

THE TEMPLE OF GOD – PART 1

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Why is it today that we do not see more healing? What about miracles?

We will see before we are done with this series that the Temple of God had better be very very careful what it does, what it says and make sure that those things that come out from the ministry are scriptural. If they are not scriptural, we are in deep trouble. That gives you some clue as to why the Church is in deep trouble today.

There are many parallels between the Church today and that which I am going to go into in the “white pages” of your Bible. I am not going to point out a lot of them in detail, at this point. You, hopefully, are converted and have minds and brains that function and you can draw a lot of comparisons yourself from what I am about to go through. I will probably mention some things as I do, but others I will wait and come to later. Use your minds as we go through here. I think you will begin to see some startling parallels between what God says and what has happened. I think you will see where we are today as a result of not heeding a lot of the information that is back here that we sometimes overlook.

Let's go to Exodus 24 to begin with. Moses has just come out of Egypt. They have been given all kinds of commandments and had those commandments explained in terms of statutes, judgments and precepts etc. They were given these to help explain the Ten Commandments because as

human beings it seems we can't quite get the Ten Commandments so, we had to have a whole book here to explain them. They can be summarized very succinctly in two sentences as Christ did in the New Testament. But, it seems that we as human beings need a lot more words to explain a lot of things. He had done a lot of explanation from Exodus 20 through 23 and now in Chapter 24,

“And he said unto Moses, Come up unto the LORD, thou, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel; and worship ye afar off.” (Exodus 24:1)

They were to stand way back. There is a good principal in our relationship with God. Recognize there is a great deal of power and authority with God that we had better fear in the right way.

“And Moses alone shall come near the LORD: but they shall not come nigh; neither shall the people go up with him.” (Exodus 24:2)

God was working, primarily, with one man. He had worked with and trained Moses. The rest had not been worked with and trained in the same way Moses had, nor were they, at that point, at the same level of spiritual understanding Moses was. It would have been very dangerous for those people to all come trotting up to where God was because they had a lot of sin, they had a lot of faults, and they had a lot of difficulties. Even though Moses

himself was far from perfect, God was working with him and there was a relationship being built there that could be worked with, whereas with the others it was not there as yet and with some, probably, would never be there.

“And Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD, and all the judgments: and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the LORD hath said will we do.” (Exodus 24:3)

They listened to what God had to say and said, that’s what we will do.

“And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD, and rose up early in the morning, and builded an altar under the hill, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel.” (Exodus 24:4)

God had given these words to Moses. Moses wrote them all down and then made an altar. He had burnt offerings, peace offerings to God and in Verse 6,

“And Moses took half of the blood, and put it in basons; and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar.

7 And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the LORD hath said will we do, and be obedient.” (Exodus 24:6-7)

Moses took the book of the covenant. He had written all these things down that he had covenanted with God and that the people said that they would covenant, or swear to or abide by. In other words, a contract was achieved. A covenant, a contract whatever you want to call it; He gave them what He

them to do and they agreed to it. You will notice, won’t you, they did not have any input in what they would do. God gave all the instruction and they agreed to follow His instruction. They didn’t say, wait a minute can we change Part C of A, we would rather have it this way. We would like to do away with three of those Commandments you gave, or one like people do today. We don’t like that particular one, we don’t like that particular statute, we don’t like that particular ordinance, and so we’ll ignore that one. No, God didn’t give them any leeway to decide what they do. They were only deciding whether, weren’t they? All that He wrote was what was important, not what they might have thought. Verse 7,

“And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people:...”

He spoke the word first then wrote it all down and went back before the people and said, I have written it all down and I’m going to read it all to you. So, he read it all them.

“...and they said, All that the LORD hath said will we do, and be obedient.”

Now someone in this contract was lying or maybe they weren’t outright lying at this point because their intentions, obviously, were good. Maybe they had good intentions with total commitment. This sounds good; we’ll do that, no hair off our neck. We can do what God ways. But, putting it into practice was a different animal wasn’t it? Just like we, at baptism, agreed to obey every word of God (Deuteronomy 8:3, Matthew 4:4 and

Luke 4:4) We agreed to live by every word of God. When we were baptized, if we were counseled properly, we were asked that question, will you live by every word of God or something very similar to that. We said yes, we will do everything that God says to do. Did we have a total commitment, or did we only have good intentions?

We are going to get into an explanation about the Tabernacle in the wilderness before we talk about the Temple of God. I think it qualifies under the definition of a portable temple. It was the first temple God had made and was portable and could be carried about the desert. He realized that they were going to be there a while.

Let's go now to Exodus 25.

“And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

2 Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring me an offering: of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart ye shall take my offering.” (Exodus 25:1-2)

The heart had to be in this. It wasn't just a rote thing. God wanted people who gave freely, from their heart to God, for a particular purpose He will outline here.

“And this is the offering which ye shall take of them; gold, and silver, and brass,

4 And blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goats' hair,

5 And rams' skins dyed red, and badgers' skins, and shittim wood,

6 Oil for the light, spices for anointing oil, and for sweet incense,

7 Onyx stones, and stones to be set in the ephod, and in the breastplate.

8 And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them.” (Exodus 25:3-7)

Notice these are all quality things. There is not spiny mesquite wood mentioned or inferior things at all. Everything here is of high quality. If an offering comes before God for a specific purpose it needs to be of high quality. If we approach God, offering ourselves, here I'm getting into the New Testament in spite of myself, there needs to be very high quality.

