

**Exodus 24-30**  
**November 23, 2014**

**Open with Prayer**

**HOOK:**

I've always known that worship is an integral part of being a Christ-follower. I know He expects us to have a heart after His own heart. I know that I have an opportunity to develop more intimacy with my Father in heaven 24/7. However, when I evaluate my own walk with the Lord, I found myself asking, "Do I take worship for granted? Is my prayer life stuck in a rut? Am I really focused on offering sacrifices of praise?"

If God decided to evaluate the content of all the prayers I've submitted to Him, I feel certain He would discover that the greatest percentage of content will fall in the category of petitions. The next highest percentage would fall into intercessory prayer for others and their needs, but the smallest percentage would be sacrifices of praise and celebrating who God is and what He's done for me.

**Background:** God told His children in Ex 19 that they were His "treasured possession, a royal priesthood, and a holy nation." In chapters 20-23, He describes through the Ten Commandments what that looks like on a macro level in Chp 20, and then he expands on the Ten Commandments by providing the Book of the Covenant describing more of the micro levels of these commandments. He was preparing them on how to conduct themselves as a community of "priests" on the day to day level.

**Transition:** But God is not done yet. Because He knows His children will be led to the Promised Land (for the next 40 yrs), He wanted to provide a mobile sanctuary, a place of worship for His children. God called it the Tabernacle. [Go to DEB and describe scale – approx. half of a football field and certain articles that were required to be in the tabernacle.] Each article in the tabernacle has great significance to us today. Because we are His children who are a part of His royal priesthood, I am especially asking you to pretend you are Aaron, a high priest. I want to take you on a journey of what he would see once he entered the tabernacle and appreciate what these articles or furniture pieces represented.

In this journey, it is ultimately my goal to help you rediscover two things:

1. The structure of the Tabernacle can inform us of the structure of our prayer life to help us reallocate our content so that it's top heavy with praise and adoration.
2. *All of us are priests who should be offering sacrifices of praise daily. This happens in the Holy of Holies at the altar if incense.* So as we travel through the tabernacle as if we're Aaron, I invite you absorb the BENEFITS of each article and how those benefits are still yours to this day as one of His priests. And hopefully, it radically changes our prayer life to focus on deepening our relationship with Him through praise. Let's begin.

**BOOK (NIV 1984): [Read Chapter 24]**

Observations/Process Qs-

V.1:

- Then he said to Moses, “Come up to the LORD, you and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel. You are to worship at a distance,

V.2:

- but Moses alone is to approach the LORD; the others must not come near. And the people may not come up with him.”

V.3:

- When Moses went and told the people all the LORD’s words and laws, they responded with one voice, “Everything the LORD has said we will do.”

V.4:

- Moses then wrote down everything the LORD had said.
- He got up early the next morning and built an altar at the foot of the mountain and set up twelve stone pillars representing the twelve tribes of Israel.

V.5:

- Then he sent young Israelite men, and they offered burnt offerings and sacrificed young bulls as fellowship offerings to the LORD.

V.6:

- Moses took half of the blood and put it in bowls, and the other half he sprinkled on the altar.

V.7:

- Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read it to the people. They responded, “We will do everything the LORD has said; we will obey.”

V.8:

- Moses then took the blood, sprinkled it on the people and said, “This is the blood of the covenant that the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words.”

V.9:

- Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and the seventy elders of Israel went up

V.10:

- and saw the God of Israel. Under his feet was something like a pavement made of sapphire, clear as the sky itself.

V.11:

- But God did not raise his hand against these leaders of the Israelites; they saw God, and they ate and drank.

V.12:

- The LORD said to Moses, “Come up to me on the mountain and stay here, and I will give you the tablets of stone, with the law and commands I have written for their instruction.”

V.13:

- Then Moses set out with Joshua his aide, and Moses went up on the mountain of God.

V.14:

- He said to the elders, “Wait here for us until we come back to you. Aaron and Hur are with you, and anyone involved in a dispute can go to them.”

V.15:

- When Moses went up on the mountain, the cloud covered it,

V.16:

- and the glory of the LORD settled on Mount Sinai. For six days the cloud covered the mountain, and on the seventh day the LORD called to Moses from within the cloud.

V.17:

- To the Israelites the glory of the LORD looked like a consuming fire on top of the mountain.

V.18:

- Then Moses entered the cloud as he went on up the mountain. And he stayed on the mountain forty days and forty nights.

## Summarize 24

### Chp 25

V.1:

- The Lord said to Moses,

V.2:

- “Tell the Israelites to bring me an offering. You are to receive the offering for me from each man whose heart prompts him to give.

V.3:

- These are the offerings you are to receive from them: gold, silver and bronze;

V.4:

- blue, purple and scarlet yarn and fine linen; goat hair;

V.5:

- ram skins dyed red and hides of sea cows; acacia wood;

V.6:

- olive oil for the light; spices for the anointing oil and for the fragrant incense;

V.7:

- and onyx stones and other gems to be mounted on the ephod and breastpiece.

V.8:

- “Then have them make a sanctuary for me, and I will dwell among them.

