

Tuesday, February 11, 2020—Leviticus 8-10

In order for man to be in relationship with God, God has to provide the connection. For Israel, the priests were that avenue of connection. The priests represented both God and man. They were from one of the tribes of Israel, but they were dressed uniquely and anointed with the sacred oil (8:1-10). They were set aside to bridge God and man.

Because they were flawed, they needed a sacrifice to make them acceptable, so Moses presented sacrifices to God and anointed Aaron and his sons with blood and oil to set them aside for God's calling (8:11-30). After a week of consecration, Aaron and his sons then offered sacrifices themselves—for themselves and the people. After sacrificing the sin offering, the burnt offering, and the fellowship offering, Aaron blessed the people (9:22). Through death God was bringing life.

Then, Aaron and Moses went into the Tent of Meeting, just beyond the sacrifices, and when they came out, the two of them blessed the people, and the glory of Yahweh appeared (9:23). The people fell down in worship and shouted for joy. This is the goal of any priest—to bring people into relationship with God so they see His glory manifest in their lives.

Nadab and Abihu, two of Aaron's sons, decided to do their jobs according to their rules instead of God's, and they died. Moses reminded the priests of their important roles and the absolute necessity of fulfilling God's calling God's way (10:4-19). Priests live differently and obediently.

Ask God to remind you of His high calling on your life. Pray for diligence to live differently and bring people to His presence. Monday, February 10, 2020—Leviticus 5-7

God expected every person to fulfill the covenant's obligations. This personal responsibility recognized the value of every person. Rich or poor, slave or free, man or woman—all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. Whether they said the wrong thing, didn't say the right thing, or unknowingly did something to make themselves unacceptable, they sinned, and God provided a remedy. They were to bring a sacrifice, and its life would satisfy the anger of God (5:1-19).

God knew the hearts of men. He had woven them together in His image and had seen the corruption sin and deception had brought. As a result, He knew this new nation would sabotage themselves through self-deception and lies, so God made provision for their confession of such sin and the pathway to restitution between the parties and restoration of their relationship with Him (6:1-7). To sin against another is to sin against God.

The offerings God prescribed were not only to deal with sin. They also allowed the expression of thankfulness (7:12). As the people grew in holiness, they would come to realize the great privilege of knowing God and the rich blessings He had given. In gratitude, they would bring bread and meat and enjoy a meal together (7:11-21). Their eating together would symbolize the richness of their relationship with God Himself.

Thank God for desiring a relationship with you. Thank Him for Jesus' being the sacrifice that satisfies His anger—removing sin and restoring the relationship. Pray for rich relationships with fellow believers.

Sunday, February 9, 2020—Leviticus 1-4

Once the Tabernacle was complete, the people were to interact with God there. How foolish would it have been to offer gifts, build the structure, and then do nothing with it? So many do that today by going to worship services, giving offerings, and yet never truly knowing God.

This interaction with God came through offerings and confessions. They provided offerings of thanks and offerings of guilt. They confessed that God was worthy and good, and they confessed they were unworthy and flawed. They gave of the best of their possession—animals without defect and the firstfruits from the field. God deserved the very best.

The priests would prepare the burnt offering and then put it on the altar. That was a pleasing aroma to Yahweh (1:17). God hates sin, so this offering represented the people's admission that sin was destructive and their desire to reconnect with Him.

The grain offering was to be of fine flour and oil without yeast. The priests would break off a portion to be burned and keep the rest (2:10). Yeast represented sin. They were bringing bread without sin, which would be broken, as their offering. God was preparing them for Jesus Himself.

When offering a burnt, fellowship, or sin offering, the man was to lay his hands on the offering (1:4, 3:2, 4:4), signifying the transfer of guilt from the man to the animal. When the offering was complete, whatever his role or standing in the community, the man was forgiven (4:26, 31, 35).

Thank God for the forgiveness He gives in Jesus.

Saturday, February 8, 2020—Exodus 38-40

Bronze is an alloy—a mixture of metals which makes the end product stronger. Like gold, bronze is shiny and beautiful, but unlike gold, bronze is able to withstand use and abuse better than gold.

In describing many of the Tabernacle's elements, God called for gold to cover those things, especially those things in His presence. The altar and the basin—where sacrifice occurred and where unholy man first came into interaction with holy God—was covered with bronze. These pieces, like the altar and the basin (38:1-8), were able to shine like gold but were able to endure the hard work of sacrifice.

