

Exodus 30-31

Bible Study

Review

Chapter 28

Instructions concerning the garments of the priests
The garments were made holy by their consecration to God's service

- Ephod, breastplate, robe, tunic, sash and turban

Chapter 29

Instructions concerning the consecration of Aaron and his sons—to serve as priests

- Washed—symbolized the removal of uncleanness
 - Atoned—by a sin offering
- Aaron—anoined with oil: symbolized setting him apart for service to God
 - Aaron's sons—dressed in priestly garb and consecrated
 - Details connected with sacrifices

Exodus 29:44-46

⁴⁴So I will consecrate the tabernacle of meeting and the altar. I will also consecrate both Aaron and his sons to minister to Me as priests.

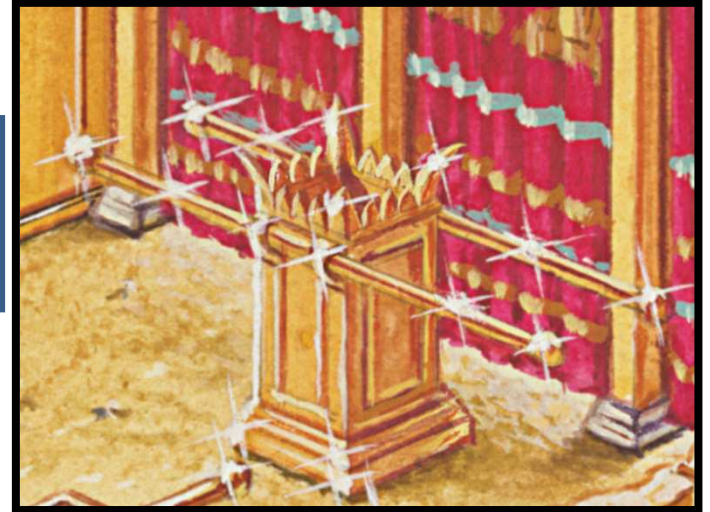
⁴⁵I will dwell among the children of Israel and will be their God.

⁴⁶And they shall know that I *am* the Lord their God, who brought them up out of the land of Egypt, that I may dwell among them. I *am* the Lord their God.

Chapter 30

[v. 1-10] Instructions concerning the altar of incense

¹“You shall make an altar to burn incense on; you shall make it of acacia wood.



(BKC) “Perhaps this piece of tabernacle furniture is described here and not in chapter 25 because of the altar of incense’s association with the rituals to be performed on it”

²A cubit *shall be* its length and a cubit its width—it shall be square—and two cubits *shall be* its height. Its horns *shall be* of one piece with it.

1 ½ foot square and 3 feet high

³And you shall overlay its top, its sides all around, and its horns with pure gold; and you shall make for it a molding of gold all around.

