

Atoned and Washed

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[0 : 0 0] Please turn with me in your Bibles to Exodus chapter 27. It's good to be with you this morning. I'm going to preach from several passages all dealing with the same subject matter, 27.1-21, 31-21, and 34-38, 37.25-29, and 38.1-20.

But because the second half of it is the implementation, the actual carrying out of the instructions in the first half, and it's almost identical word for word. I'm not going to read it out loud right now.

I will incorporate it into my sermon, throughout the course of the sermon. But I will read 27.1-21 and 31-21. So let me pray for the reading and preaching of God's word.

Father, we have gathered in your Son's name, and we humble ourselves before you. waiting to hear from you.

As you always do, speak to us in and from your word to exalt your Son, Jesus, and to cheer our souls with the consolations that we have in him.

[1 : 2 4] Meet with us now in Jesus' name, we ask. Amen. If you would please stand, if you are able, for the reading of God's word from Exodus 27, 1-21, and Exodus 30, 1-21.

Amen. You shall make the altar of acacia wood, five cubits long and five cubits broad.

The altar shall be square, and its height shall be three cubits, and you shall make horns for it on its four corners. Its horns shall be of one piece with it, and you shall overlay it with bronze.

You shall make pots for it to receive its ashes, and shovels and basins and forks and firepans. You shall make all its utensils of bronze. You shall also make for it a grating, a network of bronze, and on the net you shall make four bronze rings at its four corners.

And you shall set it under the ledge of the altar so that the net extends halfway down the altar. And you shall make poles for the altar, poles of acacia wood, and overlay them with bronze.

[2 : 3 6] And the poles shall be put through the rings so that the poles are on the two sides of the altar when it is carried. You shall make it hollow with boards, as it has been shown you on the mountain, so shall it be made.

You shall make the court of the tabernacle. On the south side of the court shall have hangings of fine twine linen a hundred cubits long for one side. Its twenty pillars, and their twenty bases shall be of bronze, but the hooks of the pillars and their fillets shall be of silver.

And likewise, for its length on the north side there shall be hangings a hundred cubits long, its pillars twenty, and their bases twenty, of bronze. But the hooks of the pillars and their fillets shall be of silver.

And for the breadth of the court on the west side there shall be hangings for fifty cubits with ten pillars and ten bases. The breadth of the court on the front to the east shall be fifty cubits. the hangings for the one side of the gate shall be 15 cubits with their three pillars and three bases on the other side the hanging shall be 15 cubits with their three pillars and three bases for the gate of the court there shall be a screen 20 cubits long of blue and purple and scarlet yarns and fine twine linen embroidered with needlework he shall have four pillars and with them four bases all the pillars around the court shall be filleted with silver their hooks shall be bronze the length of the court shall be 100 cubits the breadth 50 and the height five cubits with hangings of fine twine linen and bases of bronze all the utensils of the tabernacle for every use and all its pegs and all the pegs of the court shall be of bronze you shall command the people of israel that they bring to you pure beaten olive oil for the light that a lamp may regularly be set up to burn in the tent of meeting outside the veil that is before the testimony aaron and his son shall tend it from evening to morning before the lord it shall be a statute forever to be observed throughout their generations by the people of israel now turn a couple pages to chapter 30 with me and i'm going to read verses 1 to 21 you shall make an altar on which to burn incense you shall make it of acacia wood a cubit shall be its length and a cubit its breadth it shall be square and two cubits shall be its height its horns shall be of one piece with it you shall overlay it with pure gold its top and around its size and its horns and you shall make a molding of gold around it and you shall make two golden rings for it under its molding on two opposite sides of it you shall make them and they shall be holders for poles with which to carry it you shall make the poles of acacia wood and overlay them with gold and you shall put in it put in put it in front of the veil that is above the ark of the testimony in front of the mercy seat that is above the testimony where i will meet with you and aaron shall burn fragrant incense on it every morning when he dresses the lamps he shall burn it and when aaron sets up the lamps at twilight he shall burn it a regular incense offering before the lord throughout the generations you shall not offer unauthorized incense on it or a burnt offering or a grain offering and you shall not pour a drink offering on it aaron shall make atonement on its horns once a year with the blood of the sin offering of atonement he shall make atonement for it once in the year throughout your generations it is most holy to the lord the lord said to moyses when you take the census of the people of israel then each shall give a ransom for the life to the lord for his life to the lord when you number them and there be we that there be no plague among them with when you number them each one who is numbered in the census shall give this half a shekel according to the shekel of the sanctuary the shekel is 20 shekels half a shekel as an offering to the lord everyone who is numbered in the census from 20 years old and upward shall give the lord's offering the rich shall not give more and the poor shall not give less than the half shekel when you give the lord's offering to make atonement for your lives you shall take the atonement money from the people of israel and shall give it for the service of the tent of meeting that it may bring the people of israel to remembrance before the lord so as to make atonement for your lives the lord said to moyses you shall also make a basin of bronze with its stand of bronze for washing you shall put it between the tent of meeting and the altar and you shall put water in it with which aaron and his son shall wash their hands and their feet when they go into the tent of meeting or when they come near the altar to minister to burn a food offering to the lord they shall wash with water so that they may not die they shall wash their hands