V.9:

- Make this tabernacle and all its furnishings exactly like the pattern I will show you.

### The Furniture/Articles of the Tabernacle (See DEB for design and pieces):

**Wiersbe, W. W. (1993). *Wiersbe’s Expository Outlines on the Old Testament (Ex 27-30:33)*. Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.**

#### **I. Offerings for the Sanctuary (25:1–9)**

God gave Moses the pattern for the tabernacle (v. 9), but He asked the people to contribute the materials needed for its construction (vv. 1–9). This was a one-time offering that had to come from willing hearts (see 35:4–29). Fourteen different kinds of material are listed here, from precious stones and gold to various colors of yarn. Paul later used the image of “gold, silver, and precious stones” when he wrote about the building of the local church (1 Cor. 3:10ff.). It is important to note that the various pieces of furniture were constructed so that they could be carried; for the tabernacle emphasizes that we are a pilgrim people. The design was changed for

Solomon's temple, for the temple illustrates the people of God permanently dwelling in God's glorious kingdom. Without going into tedious detail, we will consider the various pieces of furniture of the tabernacle and the spiritual lessons that they convey.

## **II. The Ark of the Covenant (25:10–22)**

God began with the ark because it was the most important piece of furniture in the tent proper. It was the throne of God where His glory rested (v. 22; Pss. 80:1 and 99:1). It speaks of our Lord Jesus Christ in His humanity (wood) and deity (gold).

Within the ark were three special items: the tables of the Law (v. 16), Aaron's rod that budded (Num. 16–17), and a pot of manna (Ex. 16:32–34). It is interesting that each of these three items is connected with rebellion on the part of God's people: the tables of Law with the making of the golden calf; Aaron's rod with the rebellion led by Korah; and the manna with Israel's complaining in the wilderness.

These three items within the ark could have brought judgment to Israel were it not for the mercy seat upon the ark, the place where the blood was sprinkled each annual Day of Atonement (Lev. 16:14). The shed blood covered the sins of the people so that God saw the blood and not their rebellion. The phrase "mercy seat" also means "propitiation," and Jesus Christ is the propitiation (mercy seat) for us today (Rom. 3:25; 1 John 2:2). We come to God through Him and offer our spiritual sacrifices (1 Peter 2:5, 9).

The phrase "under His wings" sometimes refers to the wings of the cherubim rather than the wings of the mother hen. To be "under His wings" means to dwell in the holy of holies in close communion with God. See Pss. 36:7–8 and 61:4.

## **III. The Table of Showbread (25:23–30)**

The twelve tribes of Israel were represented in the tabernacle in three ways: by their names on the two engraved stones on the high priest's shoulders (Ex. 28:6–14); by their names on the twelve stones on the high priest's breastplate (28:15–25), and by the twelve loaves of bread on the table in the holy place. These loaves were a reminder that the tribes were constantly in the presence of God and that God saw all that they did (see Lev. 24:5–9).

The bread was a reminder too that God fed His people ("give us this day our daily bread"), that His people were to "feed on" God's truth (Matt. 4:4), and that Israel was to "feed" the Gentiles and witness to them. God called Israel to be a blessing to the Gentiles, just as bread is food for humanity; but the people of Israel did not always fulfill their calling.

The loaves were changed each week and only the priests were allowed to eat this holy bread. See Lev. 22. David was allowed to eat the bread because he was God's anointed king, and the bread was no longer on the table. God is more concerned with meeting human needs than protecting sacred rituals (Matt. 12:3–4).

## **IV. The Golden Lampstand (25:31–40)**

The word "candlestick" is misleading, for this was a lampstand whose light was fed with oil (see Lev. 24:2–4; Zech. 4). Local churches are represented by individual golden lampstands (Rev. 1:12–20), giving God's light to the dark world. The lampstand in the holy place speaks of Jesus Christ, the light of the world (John 8:12). The oil for the lamps reminds us of the Holy Spirit, who has anointed us (1 John 2:20). Some students see the golden lampstand as a picture of the

Word of God that gives us light as we walk in this world (Ps. 119:105). Israel was to be a light to the Gentiles (Isa. 42:6; 49:6) but failed in their mission. Today, each believer is God's light (Matt. 5:14–16), and each local church is to shine in this dark world (Phil. 2:12–16).

## **EXODUS 26–27**

### **I. The Curtains and Coverings (26:1–14)**

Within the tabernacle, seen only by the ministering priests, were colorful curtains of linen, hung upon the wooden framework. God built beauty into the walls and ceiling of the tabernacle, not only with the colors used but also with the images of the cherubim on the curtains. The commandment against making graven images did not prohibit the people from engaging in artistic work and making beautiful things, for they did not intend to worship these things they made for God's glory.

Keep in mind that the tabernacle proper was a tent located within a courtyard, with the various coverings placed over a wooden framework. There were four different coverings, the inner two of woven fabric and the outer two of animal skins. The innermost covering was of beautifully-colored linen, covered by fabric of woven goat's hair. Then came two protective coverings for the tent—ram's hide dyed red and leather-like badger's skins. These materials were in common use among the nomadic peoples of that day.