“And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them.” (Exodus 25:8)

In other words, God is saying, I'm moving in with you and I want you to make me a sanctuary, a temple, a place to dwell, a tabernacle they called this one. That is what a tabernacle is, a house, a place to live. He wanted His house to be of quality materials. This had to be built in a very specific way. Verse 9

“According to all that I shew thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it.” (Exodus 25:9)

He had given them specific instruction about how they were to live and they said we will follow that. Now, He is giving again very explicit instructions on how they are to build this tabernacle. It is to follow a pattern that He lays out. That means everything is to be exact. When a woman has a dress pattern and makes that dress according

to that pattern it has all the dimensions laid out exactly. The shapes and everything else is there exactly so that she can cut those pieces out, sew them together and it will match the pattern. Are you beginning to get a little bit of an idea where we are headed? God expects things to be according to His will and His way at all times and in every manner and fashion. That is why Matthew 16:18 does have a place here. Whatever we do on this earth had better be what He wants done. It had better be according to His intent, will and purpose. As Frank Nelte pointed in his last sermon, His intent, His purpose, His mind and how He thinks is laid out in the Bible. So, the answers to any question we have we will find in the Bible, whether in great technical detail or simply by principal, which can be applied. Any question we have is answered at least in principal in the Holy Scriptures. There has to be a principal somewhere that fits whatever question comes up. It is a matter of us digging out that principal and applying it properly to a particular situation. We are to rightly divide the word of truth and not apply the principals in a wrong way or in a wrong fashion. God shows that it has to be according to a specific pattern. Then He through and describes the pattern.

Why is all this written in here? This was to be a tabernacle; a portable temple that would be carried around the desert and then it wouldn't be any more. At some point, they wouldn't need this. Why go into all this detail then about exactly how to build it. We could perhaps get really bored reading through all of this. There may be several reasons God put it in here. Some of them might be more apparent than others. He may have some reasons that we wouldn't

come with. But, one that I want to emphasize as we start into this subject is that He wanted it done in specific fashion. There was no allowance for any other than exactly as He placed it. There had to be a reason, a principal for us or He would not have preserved this for us. The scribes had to write this thing out over and over and over again. They couldn't throw it on the printing press and be done with it. It had to all be written out. If you think it is boring sometimes reading it all and wondering how this all fits, what if you had to write it out over and over again. Maybe, we begin to understand that God was drilling a lesson into their minds. That you are to do everything exactly as I say. The term we sometimes use as "good enough for government work" wouldn't work here. God wanted it done in a very specific fashion. If you write something over and over again you begin to hopefully get the point that that is what He expects. On the other hand, those people didn't quite get the point, did they? They almost immediately began to do their own thing. They began to form their own traditions so that by the time Christ came to this earth they were totally following the traditions of men. They had ignored the entire Old Testament except for lip service and were following their own traditions. They had replaced the words of God entirely. It was a sad situation and they were in sad spiritual condition. Christ did not have one good word to say about them in all of His ministry that is recorded. But, He had an awful lot of bad to say about them.

We should be getting another picture there. That is we must do things exactly according to His will and His word and His intent. There is where

understanding His mind does come into great importance. We do understand how His mind works and His intents and purposes through a careful study of His word. That is how He displays His mind in these written words for us. A lot of people think they understand the mind of God and they hardly ever read the Bible.

Then in Chapter 25 He starts giving details. Let's skip on over that, but understand that it had to be six branches, or seven candlesticks and the cherubim had to face the exact way, they had to face each other and they had to have the wings just right and on and on. The pieces of the flowers and the candlesticks or whatever was in there had to be just right. They had to follow an exact pattern. Verse 39,

“Of a talent of pure gold shall he make it, with all these vessels.

40 And look that thou make them after their pattern, which was shewed thee in the mount.” (Exodus 25:39-40)

God apparently gave Moses a vision in detail of exactly how this was to be done and then he was to instruct the people on exactly how God wanted this portable temple to be built.

Let's go Chapter 26. Here you have all kinds of details of this. There are several chapters in here. Again, we won't take time to read it all, but to note that it is in here. We are not building anything in terms of a physical tabernacle to be carried around the desert. But, there are a lot of principals in here and maybe I will point out just a few as we go through.

“And thou shalt hang up the veil under the taches, that thou mayest bring

in thither within the veil the ark of the testimony: and the veil shall divide unto you between the holy place and the most holy.” (Exodus 26:33)

So, there were varying degrees of holiness that were to be built into this tabernacle. We will probably get to the point where we will see a little difference between the tabernacle itself and the Holy Place, The Most Holy. God lays some of that out, but I don't want to go into that right now. Perhaps a little later on in another sermon.

