

# **Second Baptist Church of Doylestown**

## **Bible Study Notes**

**12-9-20**

### **Exodus 30-31**

#### **The Altar of Incense - Verses 1-10**

**<sup>1</sup>Make an altar of acacia wood for burning incense. <sup>2</sup>It is to be square, a cubit long and a cubit wide, and two cubits high—its horns of one piece with it. <sup>3</sup>Overlay the top and all the sides and the horns with pure gold, and make a gold molding around it. <sup>4</sup>Make two gold rings for the altar below the molding—two on each of the opposite sides—to hold the poles used to carry it. <sup>5</sup>Make the poles of acacia wood and overlay them with gold. <sup>6</sup>Put the altar in front of the curtain that shields the ark of the covenant law—before the atonement cover that is over the tablets of the covenant law—where I will meet with you. <sup>7</sup>“Aaron must burn fragrant incense on the altar every morning when he tends the lamps. <sup>8</sup>He must burn incense again when he lights the lamps at twilight so incense will burn regularly before the LORD for the generations to come. <sup>9</sup>Do not offer on this altar any other incense or any burnt offering or grain offering, and do not pour a drink offering on it. <sup>10</sup>Once a year Aaron shall make atonement on its horns. This annual atonement must be made with the blood of the atoning sin offering for the generations to come. It is most holy to the LORD.”**

**30:1-9** Notice that no strange incense was to be burned on this altar. The very ingredients of the incense were prescribed by God. As God is the Designer of this world, He is also the Designer of true religion. From the beginning of the world, man has tried to worship God in his own way. People are prideful. Therefore they seek to create their own ways, ways they think are good, to worship God. The lesson here is that there is only one right way to approach God, and that is God's way. All man-made ways do not bring us any closer to God and as we see in this chapter if we do them we are worthy of death.

**30:10** This once-a-year ceremony was called the Day of Atonement. On this day a sacrifice was made for the sins of the entire Israelite nation. This was the only day the high priest could enter the Most Holy Place, the innermost room of the tabernacle. Here he asked God to forgive the people. The Day of Atonement served as a reminder that the daily, weekly, and monthly sacrifices could cover sins only temporarily. It pointed toward Jesus Christ, the perfect atonement, who could remove sins forever.

#### **Atonement Money - Verses 11-16**

**<sup>11</sup>Then the LORD said to Moses, <sup>12</sup>“When you take a census of the Israelites to count them, each one must pay the LORD a ransom for his life at the time he is counted. Then no plague will come on them when you number them. <sup>13</sup>Each one who crosses over to those already counted is to give a half shekel, according to the sanctuary shekel, which weighs twenty gerahs. This half shekel is an offering to the LORD. <sup>14</sup>All who cross over, those twenty years old or more, are to give an offering to the LORD. <sup>15</sup>The rich are not to give**

more than a half shekel and the poor are not to give less when you make the offering to the LORD to atone for your lives. <sup>16</sup> Receive the atonement money from the Israelites and use it for the service of the tent of meeting. It will be a memorial for the Israelites before the LORD, making atonement for your lives.”

**30:11-16** This atonement money was like a census tax. It continued the principle that all the people belonged to God and therefore needed to be redeemed by a sacrifice. Whenever a census took place, everyone, both rich and poor, was required to pay a ransom. God does not discriminate between people (see Acts 10:34; Galatians 3:28). All of us need mercy and forgiveness because of our sinful thoughts and actions. There is no way the rich person can buy off God, and no way the poor can avoid paying. God’s demand is that all of us come humbly before him to be forgiven and brought into his family.

**30:12-16** These verses describe the annual tabernacle tax. Before we saw voluntary offerings requested. This is a mandatory :“tithe.” Actually everything they had belonged to God. Here they are required to give part of it back. The ministry at the tabernacle required resources and money. They needed to pay for upkeep, food, materials, etc. Every person was charged equally regardless of how rich or poor they were. Perhaps this was so that every person would feel like they were an equal part of the work being done there, just like the body is one, but there are many parts and each one is important.

### **Basin for Washing - - Verses 17-21**

<sup>17</sup> Then the LORD said to Moses, <sup>18</sup> “Make a bronze basin, with its bronze stand, for washing. Place it between the tent of meeting and the altar, and put water in it. <sup>19</sup> Aaron and his sons are to wash their hands and feet with water from it. <sup>20</sup> Whenever they enter the tent of meeting, they shall wash with water so that they will not die. Also, when they approach the altar to minister by presenting a food offering to the LORD, <sup>21</sup> they shall wash their hands and feet so that they will not die. This is to be a lasting ordinance for Aaron and his descendants for the generations to come.”

**30:17-21** Orders are given for the making of a laver, or font, of brass, a large vessel, that would contain a good quantity of water, which was to be set near the door of the tabernacle. Aaron and his sons must wash their hands and feet at this laver every time they went in to minister, every morning. This was designed, to teach them purity in all their ministrations, and to possess them with a reverence of God's holiness and a dread of the pollutions of sin. They must not only wash and be made clean when they were first consecrated, but they must wash and be kept clean whenever they went in to minister.

