

Exodus 37-40 • The Worship of Israel Begins

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We're picking it up here tonight and it begins by saying, "*Bezalel made the ark of acacia wood.*" And what I'm going to be doing while we're reading through these verses, once again, is to put pictures up on the screen for you so that you can see those and we'll start with the picture of the Ark of the Covenant. And this isn't a picture of the Ark of the Covenant because we don't have the Ark of the Covenant to take a picture of, but this is a rendering of it, of what the ark most likely looked like. And we can do pretty good on these renderings because so much detail is given to us, frankly in the Word of God.



And I want to remind you of something else and that is that all of these things that we're going to be going through once again here, they all point to Jesus in one way, shape, or form.

And we've talked a lot about this and so I won't I'll try not to be redundant here, but as you look at that picture of the Ark of The Covenant, I want to remind you that it wasn't just an empty box. It contained things that were there to remind the Israelites of certain realities. But those realities, again, point to Jesus.

The Ark of The Covenant contained the tablets of the law as an example. It also contained a jar made out of gold that had some of the manna. And because

you'll remember that if anyone kept manna for longer than just the day in which it was given, except on the day before the Sabbath, the manna would go bad. But this manna stayed. I don't think the ark had refrigeration and it just stayed. It was, but it was there as a reminder of God's provision.

And then also, we haven't even read about it yet, but there's going to come a challenge later on during the Israelites time in the wilderness to the priesthood of Aaron. And some of the men, some of the elders of Israel are going to rise up in a spirit of rebellion, and they're going to say, why are you guys so special? You take too much upon yourselves. We're just as special as you are. And they were basically challenging God's choice of who He made high priest.

And of course the sons of Aaron were then in line for that as well. And you'll remember what happened. God, most men at that time carried his staff, and God told Moses to tell the these individuals that the person whose staff, which of course is a cut off, is a stick cut off from a tree. The person whose staff buds and blossoms is the one God chose. And then you'll remember, that's how it goes.

The staff of Aaron abutted and blossomed even though it was a dead stick, and that staff was in the Ark of the Covenant as well. So there were these reminders to the people of Israel. Some of them involved their rebellious attitudes, but they also pointed to the person of Jesus.

The tablets of the law remind us, of course, that Jesus came to fulfill the law, and to do what we could not do in the sense of keeping the law perfectly. The manna reminds us that Jesus is the provision of God, the very bread of life that came down from heaven. And of course, the priestly staff points to Jesus as our high priest.

We're still in verse 1, it says, now concerning the ark that it was, *"Two cubits and a half was its length, (you'll remember, a cubit is 18 inches) a cubit and a half its breadth, and a cubit and a half its height. ² And he overlaid it with pure gold inside and outside, (and so it must have been very beautiful) and made a molding of gold around it. ³ And he cast for it four rings of gold for its four feet, two rings on its one side and two rings on its other side. ⁴ And he made poles of acacia wood and overlaid them with gold ⁵ and put the poles into the rings on the sides of the ark to carry the ark. ⁶ And he made a mercy seat (which is the lid) of pure gold. Two cubits and a half was its length, and a cubit and a half its breadth. (so obviously it fit on that rectangular shaped box)*

⁷ And he made two cherubim of gold. He made them of hammered work on the two ends of the mercy seat, ⁸ one cherub on the one end, and one cherub on the

other end. Of one piece with the mercy seat he made the cherubim on its two ends. ⁹ The cherubim spread out their wings above, overshadowing the mercy seat with their wings, with their faces one to another; toward the mercy seat were the faces of the cherubim.” (ESV)

And again, I want to remind you, the mercy seat is an important picture. Again, as far as the ark is concerned, it's really just the lid, but the mercy seat is in essence, a picture of the very throne of God. And upon the mercy seat, the blood of the offering would be sprinkled once a year. Once for the priest who would go in to make atonement for the people and once for the people of Israel. And the blood was sprinkled there on top of the atonement cover, if you will, on the mercy seat.

But it's important to understand that the word, atonement, means covered. Meaning that the sins of Israel were covered and that's an important distinction. The sins of Israel were not paid for, they were covered.