There are certain things God has more concern about than other things. Christ did say to the Pharisees, you are keeping all these little bitty things, but what about the weightier matters. Some things are more important than other things. It is so easy for us to pick at each other over little things we think someone else might be doing wrong and that we might have the correct answer to. Sometimes we leave out the weightier matters of mercy, judgment and love etc. Those are far far more important than picking at one another about whether we eat out on the Sabbath or not. I did cover that in fairly deep detail some time ago in a sermon. You can get that out and see what thoughts I had on it at the time. Frank did write an article on it as well. We tried to apply the principals from the scripture on that and get the right answer of what God would have us do because that may not have been the same situation we have today therefore we have to apply scriptural principals. What would God have done under this circumstance and other circumstance etc? Those are things we can work and some times they are hard to discern an exact definition on, but we keep working at it. We keep looking at all of these

subjects and seeing how we can better apply God's word to whatever aspect of life we might be looking at the moment. We will do some of that before we are through with this subject, some of the things that are questions to us. How do we get in detail exactly the way God wants it? Part of it is a matter of learning wisdom and understanding, asking for guidance from God and not assuming that we, whoever we might be, have all understand and all wisdom and therefore our opinion is far better than anyone else's opinion. We tend to raise our selves up in pride sometimes and take those attitudes, don't we? We all do it, everyone of us. I have done it and hope I don't do it tomorrow. I might have done it yesterday, but it is something we have to keep working on.

In Chapter 28 He gets into the very clothing the priests were to wear. They had to be done exactly in a certain way and always the same. God is not a God of ritual. I think we will see that His mind is not a mind of ritual or of sacrifice. He never has been pleased with the blood of bulls and goats as a sacrifice. He says that in His own word. Although, He had to use them for a time because of the circumstance and situation. He is not a God of ritual, but there are certain things He had done back here that He had done on purpose to keep them in remembrance of who He was. So, He had the priests dress in just a certain manner so that people would look through them to Him. The circumstance is a little different today, you know the veil was rent in two. Now all people who have the covenant of God can approach God directly and up close for that matter. Not only as servants, but as friends as Christ said in John. There have been some changes God has

instituted based on conduct. Based on the conduct of Christ really and hopefully the conduct of those who were given access who had not had it before. At this point in time with this early tabernacle they had to stand back in fear. God was waiting to see how they would perform. So, we have them a great deal of detail. Verse 36

“And thou shalt make a plate of pure gold, and grave upon it, like the engravings of a signet, HOLINESS TO THE LORD.”

That is what all this is pointing to. You have to bring fine materials, you have to build it in such a way, you have to wear certain attire and then you have to write on it HOLINESS TO THE ETERNAL. This is the point that all of this is leading up to. Put in New Testament terms, “Live by every word of God.” Do everything God instructs in the way that He instructs it to the best of your absolute ability.

“And thou shalt put it on a blue lace, that it may be upon the mitre; upon the forefront of the mitre it shall be.

38 And it shall be upon Aaron's forehead, that Aaron may bear the iniquity of the holy things, which the children of Israel shall hallow in all their holy gifts; and it shall be always upon his forehead, that they may be accepted before the LORD.” (Exodus 28:37-38)

He had to always that, HOLINESS TO THE ETERNAL. Let's not forget why we are here. It is always there for a reminder. It is like He told them to put the Ten Commandments on their doorposts. They would have to look at it as they came in and as they went out. NEVER FORGET MY

COMMANDMENTS. He had made a covenant with them to always do everything that was in there. But, it is so easy for us to forget. Wasn't it Samuel that He made a comment about, "you have not allowed any of my words to drop to the ground"? I think that is one of the things that sticks out in my mind as something that would be nice for any of us accomplish. Wouldn't it be nice for God to come and tell us that we didn't let any of His words drop to the ground. You read them, reminded yourself of them, thought of them, you applied those principals in your life and none of My words fell to the ground. I strive to do that in terms of just being a minister. I strive to back here and there in the Book and not let any of these things get away. I mean even back here in the "white pages" there are reasons and purposes that we can find and apply to our own lives that could be missed pretty easily and dismissed pretty easily. But, we don't want to let these fall to the ground. We need to go back here, look at them and see what application they might have today. Do they have anything to do with the fact that we are having trouble with God and a lot of our prayers don't seem to be answered and many of don't seem to be healed? There are a lot of other things we could bring into this. But, those are a couple of points that I think frustrate people in the Church today. Why doesn't it seem that more prayer is answered? I'm not saying we don't get any prayers answered and that we don't have any healings, but we certainly don't have as much of either as we would like do we? It seems all efforts to try and hold the Church together around the world by various organizations are not working too well. All their efforts are coming to naught. All of those things have answers

in the scriptures. We have seen a lot of them haven't we? We will see some more.

Now, let's go on. I'm just sort of skipping through here a bit. Chapter 29, He is giving more and more details here about how this is to be done. In Verse 14 it says,

"But the flesh of the bullock, and his skin, and his dung, shalt thou burn with fire without the camp: it is a sin offering."

Sin brought death. The only way to atone for sin at that point was in a sin offering. God would wipe out that sin so that the person did not have to die. Later on, Christ, of course, became the sacrifice and we don't need the sacrifice of bulls and goats any more as Jeremiah 7 says. He didn't speak to them when they came out of Egypt about sacrifices, but He had to add them later because of transgression. Somehow, there had to be an atonement because a relationship was being broken. They had agreed that they would do everything He said, and then they didn't follow through. So, somehow the breach had to be repaired. It is just like with our families, our children, we tell them to do such and such, "but" no no you do such and such. This is my word to you; you don't have an option here. You don't have a say in what you do, I am the parent. That is God's position. Then the kid goes out and does what the parent told him not to do. There is a breach of confidence and trust and obedience there, isn't there? Somehow that has to be reconciled because the parent is angry that his or her instructions were not followed. If not angry, frustrated, whatever emotions we as parents go through. Sometimes the atonement has to come in terms of