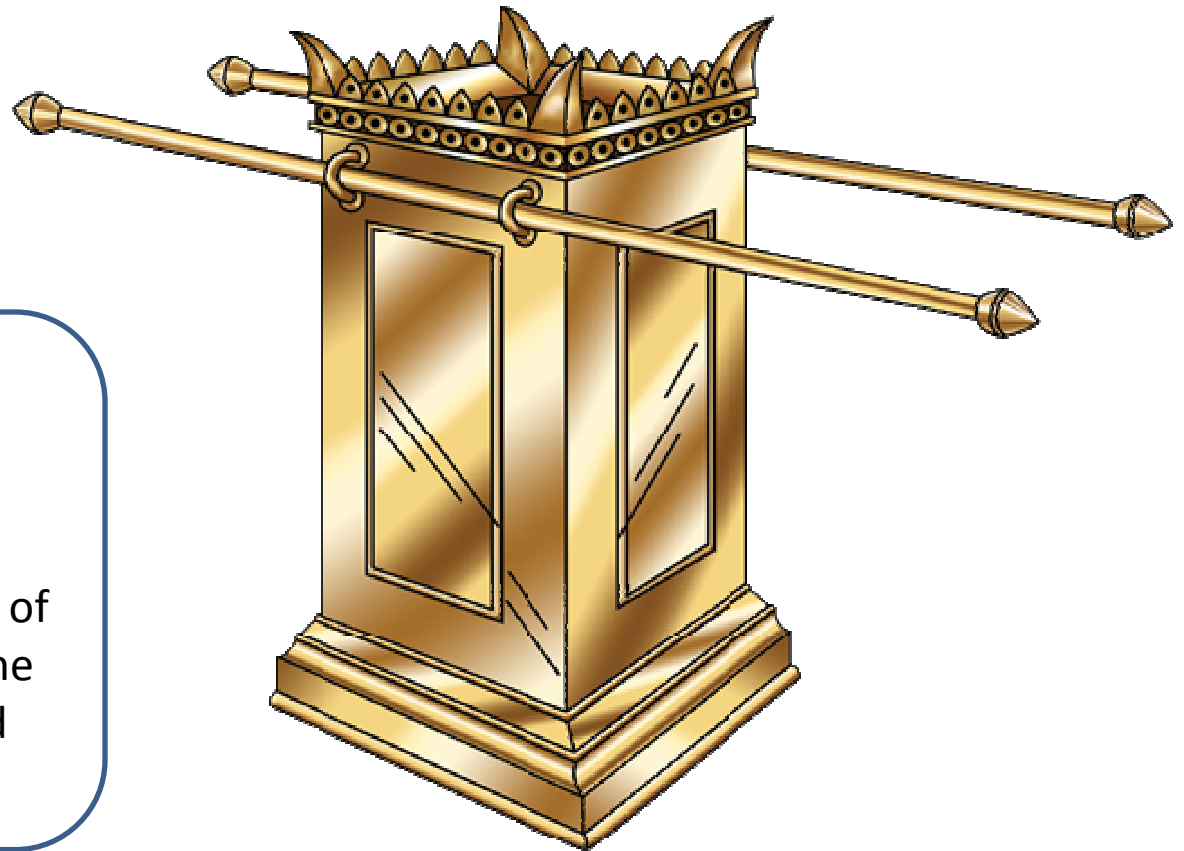
⁴Two gold rings you shall make for it, under the molding on both its sides. You shall place *them* on its two sides, and they will be holders for the poles with which to bear it.

⁵You shall make the poles of acacia wood, and overlay them with gold.

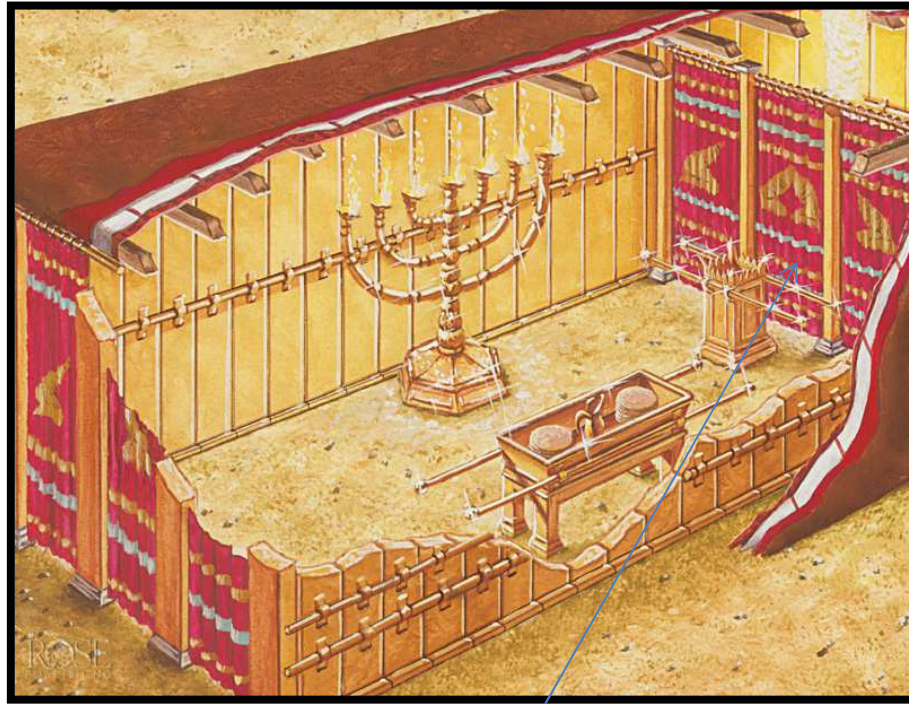
(Jewish Study Bible, Tanakh)
“This altar would stand in the Holy Place and was, accordingly, overlaid with gold”