### **II. The Framework (26:15–30)**

The combination of wood and its gold covering suggests the humanity and deity of our Lord Jesus Christ. There were many parts to the tabernacle, but it was considered one structure. And what set it apart as truly special was that the glory of God dwelt there.

The silver sockets were necessary to hold the structure level and secure on the desert ground. The silver for these sockets came from the "redemption price" given by each male who was twenty years old or older (Ex. 30:11–16). The tabernacle boards rested on silver sockets, and the curtains hung from silver hooks. The basis for our worship today is the redemption that we have in Christ.

### **III. The Veils (26:31–37)**

The inner veil hung between the holy place and the holy of holies and was passed only once a year by the high priest on the Day of Atonement (Lev. 16). Hebrews 10:19–20 teaches that this veil represents our Lord Jesus Christ's body which was given for us on the cross. When He offered up His spirit, the veil in the temple was torn from top to bottom, thus allowing anyone to come at any time into God's presence (Matt. 27:50–51).

The outer veil hung across the five pillars that formed the entrance to the tent of meeting, and it was visible to those who came to the brazen altar with their sacrifices. However, this veil prevented anyone on the outside from looking into the holy place.

### **IV. The Bronze Altar (27:1–8)**

There were two altars associated with the tabernacle—a bronze altar for sacrifices, and a golden altar for the burning of incense (Ex. 30:1–10). The bronze altar stood in the courtyard of the tabernacle, just inside the entrance of the court. There was one entrance and one altar, just as there is only one way of salvation for lost sinners (Acts 4:12).

God lit the fire on the altar when the tabernacle was dedicated, and it was the responsibility of the priests to keep the fire burning (Lev. 6:9–13). Pans and shovels were available for cleaning out the ashes, basins for handling the blood, and fleshhooks for taking the priests' share of the offerings. This altar speaks of the sacrificial death of our Lord on the cross. He is pictured in all the sacrifices God commanded Israel to bring (Lev. 1–5; Heb. 10:1–14). He went through the fire of judgment for us and gave Himself as the sacrifice for our sins.

## **V. The Court of the Tabernacle (27:9–19)**

Surrounding the tent of meeting was a linen fence with a beautiful woven “gate,” opening to the place where the brazen altar stood. Looking at the total picture, we see that there were three parts to the tabernacle: the outer court that everybody could see; the holy place, containing the table, the lampstand, and the incense altar; and the holy of holies, containing the ark of the covenant.

This threefold division suggests the tripartite nature of human beings—spirit, soul, and body (1 Thes. 5:23). Just as the holy place and the holy of holies were two parts of one structure, so our soul and spirit comprise our “inner person” (2 Cor. 4:16). Moses could take down the fence of the outer court, and it would not affect the tent. So with our own death, the body may turn to dust, but the soul and spirit go to be with God and are not affected by the change (2 Cor. 5:1–8; James 2:26).

## **VI. Oil for the Lampstand (27:20–21)**

Zechariah 4:1–6 indicates that oil for the lampstand is a type of the Holy Spirit of God. One of the ministries of the Spirit is to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ, just as the light shone on the beautiful golden lampstand (John 16:14). As the priests ministered in the holy place, they walked in the light that God provided (1 John 1:5–10). The lamp was to “burn always” (27:20; Lev. 24:2). It would appear that only the high priest was permitted to dress the wicks and replenish the oil supply. When the high priest burned the incense each morning and evening, he also tended to the lamps (Ex. 30:7–8).

# **EXODUS 28**

This chapter focuses on the clothing of the priests, while chapter 29 deals primarily with the consecration of the priests. As you study these two chapters, keep in mind that all of God's people are priests (1 Peter 2:5, 9); therefore, the Aaronic priesthood can teach us much about the privileges and obligations we have as God's priests. (Our Lord's priesthood comes from the order of Melchizedek and not the order of Aaron. See Heb. 7–8.) Note that the priests ministered first of all to the Lord, even though they also ministered to the Lord's people. The priests represented the people before God and ministered at the altar, but their first obligation was to serve the Lord (vv. 1, 3, 4, 41). If we would serve the people rightly, we must serve the Lord acceptably. The innermost garment of the priests was a pair of linen breeches (v. 42), which was covered with a fine linen coat (vv. 39–41). Over these the high priest wore the blue robe of the

ephod (vv. 31–35), and over that the ephod itself and the holy breastplate (vv. 6–30). The high priest also wore a linen turban (mitre) with a golden plate on it that read “holiness to the Lord” (vv. 36–38).

### **I. The Ephod (28:6–14)**

“Ephod” is a transliteration of the Hebrew word that describes a particular garment—a sleeveless coat made of the same material and colors as the hangings in the tabernacle. It was held together at the shoulders by special clasps, and on each clasp was an onyx stone engraved with the names of six of the tribes of Israel. The high priest carried his people on his shoulders as he served the Lord. The high priest wore a beautiful girdle around the ephod as a reminder that he was a servant.