something applied to the backside. Sometimes the atonement comes through whatever method you might devise. Spanking the backside is one that God says to use. But, there are other things that can be applied in some particular cases. I think the backside is the best one because that is the one God says to use. If you don't chasten your child with the rod you don't love him, it says. Those are very plain instructions. Once and a while though I will come across somebody who says they really still don't believe in spanking a child. What did you agree to when you were baptized? You agreed to follow every word of God. Your personal preference might be standing them in the corner upside down. I don't know. Whatever it might be. My mother would make me sit on a stool until the timer on the oven went off. I hated that. I would almost rather have had a spanking sometimes, because there was more mischief I could be getting into rather than sitting there. So, it was effective in some ways, but that is not one that God necessarily endorses. It is one that my parents came up with and a lot of parents use that. I don't have a particular problem with it, but when you say I don't believe in spanking when God clearly shows, in His word, in the Proverbs, Hebrews, that that is His approved method and you say, I don't agree with that, you have a problem. We don't have an option. God says that if you don't use the rod, you hate the child. "I don't have my kid, I love my kid." Well you have emotion for the child, but you are not loving the child in God's fashion, according to His will and His love. There is a difference between human emotion sometimes and God's love. Sometimes, His love is tough love. Sometimes, He lowers the boom on us, just as He has on the

Church. He said, I will spew you out of my mouth because you didn't follow my directions.

But, there is an incredible principal here in Exodus 29:14. Some kind of atonement, some kind of reconciliation has to be made. That is all written in here about this original tabernacle because the people didn't live up to what they agreed to live up to. Of course, we don't have a problem with that, so I guess we will just move on. But, the fact that this bullock had to die indicates that if we do not have some kind of atonement or reconciliation for our sin we ultimately will be in the lake of fire. The bullock died and we die. We thankfully have a reconciliation that can be applied in our behalf, but will that be applied if we do not follow the terms of the contract of the covenant and build the tabernacle in the way that God wants it built? There is where the rub comes. That is where we need to have our attention, I think, focused upon just how does God want a tabernacle or a temple built. If we don't do it the right way we are in trouble. That is why He is very very exacting in His word about what we shall and shall not do. That little blurb on child rearing is just one of many thousands of things we have to deal with and be sure we do it according to God's word. God has a lot of instruction about how to do. He has a lot of instruction about a lot of things and when we get away from His instruction is when we get in trouble. I have noticed that about me, and you may have noticed it about you. So, let's not let any of these words fall, but try to extract some principals from it.

Chapter 29:37, "Seven days thou shalt make an atonement for the altar, and sanctify it; and it shall be an altar

most holy: whatsoever toucheth the altar shall be holy.”

Aren't we to be holy people? So, we have another principal here about how they were to set this altar up, how long they were to sanctify it, that is set it apart, to make sure it was absolutely holy. “Whatsoever touches the altar shall be holy.”

“Now this is that which thou shalt offer upon the altar; two lambs of the first year day by day continually.

39 The one lamb thou shalt offer in the morning; and the other lamb thou shalt offer at even:” (Exodus 29:38-39)

This had to be done everyday, day by day.

“And there I will meet with the children of Israel, and the tabernacle shall be sanctified by my glory.” (Exodus 29:43)

A church without the glory of God is nothing. All we are is bunch of people. We could be off in the Foursquare Baptist or Quaker organization somewhere and be meeting together, but unless God and His glory are there it means nothing. I look out here at a group of people and you are all fine people as far as I know, but unless God is here with us this means nothing. We can't raise ourselves off the ground. We can't give ourselves immortality. We can't turn ourselves into God. We can do nothing on our own. So, unless we follow the exacting instructions that God gives on how a temple should be built He will not come dwell there. That is a big, big point that the whole Church needs to grasp and understand. If we are to have an organization, a group of

people together, we must comprehend this. If we don't get this point, we will never be what God wants us to be and He will not bless us as we wish to be blessed. We can build a temple, a tabernacle, an organization and it will mean nothing unless it has God's exacting standards. We must live by every word of God and must run a group or organization by every word of God, not by our own dreams, our own thoughts, and our own actions, our own whatever we might think up. It must be according to what is bound in heaven.

If they did it exactly as He said so that the altar was most holy, then He said I will come and it will be sanctified by my glory. That is what I want you and I to do, to build our lives in such an exacting way that God will come and be our glory. Then this little group, not just individually, but this group is that exacting.

Our judgment is indeed personal; judgment is now upon you and upon me daily as we go through out lives. It isn't something off in the future when Christ returns. Our judgment is today. Everyday He is evaluating you and me. Not one day goes by that He does not evaluate His people. They were to offer that lamb to sanctify that altar everyday. We make offering before God everyday. Yes, we have an individual judgment and God is judging us individually, but He also makes group judgments. Do you realize that? Read Revelation 2 and 3 if you don't believe me. Read about the Seven Churches. He took a group here, a group there, a group somewhere else and He said these are the characteristics of this group. Yes, it is individual as far as our ultimate judgment, but He judges us as a group as well. We have to meet

His exacting standards as a group, not just as an individual. Therefore we have to be blended together as a family, as a group of people who are thinking the same way, acting the same way and He can look at the group and say, this, this and this about us.

