



2026 Weekly Devotions

Week of: July 6th - 12th

Sermon: July 5th



July 6

John 10:9; Acts 4:12

To be honest with you, when I read through Exodus 38, I wondered what in the world would I write about and eventually preach about from this chapter. We have covered so many aspects of this great book and as we come down to the final 3 chapters, we don't want to repeat ourselves or "waste" a Sunday morning opportunity. The Spirit was gracious as He opened my eyes to some beautiful salvific truths painted masterfully in this chapter. I hope that you will stand in awe of the continuity in the Scriptures and God's omniscience in revealing the scarlet thread of redemption from Genesis 3 all the way to Revelation 22.

As you meditate on this chapter and consider the sermon that I preached on Sunday, zero in on the walls of the courtyard for a bit. Notice that the dimensions are given, the types of materials for the curtains, the pillars, the bases, the hooks and fillets, and the screen for the gate. This is a sizeable structure that surrounds the tabernacle itself. So keep in mind that the holy place and the holy of holies were what constituted the tabernacle itself and the courtyard is what surrounded it.

The people were given an obvious picture that God was on the inside of that structure, and they were on the outside. There was a clear separation between God and His people with only ONE gate to enter. The gate was about thirty feet wide and nearly eight feet tall. It was embroidered so that it stood out from the rest of the courtyard walls. The point that I want you to ponder today is that there was only one way provided to get to God. That is still true for mankind today dear people.

John recorded words that Jesus spoke in the tenth chapter of his gospel. He wrote, "I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture" (John 10:9). The clear meaning of the passage is summed up in what John recorded later: "Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through Me'" (John 14:6). Church family, I hope you meditate on the picture that is provided for us in Exodus 38 and become amazed by the clear teaching of this passage that has held true for all time. There is only way to God and He was making that clear all the way back during the time of Moses and the Israelites.

When God gave Moses the blueprints on the top of Mt. Sinai for this structure, He was already revealing His plan of redemption in and through Jesus Christ. God is set apart from humanity with access provided to Him by One means only. That one way is none other than Jesus Christ. When Jesus taught that He was the door, this is what He was talking about. Luke wrote in the book of Acts these words, "And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). It does my heart good and strengthens my faith when I realize that the New Testament illuminates the Old and that the two Testaments together reveal a single and perfect plan that God executed with sovereignty and precision. He is indeed in control of all things, and I am glad and we are safe.

July 7

Matthew 7:13-14

It is biblically faithful to say that God is the One who establishes the way by which we can meet with Him. We don't get to make up our own way to Him like so many false religions attempt. We are not permitted to say that we can get to Him by our works. We cannot get to Him by our own piety, self-denial, or legalistic "dos and don'ts". There is one way and He determined that would be by faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross, His resurrection from the dead, and ascension back to the Father's side.

I find it interesting that when Matthew wrote about entering the Kingdom of God, he did so by describing entrance through a gate (Matt. 7:13-14). He described the gate as being narrow in comparison to the wide gate that leads to destruction and eternal separation from God. The wide gate is easy to get through and many walk through unhindered and without a care in the world. The narrow gate on the other hand, is harder to navigate through, comes with many trials and challenges (Acts 14:22), and few people, in comparison to the wide gate, find it. That being said, it is still God's established way for getting to Him.

The walls around the tabernacle are intended to teach the people, and us, that there is no access to God other than the way that He is providing. The reason for this separation is our sin. You can go all the way back to the Garden of Eden to get your first vision of what sin does to our fellowship with God. Adam and Eve sinned against God when they ate of the forbidden fruit from the tree of good and evil (Gen. 3:11). As a result of their sin, death entered the human race (Gen. 2:17) and mankind was driven out from the presence of God (Gen. 3:23-24). Ever since that day, enmity has existed between God and man with no access to Him unless, in His grace, He revealed Himself to a person like Noah or Moses or made a way back Himself. This of course we know He has done in Jesus.