### **II. The Breastplate (28:15–30)**

This was a beautiful cloth “pouch” that had twelve precious stones on the outside and the Urim and Thummim in the pocket. It hung over the high priest’s heart, held by golden chains and blue lace. The high priest carried the twelve tribes not only on his shoulders, but also over his heart. Jesus Christ, our high priest in heaven, has His people on His heart and His shoulders as He intercedes for us and equips us to minister in this world.

The names of the tribes on the two shoulder stones were positioned according to their birth order (v. 10), while the order on the breastplate was according to the tribal order established by the Lord (Num. 10). God sees His people as precious jewels—each one is different, but each one is beautiful. *Urim* and *Thummim* mean “lights and perfection” in Hebrew. It is generally thought that these were stones that were used to determine God’s will for His people (Num. 27:21; 1 Sam. 30:7–8). In the East, it was common to use white and black stones in making decisions. If the person drew a white stone out of the bag, it meant “Yes,” while the black stone meant “No.” It is unwise to be dogmatic about this interpretation because we do not have enough information to guide us. Suffice it to say that God provided His Old Covenant people with a way to determine His will, and He has given us today His Word and His Holy Spirit to direct us.

### **III. The Robe of the Ephod (28:31–35)**

This was a seamless blue garment with a hole for the head and golden bells and fabric pomegranates decorating the hem. The fabric pomegranates kept the bells from hitting each other. As the high priest ministered in the holy place, the bells would jingle and let the outsiders know that their holy representative was still serving them and the Lord. The bells suggest joyfulness as we serve the Lord, and the pomegranates suggest fruitfulness.

Note that the high priest laid aside these glorious robes when he ministered on the annual Day of Atonement (Lev. 16:4). On that day, he wore the simple linen garments of the priest or Levite, a picture of Christ’s humiliation (Phil. 2:1–11).

### **IV. The Holy Crown (28:36–39)**

The turban (mitre) was a simple white linen cap, perhaps not unlike the cap worn by a modern chef, only not as high. On the turban, held by a lace of blue, was a golden plate that said “holiness to the Lord.” It was called “a holy crown” (29:6; 39:30; Lev. 8:9) and emphasized the

fact that God wanted His people to be holy (Lev. 11:44; 19:2; 20:7). The nation was accepted before God because of the high priest (v. 38), just as God's people are accepted in Jesus Christ (Eph. 1:6). Because of Jesus Christ, God's people today are a holy priesthood (1 Peter 2:5) and a royal priesthood (1 Peter 2:9).

## **V. The Garments for the Priests (28:40–43)**

Aaron's sons served as priests and had to wear the assigned garments. The fine linen of all the garments reminds us of the righteousness that ought to characterize our walk and our service. If the priests did not wear the proper garments, they were in danger of death. The priests of the heathen cults sometimes conducted their rituals in a lewd manner, but the Lord's priests were to cover their nakedness and practice modesty.

# **EXODUS 29**

The consecration of the priests teaches us much about our own relationship to the Lord.

## **I. The Ceremony (29:1–9)**

Aaron and his sons did not choose the priesthood for themselves but were chosen by God. It was an act of God's grace. No stranger (outsider) was allowed to intrude into the priesthood (Num. 3:10), not even a king (2 Chron. 26:16–23).

The washing speaks of the cleansing we have through faith in Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 6:9–11; Rev. 1:5; Acts 15:9), a once-for-all washing that needed never to be repeated (John 13:1–10). It was necessary for the priests to have daily washing at the laver, which speaks of our daily cleansing as we confess our sins (1 John 1:9).

In Scripture, clothing often symbolizes character and conduct. Our righteousnesses are like filthy rags before God (Isa. 64:6), and we cannot clothe ourselves with good works as Adam and Eve tried to do (Gen. 3:7). When we trust Christ, we are clothed with His righteousness (2 Cor. 5:21; Isa. 61:10). We should put off the "graveclothes" and put on the "grace clothes" (Col. 3:1ff). The distinctive garments of the priests identified them as the holy servants of God, set apart to minister to the Lord. As we noted before, the holy anointing oil is a type of the Spirit of God who alone can empower us for service (30:22–33).

## **II. The Sacrifices (29:10–37)**

According to OT law, there were three agents for cleansing: water, blood, and fire. It was necessary that the priests be cleansed by the sacrificial blood (Lev. 17:11). A bullock was slain as a sin offering each day for the entire week of consecration (v. 36), and the first ram was given as a burnt offering, a picture of total dedication to God. The blood from the second ram was applied to the right ears, thumbs, and great toes of Aaron and his sons, picturing their consecration to hear God's Word, do God's work, and walk in God's way. This second ram became a wave offering and then a burnt offering.

Part of the second ram was kept back for a special meal that only the priests could eat (Lev. 7:28–38). God ordained that certain parts of some sacrifices belonged to the priests as payment for their ministry to the people.