Now, I'm not saying that the people weren't forgiven. They were forgiven, but they weren't punished. They didn't get punished. Who died when there was a sacrifice? Well, an animal died, but that's not, that can't be the punishment. And there are some scriptures that help us to understand this. And the first one is in Romans chapter 3, verses 21 through 25 up on the screen for you, it says,

Romans 3:21-25 (NIV84)

But now a righteousness of God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished—

But now a righteousness of God, apart from law, (in other words, the keeping of the law) has been made known, (and I'm quoting this, by the way, out of the NIV. I really like the way it's worded) to which the Law and the Prophets testify. This righteousness from God comes (how?) through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, (your Bible in a different translation will say, propitiation) through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate (now listen, this is the important

part, *He did this to demonstrate) his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand (in other words, before the cross) unpunished—*

The reason I read this out of the NIV for you is because the wording is actually quite clearer than what we read in some of the other modern translations. And I particularly am pointing you to the fact that Jesus had to come to be punished. Why? Somebody had to pay. Somebody had to pay.

Do you think that the animals paid for the people's sins? Heavens no. Animals can't pay for the sins of man, even though they did sacrifice animals, but that wasn't in payment. We know that because of what is written for us in the Book of Hebrews. Look at this on the screen. Hebrews chapter 10 says,

Hebrews 10:4 (ESV)

...it's impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

...it's impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

You see, the animals were there standing in as a picture of substitution because God was training the Israelites to understand that the ultimate forgiveness would come their way through a substitutionary sacrifice. And that is the person of Jesus Christ who came and substituted Himself because the sins that were committed beforehand were left unpunished. Your sins were left unpunished.

Jesus came and bore the punishment that we deserve, right? He did it for past sins. He did it for present sins. He did it for future sins for those who embrace and accept what He did on the cross by faith.

It's important to understand, the pictures that we have in the Old Testament and what they point us toward and what Jesus came ultimately to fulfill. Jesus came to be punished for all of the sins that were never punished.

Boy, I get so many notes from people who are going through hard times. And they'll say to me, pastor Paul, is God punishing me for my sin? And, I always want to clarify when I'm talking to them, if I'm talking to a believer. And when they tell me, yes, I am a believer. I try to bring them back to the cross and remind them that's where God punished your sin. That's where He punished your sin.

Well, it isn't what I'm going through right now a punishment. Now, I don't think—the Bible doesn't say that God punishes those whom He loves. You know what it says? It says, God disciplines those whom He loves. He punished His Son for you.

Now, does He discipline his children? Oh yes and we'll just call that His spanking spoon, and it's very effective. But please understand, dear saints, you're not being punished. Jesus was punished for you. You are being disciplined and thank God you are being disciplined because He disciplines those whom He loves. He treats us as children because, again, what child is not disciplined by their parents? And our parent, the Lord our God is faithful to do that in our lives as well. All right.

Next we come in verse 10 to the table of show bread, or the bread of the presence. There's the picture up on the screen for you. And we have here the construction of the table and its utensils.



It says, “He also made the table of acacia wood. Two cubits was its length, a cubit its breadth, and a cubit and a half its height. ¹¹ And he overlaid it with pure gold, and made a molding of gold around it. ¹² And he made a rim around it a handbreadth wide, and made a molding of gold around the rim. ¹³ He cast for it four rings of gold and fastened the rings to the four corners at its four legs. ¹⁴ Close to the frame were the rings, as holders for the poles to carry the table. ¹⁵ He made the poles of acacia wood to carry the table, and overlaid them with gold. ¹⁶ And he made the vessels of pure gold that were to be on the table, its plates and dishes for incense, and its bowls and flagons with which to pour

drink offerings.” And once again, the table of showbread points us to Jesus as the bread of life, the One who enables us to fellowship with God.

Next, we have the construction of the lamp stand up on the screen for you there so you can see that as well. You recognize this. We call these, a menorah these days.