### **Anointing Oil - Verses 22-33**

<sup>22</sup> Then the LORD said to Moses, <sup>23</sup> “Take the following fine spices: 500 shekels of liquid myrrh, half as much (that is, 250 shekels) of fragrant cinnamon, 250 shekels of fragrant calamus, <sup>24</sup> 500 shekels of cassia—all according to the sanctuary shekel—and a hin of olive oil. <sup>25</sup> Make these into a sacred anointing oil, a fragrant blend, the work of a perfumer. It will be the sacred anointing oil. <sup>26</sup> Then use it to anoint the tent of meeting, the ark of the

covenant law, <sup>27</sup> the table and all its articles, the lampstand and its accessories, the altar of incense, <sup>28</sup> the altar of burnt offering and all its utensils, and the basin with its stand. <sup>29</sup> You shall consecrate them so they will be most holy, and whatever touches them will be holy. <sup>30</sup> "Anoint Aaron and his sons and consecrate them so they may serve me as priests. <sup>31</sup> Say to the Israelites, 'This is to be my sacred anointing oil for the generations to come. <sup>32</sup> Do not pour it on anyone else's body and do not make any other oil using the same formula. It is sacred, and you are to consider it sacred. <sup>33</sup> Whoever makes perfume like it and puts it on anyone other than a priest must be cut off from their people.'"

**30:22-33** The anointing oil was to be a holy oil. It was to be different than any other oil used in the nation and used exclusively for priests, never laymen. This special oil was a symbol that just as it was set apart for holy use, so the priests would be set apart for service to God.

### **Incense - Verses 34-38**

<sup>34</sup> Then the LORD said to Moses, "Take fragrant spices—gum resin, onycha and galbanum—and pure frankincense, all in equal amounts, <sup>35</sup> and make a fragrant blend of incense, the work of a perfumer. It is to be salted and pure and sacred. <sup>36</sup> Grind some of it to powder and place it in front of the ark of the covenant law in the tent of meeting, where I will meet with you. It shall be most holy to you. <sup>37</sup> Do not make any incense with this formula for yourselves; consider it holy to the LORD. <sup>38</sup> Whoever makes incense like it to enjoy its fragrance must be cut off from their people."

**30:34-38** The Israelites often burned incense, but this holy incense could be burned only in the tabernacle. Here God gave the recipe for this special incense. The sweet-smelling incense was burned in shallow dishes often called censers and was used to show honor and reverence to God. It was like prayer lifting up to God. It was also a vital part of the sacred ceremony on the Day of Atonement, when the high priest carried his smoking censer into the Most Holy Place. This incense, like the sacred anointing oil, was so holy that the people were strictly forbidden to copy it for personal use. Later Nadab and Abihu were executed for disobeying God by using strange incense (there own way to worship way.)

## ***Exodus 31***

### **Bezalel and Oholiab - Verses 1-11**

<sup>1</sup>Then the LORD said to Moses, <sup>2</sup>"See, I have chosen Bezalel son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, <sup>3</sup> and I have filled him with the Spirit of God, with wisdom, with understanding, with knowledge and with all kinds of skills— <sup>4</sup> to make artistic designs for work in gold, silver and bronze, <sup>5</sup> to cut and set stones, to work in wood, and to engage in all kinds of crafts. <sup>6</sup> Moreover, I have appointed Oholiab son of Ahisamak, of the tribe of Dan, to help him. Also I have given ability to all the skilled workers to make everything I have commanded you: <sup>7</sup> the tent of meeting, the ark of the covenant law with the atonement cover on it, and all the other furnishings of the tent— <sup>8</sup> the table and its articles, the pure gold lampstand and all its accessories, the altar of incense, <sup>9</sup> the altar of burnt offering and all its utensils, the basin with its stand— <sup>10</sup> and also the woven garments, both the sacred

garments for Aaron the priest and the garments for his sons when they serve as priests, <sup>11</sup> and the anointing oil and fragrant incense for the Holy Place. They are to make them just as I commanded you.”

**31:1-11** God regards all the skills of his people, not merely those with theological or ministerial abilities. Our tendency is to regard only those who are up front and in leadership roles. God gave Bezalel and Oholiab Spirit-filled abilities in artistic craftsmanship. Take notice of all the abilities God gives his people. Don't diminish your skills if they are not like Moses' and Aaron's.

### **The Sabbath - Verses 12-18**

<sup>12</sup> Then the LORD said to Moses, <sup>13</sup> “Say to the Israelites, ‘You must observe my Sabbaths. This will be a sign between me and you for the generations to come, so you may know that I am the LORD, who makes you holy. <sup>14</sup> “‘Observe the Sabbath, because it is holy to you. Anyone who desecrates it is to be put to death; those who do any work on that day must be cut off from their people. <sup>15</sup> For six days work is to be done, but the seventh day is a day of sabbath rest, holy to the LORD. Whoever does any work on the Sabbath day is to be put to death. <sup>16</sup> The Israelites are to observe the Sabbath, celebrating it for the generations to come as a lasting covenant. <sup>17</sup> It will be a sign between me and the Israelites forever, for in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed.’” <sup>18</sup> When the LORD finished speaking to Moses on Mount Sinai, he gave him the two tablets of the covenant law, the tablets of stone inscribed by the finger of God.

**31:12-17** The Sabbath had two purposes: It was a time to rest and a time to remember what God had done. We need rest. Without time out from the bustle, life loses its meaning. In our day, as in Moses' day, taking time out is not easy. But God reminds us that without Sabbaths we will forget the purpose for all of our activity and lose the balance crucial to a faithful life. Make sure your Sabbath provides a time of both refreshment and remembrance of God.

**31:18** The two stone tablets of the covenant law contained the Ten Commandments. These were not the only code of laws in the ancient world. Other law codes had come into existence when cities or nations decided that there must be standards of judgment, ways to correct specific wrongs. But God's laws for Israel were unique in that: (1) They alleviated the harsh judgments typical of the day; (2) they were egalitarian—the poor and the powerful received the same punishment; (3) they did not separate religious and social law. All law rested on God's authority.