(BKC) “Like the altar of burnt offering [27:1-2] it had horns.

And like the altar of burnt offering, the table of the bread of the Presence, and the ark of the covenant, it had poles in gold rings, for carrying it”



⁶And you shall put it before the veil that *is* before the ark of the Testimony, before the mercy seat that *is* over the Testimony, where I will meet with you.



v. 6 (BKC) “The altar was placed **in front** of the curtain leading to the most holy place, in which was positioned the ark of the testimony. In Hebrews 9: 3-4 the altar of incense is considered part of the most holy place.

...on the Day of Atonement the high priest took incense from this altar into the most holy place [Lev. 16: 12-13]

⁷“Aaron shall burn on it sweet incense every morning; when he tends the lamps, he shall burn incense on it.

⁸And when Aaron lights the lamps at twilight, he shall burn incense on it, a perpetual incense before the Lord throughout your generations.

The incense represented God’s peoples **prayers** coming to his throne

Psalm 141:2 (first part)

“Let my prayer be set before You as incense...”

Revelation 5:8 (last part)

“...and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints”

⁹You shall not offer **strange incense** on it, or a burnt offering, or a grain offering; nor shall you pour a drink offering on it.

Proverbs 28:9

⁹ One who turns away his ear from hearing the law, Even his prayer *is* an abomination.

¹⁰And Aaron shall make atonement upon its horns once a year with the blood of the sin offering of atonement; once a year he shall make atonement upon it throughout your generations. It *is* most holy to the Lord.”

Once a year the altar would be cleansed using blood from the atoning offering

“once a year”—only on the Day of Atonement was the high priest permitted to enter the room behind the veil

Leviticus 16:16

¹⁶So he shall make atonement for the Holy *Place*, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions, for all their sins; and so he shall do for the tabernacle of meeting which remains among them in the midst of their uncleanness.

[v. 11-16]– Census tax

¹¹Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying:

¹²“When you take the **census** of the children of Israel for their number, then every man shall give a **ransom** for himself to the Lord, when you number them, that there may be no plague among them when *you* number them.

When the census was taken [Numbers 1:2] a tax was paid—considered a ransom because it guaranteed protection from plagues

‘ransom’ (Heb.) *Kopher*= covering, hence atonement (Companion)

¹³This is what everyone among those who are numbered shall give: half a shekel according to the shekel of the sanctuary (a shekel *is* twenty gerahs). The half-shekel *shall be* an offering to the Lord.

(Tanakh) “The Shekel [silver] was the standard weight....the standard shekel weighing 11.4 grams or .4 oz.

➤The standard for the later temple tax

‘gerah’—a measure of weight

¹⁴Everyone included among those who are numbered, from twenty years old and above, shall give an offering to the Lord.

¹⁵The rich shall not give more and the poor shall not give less than half a shekel, when *you* give an offering to the Lord, to make atonement for yourselves.

¹⁶And you shall take the atonement money of the children of Israel, and shall appoint it for the service of the tabernacle of meeting, that it may be a memorial for the children of Israel before the Lord, to make atonement for yourselves.”

