

Sent: Monday, March 29, 2021 12:30 PM  
Subject: MOB Study on Exodus 27-28

"Surely goodness and lovingkindness will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever!" (Psalm 23:6)

Remember how we learned, back in Exodus 26, more details that God gave to Moses on Mt. Sinai about His elaborate plan for His people to build "a tabernacle"--a place where He would come to dwell with them, and they would be able to worship Him, in accordance with a protocol only He could have conceived! About the four coverings (or "curtains") of the tabernacle, the first, and most underside, one (which only the priests would see!) to be made of 252 square feet of fine twisted blue and purple and scarlet linen, with images of cherubim woven into them, joined together with 100 blue loops and fifty golden rings! Then a second layer to be made of goat's hair, with more loops and rings; a third layer to be made of ram's skin, dyed red; and finally, a fourth layer to be made of "porpoise skins"! They would rest on 48 "15-foot" boards that would stand upright and be attached together with 96 "tenons," anchored in 96 silver sockets, and supported with bars of acacia wood, overlaid with gold, with rings of gold! Whew! And that is only the "superstructure" for the tabernacle!

Then, we learned about the all-important "veil"--that was to separate the "holy of holies" from the "holy place"--again to be made of "fine twisted blue and purple and scarlet linen," and again with cherubim embroidered on it, to be hung on four pillars on acacia wood, overlaid with gold, with hooks of gold and sockets of silver! And, finally, a "screen" which would serve as the "front-door flap" at the entrance into the tabernacle, to be made similarly beautiful, and--like everything else--in strict conformance to the pattern given to Moses on the mountain! I write of these details as a reminder that we have a "designer" God--the God of all creation! A God of "wonders," who wants to dwell among us, who is into the "detail" of our lives--and who (Ecclesiastes 3:11 says) "makes everything beautiful in its time"!

Peter Enns sees the tabernacle as "nothing less than a return to a pre-Fall splendor"--and so no wonder, he says, that the writer of Exodus devotes so many words, and so much space, to describing it!

We saw more of this same kind of detail in our lesson last week on Exodus 27-28! Beginning with the "bronze altar" (or "altar of burnt offering"), with "horns" on its four corners, overlaid with bronze (which would become a "place of refuge" for the people), and which was to stand just inside the entrance to the courtyard, before the "bronze laver"--outside the entrance into the tabernacle--a place where daily sacrifices were to be made! Making it clear, symbolically, that the beginning of fellowship and access to God must be in "sacrifice" (and, as we now understand, would require the sacrifice of Christ)!

Exodus 27:9-19 describes the courtyard itself which was to surround the tabernacle (roughly half the size of a football field), with "hangings" of fine twisted linen, seven and a half feet high, supported by pillars and sockets of bronze--which were to protect the tabernacle, and serve as "a perpetual reminder that one must pause and consider before rushing into the presence of the

Most High"! (Constable notes that "the closer the physical relationship with God the greater the need for cleansing and holiness"!)

Exodus 28 next describes the "garments" that God said were to be made and worn by Aaron and his sons, when ministering as "priests to Him" in the tabernacle--garments to be made "for glory and beauty," by "skillful persons that He would endow with the spirit of wisdom"! Including a "breast piece and an ephod and a robe and a tunic of checkered work, a turban and a sash...holy garments fitting for a high priest of God--and "prefiguring Jesus Christ!

The "ephod"--perhaps the most important piece--was to be an apron-like piece of clothing, fit over the robe and made of gold and blue and purple and scarlet material--with the names of the 12 tribes of Israel "engraved on two onyx stones" on its shoulder! The "breast piece" was to be attached to the ephod and have "mounted on it" four rows of 12 precious stones, "set in gold filigree" (ruby, topaz, emerald, turquoise, sapphire, diamond, jacinth, agate, amethyst, beryl, onyx, and jasper)! Each stone unique and extraordinary in largeness and beauty, representing the 12 tribes of Israel! Wow!

God evidently viewed His children as "precious jewels"! (There's an old hymn that comes to mind with the lyrics: "When He cometh, when He cometh, to make up His jewels, all His jewels, precious jewels, His loved and His own...!")

Deuteronomy 26:18-19 says, "The Lord has today declared you to be His people, a treasured possession, as He promised you, and that you should keep all His commandments and that He will set you high above all nations which He has made, for praise, fame, and honor; and that you shall be a consecrated people to the LORD your God, as He has spoken!"

"They will be Mine," says the LORD of Hosts...!" (Malachi 3:17)

And we, as His people today--as part of the "armor of God--are called to "put on the breastplate of righteousness...!" (Ephesians 6:14)

Well, there is more in Exodus 27-28 concerning the garments that were to be made (by "skillfully- endowed" persons) and worn by Aaron and his sons, including a robe with "pomegranates and golden bells" to be made all around its hem, so that when Aaron would minister in the "holy place," there would be a "tingling that could be heard when he would enter and when he would leave"!

Verses 36-39 also describe a "plate of pure gold" that was to be fastened to the front of Aaron's turban, engraved with the words, "Holy to the LORD"! The turban and tunic and sash were to be made of fine linen--again calling for "the skillful work of a weaver"!

And special tunics and sashes and "caps" (headgear)--though not as ornate--were also to be made for Aaron's son as well! For "glory and beauty," according to verse 40!

And, finally, our text ends with a note that Aaron and his sons were to be "anointed" and "ordained" and "consecrated...that they might serve God as priests" (something we will learn more about in lessons to come)!

Well, as Constable notes: "There is much to be derived from this passage to form principles of spiritual leadership...Those whom God selects to minister to the congregation through intercessory prayer, divine counsel, and sacrificial worship, must always represent the holiness of Yahweh in their activities and demeanor"! And these principles obviously apply to all who know and follow Christ today!

The Psalmist would write: "Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us; and establish the work of our hands; yea, the work of our hands establish Thou it!" (Psalm 90:17)

Men, Isn't it comforting to know that "surely goodness and lovingkindness will follow us all the days of our lives, and that we will dwell in the house of the Lord forever"!

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