The garments for the priests were of the finest linen and covered with ornate handiwork. The names of the 12 tribes rested over the chest of the priest, and on his head was a plate that read, "Holy to the Lord" (39:30). When the people came to the priest and the Tabernacle, they saw men dressed like no one else. They saw a building like none other. They smelled a fragrance unlike any other in the world. Coming to God is a special privilege and a humbling responsibility, requiring discipline and sacrifice.

The obedience of the people produced the Tabernacle. In His grace, God filled that tent with glory (40:34) and led the people. Years later, Jesus would clothe himself with flesh and "tabernacle" with the people—the God-man coming to bear the sin of the people and bring glory to God.

Praise God for the work of Jesus to forgive, bring life, and lead.

Friday, February 7, 2020—Exodus 35-37

Israel set aside valuable possessions for the glory of God. They reserved a day of the week solely for the glory of God. They used their skills for the glory of God. God had set them aside from all the peoples of the world for His glory, so they mimicked Him—looking at their possessions differently than the world did. They set them aside and gave them away—freely, joyously, intentionally.

The Lord said the Sabbath was non-negotiable (35:1-3). That was the outward sign that united the nation. Everyone had a Sabbath, and everyone was to give it to the Lord. The Sabbath was a command, but the offerings were freewill. People gave as their hearts moved them. Everyone did not have the same possessions or skills, so everyone's gift was not the same (35:4-35). Their recognition of God's worth moved them to give more than was needed (36:5).

The craftsmen and craftswomen then took these gifts and used them with great skill and according to God's design (36:8-37:29). This was not some haphazard going-through-the-motions. Their work was an act of worship. They were obeying God in order to honor God through the skills He had graciously given.

Work was worship. Giving was worship. Life was worship. God had chosen Israel, giving them value like no other nation. Their response to Him in daily life and weekly gathering demonstrated His worth.

All of life is worship. Live daily for His glory. Give Him what He deserves from your time, skills, and possessions.

Thursday, February 6, 2020—Exodus 32-34

The people of Israel were learning how to walk with God. There was no instruction manual. (Moses was in the process of receiving that.) There were no examples to follow. (They were the first nation to have the privilege.) When they came to a moment of uncertainty, they defaulted to what they knew—worshiping hand-made images as representatives of God (32:4). That's what they had seen all their lives in Egypt.

God had expressly forbidden this (Exodus 20:4-6). God never wants His people to think they know what He looks like. He doesn't want His people to believe they are the creator or master. Aaron compromised and made an idol to make the people comfortable, and it cost everyone.

Moses based his prayer of repentance (32:11-14) on the character of God. Aaron blamed his sin on others (32:22-24). God had revealed Himself powerfully to the people, so they knew Him well enough to obey. Obedience comes from hearing and trusting Him. Sin comes from ignoring Him or forgetting His goodness and trusting self.

God told Moses to take the people to the Promised Land as He had called them to do, but He wasn't going with them because of their obstinacy. Moses asked, "What's the use?" He knew the presence of God was the only thing that gave them hope and made them different (33:16).

Moses was different because of spending time with God (34:29-33). Pray that His presence in your life is evident and effective. Pray that you live in obedience and allegiance only to Him.

Wednesday, February 5, 2020—Exodus 28-31

Coming into God's presence is no small matter. He is holy, and we are not. By His grace, He has provided the Way—Jesus, the Great High Priest. God began preparing His people for Jesus by giving them priests who wore special clothing, bearing the names of the tribes, to symbolize visually the unique role they played in Israel (28:1-43).

Moses and the people consecrated the priests (29:1-46)—publicly recognizing their vital role and setting them aside from everyone else in the nation. The new clothing, the anointing oil, and the blood of the sacrifice all foreshadowed the work of Christ and the Holy Spirit to set aside new followers of Christ. His blood forgives. He clothes them with His righteousness, and the Holy Spirit anoints them with His presence. Jesus' disciples become priests to bring others to relationship with Him.

God was preparing the people for His dwelling with them (29:45). God does not want to be distant but to walk with those He has created and loves so much. Every morning and every night the people brought sacrifice and burned incense—the sacrifice covered sins and the incense expressed devotion. They confessed what separated and then enjoyed drawing near.

The people were to set aside the priests, but they were also to set aside one day (31:12-18). One day each week they would stop working and enjoy resting in the presence and provision of God. By their worship, they showed the surrounding nations the worth of God.

Pray your life is consecrated to Jesus and displays His worth.