**Exodus VII God Tabernacles With His People**

Last week: God gave the Law of Moses at Sinai

Commandment # 1-4 Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength

Commandment 5-10 And love your neighbor as yourself.

We learned that the purpose of the Law was not to produce a way to God.

It did give them limited access to God, but…

No, the Law was given “so that trespass might increase (Romans 5:20), and so that “sin could become utterly sinful.” ( Lev 7:13) The Law is like a kind of guardian until Jesus came, who fulfilled the Law, and also replaced the law.

The Law of Moses: Obey these things fully and you will be my chosen people, a royal priesthood and a holy nation.

But in Christ we have something much better. Romans 3:21 “But now a righteousness from God has been made known, apart from the Law, to which the Law and the Prophets testify (for example in Exodus, as we will see)

We ended at Exodus 24:3,8 The people said, “All that you have commanded, we will do. Then he wrote down all God had commanded (including Exodus 25-31)

Then, Moses sealed the covenant and the Law with blood (Ex 24:8)

Ex 24:15-18 Moses spends 40 days on the mountain with the Lord. He receives the ten commandments on tablets of stone.

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Exodus 25:1-9

v. 1-7 Take up a collection. This was the purpose of Israel “plundering the Egyptians.”

v. 8 God: Make a Tabernacle. Why? I want to dwell with my people.

God wants to dwell with us. God wants to take us back to the Garden of Eden, where he dwelt with us in intimate fellowship.

That is what he wanted for his people Israel at that time, and that is what he wants with us.

This is what Jesus did:

John 1:14 God came and “tabernacled” among us. 1:18 We beheld his glory, the glory of the one and only Son.

This is what the Tabernacle was all about. It was a foreshadow of God dwelling with his people in the form of his one and only Son.

Every single item in the Tabernacle (in the wilderness), and later in Solomon’s temple in Jerusalem, is designed to explain God to us. It is both a foreshadow of Christ dwelling with us, and of the heavenly tabernacle.

But… Exodus 25:9 Follow the pattern exactly!!! Hebrews 8:5-6 Follow the pattern exactly! Why?

I. It is a copy of the real one where God really dwells, in heaven.

Hebrews 8:5 A copy and a shadow. (aside: Coll 2:17 a shadow… the reality, however…)

*Hupodeigma* sketch-plan, diorama (illustration: scale model of Jerusalem)

*Skia* shadow, reflection, silhouette

Hebrews 8:1-2 Jesus serves in the real one, of which this is merely a shadow.

II. Ezekiel 43:10 Why is God giving us all this precise details? “that they may be ashamed of their sins.”

What a strange statement. Why does God say this to Israel? To us? It is about his perfection and his holiness.

When Jesus comes back, heaven will come down to earth, and God will dwell with his people. The tabernacle is a foreshadow of this glorious and blessed event.

Exodus 25:10-22 The ark, of acacia wood, covered with gold. In it was later placed the Ten Commandments, as well as Aaron’s rod.

On top of the ark was the “Atonement Cover” Also called the mercy seat—of pure gold. v. 17

On top of this was the two cherubim of pure gold, whose wings overshadowed the mercy seat. v. 18-22

Ex 25:23-30 The table of shew bread.

Ex 25:31-40 The lampstand/Menorah, with its seven oil lamps. V. 37 7 lamps

Ex 26 Very precise details of the tabernacle itself, with the tent, the curtain of blue, purple and scarlet, and with the cherubim (v. 31) sewn into it, the Holy Place, the inner, Most Holy Place. 3x1

Exodus 27:1-8 The bronze altar of sacrifice (bronze, not gold because fire was offered on it).

Exodus 27:9-19 The outer courtyard for the Levites

Exodus 30:1-10 The gold altar of incense

Read the Hebrew summary Hebrews 9:1-5 We do have time!

Jesus serves in the true tabernacle (Heb 8:1-2)

Jesus’ ministry is in a more perfect (complete) tabernacle Heb 9:11

The Jewish tabernacle/temple was a copy of the real one Jesus is in Heb 9:23-24

Let’s go through the symbolism of the items in the Tabernacle/temple:

Outer curtain, courtyard, bronze altar, laver, inner curtain, most Holy Place, show bread, lampstand, golden altar of incense, blue, purple and scarlet curtain with cherubim, Holy of Holies, ark, cherubim, tablets, Aaron’s rod, manna and the Mercy Seat or atonement cover.