It says, *“¹⁷ He also made the lampstand of pure gold. He made the lampstand of hammered work. Its base, its stem, its cups, its calyxes, (which are the protective coverings around a flower pedal) and its flowers were of one piece with it.*

¹⁸ And there were six branches going out of its sides, three branches of the lampstand out of one side of it and three branches of the lampstand out of the other side of it; ¹⁹ three cups made like almond blossoms, each with calyx and flower, on one branch, and three cups made like almond blossoms, each with calyx and flower, on the other branch—so for the six branches going out of the lampstand. ²⁰ And on the lampstand itself were four cups made like almond blossoms, with their calyxes and flowers, ²¹ and a calyx of one piece with it under each pair of the six branches going out of it. ²² Their calyxes and their branches were of one piece with it. The whole of it was a single piece of hammered work of pure gold. (it was just a master piece of craftsmanship) ²³ And he made its seven lamps and its tongs and its trays of pure gold. ²⁴ He made it and all its utensils out of a talent of pure gold.” Must have been absolutely amazing.

Next we have the construction of the altar of incense, which we've read about before in terms of its design. There it is on the screen for you.



It says, “²⁵ He made the altar of incense of acacia wood. Its length was a cubit, and its breadth was a cubit. It was square, and two cubits was its height. Its horns were of one piece with it. ²⁶ He overlaid it with pure gold, its top and around its sides and its horns. And he made a molding of gold around it, ²⁷ and made two rings of gold on it under its molding, on two opposite sides of it, as holders for the poles with which to carry it. ²⁸ And he made the poles of acacia wood and overlaid them with gold.

²⁹ He made the holy anointing oil also, and the pure fragrant incense, blended as by the perfumer.” It must have smelled absolutely amazing, basically inside the tabernacle.

Chapter 38, we continue on with the construction of the altar of burnt offering. We'll put that up on the screen so you can see that one, essentially how it looked. (*Editor's Note: The YouTube video for this teaching incorrectly shows a repeat picture of the altar of incense. The correct picture is shown here.*)



We're told it was made like the others of acacia wood. In this case, it was “...Five cubits (long)..., and five cubits its breadth. It was square, and three cubits was its height. ² He made horns for it on its four corners. Its horns were of one piece with it, and he overlaid it with bronze. ³ And he made all the utensils of the altar, the pots, the shovels, the basins, the forks, and the fire pans. He made all its utensils of bronze. ⁴ And he made for the altar a grating, a network of bronze, under its ledge, extending halfway down. ⁵ He cast four rings on the four corners of the bronze grating as holders for the poles. ⁶ He made the poles of acacia wood and overlaid them with bronze. ⁷ And he put the poles through the rings on the sides of the altar to carry it with them. He made it hollow, with boards.” There you have the altar of sacrifice.

Now we move on here. Verse 8 and it says, “He made the basin of bronze (we'll put the next image on the screen for you, this is also referred to as the laver) and its stand of bronze, from the mirrors of the ministering women who ministered in the entrance of the tent of meeting.”



So this must have had a pretty incredible sheen to it as well being made from mirrors and also of bronze. And of course, this is where the priest would wash related to his functions in the sacrificial system.

Next, as we get into verse 9, it begins by saying, “*And he made the court.*” And so this is the construction essentially of the courtyard which was really just a big fenced area surrounding the tabernacle.



When the temple was eventually built, this was referred to as the outer courts of the temple. And in Jerusalem, this is as far as a Gentile could come. They could go into the courtyard, the outer court, and they could worship there, and they could come before the Lord, but they could not go any further than these outer courts. And this is where they were also buying and selling, you'll remember.

And Jesus took it quite issue with that on a couple of occasions and drove those who were buying and selling out of this area. But of course, that's when the temple was actually built.

Verse 9 says, *“And he made the court. For the south side the hangings of the court were of fine twined linen, a hundred cubits; ¹⁰ their twenty pillars and their twenty bases were of bronze, but the hooks of the pillars and their fillets were of silver. ¹¹ And for the north side there were hangings of a hundred cubits; their twenty pillars and their twenty bases were of bronze, but the hooks of the pillars and their fillets were of silver. ¹² And for the west side were hangings of fifty cubits, their ten pillars, and their ten bases; the hooks of the pillars and their fillets were of silver. ¹³ And for the front to the east, (once again) fifty cubits. ¹⁴ The hangings for one side of the gate were fifteen cubits, with their three pillars and three bases. ¹⁵ And so for the other side. On both sides of the gate of the court were hangings of fifteen cubits, with their three pillars and their three bases. ¹⁶ All the hangings around the court were of fine twined linen. ¹⁷ And the bases for the pillars were of bronze, but the hooks of the pillars and their fillets were of silver. The overlaying of their capitals was also of silver, and all the pillars of the court were filleted with silver.*

¹⁸ And the screen for the gate of the court was embroidered with needlework in blue and purple and scarlet yarns and fine twined linen. It was twenty cubits long and five cubits high in its breadth, corresponding to the hangings of the court. ¹⁹ And their pillars were four in number. Their four bases were of bronze, their hooks of silver, and the overlaying of their capitals and their fillets of silver. ²⁰ And all the pegs for the tabernacle and for the court all around were of bronze.”