and their feet so that they may not die it shall be a statute forever to them even to him and to his offspring throughout their generations this is god's holy and authoritative word please be seated we live in a in an egalitarian society where people enjoy historically unprecedented levels of equality of course there's some kind of hierarchy and leadership in every society but generally speaking we can speak to whomever we want and expect to be treated as well as everyone else so this idea of being unworthy of being unworthy of someone or being unworthy to be at some place is something that's foreign to most of our day-to-day experience so let's do a thought experiment for a moment imagine that you are attending a red carpet event and you are in sweaty pajamas in in a flip-flops that are kicked with dirt and dust and dust and you didn't have a chance to shower so you stink and you have a bedhead okay and now imagine how you would feel in that place you'd feel completely out of place you would feel unworthy to be there you would be desperate for a shower you'd feel desperate for designer dress designer suit maybe some fame and celebrity go with this way you can feel like you can actually be there and you would maybe even also want thick layers of makeup to cover up your blemishes so if you feel so exposed and so helpless and unworthy in the presence of celebrities who are merely human if you feel so exposed and insecure in front of the rolling cameras and bright lights of a red carpet event how much more unworthy are we to be in the presence of god himself the infinite creator of heaven and the earth who with his all-seeing eyes dwells in unapproachable light god who is a consuming fire himself how do we meet with him how do we dwell in his presence that's the problem that this passage addresses starting in chapter 25 where the lord's instructions to moses and the israelites for the construction of the tabernacle began the tabernacle has been referred to exclusively as the dwelling the english word tabernacle just means tent but it's translating a hebrew word that means dwelling place the dwelling place of god god's residence but notice in chapter 27 20 to 21 which we read that the tabernacle starts to be called something else for the first time it says you shall command the people of israel that they bring to you pure beaten olive oil for the light that lamp may be regularly be set to burn in the tent of meeting outside the veil that is before the testimony aaron and his son shall tend to it from evening to morning this is the first time that the expression tent of meeting is used in the book of exodus to refer to the tabernacle so from exodus 25 to 27 19 the tabernacle has exclusively been called the dwelling 19 times but starting here in 27 20 until 30 38 it is exclusively called the tent of meeting a total of 14 times so when describing the most holy place and the holy place within the tabernacle proper its golden fire furnishings the ark of the testimony the atonement cover the golden lamp stand and the table of the presence and the covering and the veils the tabernacle is called the dwelling to emphasize its function as god's residing place his dwelling place but when describing the priests who facilitate the sacrifices and the bronze altar for atonement sacrifices