The courtyard. Only the Levites could enter.

Solomon’s temple: Court of the Gentiles, Court of women, Court of men, Court of Levites, Holy Place (Aaronic priests), Holy of Holies (high priest).

Many layers of separation between man and a holy God. (We will see that all this changed when Jesus entered the true, the heavenly tabernacle.)

Coming before God:

Gentiles only entered the outermost courtyard.

Women had their own separate courtyard.

The Jewish men could only come to the gate

The Levites could come into the courtyard

The Priests could come into the Holy Place

The High Priest came into the Holy of Holies, one day a year, only after sacrificing a bull for his own sins, only after filling the holy of holies with incense, only after offering a bull and a goat for the people’s sins

only for a few minutes. (with a rope tied around their ankle!!!)

All of this emphasized their separation and distance from God.

1. The Bronze Altar: To come before God, a sacrifice is required. The blood of Jesus comes first.

God was telling the Jews about the ministry of Jesus in heaven. You cannot enter into the Holy of Holies without first stopping at the bronze altar of sacrifice.

2. The Laver. To enter into a relationship with God, one must be washed in baptism.

 1 Peter 3:21 Not a physical cleansing (as at the laver).

3. The Bread on the right. 12 loaves for the 12 tribes = Spiritual food

Jn 6:35 I am the bread of life.

4. The golden lampstand. Seven branches, each with a bowl kept perpetually burning.

 Zech 4:1-6 Two olive trees represent an eternal supply.

The lampstand = the Holy Spirit which we receive when we are baptized and enter a relationship with God.

On the right: Jesus

On the left: The Holy Spirit

In the center: The Father.

5. The golden altar of incense. Not used for sacrifices or offerings.

Rev 5:8 The altar of incense = or prayers which come right before the presence of God.

6. The curtain. The separation between man and God. Anyone who peered behind the curtain saw God and died on the spot.

Only once a year, only after sprinkling the blood of a bull a ram and a goat, only after filling the HoH with incense, only the high priest could enter, only briefly, to offer sacrifice for the people.

Note that there were cherubim embroidered into the curtain. The cherubim are those who guard the holiness of God (Revelation 4:6-8, Genesis 3:24

Ezekiel 10:9-19)

7. Inside the Holy of Holies. The ark, the cherubim and the mercy seat. God dwelt *literally* on the Mercy Seat between the cherubim. The two cherubim sit above the mercy seat, protecting God’s glory. Below them is the mercy seat, which is between the presence of God and the Law, which is below the mercy seat. This represents the grace of God, which sees the blood rather than the Law.

For the Jews, the items in the Holy of Holies was a mystery, something they could never even hope to see. We get to see all these items every day!!!

Cherubim = protecting God’s holiness.

Mercy seat = grace of God. Where the blood was splattered.

Note: When Jesus died, the curtain was torn in two. God abandoned Herod’s temple forever. For us, Hebrews 10:19-22 now applies.

Application: God comes and dwells in us as a temple.

New Testament: Individually we are the temple of the Lord. 1Cor 3:16 Don’t you know that you are God’s temple and that the Spirit of God lives in you.

Collectively we are the temple of the Lord (Eph 2:21-22) The whole building is being fitted together in Him and is growing into a holy sactuary/temple in the Lord, in whom you are being built together for God’s dwelling in the Spirit.

Summary Rev 21:3 In heaven we tabernacle with God forever.

Exodus 40:34-38 The glory of the Lord filled the Tabernacle.

God is dwelling with his people.

1 Kings 8:10-12 The glory of the Lord filled Solomon’s Temple.

Tabernacle in desert pillar of fire, smoke, with 12 tribes camped around it.

Summary:

The tabernacle tells us two things:

1. It tells us that God’s desire is to dwell (tabernacle) with his people, both individually and, more importantly, as a people.

2. It tells us that, outside of Christ, our access to God is extremely limited, but in Christ we have full, unfettered access.

That’s why Christ came!

Remember:

John 1:14 God came and “tabernacled” among us. 1:18 We beheld his glory, the glory of the one and only Son.