

Message #60

Exodus 30:11-38

We have said many times in the course of this study of Exodus that you cannot worship God any old way. It is impossible to worship God on our terms. It must be on God's terms. Worshipping God in a proper way is a critical factor to not experiencing judgment of God. This is true in the O.T. and this is also true in the N.T..

For example, in the N.T. some people in the Corinthian church were gathering together to partake of the Lord's Supper and some of the people were drinking the wine and getting drunk (I Cor. 11:20-21). This was totally inappropriate. So Paul warned the church that when each person partakes of communion, he needs to carefully examine himself because if you partake in an unworthy way, God judges His own people with weakness, sickness and death (I Cor. 11:29-32). So it is imperative that we worship God in a proper way.

Now when we come to this text in Exodus, it is clear that the same was true for Israel.

GOD DEMANDS THAT PEOPLE WORSHIP HIM IN WAYS SPECIFICALLY PRESCRIBED BY HIM AND IF HIS PEOPLE DO HE WILL BLESS THEM AND NOT SEND NEGATIVE PLAGUES AGAINST THEM.

There are four worship mandates that are given in this chapter. It is obvious that if you attempt to worship God without meeting these mandates, there were serious promised consequences.

WORSHIP MANDATE #1 – Those over 20 need to make a sacrificial ransom contribution to the Lord's work or they will be hit with plagues. **30:11-16**

If you don't think giving offerings is important to God, take a look at this text. God warns that those who do not give this particular ransom offering would be hit with a series of plagues. Now these offerings were to come from God's people. These were not offerings collected from the Canaanites. These were offerings that were to come from God's people and God specifies five key facts about this particular offering:

Fact #1 - Every son of Israel was responsible to give this ransom offering for himself. **30:12**

This has been called a ransom tax or atonement money. A theme that shows up over and over again is that in any relationship that one has with God, it is always on the basis of redemption that is paid by a ransom price. Why would God continually demand this? Because He wants His people to always remember that we are in a relationship with Him because of a redemptive ransom price that has been paid.

Fact #2 - Every numbered person shall give ½ shekel as a contribution to the LORD for the Sanctuary. **30:13**

Half a shekel was not a lot of money. In fact, half a shekel was about 1/5th of the amount of an ounce of silver. An ounce of silver today is worth about \$17 so 1/5th is a little more than \$3.

So it wasn't much. If we put it in regard to a dollar, it was worth about 20 cents.

But the point is every person must realize that even though they may not be worth much, the only way they get into a right relationship with God is by a redemptive ransom price that must be paid.

Now when we take this to the New Testament, what we learn is that Jesus Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law that we might receive full sonship status in the sight of God (Gal. 3:13; 4:5).

Fact #3 - Everyone who is 20 years of age and older must give this contribution. **30:14**

There are two kinds of offerings when it comes to God: free will offerings and mandatory offerings. The ransom offering is a mandatory offering. Now the Roman church has played on this point by saying you can pay your way out of your sin debt. In fact, they came up with a system that said the more you pay, the more sins may be forgiven. But the next fact completely negates this idea.

Fact #4 - Each person is to pay the same exact amount. **30:15**

There is no partiality with God. All are equal and all need redemption. It does not matter if one is rich or poor, successful or not successful; all need to be redeemed by the ransom price.

Fact #5 - This is atonement money that is to be used for the service at the tent of meeting. **30:16**

Victor Hamilton, who has written a good commentary on the book of Exodus, says, "It is one thing to pay for the erection of a new building. It is another thing to have funds for its upkeep and maintenance over the long haul" (*Exodus*, p. 510).

Contributions came in for the building of the Tabernacle, but contributions were also needed for the maintenance of the facility. This particular offering was to be used for the upkeep and general expenses related to proper worship.

Even though this offering would remind all of the ransom necessary for a relationship with God, it also had a very specific purpose.

