

Pentecost 2023

Part 2: Preparing OUR Temple

(preached 5/28/23)

LAST WEEK:

- What did Jesus do in the 10 days He was in Heaven between His Ascension and Pentecost?
- Jesus entered the Heavenly Temple all the way to the HOH where Father God sits on His throne.
- As the Lamb of God, He was the last, best, and eternal blood sacrifice for the remission of our sins.
- As the eternal High Priest, He also presented Himself to Father God, making Intercession on our behalf.
- Father God was and is eternally pleased with His Son as both the Lamb and High Priest, accepting His sacrifice and Intercession!
- Jesus then sat down on His own throne at the right hand of His Father to rule and reign alongside Him.
- WHAT DID THIS DO TO/FOR US?
- For any who receive Jesus as Savior, our sins are eternally forgiven and Father knows our names, which are written on the heart of Christ!
- The Lord sent the Holy Spirit to write His Word—Who is Jesus—on our hearts which are the tablets of the NC!
- We now have the clearance to approach God...just like the High Priest!!!
- Jesus IS the curtain that separates God from humanity—He is the path. We must pass through Him to access Father.
- Let's therefore cast off all fear and approach Father in the HOH.
- He sits on a throne of Grace and not Judgment for the believer. Hebrews states believers receive grace and mercy when we approach, not wrath, disappointment, the silent treatment, or condemnation.

TODAY is Pentecost and we're going to further explore the work Jesus did in us—a work so miraculous and divine, let Him Baptize us all in God's Holy Spirit!

EXODUS COVENANT. After God made covenant with the Hebrews during the Exodus, He then gave a mind-blowing command:

[Exo 25:8-9 ESV] 8 And let them make me a sanctuary, **that I may dwell in their midst.** 9 **Exactly as I show you concerning the pattern** of the tabernacle, and of all its **furniture**, so you shall make it.

SINAI BLACK CLOUD. Let's do our best to get into the mind of the ancient Hebrews which includes their experience with the Lord so far. Previous to this command, God descended from heaven and hovered at the summit of Mt. Sinai, VEILING Himself in dark, black cloud because to look upon God directly was death. What's more is that God commanded that a barrier be erected around the base of the mountain so that neither man nor beast—except Moses—would ascend the mountain while God was there...under penalty of death.

SPOKE AUDIBLY. Then there was a massive earthquake that scared everyone half to death, then God spoke AUDIBLY which nearly completed the process! When the people heard God speak, they were sore afraid that they begged Moses to be the only one to hear from the Lord.

So now the same Lord is commanding that a massive tent be built so He can descend from heaven again and live AMONG His people!

EXACT SPECIFICATIONS. It wasn't a matter of Moses just throwing up any old tent...look at the verse again: the Lord wants His earthly house built to His EXACT specifications, not just in measurement *but what it's furnished with.*

MISSIONS TRIP. Imagine going on a missions trip to a foreign country half a world away where everything is different. In order to feel more comfortable, you ask the locals to build a house that's exactly like the one you live in now. Especially your living room where you spend most of your time: your recliner, coffee table, TV, etc. When you finally arrive, the country is foreign and unfamiliar but your living place is a close replica of your house in the states down to every detail. You would likely feel more comfortable, despite the outside surroundings.

That's the Tabernacle and future Temple—it was a replica of God's house in Heaven.

GOD VEILED HIMSELF. God is all powerful and holy—for Him to come to this corrupted earth and dwell among fallen humanity would mean death for the planet and us. So He had Moses, then David, then Solomon, and then Joshua/Ezra build Him an earthly home where He could live among us. He was still veiled by the walls, rooms, and curtain of these houses to “diminish” His presence as the dark clouds once did at Sinai.

He wasn't quite done with the Tabernacle prep:

[Exo 40:9 ESV] 9 "Then you shall take the anointing oil and anoint the tabernacle and all that is in it, and consecrate it and all its furniture, so that it may become holy.

[Exo 40:29 ESV] 29 And he set the altar of burnt offering at the entrance of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting, and offered on it the burnt offering and the grain offering, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

Clean & Sanitize. The locals have rebuilt your USA house to your exact specifications but there's just one thing: the country you're going to is rife with plague. So the next thing you ask them to do is clean and sanitize everything. The entire building and all the furniture within is cleansed with bleach so that by the time you walk in the doors there will be no trace of the virus or harmful bacteria.