When Achan stole did He not judge all Israel as a group because of one man's sin? All Israel suffered a plague and something like 26,000 were killed; I think that is the one, until that was solved. So, you and I depend on each other and no man is an island. We can't take our ball and go home and say I am my own person; I'll serve God on my own. God says not to forsake the assembling our ourselves together. Many many people are doing that around the world today. In some cases you may be the only one around, I understand that, across the country, but God expected us to grow as a group of people. His particular, set apart, sanctified people are to act in tandem together and to be welded together in obedience and service to Him. All the people said, We will obey, as a group. But, I can't make you, you or you obey God can I? Only you can make you obey God and only I can make me obey God. But, the well being of the group depends on all of us as individuals responding together to accomplish that. My sin, and I will say this in different ways, my sin, which I might think is a hidden sin or that nobody knows about, just me, you know You and me Lord, even though nobody else might know about that particular sin, could still effect whether you are healed, whether you have a prayer answered or not. Every one of your sins and faults could effect whether someone else in the congregation is healed or their prayer is

answered or not. You are not an island, none of us are. We have to work together for the common good. We might think we have a private fault or sin, no you don't, God knows about it. Whatever you do may affect the well being of the whole. Just like Achan's sin affected the whole of Israel. Thousands of people died because of one man's sin. Does God judge as a group or not? Therefore, we are caretakers. We are our brother's keeper. That was one they tried to slip out of right off the bat wasn't it, Cain and Abel. "Am I my brother's keeper?" God, said, yes you certainly are, what have you done with him? You killed him. We can kill each other spiritually very easily by how we act and react one with another. We have to do it in a very careful and exact manner.

We have to be watchful that we don't throw God's way to the ground and come up with our own ideas about how to do things or what can or cannot be done. I think that the translation of Matthew 16:18 that says, whatever you decide had better well be what has already been decided in heaven. When we make a judgment in terms of Matthew 18, where that is repeated, of someone else whom we feel had a problem or who has sinned against us, then we had very well better make the same judgment the same judgment with them that God would make with them. Keep in mind that however we judge them, God will judge us. If you do not show mercy, God will not show mercy to you. That is a scary scary concept, but it is absolutely biblical and cannot be denied. Blessed are the merciful. I want to be blessed of God. Let's be blessed by God because of the things we do and because we please Him in every way and

follow His intensions and desires in everything in our lives.

Now, let's go to Exodus 30.

“And thou shalt make an altar to burn incense upon: of shittim wood shalt thou make it.” (Exodus 30:1)

Then He goes through all the detail of how that is exactly to be done. Then in Verse 9 He says,

“Ye shall offer no strange incense thereon, nor burnt sacrifice, nor meat offering; neither shall ye pour drink offering thereon.”

How does that equate to our prayers? We are not to bring strange prayers or strange conduct for that matter before God. So, we have to pray in the prescribed manner and according to His will and purpose. Christ showed us the basic outline for prayer in Matthew 6 and then we read the Bible the rest of our lives to learn the mind and will of God. When we, through the scriptures, come to understand how His mind works, how He reacts to this, to that and the other thing, then we don't bring strange prayers before Him, do we? Because, then we begin to pray according to what He would react in a positive way to. There are a lot of people out in the world who pray, but they don't have a clue as to the will and the purpose of God. Therefore, their prayers are not generally answered. In fact, He says He doesn't hear the prayers of sinners. Now, I am not saying that once in a while God may not out of His own character and mercy and the fact that He is such a loving God, may once and a while, let's say in a way in spite of Himself, because of His compassion and

love, He may answer someone's prayer. And it may be that He has a particular purpose in mind. He answered some of your prayers probably before you were converted, while you were yet a sinner. Because, He already knew He was working with you and He knew He was going to call you. He had you figured out, knew your name, knew where you lived and everything about before He ever called you. This isn't happenstance. You didn't run across the Plain Truth in the dentist's office out of happenstance. God led you here as a specific individual on purpose. We need to get that through our thick skulls brethren. We can't slide out from under our responsibility by saying; maybe God didn't really call me. Maybe I just sort of happened upon this. No, if your mind opened, God had to open it. No man can come expect the spirit of the Father draw him. It is too easy to try to find a way to slip out from under our obligation and the commitment we made before God. We find all kind of ways and that is just one of the plethoras of them that are available. Maybe God didn't really know me. Yes, He did. Now maybe He answers a prayer here and there because He is also working with some people that He may not be calling in this age, but he is preparing them for the Millenium or the Great White Throne Judgment. So, I am not here to say that God never answers the prayer of someone out in the world. He may for His own purposes and whatever purpose He has in their life down the road. But, in general, He make a very strong statement, I don't even hear the prayers of those who are living in sin and have not dedicated themselves to my way. He just doesn't listen and if we don't come before Him in the proper way, according to His will, He won't listen to us either.

Just maybe that is one reason a lot of our prayers aren't being answered. Maybe we are not building a temple exactly according to His specifications and according to His pattern.

There are so many principals in going through here and I am not going to go through it all. You can read it on your own time and extract some of these things.

But, here is another good principal further on down in this chapter. Each of the people was to bring an offering for this altar. Verse 14,

“Every one that passeth among them that are numbered, from twenty years old and above, shall give an offering unto the LORD.

15 The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less than half a shekel, when they give an offering unto the LORD, to make an atonement for your souls.