[11 : 27] and for the bronze base and for the washing inside the courtyard the tabernacle is called the tent of meeting to emphasize its function as the mediating place there and the meeting place between god and his people so in describing this function of the tabernacle this passage teaches us this important main point that we can meet with god because we have been atoned by the blood of christ and washed by the water of the spirit we're going to look at four different points we're going to start with god's holiness and the tent of meeting first by looking at the descriptions of the enclosure of the outer courtyard in 27 9 to 21 in 38 9 to 20 so the tabernacle proper the dwelling place of god was further enclosed by a series of interconnected curtains made with fine twine linen these curtains were connected to the pillars made of acacia wood or overlaid with bronze and then but their capitals at the top and the hooks and the fillets fillets or fillet we think of fillet of meat but it's just a strip of metal that's decorating the top of the column the capital the fillet and those the top part is silver that's on the outside these pillars and the enclosure forms a large rectangle around the tabernacle the longer side is north and south it's a hundred cubits which is about 150 feet long and then the two shorter sides are uh 50 cubits west and east and they're about 75 feet long and so if you want to imagine a tennis court the larger enclosure is about almost exactly twice as large as the tennis court both in its length and its breadth so that's the the outer enclosure of the courtyard and on the east side there is a 30 feet long screen at the center that's where the entrance is at the gate of the enclosure is and we have highlighted this a number of times over the last few weeks that entrance to the east is significant because the entrance to the garden of east was garden of eden was on the east and the entrance to the later temple will also be in the east the entrance to god's dwelling place always is faces an easterly direction where the sun rises like christ was raised from the dead but not only that it reminds us also of the fact that the israelites and all of us by extension are sinful people who live east of eden as john steinbeck put it in exile from the presence of god from the garden of eden and and so the material that the gate the screen is made of also reinforces the sense of distance uh 27 16 and 38 18 both tell us that the screen for the gate of the court was embroidered with needlework in blue and purple and scarlet yarns in fine twine linnet uh it's made of the same material uh of as the veil that separates the most holy place from the holy place the only thing that's different is that it doesn't have the cherubim worked into it so it's not god it doesn't represent god's heavenly dwelling place it in the holy of holies but it still has the all the royal markings of these colored yarns i mentioned to you a few weeks ago that the colored yarns were very expensive in those days because they didn't have synthetic dyes so the dyes had to be extracted manually from the glands of sea mollusks and plant barks and leaves and berries and precious metals and minerals so you'd have to scar the land to find the right plants and or wade through the sea to collect the right clams and snails that can be pressed and used to produce the dyes for these yarns and so these were very uncommon artifacts the scarlet yarn blue and purple yarns were uncommon materials of royalty and luxury so you would not see these kinds of materials in the common people's houses the same is true for the fine twined linen which the all the rest of the curtain of the outer enclosure is made up of it's not made of typical linen made from the fiber of beaten

flax which which was coarse uh it's it's it's made of the same material but this is very fine it has fine twine linen of the silkiest variety in genesis 41 42 when pharaoh appoints joseph as second in command in all of egypt guess what he puts on joseph he puts on him a linen fine linen garments of fine linen like the curtain that's around the enclosure so again this is royalty material so then the entire 450 foot perimeter is made up of rich materials like this and if we're in the israelite shoes we wouldn't marvel at it it's if you were children you'd probably want to go up and touch it wow look at how smooth that is look at how fine that material is and on top of that it's pretty imposing the curtains are 7.5 feet tall five cubits that means even some of the tallest current and former nba players like yaoming or taco fall who are 7.6 feet tall are not tall enough to look over it on flat foot which means none of us have any chance of looking over it and so only the top most part of the tabernacle would be visible from the outside so if you consider these details we can see that the tabernacle is not exactly a picture of approachability or accessibility the tabernacle was not meant to be a common ordinary place that anyone can casually walk into and stroll around like a public park this distance between us and god is also communicated through the gradation of holiness we see in the design of the tabernacle i've mentioned this to you before that that all the furnishings in the courtyard are made of bronze there the pillars on the outside are made of bronze but the top of the pillar the capitals are made of silver but then when you get to the tabernacle the tent inside proper the the pillars are made of silver but the not the the whole pillar the bottom of the pillars are made of silver but the top is made of gold the rest of the pillars made of gold so it's like the tabernacle has three levels or almost layers like three stories even though it's flattened on level ground it's like their stories the the the top of the outer enclosure fits to the the outside of the tent the bottom of that and then once you go furthest in inside the most holy place everything is gold you don't you see nothing but gold and so there's this gold level silver level bronze level it's kind of like how i feel when i when i uh ever travel on flights it's like the you you're waiting to board and there's this the gold level people who get to board before everybody else and they get to sit in the best seats and they get to eat the best food and get the best drink and and they have their own bathrooms and uh you know and then there's the silver level people i don't know what they get and then there's the bronze level people and then there are people like me right and so there's this distance between you and those people and and that's exactly what this tabernacle is supposed to convey there's the gold there's the silver there's the bronze and then there's you right i i want us to feel this gap between god and us you know not just in a theoretical way but in a visceral way at an emotional level before we move on to the next point because we can't appreciate what god does to bridge that gap unless we first feel that that chasm that we can't ever cross on our own in esther 4 11 when mordecai asks esther for help saying we are about to be exterminated as jews say state sanctioned pogrom they're about to kill us all and he asks esther pleased with her to go and talk to the king because she's the queen and then esther tells mordecai i can't just go into the king i have to be summoned if i go without