CONSECRATION. *Now you understand the concept of consecration.* Before the Lord would descend from Heaven, He commanded the Hebrews to CONSECRATE everything and remove all corruption. They did so in a two-step process: 1) sacrificing an animal (shedding its blood) that was without spot or blemish, burning the remains, and offering it and 2) anointing everything with a specific oil blend God gave them.

COMPLETION. After Moses completed everything to God's specifications, this happened:

[Exo 40:34-35 ESV] 34 Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. 35 And Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud settled on it, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.

God descended and settled into His new home!!!

GOD IS SO POWERFUL AND HOLY THAT EVEN WITH HIM SEVERELY RESTRAINING HIS PRESENCE, MOSES HIMSELF CAN'T EVEN GO INTO THE TABERNACLE BECAUSE OF THE GLORY!

SUMMARY:

- God wanted to live among His people, NOT be separate from them.
- God commands a home that's a close replica of His home in Heaven.
- God consecrates His earthly home with blood and oil.
- God descends from heaven and fills His home with His glory.

Repeat after me: They Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven."

NC REVELATION. Now let's reveal the New Covenant revelation, an amazing truth which reveals what Jesus did to prepare you and I to be near to God and help bring His Kingdom here to earth:

[1Co 3:9-11, 16 ESV] 9 For we are God's fellow workers. You are God's field, God's building. 10 According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building upon it. Let each one take care how he builds upon it. 11 For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. ... 16 Do you not know

that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?

THIS JUST HAPPENED AS I WAS WRITING THE SERMON: when I started writing a few hours ago, I turned on my audio Bible and began with Romans. I just let it play in my ears while I type. In the SAME MOMENT I copied and pasted the verses above, my audio Bible had automatically moved to Corinthians after finishing Romans and was on these very verses just as I pasted them! I didn't plan this! The Holy Spirit orchestrated the whole thing!!!

The revelation Paul shares with the Corinthians is that we are God's Temple and have been since the beginning.

[Gen 1:26-27 ESV] 26 Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." 27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

Moses' Tabernacle was not the first instance of God's house on earth, it was Adam & Eve.

Humankind was created to mimic God's "LIVING ROOM" in Heaven.

God created a likeness of heavenly kingdom inside of us.

God's desire since the beginning wasn't just to walk among us as another being, but to live within us in the form of the Holy Spirit.

FURNITURE. Moses and Solomon's Temple weren't just built to specific measurements, but also contained particular furniture and articles that God wanted there. Just as you like your favorite recliner and lamp, God has His too and they are:

- The Fiery Altar of Sacrifice
- The Bronze Laver (a bowl or tub)
- The Table of Shewbread
- The Menorah (7 pronged lampstand).
- The Altar of Incense
- The Ark of the Covenant

YOU have all of these inside you because God put them there.

TEMPLE:

- The Fiery Altar is where unblemished animals were sacrificed and the remains burned for the forgiveness of sin.
- The Bronze Laver was a bowl or tub of still waters where the priests would wash their hands, face, and feet.
- The Table of Shewbread had bread the Priests would eat.
- The Menorah was 7 pronged candle filled with oil and burned perpetually.
- The Altar of Incense was the place of worship.
- The Ark is where God dwelt.

HP JESUS CLEANED OUT EMPTY TEMPLE. On the day you and I were Saved, High Priest Jesus had some work to do in us. We—His Temple—was already built but had fallen into tough times. Ever seen a home that's been empty while? Spiderwebs galore, dirt and dust, rotting wood, roof fallen in, etc. ***Homes like that require a carpenter...One Who really loves it and will put in the money, materials, and labor to renew it.***

JOSIAH. We named our youngest son Josiah after the righteous King of Israel in Scripture. There had been a long line of wicked kings and Israel had fallen away from the faith. Solomon's Temple was once a regal, shining building but had fallen into disrepair through lack of use and care.

CLEANSED TEMPLE. When Josiah took the throne He returned Israel to the Lord and one of the first things He did was clean up and repair the Temple. He also put to death the corrupt priests who had defiled the same, then replaced them with righteous ones. Then he consecrated the Temple and rededicated it to the Lord, resuming worship and sacrifice.

On the day you and I were Saved, King & Carpenter Jesus did the same thing. He entered into us, cleaned out the dirt and cobwebs, put to death our flesh which had defiled it, repaired and restored anything falling apart or rotted, then He cleansed and consecrated the whole thing with His blood. He walked into our Holy of Holies and took His rightful place enthroned upon the Ark of the New Covenant that He brought with Him and He remains there to this day.