### **III. The Continual Burnt Offering (29:38–46)**

Now the Lord began to describe the ministerial duties of the priests, beginning with the burnt offerings that were to be offered morning and evening each day. The first responsibility of the priests each morning was to remove the old ashes from the altar, get the fire burning, and then offer a lamb to the Lord, a symbol of total devotion to God. See Lev. 6:8–13. This is a beautiful picture of what our morning “devotional time” ought to be like. “Stir up the gift of God” (2 Tim. 1:6) literally means “fan into full flame.” How easy it is for the fire to get low on the altar of our hearts (Rev. 2:4) so that we become lukewarm (Rev. 3:16) and even cold (Matt. 24:12). The tabernacle was sanctified (set apart) by God’s glory (v. 43) when the glory of God moved into the holy of holies (Ex. 40:34). Israel was the only nation to have “the glory” (Rom. 9:4). God’s Spirit lives within us and therefore we should be a separated people who bring glory to God (2 Cor. 6:14–7:1).

## **EXODUS 30**

God wanted His people to be “a kingdom of priests” (19:6). Today, all of God’s people are a priesthood (1 Peter 2:5, 9; Rev. 1:6), but in OT days, the nation of Israel had a priesthood that represented them before God. What the priests were, the whole nation should have been. What kind of people make up “a kingdom of priests”?

### **I. A Praying People (30:1–10, 34–38)**

As we have noted, there were two altars involved in the tabernacle services—a bronze altar for the blood sacrifices and a golden altar for the incense. The gold covering the wood speaks of the deity and humanity of the Savior and reminds us that we can pray to the Father only because of the intercessory work of His Son. We bring our requests in the name of Jesus Christ (John 14:12–15).

The burning of the incense pictures the offering up of our prayers (Ps. 141:2; Luke 1:10; Rev. 5:8). The fire that consumes the incense reminds us of the Holy Spirit, for without His aid we cannot truly pray (Rom. 8:26–27; Jude 20). The golden altar stood before the veil, outside the holy of holies, but we are privileged to come boldly into God’s presence and bring our requests to Him (Heb. 4:14–16; 10:19–22). The high priest burned the incense each morning and evening, a reminder that we should open and close the day with prayer and during the day “pray without ceasing” (1 Thes. 5:17). The priest carried the fragrance of the incense with him all the day.

The special composition of the incense is given in vv. 34–38, and this formula was not to be used for common purposes. Likewise, prayer is special, and God dictates what the requirements are for effective praying. “Strange incense” (v. 9) and “strange fire” (Lev. 10:1) were not to be used on God’s altar. No matter how fervent a prayer might be, if it is not according to God’s will, it will not be answered.

### **II. A Grateful People (30:11–16)**

The annual Passover celebration would remind the people that the nation had been redeemed from bondage, and this annual “census tax” would be another reminder of their redemption (see 1 Peter 1:18–19). The silver was originally used for the sockets and hooks for the tabernacle

(38:25–28); in later years, it helped to pay for the upkeep of the house of God (Matt. 17:24–27). When David impetuously took a census without receiving the “redemption money,” God sent a plague to the nation (1 Chron. 21:1–17). It is dangerous to use “religious statistics” for the praise of man and not for the glory of God. We should be grateful to God for the redemption we have in Christ, and we should be willing to give to Him for His glory.

### **III.A Cleansed People (30:17–21)**

This bronze basin stood between the bronze altar and the tent, and the water in it provided ceremonial cleansing for the hands and feet of the priests. With no floor in the tabernacle, their feet would get dirty. In addition, the handling of the sacrifices would defile their hands. It is possible to be defiled even while serving the Lord. The laver was made out of brass mirrors (38:8). Since the mirror is a picture of the Word of God (James 1:23–25), the laver illustrates the cleansing power of God’s Word (John 15:3; Eph. 5:25–27; Ps. 119:9). When we trust Jesus Christ, we are “washed all over” once and for all, but it is necessary to confess our sins and “wash our hands and feet” if we want to enjoy fellowship with the Lord (John 13:1–11; 1 John 1:9).

### **IV. An Anointed People (30:22–33)**

Like the incense for the golden altar, the anointing oil for the priests was to be a special commodity, not to be duplicated or desecrated by common use. It could only be poured on the priests; the common people could not use this special ointment. How wonderful that all of God’s people today have been anointed by the Spirit (1 John 2:20, 27; 2 Cor. 1:21).

#### **LOOK:**

What’s amazing to me is that the Tabernacle illustrates the GOSPEL message. When Jesus died on the cross and his substitutionary sacrifice was completed, he said, “It is finished.” At that moment, the veil was torn supernaturally so that anyone who placed their faith in Jesus would become His priest. Once you became His priest, He allowed us to have direct access to Him inside the Holy of Holies.

The New Testament picture of this is beautiful. You and I became the “temple” of the Holy Spirit:

- I Cor 3: 16-17 “Don’t you know that you yourselves are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit lives in you? If anyone destroys God’s temple, God will destroy him; for God’s temple is sacred, and you ARE that temple.”
- I Cor 6:19 “Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own
- 2 Cor 6:14-18 (v.16b) “For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: ‘I will live among them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people.’”

You and I have an awesome privilege as a “priest” to *live INSIDE the veil* daily. We need to ask ourselves if our temple is free of idols. Is it free of distractions? Is our temple filled with incense to burn so that we can offer sacrifices of praise, an aroma that is pleasing to Him?