An offering of one half-shekel was taken up from those twenty years of age and older for the service and maintenance of the tabernacle

Each person was paying a price for his own life—an acknowledgment that life was from God and God was owed because of it

The same amount was paid by everyone, no matter if rich or poor

[v. 17-21— Bronze laver

¹⁷Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying:

¹⁸“You shall also make a laver of bronze, with its base also of bronze, for washing. You shall put it between the tabernacle of meeting and the altar. And you shall put water in it,

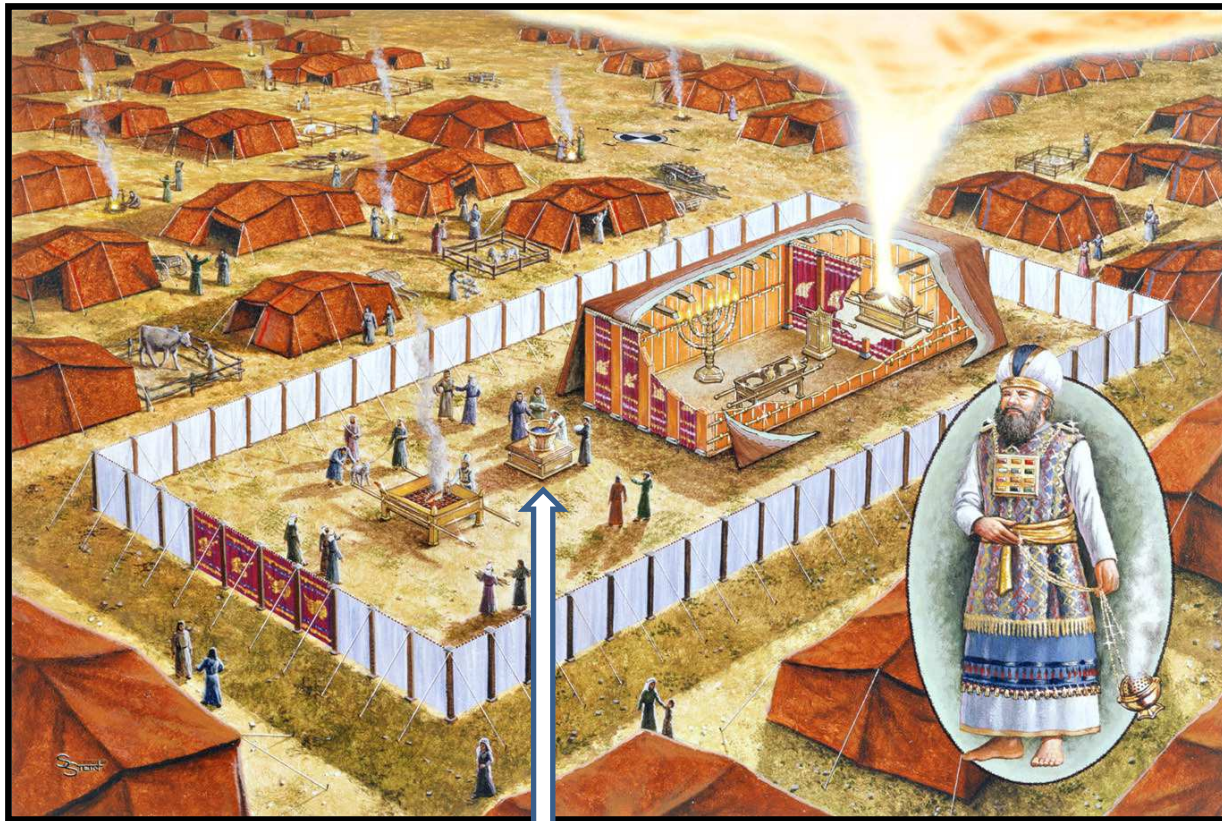
¹⁹for Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet in water from it.



(Tyndale) “The laver was to stand in the great courtyard, before men entered the tent itself. After washing and cleansing, the priest could enter to offer incense in worship. Priests must certainly have needed to wash after sacrifice and blood ritual, so it had practical value as well.”

²⁰When they go into the tabernacle of meeting, or when they come near the altar to minister, to burn an offering made by fire to the Lord, they shall wash with water, lest they die.

²¹So they shall wash their hands and their feet, lest they die. And it shall be a statute forever to them—to him and his descendants throughout their generations.”