THE HUMAN BODY:

- The fiery altar is where Jesus offered Himself as our sacrifice and where we repented of our old self and received Him.
- The Bronze Laver is where we are washed by the water of His Word, like being Baptized.
- The Table of Shewbread is where we eat of God's Word, filling our spirits.
- The Menorah is the light of God, fed by the oil of the Holy Spirit, that burns within us.
- The Altar of Incense is where we give thanks and praise to God, worshipping Him.
- The HOH in us is where He lives, enthroned on the covenant He made with us.
- Once He rests within us, His glory fills us.

We are consecrated by His blood and oil. We are holy ground. We are the Temple where God lives.

THIS IS WHO AND WHAT WE ARE, BECAUSE JESUS MADE US IN HIS LIKENESS.

Have you noticed a similar pattern in Psalm 23, the journey of Jesus in which we follow?

- Valley of Death's Shadow: where we die to self at fiery altar & are cleansed by Jesus' blood.
- Green Pastures: where we eat "the Shewbread."
- Still Waters: where we wash ourselves (bronze laver).
- Table before Enemies: we are anointed—consecrated—with oil. (Menorah)
- House of the Lord—the Holy of Holies where God dwells!

Peter brings us further:

[1Pe 2:4-9 ESV] 4 As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, 5 **you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices** acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. 6 For it stands in Scripture: "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame." 7 So the honor is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe, "The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone," 8 and "A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense." They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do. 9 But you are a chosen race, a **royal priesthood**, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

CORNERSTONE. The first Temple stone laid as the foundation is the "cornerstone" which sets the bar for all the other stones which follow and is the largest one. The "little stones" that follow are smaller, but are replicas of the cornerstone scaled down.

Jesus is the Cornerstone of the Church, and we are the "little stones" Peter is referring to here.

REJECTED. Cornerstone Jesus was "rejected by the builders" which were His own people, the Jews. Despite this rejection, Jesus became the cornerstone for the Church instead.

Remember that we are made in the image of Christ, so as He plays multiple roles, so do we.

- Jesus said He was God's Temple, and thus so are we.
- Jesus was the sacrifice and died to cleanse the Church, and we die to the flesh and Jesus' blood cleanses us.
- Jesus is the High Priest of Heavenly Temple & Church, and thus we are Priests of our OWN temple.

You are the Priest of your own Temple, with Jesus as High Priest.

Remember the furniture of Moses Tabernacle and Solomon's Temple and what they were for:

- **The Fiery Altar**: we live lives of repentance, offering sins, fears, and false beliefs to be burned on the altar.
- **The Bronze Laver**: the still waters of Jesus' Word cleanse us when we hear and read it.
- **The Table of Shewbread**: is the bread of life we eat—Jesus' Word—that fills our spirits.
- **The Menorah**: keep our lampstands full of God's oil so that the Holy Spirit burns brightly within us.
- **The Altar of Incense**: thank Him! Praise Him! Worship Who He is!
- **The Holy of Holies**: spend time with God! Approach Him.

The priests were the one who performed all these duties in the old temple, and we underpriests of Christ we do the same.

[Eph 2:19-22 ESV] 19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, 20 **built on the foundation** of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself **being the cornerstone**, 21 in whom the **whole structure**, being joined together, **grows into a holy temple in the Lord**. 22 In him **you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit**.

I heard something interesting last night, spoken by a celebrity. Even though this person isn't Saved and was referring to his own pride, the Holy Spirit showed me how the same concept could be applied in a Godly way.

The celebrity said: "people are always asking me 'what do I want to be' and the fact is I'm already everything I want to be."

Again: he was being prideful and leaving God out of his life. Yet now consider this: what if Jesus has already made us into what He wants us to be?

- Forgiven
- Made Righteous & Justified
- Loved by God eternally
- Holy Ground
- Child of God
- Inheritor of God's Kingdom including eternal life
- Filled with the Holy Spirit
- Jesus the Word written onto our hearts
- Given purpose in both this world and the next

I get it: I still sin and so do you. There are more areas of my life that need healing and repentance. I would like to operate at a greater level of faith than now and so much more. ***The Holy Spirit is my BFF and He's helping me with all these things from glory to glory.***

Yet at the same time: Jesus has made us into ALL of the above already. It is finished.

Because of Him I am Who He wants me to be!

This isn't a statement of pride or self-motivation, but one of humility and thankfulness toward Christ Who is the Author and Finisher of everything we are!