WORSHIP MANDATE #2 – Those priests who minister need to first wash their hands and feet or they will die. **30:17-21**

It is very evident from this next mandate that in order for proper worship to take place, the priests must be clean and not dirty. God mandated that they be washed and cleansed.

There are certain observations we want to make about this:

Observation #1 - A bronze wash basin was to be made for washing. **30:18a**

When Solomon constructed the Temple, he was so focused on the cleanliness of worship that he made 10 of these bronze basins (I Kings 7:38).

Observation #2 - A bronze basin filled with water was to be put between the tent of meeting and the altar. **30:18b**

In other words, after the altar but before the entrance into the tent there was to be this bronze altar filled with water.

Now we may observe from this that being washed clean is different than being cleansed by the blood. At the altar the blood was shed and beyond that altar was this act of cleansing.

It is one thing to be saved; it is another thing to come to worship God as a saved person and be clean.

Observation #3 - The priests needed to wash their hands and feet before they entered into the tent or else they would die. **30:19-21**

God will not accept any attempt to worship Him if a priest is dirty. A priest needs to be clean. The value of this wash basin is that it says God wants His ministers pure and not dirty. If anyone tries to minister for God who is not washed from the dirt and filth of this world, God will not accept it and the person is in jeopardy of being judged by God. In fact, one who tries to minister for God without being clean is in danger of the death penalty.

Many years ago in another church, I witnessed in a service a woman who came up to sing special music. She started singing and then had to start over. In the middle of the song she stopped and had lost her place. She was struggling to hit the right notes in harmony with the piano. It was a disaster. When she got done, she was so emotionally upset she was weeping. Her ministry in the church was dead. We would later learn that this woman was involved in sin. She had tried to stand up in a church of God, not having dealt with the sin and God would not let her minister effectively because she was not clean.

The application to us is obvious. If we want a vibrant relationship with God, we must be clean. What this means is that there needs to have been a confession that is made to God to be clean.

WORSHIP MANDATE #3 – Those who worship God must use proper anointing oil or they will be cut off from God's people. **30:22-33**

Now it was critical that in order to worship God there needed to be an amazing perfumed oil for anointing purposes. God wanted things in His place of worship to smell nice. As one writer observed, the amount of ingredients here would add up to a sizeable and expensive quantity.

Three times in these verses this oil is identified as Holy anointing oil (v. 25, 25, 31). In verse 32, it is stressed that this is very “holy.”

Now there is absolutely no doubt that this anointing oil is an illustrative picture of the value of the person and work of the Holy Spirit (I Sam. 16:13). We believe that this is illustrative of the value of the Holy Spirit that is incalculable to the worth in the life of the believer.

There are 14 facts to observe:

Fact #1 - This perfumed oil was to be made of the finest spices. **30:23a**

These were the very best and highest valued of spices that were to be used.

Fact #2 - This perfumed oil was to be made of flowing myrrh worth 500 shekels. **30:23b**

Free-flowing myrrh has been identified as an aromatic gum that seeps out from cracks in the bark that typically grows in Arabia and India. Now a shekel was a weight that was used for measuring the value of something. It is unclear as to the specific weight. Some have suggested that one shekel was equivalent to the weight of 10 pennies. So 500 shekels would be quite a total weight value and would probably purchase a substantial amount of myrrh.

Fact #3 - This perfumed oil was to be made of fragrant cinnamon worth 250 shekels. **30:23c**

Cinnamon appears only three times in the Hebrew Bible (Ex. 30:23; Song of Sol. 4:14; Prov. 7:17).

Fact #4 - This perfumed oil was to be made of fragrant cane worth 250 shekels. **30:23d**

Fact #5 - This perfumed oil was to be made of cassia worth 500 shekels. **30:24a**

Douglas Stuart says that the 1500 total shekels would turn out to be about 38 pounds in modern dry measurement. This was to be mixed together to form this fragrance and it was not to be a paste, but an oil that one could pour.