16 And thou shalt take the atonement money of the children of Israel, and shalt appoint it for the service of the tabernacle of the congregation; that it may be a memorial unto the children of Israel before the LORD, to make an atonement for your souls.” (Exodus 30:14-16)

The principal laid out here is that you can't take political advantage by giving more because you have more. You can't buy favor with God. You shouldn't be able to buy favor in the Church to become, let's say important in your own eyes as a deacon or an elder or whatever. We had a lot of that fighting for office in the previous temple and I hope that we can grow and be more mature and above that because God says,

“for an atonement for our soul” we are all equal in value, half a shekel is what He had them give on the Day of Atonement. You didn't give more, you didn't give less. You didn't curry favor or receive political favor. But, didn't we come to the point at the Feasts that we tried to drum up more money in offerings? Didn't we get competitions going to see who could give the most? All done under the pretense of “helping the work. But, I saw a lot of political advantage garnered by some of those things. Those who could give the most came to be known in many cases because of success in the business world and that was equated somehow with spiritual success. It had nothing to do with it. But, because a guy was doing well in business you thought maybe he ought to be a deacon. But, maybe he was lying, cheating and stealing, maybe he was prospering as the wicked prosper as David lamented at times. But, he had the money and curried political favor as a result. There are just all kinds of principals here.

Chapter 31:1-5

“And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

2 See, I have called by name Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah:

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

4 To devise cunning works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass,

5 And in cutting of stones, to set them, and in carving of timber, to work in all manner of workmanship.”

So, God gave a particular gift to someone to be able to follow the exacting instructions of how all these things were to be made in the Tabernacle and of the altar etc.

“And I, behold, I have given with him Aholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan: and in the hearts of all that are wise hearted I have put wisdom, that they may make all that I have commanded thee;” (Exodus 31:6)

God gave gifts. We read about that in the New Testament, I Corinthians 12 and other places don't we? God will give gifts to His people to be able to build the kind of temple He wants. If we are yielding and worthy, in that sense, God will give us gifts to help build a temple the way God wants is built. We have an opportunity to build a temple. There are a lot of temples being built out there, right? There are hundreds of organizations now that are daughters or off shoots of Worldwide Church of God. Obviously, we were doing some things wrong or God would not have blown it apart. Some are trying to recreate what was there; some are trying to add a few little twists to it. But, if God was so angry that He blew it apart, there were some major wrongs going on. That means we have to make some major revisions. Recreating what was there, as I talked about in couple of sermons recently, is not enough. We have to get this instruction book out and get in line with every word of God. It is enough to play church anymore. We have seen how God reacts to that. That temple was not built in the form and the fashion that He wanted it. I think Zechariah 1 gives us some clue where He says, “I was a little displeased” and then the heathen came in and “I became sorely

displeased”. Now, He wants another temple built. We as a fledgling little group, nothing great size and numbers, money, prestige or anything else, in fact, we are looked down upon in most quarters now, but be that as it may and let it roll off our backs as nothing. Don't worry about is, just get busy building what God wants built according to the way He wants it built.

We have a fresh start, we have an opportunity, a chance to build something the way God wants it built. Therefore, we need to have our heads in this book finding out exactly what He wants done. That is the main point I am trying to extract from these scriptures back here. God is pretty exacting in His instructions.

He closes this section in Verse 12 and thereafter.

“And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

13 Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the LORD that doth sanctify you.

14 Ye shall keep the sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you: every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death: for whosoever doeth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people.” (Exodus 31:12-14)

That is a fairly strict decree, is it not? What if we were under these circumstances today and you broke the Sabbath? The rest of us would be obligated to go out there and stone you to death, bounce rocks off your head until you died. That is how important

this was to God. If we don't keep His Sabbath, He says we will die. The lake of fire is for those who will not keep His Sabbath. We are not put to death physically today for breaking the Sabbath, but that still hangs over our head. There are a lot of people in the greater Church of God today or who were in it I guess, who are no longer keeping the Sabbath. They have gone back to the swill, the vomit.

“14 Ye shall keep the sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you: every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death: for whosoever doeth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people.

Cut off by death.

15 Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the sabbath of rest, holy to the LORD: whosoever doeth any work in the sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death.

This is emphasized, isn't it? It is said over and over here.

16 Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant.

Then He takes it another step further.

17 It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed.” (Exodus 31:14-17)

Is God pretty exacting about this or not? Any Church today, whatever it

might be on this earth, that claims to follow God, who does not keep the Sabbath, is not a Church of God. God has nothing to do with them. He says, if you will follow, remember what we read, if you will follow every thing I say, I will come and be the glory in the middle of you. Here, He says, if you don't keep my Sabbath you are to be put to death and it is a sign between Me and My people and if you don't have this sign you are not God's people.

I find people in the greater Church of God today trying to say that some of the Baptists and some of the Methodists and some of the Church of Christ may be Christians. NO THEY ARE NOT! God will have nothing to do with any one who does not keep His Sabbath. It says so right here. It was being kept in the New Testament. You cannot say it was done away. It is still being kept. It is a sign between God and spiritual Israel today. Anyone who steps away from it is stepping away from God. Can we get the principal out of here that whatever God says we better do it the way He says it or else He has nothing to do with us and He says we ought to die.

The tabernacle had to be built in a certain way and as soon as it was built, He laid this on them as a part of the contract that was made back in Exodus 20 where He gave them the Sabbath or at least codified it. It had been there since creation. But, He wanted a very severe reminder here that if you are going to build a tabernacle and a temple to Him and you don't keep the Sabbath there is no relationship between you and God. So, that obliterates a lot of people who think that they worship God from having any relationship with God. This is pretty

serious business. That is why we cannot allow His words to fall to the ground.

