in the book of the covenant, on how the children of Israel were to live with one another, He now wanted to give them directions on how they were to "worship" Him (i.e., live with Him)! How amazing it is that God desired to actually "dwell" with His people, and to be "worshipped" by them! And this is what Exodus 25, our lesson last night, is all about!

Can you imagine how Moses must have felt as he descended from his meeting with God, after forty days and forty nights, with all the details (the elaborate details!) of God's instructions (or "blueprint") for building a tabernacle, and all its furnishings--"after the pattern shown to him (Moses) on the mountain"? And the reaction of the people, after hearing it? ("How're we going to do that?" must have been their thinking!)

Exodus 25:1 says that the LORD told Moses to "tell the sons of Israel to raise a contribution for Me (God) from every man whose heart moves Him..." for all the materials that would be needed to construct the tabernacle and all its furnishings! And when you read, in verses 4-7, about all that is required (the gold and silver, and bronze, and "blue, purple, and scarlet fine linen," and goat hair, rams' and porpoise skins, acacia wood, oil, spices, incense, and onyx)--it's baffling! (And yet we learn in Exodus 36 that the people would end up giving "more than enough," and that Moses had to actually issue a proclamation for the people to "restrain from bringing any more"!)

Wow!

So where did the people come up with all these materials? Remember how God told Abraham (way back in Genesis 15) that his descendants would be "strangers in a land that is not theirs, where they would be enslaved and oppressed for 400 years" (speaking of Egypt) but that, afterwards, they "would come out with many possessions"! And how He told Moses, in Exodus 3:21-22, that He would grant them "favor in the sight of the Egyptians," and that they would not leave "empty-handed"! And, in Exodus 12:35-36, how "the sons of Israel requested articles of silver and gold, and clothing, from the Egyptians, as Moses instructed them, and how the LORD gave them "favor in the sight of the Egyptians, and so let them have their requests"! Do you think God, in His sovereign work, had a purpose and plan for all this?

Constable writes that God had specifically designed the tabernacle, and all its furnishings, "to teach the Israelites about Himself--and how they might have a relationship with Him and worship Him in a manner that He alone would prescribe"! Peter Enns, in his commentary on Exodus, calls it "an earthly representation of a heavenly reality." He also notes that the phrase "the LORD said to Moses" occurs seven times in Exodus 25-31--the first six concerning the building of the tabernacle and its furnishings, with the seventh one introducing the Sabbath--making the connection between the building of the tabernacle with the seven days of creation (which involved six creative acts (and "And God said statements"), culminating in the seventh day of rest). How interesting!

Significantly, the order of things described in the construction of the tabernacle begins, in Exodus 25:10, with the "ark of the covenant" (and not with the "altar of burnt offering," which would be the first thing one would see when entering the tabernacle courtyard)! And so, appropriately, in the "Holy of Holies," where, once a year, on the "day of atonement," the blood of the sacrifice would be poured out on the "mercy seat" (or the lid of the ark, which contained the tablets of the law), and where God would meet with a representative of His people, in a cloud (and the "shekinah" glory), in between the two overlooking cherubim (which are upon the ark), to make atonement for the sins of the people! (MacArthur notes that it was the "blood of the sacrifice that stood between God and the broken law of God," that allowed the "atonement"! Portraying how Christ, by His sacrifice, would one day, as I John 2:2 says, be the "propitiation"--or the "once for all" appeasement or satisfaction--for our sins!)

Exodus 25 also introduces two other furnishings of the tabernacle which are to be constructed, in elaborate ways--"after the pattern for them shown to Moses on the mountain"--and situated in the Holy Place, outside the Holy of Holies. Both essential for the peoples' obedience to God's instructions, and to the worship of God--the "Table of Showbread," and the "Golden Lampstand"!

The "table of showbread," with all of its fine accessories, where each week a new batch of 12 loaves of bread--the "bread of the Presence"--were to be laid, to acknowledge that the 12 tribes of Israel were sustained constantly under the watchful eye and care of their LORD. The "bread of the Presence" is understood (now) to typify the Lord Jesus Christ who said, in John 6:35: "I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst!"

Then, the "golden lampstand," to be made with pure gold, and its seven lamps, to be "trimmed and filled with oil every morning" and to be "burned continually...as a perpetual statute throughout their generations for the sons of Israel" (Exodus 27:20-21) Jesus, of course, would call Himself the "Light of the world" (in John 8:12), but would also call us the "light of the world" with an admonition that we "let our light shine before men that they might see our good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven"! (The prophet Zachariah, in Zachariah 4, was awakened, in a vision, by an angel out of his spiritual trauma, seeing the golden lampstand with its seven lamps! And, in Revelation 1, John writes to the "seven churches that are in Asia... about the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after these things"!)

And so, as we continue in our study of Exodus, we are again amazed at the clear connections between the Old and the New Testaments and, even more so, the awesomeness of our God, who certainly knows all about us, and our ways--so much more than we can know Him--and continues to work out His plan for our world, and for us, in ways we cannot even imagine! And whom we know never asks someone to do anything without providing him with the resources, and talents, and whatever, to accomplish it!

And, so, men, go with God this week, and do whatever it is He calls you to do--and be a blessing!

Lowell