
Day 30 - January 30

Establishment of a Nation (1525 - 1400 BCE)
Instructions for the Tabernacle

Readings: *Exodus 29:1-31:18*

Reflections:

- This section is tough to wade through because of the detail. Some of it is actually grotesque.
- Aaron and sons are to be washed with water. This is an early reference to ritual baptism which will later become baptism within the Jesus movement.
- Sacrifice for sins sets the stage for Christ to be understood as the Lamb of God, the one whose death takes away human sin. See John 1:29-36 and Revelation 5:6; 7:10.
- We also see a clear indication of the centrality of intimate friendship with God and the importance of speaking with God: “For the generations to come this burnt offering is to be made regularly at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting before the Lord. There I will meet you and speak to you; there also I will meet with the Israelites, and the place will be consecrated by my glory....Then I will dwell among the Israelites and be their God.” (Exodus 29:42-46)
- Note that the Spirit gives divinely inspired abilities to build the tabernacle: “I have filled him with the Spirit of God, with skill, ability and knowledge in all kinds of crafts - to make artistic designs for work in gold, silver, and bronze...etc.” God supernaturally enabled these craftsmen to make the place of his dwelling very beautiful, although it was a very humble and simple tent. Again in the story of Israel everything is externalized like a child's picture book. In Ephesians 4:11-13 we read, “It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.” The Spirit of God comes on leaders in the Jesus movement to heal, equip and beautify a community of people rather than a tent or a temple. This can encourage us that God wants to give us his Spirit to share in the development of his community, his family. He wants to work through us to make his people beautiful and mature that individually and collectively we might represent him well to a broken and searching world. You may feel like you don't have this in you but that is the exact starting point. God wants to do it through you.

- Many who read the story of Israel and a passage like this come to the conclusion that we have to work hard to become righteous before God. What we discover is that those that have put their trust in Christ already are righteous in God's eyes. God says to us, "I made you to be perfect in Christ. He is the perfect one, the only perfect one." Religion makes personal righteousness the destination. Faith in Christ makes it the starting point.