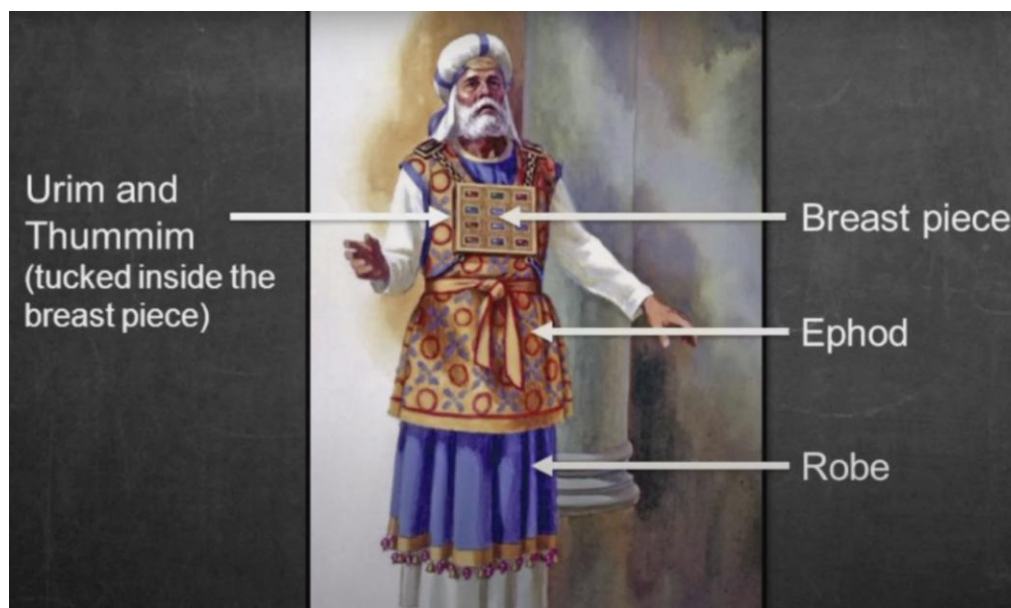
And then we end this chapter with just a record of the offerings and the contributions that the people of Israel made toward the tabernacle and all of its furnishings.

And so it says in verse 21, *“These are the records of the tabernacle, the tabernacle of the testimony, as they were recorded at the commandment of Moses, the responsibility of the Levites under the direction of Ithamar the son of Aaron the priest. ²² Bezalel the son of Uri, son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, made all that the LORD commanded Moses; ²³ and with him was Oholiab the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan, an engraver and designer and embroiderer in blue and purple and scarlet yarns and fine twined linen.*

²⁴ All the gold that was used for the work, in all the construction of the sanctuary, the gold from the offering, was twenty-nine talents and 730 shekels,

by the shekel of the sanctuary. ²⁵ The silver from those of the congregation who were recorded was a hundred talents and 1,775 shekels, by the shekel of the sanctuary: ²⁶ a beka a head (that is, half a shekel, by the shekel of the sanctuary), for everyone who was listed in the records, from twenty years old and upward, for 603,550 men. ²⁷ The hundred talents of silver were for casting the bases of the sanctuary and the bases of the veil; a hundred bases for the hundred talents, a talent a base. ²⁸ And of the 1,775 shekels he made hooks for the pillars and overlaid their capitals and made fillets for them. ²⁹ The bronze that was offered was seventy talents and 2,400 shekels; ³⁰ with it he made the bases for the entrance of the tent of meeting, (notice now, we're interchanging the name of the tabernacle with the tent of meeting) the bronze altar and the bronze grating for it and all the utensils of the altar, ³¹ the bases around the court, and the bases of the gate of the court, all the pegs of the tabernacle, and all the pegs around the court."