being summoned the only sentence is death unless the king graciously extends the scepter to show mercy that's the kind of that's the kind of respect and honor that an earthly king gets how much more the divine king you can't go to a king whenever you want you have to be summoned you have to be worthy and so we are no members of the royal family we're no queen we're common folk dirty sinful how are we supposed to enter the tent of meeting to meet with god you and i are not worthy it doesn't matter how many followers you have on social media it doesn't matter that you're the ceo of a fortune 500 company it doesn't matter that you have a phd and a postdoc and a post postdoc from harvard and mit it doesn't matter that your iq is off the charts or that your eq is off the charts it doesn't matter that you're a pretty good person who's never had a scandalous sin in your life you and i are not worthy and that's the reality between yahweh the lord god the holy one and us there is a gaping chasm that's impossible this is where the furnishings of the courtyard come into the picture and we're on to the second point our sinfulness and the altar of atonement the word atonement is seldom used outside of church nowadays but it means something similar to the word reparations which i'm sure you've heard more frequently it refers to the making of amends for some kind of injury or wrong done to another and atonement it covers over sin and offense it's a payment that satisfies divine justice chapter 30 verses 11 to 16 speak of this please turn there with me chapter 30 verses 11 to 16 when mooses conducts the census of the people of israel everyone 20 years old and above is required to pay half a shekel as an offering to the lord and later in exodus 38 25 to 26 there is an actual accounting of all the silver that was collected through this census tax and we are told that all the men over 20 years old were 603 550 there was that many of them and each of them paid a half a shekel resulting in a hundred talents and 1775 shekels of silver it's about 7601 pounds of silver in our in our rendering reckoning another passage in numbers one also mentions a census and it it has the same number of males 603 550 so it's probably referring back to the same census that exodus 30 speaks of and that's illuminating because in numbers it specifically mentions that this census was intended to count those from 20 years old and upward every man able to go to war in israel so census here it serves a military purpose in part to count the possible number of conscripts into the army which is the reason why the women and children are not counted this is the israelite equivalent of the selective service system have you guys gotten letters from the selective service system i guess well maybe i'm too old to get that now but um when you it's the it's the agency in the u.s government that keeps track of all eligible u.s citizens who are to who can be conscripted to serve in the army in a military draft the lord says to mooses in chapter 30 verse 12 read with me when you take the census of the people of israel then each shall give a ransom

for his life to the lord when you number them that there be no plague among them when you number them and then he continues in verses 15 to 16 the rich shall not give more and the poor shall not give less than the half shekel when you give the lord's offering to make atonement for your lives you shall take the atonement money from the people of israel and shall give it for the service of the tent of meeting that it may bring the people of israel to remembrance before the lord so as to make atonement for your lives this is a very fascinating passage why does every israelite man of military age need to make an atonement for his life and then give a ransom for his life to the lord when being counted in the census why is there a threat of a plague breaking out among them when a census is conducted the words ransom and atonement which is repeated throughout this passage give us clues about the nature of this payment what it does what its purpose is these men have been numbered to go to war later on in the conquest of the promised land their lives are essentially forfeit which is why they need a ransom payment this is their way of acknowledging that their lives are ultimately in the lord's hands the census tax is simultaneously a tribute and petition it's a tribute to the king acknowledging their subjection to his authority we're in your hands we're at your disposal it's also a petition asking the king to remember them with favor and protect and spare them so the silver collected through the census tax will be used for the construction of the tent of meeting so that it may bring it says if bring the people of israel to remembrance before the lord so as to make atonement for their lives since the rich man's life is not more valuable than the poor man's life and vice versa all pay the same half shekel no more and no less but there's still more meaning to this census tax there's this threat of a plague breaking out when the israelite men are being numbered there are a number of censuses taken throughout the old testament and here in exodus the census is taken before the construction of the tabernacle and then later similarly in second chronicles 2 a census is taken before the construction of the temple before solomon builds the temple in numbers 1 and 26 a census is taken to number the soldiers before the conquest of canaan and in numbers 4 the levites were specifically omitted from the census are counted for the service within the tabernacle because they don't serve in the military there's only one census in all of the old testament that does not serve a specific divinely sanctioned purpose and that's recorded in second samuel 24 and first chronicles 21 when king david orders a census of israel's men eligible for military service without god's express approval or command and guess what happens god punishes israel with a plague so that 70 000 men of israel die this account appears to be connected related to this passage in exodus 30 why is god so upset with david taking a census he's the king after all we can infer the reason from what his military commander joab who is charged with taking this actual census says to david in objection he says this may the lord add to his people a hundred times as many as they are are they not my lord the king all of them my lord's servants why then should my lord require this why should it be a cause of guilt for israel for kings and nations taking a census is a way of estimating their power