So, there is one single gate in the walls of the courtyard by which the people can draw nearer to God. Let us turn our attention now to what they found upon entering through the gate. What we are about to learn is that inside the courtyard God has once again painted with amazing detail what is necessary for a person to gain access to Him, forgiveness, acceptance and restoration. It is rather astounding when you pause and consider the ramifications of our sins and the price paid for redeeming us.

As we enter through the gate, we are immediately faced with a large 8 feet by 8 feet square structure that is nearly 5 feet tall made of wood and covered in bronze. It looks like a big grill as it has a grate on the top with an ash pan underneath for ashes. There are horns crafted out of bronze on each corner and various utensils, pots, basins, and forks all made out of bronze as well. This large altar has a fire blazing in the fire pan that never goes out. We learn that priests are responsible for a very important task that is performed on a continual basis. It is here that burnt offerings are to be made on behalf of the people for their sins in order to gain for them God's forgiveness and thus His mercy and grace.

July 8

Leviticus 17:11

I have a hard time imagining what it must have looked like and smelled like at the altar of burnt offerings just inside the courtyard. The number of animals brought in and slaughtered there was immense. There were so many people, so many sins, so much atonement to be gained that the fire in the altar never went out. Moses wrote in Leviticus, “The fire on the altar shall be kept burning on it; it shall not go out. The priest shall burn wood on it every morning, and he shall arrange the burnt offering on it...” (Lev. 6:12). You can read Leviticus 3-5:13 to learn more about the regulations and requirements of the sin offerings.

Please don’t fail to see that the altar was a place of bloody sacrifice. We should ask ourselves the question – Why? Why this grotesque, smelly, killing station at the very entrance of the courtyard. Dear ones, I hope and pray that you will walk away from this week and this sermon with a better understanding of the seriousness of your own sin. Friend, sin is no light matter and the debt to be paid to cover our sins is almost incomprehensible – if we fail to understand God’s holiness and our treason against Him.

The bronze altar was meant to scream to those entering the courtyard that they are sinners, and the debt of every person’s sin must be paid in blood. It helps to understand that when the Bible says, “there is no forgiveness of sins without the shedding of blood,” He means that the payment must be life. In Leviticus 17:11 it says, “For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it for you on the altar to make atonement for your souls.” This is incredibly important and you must grasp this truth in order to truly understand why Jesus had to die on the cross in our place.

The blood is God’s way of saying life. When He says that blood must be shed, He is saying that life must be given for the payment of sin. “For the wages of sin is death” (Rom. 6:23). Adam was told that if he ever sinned against God, death would be the punishment. It was and it still is! Recall that in the Garden of Eden, animals were killed so that Adam and Eve’s shame due to their sin could be “covered.” A lamb died because of their sins, and a Lamb died for us because of ours.

The Israelites would bring to the priest inside the courtyard a proper offering for their sins and the priest would slaughter it in accordance with the Levitical requirements providing atonement for the sins of the one bringing the offering. Here is what Moses wrote in Leviticus 1, “He shall bring it to the entrance of the tent of meeting, that he may be accepted before the Lord. He shall lay his hand on the head of the burnt offering, and it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him” (vv. 3-4). The laying on of the hands on the head of the burnt offering was symbolic of transferring the guilty party’s sin to the substitutionary sacrifice. Oh dear one, I hope that you see that our sin was transferred to Jesus Christ as He paid the debt that we owed with His own life and the shedding of His own blood.

July 9

Hebrews 9:11-12, 10:1-4

I think it would be appropriate to begin this “point to ponder” with a lengthy passage of Scripture quoted directly and fully from God’s Word. The author of Hebrews wrote, *“For since the law was but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near. Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, since the worshippers, having been cleansed, would no longer have any consciousness of sins? But in these sacrifices, there is a reminder of sins every year. For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins”* (Heb. 10:1-4). The altar of burnt offerings provided only temporary forgiveness for the people making the offerings every year.