That is the end of that section of the scripture. You can go on and read Chapter 32 if you want and see what happened immediately. Moses disappeared and they made themselves a golden calf and took off their clothes and began to dance around. That is a long long way from what they had just agreed to do. I don't know what all they did, but I have a pretty good imagination of what they did. None of it had to do with the 10 Commandments whatsoever. They probably danced on the Sabbath too.

God laid it out pretty clearly and they agreed to it and then they didn't do it.

Let's move on. Let's go to Leviticus. There is an awful lot back here about all of this, just page after page after page. It is easy to say it, but if you are writing it; it gets to be a chore by hand over and over again. Here in the Book of Leviticus you have the first 7 chapters describing various sacrifices having to do with the tabernacle. We are to present our bodies as a living sacrifice, Romans 12:1, so I am not going to go through all these sacrifices. That would be a sermon in itself about the spiritual things we can extract about these various sacrifices. There are many principals here. But, that is not really my purpose is this particular series. My purpose is to point out that from the outset that God has very exacting instructions in regards to how a temple should be built. Whether it be a portable one or a permanent one. Are we not pilgrims and strangers and ours is somewhat portable even today? So,

these things about the tabernacle can have a great deal of bearing on our thinking. There are some object lessons here for us. That is why God wrote this down to go through and understand that if you are going to build a temple, this is the way you do it. The rest of the Bible is there explaining how it needs to be done.

Leviticus 8:10:

“10 And Moses took the anointing oil, and anointed the tabernacle and all that was therein, and sanctified them.

11 And he sprinkled thereof upon the altar seven times, and anointed the altar and all his vessels, both the laver and his foot, to sanctify them.”

We sanctify by anointing with oil when we are sick. The anointing that was done here had to be done in a specific fashion in the right way. If we come we can pour oil on peoples heads from now on and nothing unless the right things are happening in those heads.

We wonder why we are not healed and yet maybe we are not doing all the things we should be doing in building a temple in such a way that God then begins to show His glory there. I think that should be an easy connection to make. He says according to your faith be it unto you for example. If we come doubting, questioning, wondering, not believing maybe that it would be His will; that is a big problem. We are not coming with the exact attitude God wants us to have.

There are many other things about building a temple before God

shows His glory there. Just as we have seen in the tabernacle, without going through all the details. Some of you have probably scanned a little bit of it as I am talking about all the detail that had to be followed.

Moses had to do things just right. He had to sprinkle it so many times, be sure everything was done according to God's will that it might be sanctified or set aside for a particular purpose. Is it any surprise we find the term "sanctification" in the New Testament? We have to be sanctified just like that tabernacle was sanctified. We have to go through certain things before we are sanctified, don't we? The world out there is not sanctified. The word just simple means "set apart". When you are speaking in terms of spirituality we are set apart for a particular purpose. God begins to set us aside from the rest of the world as a particular group of people when we begin to respond to His will and to His ways, doesn't He? We began keeping the Sabbath. We began understanding we have a purpose on this earth. We began getting rid of unclean meats. We began to do a lot of things that we were learning as we were coming into the Church. That is why we are not baptized as soon as we walk in the door and they say, Halleluiah brother you are here, let's baptize you. We don't do it that way. We wait to see if God indeed is setting you apart. If He is sanctifying you for the very high calling and office of being a member of His family. So, you are educated, somewhat, and then the ministry should wait before baptizing you to see if you begin making changes in your life. If you are showing by your fruits that you are willing to commit yourself to this way of life forevermore. We can't know whether it

is forevermore. We can read the scriptures to you and tell you that you have to make a commitment, not just say, Hey I like this group of people and you guys are pretty nice, you have good potlucks, you have good cooks, I think I'll come to church here. "I've found my Church home." There is a lot more to it than that. God has very exacting standards. We begin a life building a temple and building it according to His standard. If He doesn't light it up with His glory, then what do we question? Do we question Him? "God you didn't do all the things you said you would do." Now, what is His answer to that? "You didn't do all the things I told you too do." All the things we said we would do. Therefore, God will not light up your temple with His glory. It is a simple cause and effect equation. God is never at fault. He has always done everything He said He would do if we would do everything He told us to do that we agreed to do.

Was the fault in the Old Covenant originally? No, He said the fault was in the people, not in the covenant. They would have been blessed if they had followed that covenant. But, as soon as they had made it and had built the tabernacle according to specifications they immediately reneged on everything they had been told basically. Follow the history of Israel through the Bible; they very rarely did what God said. A few rare individuals basically followed the things He said, but not very many. They were not too much blessed either.

The only reason we are really blessed as a nation right now or as nations of Israel is because of Abraham's obedience, not because of

our own. We are about to be destroyed as nations because of our disobedience. He is removing the blessings of Abraham from us. When God blows something apart or allows it to be blown apart, if you will, there is a cause for that. I'll guarantee this little group that I am speaking to today in this room, by phone or by tape wherever it happens to go, however we think of ourselves we will be blown apart if we do not build a temple according to God's standards so that His glory might show through us as a light to the world. It is just a fact. If we survive as a group and become what God wants us to be, it is only because we build according to His standard. If we do anything different we are doomed. I hope that scares you. It certainly scares me. I want to do it right this time. I don't want to play "Church" any more. I want us to find and follow all the standards that God would have us live up to.