it's their way of sticking out their chest and flexing their muscles it's this is why it's their way of saying look at what vast army i have and my command don't mess with me and this is why taking a census is inherently offensive to god it's an act of hubris it's an act of independence and rebellion rather than humble submission to god in duranami 7 god specifically said that to hit to the israelites that he that he chose them as his treasure treasure of possession and set his love upon them out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth quote not because they were more in number than other people for they were the fewest of all the peoples god chose them because he said his love on them because he's keeping the promises he had made to their forefathers he did not choose them because they were a powerful numerous people because they deserved his affection so by counting the men eligible for military service david showed that his heart had strayed away from god that he believed in strength in numbers more than strength in the lord he trusted in his own hosts rather than in the lord of hosts this is another reason why exodus 30 requires the payment of atonement money when a census is being taken that there will be no plague among them when you number them what are some ways that you have taken a census in your own life do you look at your bank statements and investments with satisfaction and put your trust in them rather than in the lord do you look at your list of friends or look around at your family and put your trust in them rather than in the lord do you count your genealogy or your academic pedigree do you take stock of your talents how much smarter you are than others how much prettier you are than others how much stronger and more athletic you are than others how much cooler or funnier you are than others how much more liked you are than others stop counting those trivial numbers what truly matters is do you have god is god on your side rather are you on god's side for the foolishness of god is wiser than men and the weakness of god is stronger than men christ jesus is for us wisdom from god righteousness and sanctification and redemption let the one who boasts boast in the lord not in our own senses at the bottom of sin bottom of it sin is simply this it's displacing god with something or someone else in our lives and all of us have done that by taking various censuses in our lives and for that reason all of us need atonement but the payment of this atonement money only applied to men eligible for military service so the half shekel census text was a one-time only prescription to collect silver in part for the construction of the tabernacle so the more general atonement is needed and that's where the bronze altar in the courtyard comes in the fact that god commanded moises and israelites to build a bronze altar might be surprising to some of you if you remember god's specific instructions regarding altars in the book of the covenant in exodus 20 there god said this you have seen for yourselves that i have talked with you from heaven you shall not make gods of silver to be with me nor shall you make for yourselves gods of gold an altar of earth you shall make for me and sacrifice on it your burned offerings and your peace offerings

[31 : 39] your sheep and oxen if you make an altar of stone you shall not build it of hewn stones for if you wield your tool on it you profane it so note there's an interesting phrase in verse 20 you have seen for yourselves that i have talked with you from heaven it's very interesting what have they seen not god's face but god's voice that god speaks so this is why there is a prohibition in the bible of making carved images or idols for worship because god does not rule through images the pagans thought that gods their gods dwelled these images and idols and that they bowed down before them and worshiped them but god rules always our god through his word by speaking to us that's why they're not supposed to make images and that's why they're also not supposed to make altars that are meant to displace god and to represent god in a sense and so that's why when they're building an altar for sacrifice they must only build it out of earth out of dirt and if they are to use stones they are to use hewn they're not to use hewn stones only stones as they naturally exist in nature so that they are not they don't wield human tools on it put artistic representations on it it's just a common ordinary altar because you're not supposed to relate to god through the images but through his word by offering sacrifices to him in obedience to his word and so then this bronze altar in the courtyard of the tabernacle is an exception to that because this is where the priests of god themselves will regulate the worship they will be there to prevent idolatry and they will offer sacrifices according to the biblical prescriptions and so this is the one exception to that but outside of that any altar that they build for example later in Deuteronomy 27.4