I am also challenging us to evaluate the content of our prayers and reallocate the percentages between petitions, intercessory prayer, and praise and thanksgiving, such that the highest percentage of our content goes to praise and thanksgiving. Giving God praise, glory, honor, adoration and thanksgiving is the only thing we have to offer Him that doesn't come from Him. Praise is His love language, so let's not withhold it from Him. Let's pray.

**Close in Prayer**

### **Commentaries for Today's Lesson:**

**Wiersbe, W. W. (1993). *Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the Old Testament (Ex 24-25:9)*. Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.**

Moses is about to receive from God the divine pattern for the tabernacle and the priesthood. Whenever God calls us to do a work, He gives us the plans and expects us to follow His will. Ministry is not accomplished by our trying to invent ways to serve God, but by seeking His will and obeying it (Isa. 8:20).

#### **I. Confirming the Covenant (24:1–8)**

Before Moses and the leaders of the nation could ascend the mountain to meet with God, the people had to enter into covenant relationship with God. Moses shared the Word of God with the people, and they agreed to obey it. How little they understood their own hearts! They should have said, “With the Lord’s help, we will obey His Law.” Within a few weeks, the nation would be worshipping an idol and violating the very Law they agreed to obey.

The covenant was confirmed with sacrifices and the sprinkling of the blood on the Book of the Law and on the people who agreed to obey it. The twelve stones of the altar represented the twelve tribes of Israel, indicating that each tribe was committed to obey the voice of God. The blood on the altar spoke of God’s gracious forgiveness of sin, while the blood sprinkled on the people committed them to a life of obedience. Believers today have been sprinkled by the blood of Christ in a spiritual sense and are committed to obey His will (1 Peter 1:2).

#### **II. Seeing the Lord (24:9–18)**

Seventy-five men went up the mountain: Moses, Joshua, Aaron and his two sons Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of the people. They beheld the glory of God on the mountain and ate and drank in His presence. You would think v. 11 would read, “They saw God and did fall on their faces in fear.” But it says that they saw God and “did eat and drink.” Because of the blood on the altar, they were able to have fellowship with God and with one another. We should eat and drink to the glory of God (1 Cor. 10:31) and live each day in the presence of God, even though we cannot be on the mountain.

God called Moses to go up higher so that He might give him instructions for building the tabernacle and establishing the priestly ministry. He left Aaron and Hur with the elders and took Joshua with him into the cloud of glory. First mentioned in Ex. 17:9, Joshua eventually became Moses’ successor. We do not know who Hur was, but he, with Aaron, assisted Moses in praying for the success of Joshua in the battle against the Amalekites (Ex. 17:8–16). Aaron must have gone down from the mount, because we find him in chapter 32 helping the people make the golden calf. When we abandon our place of ministry, we not only sin ourselves, but we may lead others into sin. See John 21.

In OT days, God often revealed His glory in a cloud (19:9, 16). He led the nation with a pillar of cloud and fire (Ex. 13:21–22). “God is a consuming fire” (Deut. 4:24; Heb. 12:29). Moses did not dare approach God until God summoned him, but when God called, Moses obeyed.

It is possible to believe in God and be a part of His covenant and yet not be close to God. The nation was at the base of the mountain; the seventy elders with Aaron, Hur, Nadab, and Abihu were farther up the mountain; Moses went higher with his assistant Joshua; and then Moses left

Joshua behind as he entered the cloud into the presence of the Lord. Under Law, God determined how near people could be to Him. But under grace, we are the ones who determine our nearness to God. God invites us to fellowship with Him. The elders worshiped God “afar off” (v. 1), but we today are invited to “draw near” (Heb. 10:22; James 4:8). What a privilege it is to fellowship with God, and what a tragedy it is that we too often fail to spend time in His presence.

Nadab and Abihu were given the gracious privilege of seeing the glory of God, and yet later they presumptuously disobeyed God and were slain (Lev. 10:1–5). It is possible to come near to God and still go away and sin. How important it is that our personal worship of the Lord result in a clean heart and a right spirit (Ps. 51:10), for great privileges bring with them even greater responsibilities.

## EXODUS 25

In the Book of Genesis, it is recorded that God walked with His people (Gen. 3:8; 5:22, 24; 6:9; 17:1). But in Exodus, God said that He wanted to dwell with His people (Ex. 25:8; 29:46). The tabernacle built by Moses is the first of several dwellings that God blessed with His glorious presence (Ex. 40:34–38). However, when Israel sinned, the glory departed (1 Sam. 4:21–22). The second dwelling place is the temple of Solomon (1 Kings 8:10–11). The prophet Ezekiel saw that glory depart (Ezek. 8:4; 9:3; 10:4, 18; 11:23). The glory of God returned to earth in the Person of His Son, Jesus Christ (John 1:14, where “dwelt” means “tabernacled”), and men nailed Him to a cross. God’s people today are the temple of God, universally (Eph. 2:20–22), locally (1 Cor. 3:16), and individually (1 Cor. 6:19–20). Ezekiel 40–46 promises a kingdom temple where God’s glory will dwell (Ezek. 43:1–5). We also see that the heavenly home will be a place where God’s presence is eternally with His people (Rev. 21:22).