The bronze laver was outside of the holy place where Aaron and his sons washed their hands and feet before entering the holy place to officiate

➤ This symbolized the need for purity through cleansing

[v. 22-38]— spices and anointing oils

²²Moreover the Lord spoke to Moses, saying:

²³“Also take for yourself quality spices—five hundred *shekels* of liquid myrrh, half as much sweet-smelling cinnamon (two hundred and fifty *shekels*), two hundred and fifty *shekels* of sweet-smelling cane,

²⁴five hundred *shekels* of cassia, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, and a hin of olive oil.

(Tanakh) ““The formula of the sacred anointing oil is now given...a fragrant compound of olive oil and the finest spices”

(BKC) “Its formula was as unique as the product was holy”

²⁵And you shall make from these a holy anointing oil, an ointment compounded according to the art of the perfumer. It shall be a holy anointing oil.

²⁶With it you shall anoint the tabernacle of meeting and the ark of the Testimony;

(Tanakh) “it is to be used to sanctify the sanctuary and all its furniture...not for everyday hygienic and cosmetic anointing”

²⁷the table and all its utensils, the lamp stand and its utensils, and the altar of incense;

²⁸the altar of burnt offering with all its utensils, and the laver and its base.

²⁹You shall consecrate them, that they may be most holy; whatever touches them must be holy

(BKC) “Because of the sacred nature this special oil was not to be used for any purpose other than those stated”

³⁰And you shall anoint Aaron and his sons, and consecrate them, that *they* may minister to Me as priests.

³¹“And you shall speak to the children of Israel, saying: ‘This shall be a holy anointing oil to Me throughout your generations.

³²It shall not be poured on man’s flesh; nor shall you make *any other* like it, according to its composition. It *is* holy, *and* it shall be holy to you.

³³Whoever compounds *any* like it, or whoever puts *any* of it on an outsider, shall be cut off from his people.”

v. 32-33 (Tanakh) “The sacred anointing oil was not to be duplicated [or sold] nor used by laymen”

The sacred incense:

³⁴And the Lord said to Moses: “Take sweet spices, stacte and onycha and galbanum, and pure frankincense with *these* sweet spices; there shall be equal amounts of each.

³⁵You shall make of these an incense, a compound according to the art of the perfumer, salted, pure, *and* holy.

v.35 “incense”
(Tanakh) “Like the anointing oil, it is sacred to the Lord and may not be duplicated and used for any other purpose”

³⁶And you shall beat *some* of it very fine, and put some of it before the Testimony in the tabernacle of meeting where I will meet with you. It shall be most holy to you.

³⁷But *as for* the incense which you shall make, you shall not make any for yourselves, according to its composition. It shall be to you holy for the Lord.

³⁸Whoever makes *any* like it, to smell it, he shall be cut off from his people.”

v. 38 (Expositors) “Failure to properly consider it would result in excommunication from the nation”

The instructions for the sanctuary have been completed and now details about the organization of construction are given in the next chapter

Chapter 31

The craftsmen are appointed [v. 1-11]

¹Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying:

²“See, I have called by name Bezalel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah.

Bezalel of tribe of Judah and his assistant Oholiab [v. 6] of the tribe of Dan—two master builders are designated to be in charge of executing God’s plans for the construction of all that pertained to the tabernacle and its service

“Bezalel means—‘in the shadow of God’s protection’

³And I have filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, in knowledge, and in all *manner of* workmanship,

⁴to design artistic works, to work in gold, in silver, in bronze,

⁵in cutting jewels for setting, in carving wood, and to work in all *manner of* workmanship.