Moses commands Israelites to build an altar when they cross over the Jordan and there they are told specifically to obey that command to build either an earthen altar or an altar with stones that are not hewn that are uncut stones so that command still applies in other places it's on this bronze altar that many sacrifices and offerings would be offered to God. Leviticus 1-7 tells us about five different kinds of sacrifices and offerings that would be offered on this bronze altar. First is the burnt offering which is the most costly kind of offering because it entailed the burning whole of the entire animal sacrifice with nothing left remaining as a pleasing aroma to the Lord. The second kind of offering is the grain offering which is an offering of the first fruits thanking God for the harvest. Third is the peace offering featuring an animal sacrifice that was actually consumed by the worshippers and the priests in the presence of God enjoying fellowship with God so sometimes it's called the fellowship offering. The fourth is the sin offering which served to purify people from the defiling effects of unintentional sins and then fifth is the guilt offering which was an atoning sacrifice for guilt incurred by causing damage or loss to God or to your neighbor for sins that require restitution making restitution so all these offerings and sacrifices are ultimately fulfilled in Jesus because we know from Hebrews 10 that these sacrifices were merely a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of those realities. These sacrifices that the Israelites offered could not as the Bible says atone for sin in an ultimate sense. They only pointed to the once for all sacrifice that Jesus would make on the cross by dying for our sins and all five of these sacrifices point to that. Four of them feature a ram, an unblemished ram which points to Jesus who is the Passover lamb, unblemished lamb sacrifice for us and then the fifth, the grain offering or the peace offering rather is the grain offering also represents us, Jesus bringing us the first fruits of God. Sorry and there's still other ways that the bronze altar point to Jesus and this is it in terms of its physical appearance. It's square, 7.5 foot square and it stands 4.5 feet tall and it's placed right inside the courtyard enclosure so it's the first thing you see as you enter the courtyard and it would dominate your view as you enter. It's an unmistakable message: no human being may approach God safely unless there's sacrifice unless there is atonement. It's made of wood which might seem counterintuitive for an altar because it'll burn but it's remember it's overlaid with bronze to protect it and the one very significant feature of it is that this altar has horns on its four corners that's one piece with the altar itself and there's a practical purpose for this. Psalm 118:27 tells us that the sacrifices were tied using the horns on the four corners maybe to stabilize it or maybe it makes it easier to lift it in and out of the hollow altar but there's an even more important way, more important symbolic meaning to this because animals often use their horns to demonstrate their strength and to establish dominance in the ancient world. Horns came to symbolize strength and power and victory so in Daniel 7 he sees in his vision a picture of a beast with ten horns and we are told that that represents ten kings so horns can represent powerful kings. Psalms frequently feature prayers to God asking God to cut off the horns of the wicked but to exalt or lift up the horns of the righteous but even more

the horn is often associated in scripture with the Lord God himself or with his anointed one with his Messiah the king so Psalm 18:2 cries out the Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer my God my rock in whom I take refuge my shield and the horn of my salvation my stronghold in 1 Samuel 2 Hannah prays for the day when the Lord will break his adversary to pieces and give strength to his king and exalt the horn of his anointed. Psalm 130 to 17 prophesies of a day when the Lord will make a horn to sprout for David and finally in Luke 1:68 to 69 shortly before Jesus' birth Zachariah prophesies of his birth blessed be the Lord God of Israel for he has visited and redeemed his people and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David so Jesus is the horn of salvation who shatters the enemies of God to save

God's people Jesus' very name means the Lord is salvation it's no wonder then that in Exodus 29 12 and Leviticus 4 7 God commands that after you make a sacrifice a sin offering you are supposed to daub its blood on the four horns of the altar representing the blood that Jesus sheds for us to save us and it is because of this what the horn represents the horn of salvation that there is a practice that is attested throughout the Old Testament that when people sin and the evildoers are about to be punished for their sin if they are repentant and they acknowledge their guilt they can go into the tabernacle the courtyard and they can grab hold of the horns of the altar as a way of pleading for amnesty asking for mercy from the king who is about to punish them so this is what Adonijah does in 1st King 150 he is guilty of sedition he was trying to usurp the kingdom from right under the noses of King Solomon but he is caught and his party is dispersed and he knows he is about to be cut down to death so he runs into the tabernacle he grabs hold of the horns of the bronze altar and Solomon because of that spares him at least for that time and so that is what