### I. Offerings for the Sanctuary (25:1–9)

God gave Moses the pattern for the tabernacle (v. 9), but He asked the people to contribute the materials needed for its construction (vv. 1–9). This was a one-time offering that had to come from willing hearts (see 35:4–29). Fourteen different kinds of material are listed here, from precious stones and gold to various colors of yarn. Paul later used the image of “gold, silver, and precious stones” when he wrote about the building of the local church (1 Cor. 3:10ff.). It is important to note that the various pieces of furniture were constructed so that they could be carried; for the tabernacle emphasizes that we are a pilgrim people. The design was changed for Solomon’s temple, for the temple illustrates the people of God permanently dwelling in God’s glorious kingdom. Without going into tedious detail, we will consider the various pieces of furniture of the tabernacle and the spiritual lessons that they convey.

**Toussaint, S. D. (1985). Acts. (J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck, Eds.) The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures. (Vol. 1, pp. 145–148). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.**

*r. The confirmation of the covenant (24:1–11)*

The covenant stipulations—including the Decalogue and the ordinances—whereby the people of Israel were to be regulated as the people of the true God had been given. It now remained for the people to ratify the pact.

24:1–4a. God summoned **Moses** before Him with **Aaron**, Aaron’s two eldest sons **Nadab and Abihu** (cf. Lev. 10), **and 70 of the elders** (leaders) of the people, though the men, all 73 of them, except for **Moses** were to keep their **distance** (cf. Ex. 19:12–13, 24) from **the LORD** out of respect for His majesty and holiness. Moses went to the top of the mountain, the 73 other leaders were on the mountain but not at the top, and the people were below at the foot of the mountain.

God was now ready to confirm the Mosaic Covenant with His people. **Moses** rehearsed before **the people all the LORD’s words and laws** (20:22–23:33), called “the Book of the Covenant” (24:7). After hearing these laws the people heartily submitted themselves to obey them (cf. 19:8) and **Moses ... wrote down** God’s commands.

24:4b–8. Then Moses prepared the people for the ratifying of the Law. First Moses made **an altar at the foot of** Mount Sinai and erected **12 stone pillars** to represent Israel’s **12 tribes**. Since the Levitical priesthood had not yet been organized, **young Israelite men** (perhaps the dedicated firstborn, 13:1–16), and **Moses** served as priests and **offered burnt offerings and ... fellowship offerings to the LORD**. In the ratification ceremony **Moses sprinkled blood ... on the altar** (24:6) and on the people (v. 8) who had heard Moses read **the Book of the Covenant** and had promised once again to **obey** it (v. 7; cf. v. 3). This is the only time in the Old Testament when *people* were sprinkled with blood. Possibly the people were sprinkled in the sense that the stones which represented them (v. 4) were sprinkled. (On the relationship of obedience and sprinkling of blood see comments on 1 Peter 1:2.) The sprinkled blood, then, symbolized the legal transaction between God (represented by the altar, Ex. 24:6) and the people (represented by the stones). Israel was thus ceremonially set apart through blood (**the blood of the covenant**) as the people of the true God. Later the New Covenant, established by Jesus, was also ratified by blood, His own (Luke 22:20; 1 Cor. 11:25–26).

24:9–11. **Moses ... Aaron**, Aaron’s two eldest sons, **and the 70 elders ... went up** the mountain to confirm and ratify the covenant before God. Since no one can see God and live (see comments on 33:11, 20; John 1:18), they probably **saw the God of Israel** in the sense that they had a vision of Him in which they discerned who He is. Apparently the sight was so grand and awesome that their eyes saw only below **His feet**. The splendor of God looked like **sapphire** (cf. the throne of sapphire in Ezek. 1:26). Then they **ate** a meal before Him. It was common to symbolize the ratifying of a covenant with a meal (cf. Gen. 26:30; 31:54; Luke 22:15–20).

#### 4. THE CEREMONIAL REGULATIONS (24:12–31:18)

The Mosaic Covenant had been confirmed (24:1–11) and Israel was then a theocracy, a government or commonwealth under God. Having been redeemed from bondage by God and now in a covenant under His laws, God’s people were then enlightened as to the proper way to worship Him. So Moses was called into God’s presence to receive the Decalogue in stone along with other commands (24:12) and he returned 40 days later (31:18; 34:28). In that period of time God communicated to Moses the form of Israel’s worship. The tabernacle was to become the focus of Israel’s worship of God. This lengthy section (24:12–31:18) deals with ordinances pertaining to the sanctuary and priestly ministry—ceremonial laws that undergirded the covenant.

a. *The context of the disclosure of the ceremonial law (24:12–18)*

24:12–18. **Moses** was summoned before God **on the mountain** to receive **the tablets of stone, with the Law** (the Decalogue, 20:2–17; cf. 34:28) **and commands** related to Israel's worship. God had given Moses the Decalogue earlier but now it was inscribed in stone.