Fact #6 - This perfumed oil was to be made of olive oil measured a hin. **30:24b**

A hin is a liquid measurement which, according to Merrill Unger, is equivalent to 6 pints.

Douglas Stuart says it was about a gallon.

Fact #7 - This perfumed oil is to be made into holy anointing oil. **30:25**

This oil was to be the work of someone specifically skilled in this field.

Fact #8 - This perfumed oil is to be used to anoint the tent and the ark of the testimony. **30:26**

Fact #9 - This perfumed oil is to be used to anoint the table, the lampstand and altar of incense plus all the utensils. **30:27**

Fact #10 - This perfumed oil is to be used to anoint the burnt offering altar and the wash basin plus all the utensils. **30:28**

Fact #11 - All of these things were to be classified as holy. **30:29**

Everything associated with this place needed to be holy. Everything needed to look good and smell good.

Fact #12 - All of the priests must be anointed and consecrated so they may minister as priests unto God. **30:30**

Every believer who comes into the presence of God needs to realize the value of purity in regard to the Holy Spirit.

Fact #13 - All of the sons of Israel need to know that this is sacred anointing oil and it is not to be made or used for common purposes. **30:31-32**

Sacred things are not to be made into common things. Worship things should be viewed as sacred worship things. No sanctuary should ever be turned into a night club. No pulpit should ever be replaced by a drum set.

Fact #14 - Any wrong use of this anointing oil will cut off a person from God's people. **30:33**

It is very serious business to do anything wrong in a sacred place of worship or to sacred things involved in worship.

WORSHIP MANDATE #4 – Those who worship God must use specific spices and incense or they will be cut off from God's people. **30:34-38**

Not only was there to be this anointing oil, but these were special spices for the twice daily incense burning. There is one more worship mandate that God spells out in this section and that is the mandate of making a special type of incense for worship.

Fact #1 - The incense was to be made of different spices. **30:34a**

Fact #2 - The incense was to be made of stacte. **30:34b** - gum that comes from the storax tree. This is a very sweet spice.

Fact #3 - The incense was to be made of onycha. **30:34c** - a powder scraped from a shell that was found near the Dead Sea, which when burned gave off perfume.

Fact #4 - The incense was to be made of galbanum. **30:34d** - this was a brownish resin that came from a thick-stalked plant, which was a Mediterranean Sea coastal plant.

Fact #5 - The incense was to be made from pure frankincense. **30:34e** - fragrant gum that comes from Boswellia trees that are found in the Mediterranean world.

Dr. C. I. Scofield said all of this speaks of the beauty and perfections of Jesus Christ. His entire life was a rich, sweet-smelling aroma before God.

Fact #6 - The incense was to be made into a perfume by a perfumer. **30:35a**

Fact #7 - The incense was to be salted, pure and holy. **30:35b**

Why was salt to be added? Because salt would preserve it. This gave permanence to the perfume.

The fact that this is pure and holy would indicate that this relationship with God is a permanent relationship and it is always based on what is pure and holy.

Fact #8 - The incense was to be beaten into a very fine state. **30:36a**

Fact #9 - The incense was to be put in part before the testimony in the tent of meeting. **30:36b**

Fact #10 - The incense was important to God meeting with His people. **30:36c**

Fact #11 - The incense was to be considered most holy. **30:36d**

Fact #12 - The incense was never to be made for anything but worship. **30:37**

Fact #13 - Any person who made this incense for non-sacred uses would be cut off from His people. **30:38**

It is very clear to see that you didn't just worship God on your terms. There needs to be careful thought and preparation that goes into worship.

SOME NEW TESTAMENT APPLICATIONS:

- 1) The ransom redemptive offering is a mandatory offering needed by all for worship.**
- 2) God does keep track of who gives generous offerings to Him and who doesn't.**
II Cor. 9:6-7
- 3) God's people need to be clean when they come to worship God. I John 1:9**
- 4) God's people need to be properly anointed in order to worship God. II Cor. 1:21**
- 5) God's people need to offer up proper incense offerings.**