Leviticus 15 has to do with all types of physical uncleanness they had i.e. a running issue or women's difficulties, all kinds of things here that were ceremonially problems in that day and age. In other words, anything that is imperfect in us basically would come in here as a principal.

Verse 31,

"Thus shall ye separate the children of Israel from their uncleanness; that they die not in their uncleanness, when they defile my tabernacle that is among them."

We are living in a tabernacle or a temple of God today. If defile that tabernacle or that temple, we can see here what God thinks of defiling His

temple. Whether it be the temple of our body or the larger temple of the Church, both are used. That is why I say again that judgment is personal, that is we are each a temple of God's Holy Spirit and yet He refers to the temple as a group, as a whole. There is a judgment on both not just the individual or the group or not just the group and not the individual. If we defile our body, which is the temple of His Spirit or we defile a Church body, which also His temple, then we will be separated out for death ultimately. Maybe for a broken relationship with God. It is one thing to ultimately die for it, isn't it? It is another thing to not be in God's favor, to not be pleasing Him and Him be pleased with you. I guess our ulterior motive always is "so that I can be blessed". We should want to have the right kind of relationship and when we defile our temple how can we expect His blessing. If we defile the group, how can we expect His blessing? No man is an island. We have to be working together to achieve, to help one another. What did Paul say? Comfort the feeble, help the weak, help the poor do everything we can to help strengthen and encourage one another and not to esteem ourselves above anyone else, which is the easiest thing for a human being to do. It is easy to put ourselves above someone else in our own minds and hearts, rising up in pride above someone else. You simply cannot do it. If you defile it, you are in trouble.

Chapter 16, you have the two goats, which we sometimes talk about on Atonement. Satan bearing the responsibility in some ways for our sin, Christ bearing the sacrifice and the atonement for our sin. One was turned in the wilderness alive, the other had to die. The one that died was for us. There

is an atonement made. I am not saying here that we are all doomed because we are not perfect yet. We do have an atonement that can be made. But, what I want to drill in is that there is an exacting standard that God holds us to. If we don't live quite up to it, thankfully there is mercy that is if we are merciful to each other. There is always that caveat in there. He will not show mercy on us unless we show mercy on one another. Do you really believe that? Have you internalized that? That is hard to internalize. It is easy to accept as a philosophy that God will judge me like I judge others, but it is hard to internalize it to the point that we really and grasp that how I treat someone else and how I judge them and how I think of them is exactly how God is going to think of me. We like to have a higher opinion of ourselves don't we? It is natural to want to be right, to be above, to be better than or whatever. We struggle with that. Sometimes we don't show mercy as a result because if we put somebody else down, it makes us feel better about ourselves. We always want to thought well of and we love to think well of ourselves. We would like to think well of ourselves, sometimes we have low self esteem and it is not so much self esteem that is the problem as it is self pity. There is a difference. We are to esteem others better than ourselves and we are not pity ourselves. Just grow, just overcome. That is easy to say and hard to do.

Leviticus 17: Gets into more of this group philosophy I have been talking about.

“What man soever there be of the house of Israel, that killeth an ox, or

lamb, or goat, in the camp, or that killeth it out of the camp,

4 And bringeth it **not** unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, (not to his own tabernacle) to offer an offering unto the LORD before the tabernacle of the LORD; blood shall be imputed unto that man; he hath shed blood; and that man shall be cut off (or killed) from among his people:” (Leviticus 17:3-4)

It is interesting an interesting principal. We cannot go out and be Christians on our own. God says we have to bring it to the tabernacle of the congregation. That the sacrifice means nothing unless it is brought to the right place. It behooves us to find the right place; to find the right people; to find people we are willing to build according to the exacting standards of God's word. I am not saying we are it. I am saying we are striving to be that way. It is folly for anyone today to say, “we are the only place”. Many organizations try to do that. “We are the Philadelphians, you guys are all the Laodecians. We are the first of the first fruits we are the very elect or the very very elect” or however they want to put it. That is a great danger. We are just some of God's people lumped together here who are trying to find the right standard. That is my feeling and evaluation of this. If we do that God will show His glory in us in some form or fashion in His own good time and will once we build according to His standard. But, for those many people who are out there who think they don't need a ministry, they don't need a people, they don't need a group, they are barking up the wrong tree. Because, if you don't bring it before the tabernacle of the congregation, if you kill it

somewhere else and try to do it on your own, you are in big time trouble with God. I know there are people around the country who would not like to hear those words, but the principal is right here in the book. You can't get away from it. It is what God says. If you don't like us, go find somebody else, but find somebody and get together and build the right standard. It does not have to be here necessarily. If you are hearing the things here that will help you to attain the right kind of relationship with God and the right kind of relationship with your brothers and sisters in the Church, then by all means you are welcome. But, I am not trying to say we are the only place by any means. There may be others who are doing that. People have different levels of growth, different levels of understanding and maybe they should be where their level is so that they might grow. You are going to hear strong things here. If you are not ready for it it might do you in. A lot of people don't want to be around us because we are crying aloud and sparing not. I am not going to apologize for that. I am going to read what God says His standards are and how exacting they are. We are going to hold our feet to the fire. We are going to try to live up to those standards. I want God to show His glory in us as a group and as individuals. If we do it right He will. He has promised that, He is bound by His own word. He cannot help Himself. If we our part and He does not, then He's a liar. God is not a liar. He will perform His part if we do our part. We have absolute promises throughout the Bible.