God’s spirit—through wisdom would help in understanding and knowledge to complete this most important project

- Bezalel’s abilities included working with precious metals and woodwork

⁶“And I, indeed I, have appointed with him Aholiab the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan; and I have put wisdom in the hearts of all the gifted artisans, that they may make all that I have commanded you:

Aholiab means—‘the divine father is my tent’

(Tanakh) “The construction is supervised and executed by skilled people from all the tribes”

⁷the tabernacle of meeting, the ark of the Testimony and the mercy seat that *is* on it, and all the furniture of the tabernacle—
⁸the table and its utensils, the pure *gold* lamp stand with all its utensils, the altar of incense,
⁹the altar of burnt offering with all its utensils, and the laver and its base—
¹⁰the [£]**garments** of ministry, the holy garments for Aaron the priest and the garments of his sons, to minister as priests,
¹¹and the anointing oil and sweet incense for the holy *place*. According to all that I have commanded you they shall do.”

v. 7-11 The articles to be fabricated by the craftsmen are listed with the addition of the garments [v.10] which were not mentioned before

v. 12-18 The remembrance of the Sabbath

(Tanakh) “Thus far, the instructions concerned a holy place; now the instructions emphasize the importance of a holy time”

¹²And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying,

¹³“Speak also to the children of Israel, saying: ‘Surely My Sabbaths you shall keep, for it *is* a **sign** between Me and you throughout your generations, that *you* may know that I *am* the Lord who sanctifies you.

Exodus 20: 10 (first part)

“but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God.”

“My Sabbaths” (Tanakh)

“Since the Sabbath **belongs** to God, observing it serves as a **sign** between Me and you...”

(Tanakh) “The notion of a sign is key to priestly thinking about the Sabbath—it is not merely a day of rest”

¹⁴You shall keep the Sabbath, therefore, for *it is* holy to you. Everyone who profanes it shall surely be put to death; for whoever does *any* work on it, that person shall be cut off from among his people.

(Tanakh) “Because the Sabbath is God’s and holy to Him, it must also be holy to Israel like the sanctuary and its parts.

Hence, profaning it—treating it as unholy, common—is no less a capital crime than encroaching on the sanctuary or Mt. Sinai”

(BKC) “In the midst of His instructions for the work to be performed, God reminded Moses that obedience was a religious duty.

The Sabbath was the sign that made Israel a theocracy. It was a test of the nation’s commitment to God

¹⁵Work shall be done for six days, but the seventh *is* the Sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord. Whoever does *any* work on the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death.

¹⁶Therefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations *as* a perpetual covenant.

¹⁷It *is* a **sign** between Me and the children of Israel forever; for *in* six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed.”

(Tanakh) “The Sabbath serves as a sign of Israel’s relationship with God because it commemorates God’s own actions and, in observing it, Israel follows His example.”

(The Pentateuch, W.H. Griffith Thomas)

“The Sabbath is emphasized as a divine sign. It is not merely a repetition of what has already been said; the references to the sign and the penalty are new points”

(Expositors) “a sign [v.17] is a miracle [4:8-9] or a memorial [Josh. 4:6]. But here it is a pledge of the covenant relationship as was the rainbow after the flood.”

[Gen. 9:12-17]

God had begun speaking to Moses in 25:1

¹⁸And when He had made **an end of speaking** with him on Mount Sinai, He gave Moses two tablets of the Testimony, tablets of stone, written with the finger of God.

‘ the testimony’

(BKC) “The Decalogue, the ten commandments; also called the testimony because they testify of God’s standards”

“finger of God”

(NSB) “is a bold anthropomorphism (a quality of God expressed as a human characteristic) that underscores the divine origin of the law.

The Bible speaks not of the genius of Israel, but of the finger of God. The ten commandments were not the product of man, but the revelation of the Lord”

(Expositors) “This verse is transitional to the golden calf scene. The forty days had come to an end.

Lessons

The incense—represents prayers...

Washing—symbolic of spiritual cleansing

Anointing oil—representative of God's Holy Spirit

- Today by repentance, baptism and receiving the Holy Spirit we are spiritually cleansed on the road to conversion

God filled the artisans with wisdom by his spirit to accomplish their tasks

- God gives spiritual gifts to his Church today to accomplish his will and plan

God stressed the importance of keeping His Sabbaths—as a sign between God and his people

- Today, in obedience to God, we keep the Sabbath