Jesus represents for us remember that Jesus is the horn that sinners can run to to grab hold of and cling to death is hounding you perhaps even this very day because you are a sinner you are guilty of sedition you have rebelled against God our rightful king by serving other gods and living for yourself you will surely be cut down you will surely die you will surely be condemned to hell but there is a refuge you can run to you can run into the quarry you can grab hold of the horns of the altar you can cling to Jesus whose blood was poured out for us as an atoning sacrifice so that we might be forgiven and reconciled to God maybe you feel like running away maybe you feel that guilt and shame that's not reason to run away from God that's reason to run to him to run to Jesus say I have no salvation apart from you

[41 : 04] Lord Jesus I cling to your horn of salvation it's then and only then that you will find mercy let's now look at the other furnishing within the courtyard the bronze basin for washing Exodus 30 17 to 21 tells us that this bronze basin stood between the tent of meeting and the bronze altar and this is where Aaron and his sons the priests were to wash their hands and feet before ministering at the altar so that they don't die later in 38-8 when this bronze altar basin is actually built it gives us one additional tidbit of detail that's fascinating it says that the bronze basins was made quote from the mirror of the ministering woman who ministered in the entrance of the tent of meeting so even though only Aaron and his sons served as priests within the tabernacle there were women who served in the courtyard of the tabernacle isn't that amazing I think that's even at this stage of redemptive history we see a clear example that women were intimately and indispensably involved in the ministry of God's dwelling place men and women had distinct roles but they both had indispensable roles and it's the same in the church today which is the new covenant temple of God though only certain men serve as elders of the church there are many women who are vitally involved in the ministry of God's house and it's also special that it's there these ministering women's contribution of their bronze mirrors that is used to build this bronze basin at that time in those days they didn't use clear reflective glass as mirrors they used bronze and so they offer up their bronze mirrors which makes this bronze basin instead of using their mirrors to beautify themselves they offer up their bronze mirrors so that God's people the priests can be purified it's a very special way to give of yourself to God and so when you enter through the enclosure into the courtyard of the tabernacle so you'd first see the bronze altar it's imposing fixture there and then you go past that and you'll see the basin the bronze basin which is like a sea of water the basin's later equivalent when Solomon builds his temple is actually called the sea it's called the bronze sea and so once you pass through that water you go into the tabernacle proper which is the dwelling place of God so imagine for a moment in the bird's eye view what this progression looks like going further and further in to the tabernacle does that remind you of anything you've seen so far in Exodus when the Israelites were slaves in Egypt they had to sacrifice the Passover lamb an unblemished lamb then they had to pass through the Red Sea right and then in the wilderness they were guided by the pillars of fire and smoke and fed with manna the bread from heaven and inside the holy place what do you find the lamp stand and the bread of the presence now and then you go further in and then you find the most holy place the very footstool of God where God dwells with his people and that's exactly what God promised what happened when the Israelites entered the promised land where God will dwell with them so the tabernacle you go with the sacrifice cross the water into the wilderness where you are fed and guided by the light and fire and smoke pillar and you go into the promised land where God dwells with you the tabernacle is a reenactment of Israel's salvation history and that too is ultimately fulfilled by Jesus because Jesus makes his once for all atoning sacrifice on the cross and dies for us and when Jesus died it says in John 19:34 that a Roman soldier just pierced his side with the spear just to make sure that he is dead and then at once there came out blood and water from his side and John's there making an intentional theological point in John 7:38-39 Jesus said whoever believes in me out of his heart will flow rivers of living water and now this he said about the spirit John tells us the image of water is frequently used throughout the Bible to refer to the rinsing the reviving and the renewing and regenerating activity of the Holy Spirit so when Jesus dies on the cross and makes satisfaction atonement for our sins the spirit of God is symbolically poured out in the water that pours out from his heart out of his heart flows rivers of living water which is a fulfillment of the prophecies in Zechariah 12 and 13 that the one whom that they have pierced will save them and that he will become for them quote a fountain that cleanses them from sin and uncleanness so Jesus is the one who was pierced and who became the fountain from whom the spirit of God comes gushing out to cleanse us from all sin there's a