The leadership of the people was temporarily delegated to **Aaron and Hur** (cf. 17:10, 12) while **Moses ... with Joshua** proceeded up Sinai, **the mountain of God** (cf. 3:1; 4:27; 18:5). Joshua, first mentioned in 17:9, became increasingly more prominent (cf. 33:11). Perhaps Joshua went up the mountain only partway.

A **cloud**, representing God's glory (cf. 19:16), heralded the approach of God to meet Moses. God's **glory.... covered the mountain** and there after **six days** God communed with **Moses from within the cloud. To the people below, God's glory ... looked like a consuming fire** (cf. 19:18). While there **40 days** Moses ate and drank nothing (cf. Deut. 9:9).

b. *The instructions for the tabernacle (chaps. 25–27)*

The tabernacle was important to Israel's national life; it symbolized God's dwelling among His people (25:8; 29:45) and was the place where He would meet with the leaders (29:42) and the people (29:43). God's glory was manifest in the tabernacle (40:35). Also it was the newly established theocracy's visible center for the worship of God. The tabernacle prefigured Christ, who is said to have "tabernacled" (John 1:14) or dwelt among His people.

The tabernacle (Ex. 25:9) was referred to by several names: sanctuary, meaning a sacred place (25:8); tent (26:7, 11–14, 36), because of its tentlike structure; Tent of Meeting (27:21), signifying its structure and purpose; and tabernacle of the Testimony (38:21; cf. Acts 7:44) and Tent of the Testimony (Num. 9:15), meaning the place where the two tablets of the Law (the "Testimony"; cf. Ex. 31:18 and see comments on 16:34) were kept (i.e., in the ark, in the most holy place; cf. 25:16, 21). See the sketch "Plan of the Tabernacle." Some Bible scholars think that the tabernacle was V-shaped like a tent with a ridge pole and sloping roof. However, the Scriptures make no mention of a ridge pole. Also the gabled roof would increase the measurement of the roof beyond the width of 15 feet so that the curtains over the roof and sides would not adequately cover the gold-covered boards. Therefore the traditional flat-roofed view of the tabernacle seems preferable.

(1) The gathering of materials.

25:1–9. **The LORD** described to **Moses** the materials to be assembled for building the **tabernacle**. The Israelites were to bring a voluntary **offering ... from each person whose heart prompted him to give**. The metals to be used in the construction were **gold, silver, and bronze**. Gold was listed first probably because it is the most precious. After the three metals four materials are listed: three colors of **yarn** and also linen. **Fine linen** translates *šēš*, from an Egyptian word. "Egypt excelled in the production of linen, especially twined linen, where every thread was twisted from many strands. The Hebrew slaves must have learned many Egyptian arts and crafts ... during their stay in Egypt" (R. Alan Cole, *Exodus: An Introduction and Commentary*, p. 189). Next was **goat hair, ram skins ... and hides of sea cows**. "The sea cow (*dugong dugong*) is a herbivorous mammal native to the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aqaba, and to this day the bedouin make sandals from its skin" (Ronald F. Youngblood, *Exodus*, p. 114; see Ezek. 16:10, where the word "leather" is the same as that for "sea cow" in Ex.).

The **wood** of **acacia** trees, common in the Sinai Peninsula, is good for construction purposes. Other items to be brought included **olive oil ... spices**, and precious **stones**. The gold, silver, and

linen probably came from the Egyptians (cf. 12:35–36). Some of the other materials could have been from spoils in Israel’s defeat of the Amalekites (17:8–16) or through trade with bedouins.

**Cabal, T., Brand, C. O., Clendenen, E. R., Copan, P., Moreland, J. P., & Powell, D. (2007). The Apologetics Study Bible: Real Questions, Straight Answers, Stronger Faith (pp. 125). Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers.**

**24:9–11** If God is invisible (Jn 5:37; 1 Tm 1:17; 6:16), how could Moses and the elders see Him? The Bible states that no one has ever seen God directly (see Ex 33:20; Jn 1:18). Yet the Bible records a number of theophanies, or appearances of the Lord or the exalted Christ (e.g., Gn 12:7; 15:1; Is 6:1; Ezk 8:1–4; Acts 9:3–6; Rv 1:12–15). It is not easy to determine, from the biblical descriptions, whether such events are inward “visions” or outwardly visible events. The fire that Moses saw in a bush (Ex 3:2–4) and the sacred cloud that was filled with the presence of God (13:21) are instances of visible manifestations that were, nevertheless, indirect and obscured by “unapproachable light” (1 Tm 6:16). The theophany described here, which was experienced by the elders of Israel as well as by Moses and the priests, must be of the same order. Alternatively, this incident may refer to an appearance of God’s divine representative, the Angel of the Lord. For further information on the connection between the Angel of the Lord and God, see the note on 3:2.

**25:3** The Hebrew word for *bronze* is translated “brass” by KJV and other versions published prior to the middle of the twentieth century. However, “brass” is inaccurate. Bronze, a mixture of copper and tin, was widely used in the ancient Near East. Brass, a mixture of copper and zinc, was not available in ancient western Asia. Bronze is what Israelites were to give as an offering for the construction of the tabernacle and its furnishings.