All right. Chapter 39. This brings us to the preparation of the priest's garments. Since we have a rendering here as well in the form of a picture, painting, drawing, whatever.



And it says, "From the blue and purple and scarlet yarns they made finely woven garments, for ministering in the Holy Place. They made the holy garments for Aaron, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

² He made the ephod of gold, blue and purple and scarlet yarns, and fine twined linen. ³ And they hammered out gold leaf, and he cut it into threads to work into the blue and purple and the scarlet yarns, and into the fine twined linen, in skilled design. ⁴ They made for the ephod attaching shoulder pieces, joined to it

at its two edges. ⁵ And the skillfully woven band on it was of one piece with it and made like it, of gold, blue and purple and scarlet yarns, and fine twined linen, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

⁶ They made the onyx stones, enclosed in settings of gold filigree, and engraved like the engravings of a signet, according to the names of the sons of Israel.

⁷ And he set them on the shoulder pieces of the ephod to be stones of remembrance for the sons of Israel, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

⁸ He made the breastpiece, in skilled work, in the style of the ephod, of gold, blue and purple and scarlet yarns, and fine twined linen. ⁹ It was square. They made the breastpiece doubled, a span its length and a span its breadth when doubled. ¹⁰ And they set in it four rows of stones. A row of sardius, topaz, and carbuncle was the first row; ¹¹ and the second row, an emerald, a sapphire, and a diamond; ¹² and the third row, a jacinth, an agate, and an amethyst; ¹³ and the fourth row, a beryl, an onyx, and a jasper. They were enclosed in settings of gold filigree. ¹⁴ There were twelve stones with their names according to the names of the sons of Israel. They were like signets, each engraved with its name, for the twelve tribes. ¹⁵ And they made on the breastpiece twisted chains like cords, of pure gold. ¹⁶ And they made two settings of gold filigree and two gold rings, and put the two rings on the two edges of the breastpiece. ¹⁷ And they put the two cords of gold in the two rings at the edges of the breastpiece. ¹⁸ They attached the two ends of the two cords to the two settings of filigree. Thus they attached it in front to the shoulder pieces of the ephod. ¹⁹ Then they made two rings of gold, and put them at the two ends of the breastpiece, on its inside edge next to the ephod.” It sounds heavy to me. Phew! Can you imagine putting this on a hot day and going into minister?

“²⁰ And they made two rings of gold, and attached them in front to the lower part of the two shoulder pieces of the ephod, at its seam above the skillfully woven band of the ephod. ²¹ And they bound the breastpiece by its rings to the rings of the ephod with a lace of blue, so that it should lie on the skillfully woven band of the ephod, and that the breastpiece should not come loose from the ephod, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

²² He also made the robe of the ephod woven all of blue, ²³ and the opening of the robe in it was like the opening in a garment, with a binding around the opening, so that it might not tear. ²⁴ On the hem of the robe they made pomegranates of blue and purple and scarlet yarns and fine twined linen.

²⁵ They also made bells of pure gold, and put the bells between the pomegranates all around the hem of the robe, between the pomegranates—

²⁶ a bell and a pomegranate, a bell and a pomegranate (I think we got that)

around the hem of the robe for ministering, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

²⁷ They also made the coats, woven of fine linen, for Aaron and his sons, ²⁸ and the turban of fine linen, and the caps of fine linen, and the linen undergarments of fine twined linen, ²⁹ and the sash of fine twined linen and of blue and purple and scarlet yarns, embroidered with needlework, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

³⁰ They made the plate of the holy crown of pure gold, and wrote on it an inscription, like the engraving of a signet, "Holy to the LORD." ³¹ And they tied to it a cord of blue to fasten it on the turban above, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