I don't know if you guys have dreams often but there's a widely observed attested dream throughout the world and it's one of people feeling dirty and then washing themselves again and again in the dream this kind of dream sometimes occurs when people feel like they are in a morally compromising situation when they feel they lack integrity or honesty and this is the spiritual reality for all of us we are morally spiritually grubby people and we need the water of the Holy Spirit to cleanse us to be have you ever tried washing yourselves without water you could use soap all you want I mean you could use put hand sanitizer all over your body if you want to you're not going to feel clean at all you're going to feel more achy if you want a real wash you need water no matter what you do to try to wash yourself with your own good works you cannot make yourself clean you need the water of the Holy Spirit to rain on you to pour out on you to cleanse you and that's what's represented in the washing of baptism and receive the Holy Spirit if you repent of your sins and believe in Jesus and make a public profession of your faith and get baptized you will receive the Holy Spirit and that brings me to my short final point our holiness and the living sacrifice

I mentioned to you earlier that all five types of offerings were offered on this bronze altar in the courtyard but there is one particular offering that is specifically especially associated with this bronze altar and that is the burnt offering throughout the book of Exodus the bronze altar is repeatedly called the altar of burnt offering Leviticus 1 9 specifies the burnt offering was the most costly kind of offering because you burn up the entire animal and leave nothing behind and it's as a pleasing aroma to the Lord and in this way burnt offerings signify that God's people are to be completely consecrated to him totally devoted to him and that idea is connected to the altar of incense which is a furnishing inside the holy place the golden incense immediately before the veil that separates the most holy place from the holy place we intentionally didn't talk about that when we were talking about furnishings inside the holy place because the Bible intentionally puts it together with the bronze altar and associates those two things theologically just like the bronze altar just like the bronze altar the golden altar of incense in the holy place is square it too has four horns on its corners and it too is supposed to be the horns are supposed to be daubed with the blood of the sin offering and in the same it's just the same as the bronze altar it says in the bronze altar you were supposed to offer a burnt offering twice a day once in the morning once at twilight in the same way there's supposed to be incense offered on this golden altar in the holy place twice a day once in the morning and once at twilight at exactly the same time so whenever the priests offer the burnt offering at the bronze altar an incense is being offered on the altar golden altar of incense so do you see the connection there it's the burnt offering is entirely burned up to God to be a pleasing aroma to God and then the pleasing aroma ascends to the very dwelling place of God in the form of the smoke and the incense in the golden altar that's what's happening there and this aroma would have been so pleasant it says in 30, 34, 35 it says to take sweet spices stacte and anise and galbanum sweet spices with pure frankincense and make an incense blended as by the perfumer seasoned with salt pure and holy this was a distinct smell that was to be associated with

God's dwelling place only no one else was to use this specific combination of spices and perfumes and this represents God's lavish hospitality toward us imagine a family Christmas dinner with the resinous scent of pine trees just imagine that and the cinnamony aroma of mulled wine and gingerbreads you smell that when you walk into a house you feel at home you feel loved you feel cared for that's what these smells evoke as the priests are ministering in the holy place God's hospitality God's welcome God's fellowship with his people and where does that aroma come from it comes from the sacrifices that we make it comes from the burnt offerings as people who have been sanctified by the Holy Spirit we ourselves get to offer up sacrifices of worship to God and it ascends to the very heavens where God dwells that's what Paul is speaking of in Romans 12

[51 : 40] I appeal to you therefore by the mercies of God to present your bodies as a living sacrifice Revelation 5 and 8 speak of how the prayers of the saints when we pray that they come up to God as smoke of the incense from the golden censer and an altar as a pleasing aroma to God Hebrews 13 15 says that continually offer up sacrifice of praise to God that is the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name so when we acknowledge God and praise him with our lips when we cling to him and depend on him in prayer when we live a life of faith and obedience instead of being conformed to the patterns of this world we are offering up a living sacrifice to God that's how we ought to live and remember this is a burnt offering you don't offer a part of it you offer the whole thing all of you your whole life every minute of it everything you have head to toe all that you are completely devoted to him because that's what God deserves and that comes up to him as a pleasing aroma is there a greater privilege than that to offer yourself up wholly to God and say

I am yours it's when we do that that we also bear witness to others as Paul says in 2nd Corinthians we become the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing let's pray that we would be that as a church together yes father we do offer up our whole selves to you we want to be devoted to you we want to be a whole not partial a whole burnt offering we want to be a pleasing aroma to you father that we can be a pleasing aroma in your living room that we can please you with our worship that we can please you with our prayers that we can please you with our obedience God is too much of a privilege for us to bear help us never to lose sight of it take our lives

Lord and let it be consecrated all to you Lord in Jesus name we pray amen