

APRIL 14, 2024

"Symbols"

Scripture: Exodus 27:1-8



SYMBOLS

3rd Sunday of Easter

AUTHOR

Moses is the author and wrote to the people of Israel. He wrote Exodus around 1450-1410 BC, about the same time as Genesis. Exodus was written in the wilderness during Israel's wanderings, somewhere in the Sinai Peninsula. The purpose of Exodus is to record the events of Israel's deliverance from Egypt and development as a nation. Moses also wrote Genesis, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.

CONTEXT

The Israelites had been made slaves by Egypt's Pharaoh but God eventually delivered them and Moses led them out of Egypt. They escaped through the Red Sea, traveled through the wilderness and set up camp at the base of Mount Sinai, God's holy mountain. There they received the 10 commandments and instructions for building a tabernacle as a center of worship. The tabernacle was important to Israel's national life and symbolized God's dwelling among His people and was the place where He would meet with the leaders and the people. As today's scripture passage begins, God gives instructions about the courtyard outside the tabernacle. In the courtyard the Israelites were to build an altar called the altar of burnt offering. It was the first thing the Israelites saw as they entered the tabernacle courtyard. Here sacrifices were constantly made and its presence reminded the people that they could only come to God by means of the sacrifices. It was the only way their sins could be dealt with.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Read Exodus 27: 1-8 (the plans for the altar of burnt offering).
2. Read Exodus 38: 1-7 (the actual building of the altar of burnt offering) and compare.
3. Read Exodus 29: 10-14. How is the sacrifice described? Why do you think there were such detailed rituals for these sacrifices?
4. God was serious about his relationship with the Israelites. What might have been the danger or consequences for Israel if they had created their own form of worship?
5. Read Hebrews 10:1-18. How does verse 1 describe the old system under the law of Moses that we read about in Exodus?
6. What was the shortcoming of the sacrifices?
7. What did the sacrifices remind the Israelites of, year after year? (Hebrews 10:3)
8. What they really needed was forgiveness. Read I John 1:9. What is promised?
9. In Hebrews 10:9 what does Jesus do?
10. How does Hebrews 10:12 impact us?

ENCOURAGEMENT

Hebrews 10:17-18 tells us that when we confess our sins they are forgiven and forgotten. And when sins have been forgiven, there is no need to offer any more sacrifices.

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