Isn’t it wonderful that God would explain the use of the Old Testament Levitical system to us? It was His plan all along for those laws to provide temporary forgiveness while they pointed to the ultimate fulfillment of atonement to be made through Christ. The system truly was only a shadow or typology that pointed to a future fulfillment. Friend, be encouraged by the clear teaching that God had a plan from the outset and that He worked out all the details even while providing a means of atonement for the people. The Law was to point to Jesus, and I pray that you see how it so clearly did.

Note that what the author of Hebrews had written in chapter 9. There he penned these precious words, “But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) He entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of His own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption” (Heb. 9:11-12). As I read this passage in view of Exodus 38, I nearly had a holy fit. These words make so much more sense to me when I think about the tabernacle and the walls around the courtyard.

He entered dear ones into the tabernacle, the very presence of God the Father, not by the shed blood of goats and other animals, but by His own shed blood. This is an amazing picture of what Exodus 38 is all about. The Israelites were dependent upon this Levitical system for sacrifice and atonement and the services of a sinful priest who needed forgiveness too. The priests of their day had to get clean before approaching God for the people because they were sinners too. In Christ alone, there is perfection and His perfect life is all that is necessary for Him to enter into the presence of God. He is not entering into some manmade tent. He is entering into the very throne room of heaven with no need of a mediator, a priest, or the shed blood of some goat or calve. Oh no friend, He is entering by His own merit and is willing to impute that to all who will bow the knee to Him as Lord and thus Savior. When John the Baptist said in John 1:29, “Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world”, this is what he meant. He was offered on the altar for you and me and through Him we have access to the Father.

July 10

Ephesians 5:26-27

As we walk past the altar of burnt offerings, the next sacred object that we see is the bronze basin intended for ceremonial washing or cleansing of the priest. If you look back at Exodus 30:20 you will find, “When they go into the tent of meeting (tabernacle), 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.” The priests were to be clean when they were serving on behalf of the people and when they approached the holy place to serve the Lord.

The bronze basin was intended to serve as a reminder for the need for holiness before approaching God. You see, the altar of burnt offerings was the place where sacrifice was made for Israel’s transgressions. Atonement was granted or achieved by the blood given to take away the guilt of the people’s sin. The bronze basin reveals to us that there was still a need for cleansing even after the declaration of atonement was granted. Some scholars see in the Exodus a connection with the courtyard as well as our salvation in Christ.

In the deliverance or exodus from the bondage of slavery in Egypt, the Israelites first received atonement for their sins through the sacrifice of the Passover Lamb, which is symbolized by the altar in the courtyard. Then they passed through the waters of the Red Sea symbolizing cleansing. They walked through the Red Sea and lived while their enemies were destroyed. The bronze basin is meant to symbolize the cleansing power of God’s grace to wash away sin. Every time the priest offered a sacrifice on the altar or every time they entered the tent of meeting, they had to be clean. It was wash or be killed!

Like nearly everything else in the tabernacle, the basin was a shadow of the gospel. When God gives us new life in Christ, He declares us just. We know from the full counsel of God’s Word that there is a continual need of cleansing as we battle our sin nature or flesh while sanctification is being accomplished in our lives. We are told that Christ sanctifies His bride, the church (you and me) “by the washing of water with the Word” (Eph. 5:26). Paul goes on to say that Christ’s intention is to make us holy and without blemish (v. 27). The basin signifies the need for continual cleansing as children of God.

Paul wrote to Titus these informative words, “...He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to His own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit. In many ways, we think of baptismal waters as a symbol pointing to the cleansing that has taken place in a believer’s life when they are submerged in the water. The point of this devotion today is that the sacred objects in the courtyard speak of the atoning work accomplished by the blood sacrifice that makes sinners right with God and then pure cleansing water (the Word of God and the Holy Spirit) that makes us holy as we yield ourselves in obedience to our Lord and Savior.

July 11

John 19:30; Hebrews 9:25-26

Once the sacrifice had been made and the blood shed and applied, and the priest had gotten “clean”, access to the Father was granted. At this point in history, only the priest could enter the holy place and only the high priest the holy of holies once a year. There was still a sacrifice that would need to be made that would put an end to the ceremonies required for atonement, propitiation, justification, and so forth. As we have learned by now, that sacrifice would be Jesus Christ – the Son of God Himself.