³² Thus all the work of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting was finished, and the people of Israel did according to all that the LORD had commanded Moses; so they did. ³³ Then they brought the tabernacle to Moses, the tent and all its utensils, its hooks, its frames, its bars, its pillars, and its bases; ³⁴ the covering of tanned rams' skins and goatskins, and the veil of the screen; ³⁵ the ark of the testimony with its poles and the mercy seat; ³⁶ the table with all its utensils, and the bread of the Presence; ³⁷ the lampstand of pure gold and its lamps with the lamps set and all its utensils, and the oil for the light; ³⁸ the golden altar, the anointing oil and the fragrant incense, and the screen for the entrance of the tent; ³⁹ the bronze altar, and its grating of bronze, its poles, and all its utensils; the basin and its stand; ⁴⁰ the hangings of the court, its pillars, and its bases, and the screen for the gate of the court, its cords, and its pegs; and all the utensils for the service of the tabernacle, for the tent of meeting; ⁴¹ the finely worked garments for ministering in the Holy Place, the holy garments for Aaron the priest, and the garments of his sons for their service as priests. ⁴² According to all that the LORD had commanded Moses, so the people of Israel had done all the work. ⁴³ And Moses saw all the work, and behold, they had done it; as the LORD had commanded, so had they done it. Then Moses blessed them."

Chapter 40, final chapter. *"The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ² "On the first day of the first month you shall erect the tabernacle of the tent of meeting. ³ And you shall put in it the ark of the testimony, and you shall screen the ark with the veil. ⁴ And you shall bring in the table and arrange it, and you shall bring in the lampstand and set up its lamps. ⁵ And you shall put the golden altar for incense before the ark of the testimony, and set up the screen for the door of the tabernacle. ⁶ You shall set the altar of burnt offering before the door of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting, ⁷ and place the basin between the tent of*

meeting and the altar, and put water in it. ⁸ And you shall set up the court all around, and hang up the screen for the gate of the court.

⁹ “Then you shall take the anointing oil and anoint the tabernacle and all that is in it, and consecrate it and all its furniture, so that it may become holy. ¹⁰ You shall also anoint the altar of burnt offering and all its utensils, and consecrate the altar, so that the altar may become most holy. ¹¹ You shall also anoint the basin and its stand, and consecrate it. ¹² Then you shall bring Aaron and his sons to the entrance of the tent of meeting and shall wash them with water ¹³ and put on Aaron the holy garments. And you shall anoint him and consecrate him, that he may serve me as priest. ¹⁴ You shall bring his sons also and put coats on them, ¹⁵ and anoint them, as you anointed their father, that they may serve me as priests. And their anointing shall admit them to a perpetual priesthood (that means ongoing) throughout their generations.”

¹⁶ This Moses did; according to all that the LORD commanded him, so he did. ¹⁷ In the first month in the second year, on the first day of the month, the tabernacle was erected. ¹⁸ Moses erected the tabernacle. He laid its bases, and set up its frames, and put in its poles, and raised up its pillars. ¹⁹ And he spread the tent over the tabernacle and put the covering of the tent over it, as the LORD had commanded Moses. ²⁰ He took the testimony and put it into the ark, and put the poles on the ark and set the mercy seat above on the ark. ²¹ And he brought the ark into the tabernacle and set up the veil of the screen, and screened the ark of the testimony, as the LORD had commanded Moses. ²² He put the table in the tent of meeting, on the north side of the tabernacle, outside the veil, ²³ and arranged the bread on it before the LORD, as the LORD had commanded Moses. ²⁴ He put the lampstand in the tent of meeting, opposite the table on the south side of the tabernacle, ²⁵ and set up the lamps before the LORD, as the LORD had commanded Moses. ²⁶ He put the golden altar in the tent of meeting before the veil, ²⁷ and burned fragrant incense on it, as the LORD had commanded Moses. ²⁸ He put in place the screen for the door of the tabernacle. ²⁹ And he set the altar of burnt offering at the entrance of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting, and offered on it the burnt offering and the grain offering, as the LORD had commanded Moses. ³⁰ He set the basin between the tent of meeting and the altar, and put water in it for washing, ³¹ with which Moses and Aaron and his sons washed their hands and their feet. ³² When they went into the tent of meeting, and when they approached the altar, they washed, as the LORD commanded Moses. ³³ And he erected the court around the tabernacle and the altar, and set up the screen of the gate of the court. So Moses finished the work.

³⁴ *Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.* ³⁵ *And Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud settled on it, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.*” Boy, this is incredible.

I mean Moses used to go up onto the mountain and he would be in the presence of God to the degree that his face would shine when he came down the mountain and began to tell the people what the Lord had said. And so he was obviously in the presence of the glory of God and yet we're told here that the glory of the Lord so filled the tabernacle, that Moses couldn't go in, he couldn't enter.

And this is interesting because there's a corollary to this in the building of the first temple, Solomon's temple. You'll remember perhaps reading in 2 Chronicles, when the temple was built and when it was dedicated, we're told in 2 Chronicles, I believe it's in chapter 5, that as the house of the Lord was dedicated, it was filled again with the glory of the Lord to the degree that the priests could not go in and minister. They couldn't enter because of the glory of the Lord filling the house of God. So we have a repeat, if you will, in that sort of a deal verse.

The last few verses, 3 verses of the chapter, and of the Book of Exodus simply say that, “³⁶ *Throughout all their journeys, whenever the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the people of Israel would set out.*”

Now, you can imagine this was not a fast sort of a setting out. I don't know if you've ever broken camp. If you've been out camping, you decide it's time to go home. You pack up your stuff. Can you imagine having 2.5 million people we think, and all of the tents and things that go along with these people. And then the tabernacle, which has to be taken down, and packed up so that it can be moved, and put in just the right place, and packed just the right way. It gives me the shakes just thinking about it.

But anyway, it says that when, “...*the cloud was taken up* (here again, verse 36) *from over the tabernacle, the people of Israel would set out.*”

³⁷ *But if the cloud was not taken up, then they did not set out till the day that it was taken up.* ³⁸ *For the cloud of the LORD was on the tabernacle by day, and (in other words, it literally hovered over the tabernacle by day and that cloud became a pillar of) fire...by night, (or if you will, fire inside the cloud) in the sight of all the house of Israel throughout all their journeys.*”

And so we end the Book of Exodus with this statement about how the people of God were led by the Lord through the wilderness and they did not move unless the Lord moved. There's certainly something for you and I to learn from that as well.

I read through a book like this, Exodus, and of course, Leviticus will be coming up next. And I read about all of the procedures that had to be performed just right, according to the specific way that the Lord had commanded Moses and the people. And they had to go in and do things in just the right way. And the priests were dressed in just the right way, and they performed their duties in a very specific pattern.

And the holiness of God was paramount. And the sacredness of all that they did and performed was so vital to the entire process. And I think about how that is so different from the relationship and the way that we go about our worship.

And I have a deep appreciation for what the Israelites had to do, and the things that they were commanded from the Lord, and how they performed those things. But I'm so glad I live in the time that I live. I'm so glad that I live in that time period when the message isn't what it was for the Israelites.

Their message was, stay away, keep your distance. And our message is exactly the opposite from the Lord. Come to Me. Come to Me, all you who are weary, heavy laden, and I will give you rest. (Matthew 11:28) And we can come anytime we want before the throne of grace.

And Christians, I just want to encourage you. Don't take that for granted. Don't take coming before the throne of grace for granted. It's a privilege that we have, but it's a privilege that is ours because it's of what Jesus did for us on the cross. He made the way. He's the key that opens the door. He, in fact, He even said, I am the door for the sheep. (John 10:17) It is through Him that we pass.

And what a blessing, what a blessing to be righteous before God, bearing not a righteousness of our own, but a righteousness that is imputed by faith, amen. What a blessing. What a blessing. Don't ever take it for granted.

We stand righteous before God right now, not because of our good deeds, not because of our actions, but because of our faith in what Jesus did on the cross, we are accepted as righteous. Let's pray.

Father, we thank You so much for this study tonight and really the whole study of the Book of Exodus. And we see this incredible picture that even applies in our lives today. How this book began by introducing us to a deliverer, how this book began by explaining that the people of God were languishing in slavery and bound to their burden, and how You had a plan to set them free, to release them from their bondage, to bring them into freedom.

But how the people lacked understanding and at times walked in rebellion. And Lord even that applies to our own lives. We have seen also Lord through this study, this overwhelming picture of the glory and majesty of the Lord on high.

Help us to remember Lord, that even though we have an open invitation to come to You and before You at all times, Your glory has not waned from those days. You are still the same consuming fire.

And that makes us Lord even more thankful that our sins are forgiven. That even now we have a clean slate to begin again, to begin anew. To walk in that freedom, to walk in that forgiveness, to walk in that newness of life.

Lord, help us to live in a way that honors all that You have done for us. We thank You. We praise You. We give You our worship, which means we give You our very selves, in the name of Jesus Christ, our Redeemer and soon coming King, amen.