The author of Hebrews wrote, “Nor was it to offer Himself repeatedly, as the high priest enters the holy places every year with blood not his own, for then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. But as it is, He has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself” (Heb. 9:25-26). Dear friends, the blood of God was paid which satisfied His own demands once and for all. Bulls and goats were not ultimately enough, and neither was the blood of sinful man. It had to be God Himself. It reminds me of what is written in Genesis 22:8, “God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son.” These were the words Abraham spoke to his own son Isaac on Mt. Moriah. God provided a lamb then and He provided the Lamb for us too.

When Jesus was hanging on the cross, He said seven different phrases at various times. The final one was simply this, “It is finished” (John 19:30). This was the greatest declaration of victory ever uttered. The question that needs to be asked is, “What was finished?” Simply put, all of the ceremonial requirements demanded by the law of God that required the altar of burnt offerings, the bronze basin for cleansing, the altar of incense, the table for the Presence, the lamp stand, the need for the priests, and the blood of sacrificial animals was finished. At His death, and because of it, God’s plan of redemption was done and all that remained was for Jesus to rise from the dead to prove it.

For Jesus, His suffering was finished, His perfect obedience was finished, the payment that satisfied the wrath of God was finished, the blow that defeated Satan was finished, and the Old Covenant was finished as the New took its place. For us, having to carry the burden of the law’s requirements was finished, wondering if we are good enough was finished, limited access to our heavenly Father was finished, and being grafted into the family of God securely was made possible.

Friend, when you consider the sacred objects we discovered in the courtyard of the tabernacle, please remember that Jesus took carry of the altar of burnt offerings by voluntarily laying Himself there as our perfect and final sacrificial substitute and the cleansing basin, the Holy Spirit, serves to continually cleanse us as He sanctifies us from one degree of glory to another as we follow Christ. Justification has been granted and sanctification is progressing in our lives by the mercy and grace of the One who laid down His life for ours. What a God we serve and what an incredible plan He advanced throughout history. I can’t wait to see the rest of His plan unfold.

July 12

Leviticus 16:21; Romans 10:9

It is finished so what must we do? You might recall that earlier in the week, I mentioned that the person giving the sacrifice to the priest as a burnt offering would lay their hands on the head of the animal to symbolize the transfer of their guilt onto the sacrifice. The death and shed blood of the sacrificial animal were to serve as a substitute for the person and their families and atonement would be made (Lev. 1:1-4).

Another interesting ceremonial act takes place at the altar as well. Another goat is offered as a sacrifice, but this time a live goat is brought to the high priest. A description of this event is provided in Leviticus 16 where we read, "...he shall present the live goat. And Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat and confess over it all the iniquities of the people of Israel, and all their transgressions, all their sins. And he shall put them on the head of the goat and send it away into the wilderness...The goat shall bear all their iniquities on itself" (vv. 21-22). This is where we get the term *scapegoat*.

Of the two goats brought to the priest, one would be slaughtered for the sins of the people because, as stated before, the wages of sin is death and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins. The other, as mentioned above, would be released into the wilderness symbolically carrying on itself all the sins of the people. This is of course foreshadowing Christ who is the complete atonement for our sins.

We know from Revelation 13:8 that Jesus was the Lamb slain from the creation of the world as a sacrifice for our sins. We also know that God made Him our scapegoat. We learn from 2 Corinthians 5:21 that he laid on Him the sins of the world so that we might become His righteousness. From Isaiah 53:6 we know that God laid on Him the iniquity of us all. The scapegoat was driven into the wilderness because once the sins of the people were laid on his head, he was considered unclean. This is why Jesus was crucified outside of the city. Our sins were laid on Him, and he was driven from the city. Jesus embodied what the scapegoat represented.

Dear friends, it is imperative that each one of us be sure that we have come to the Lord Jesus and by faith laid our hands on Him for the removal of our sins, the payment for them, and the righteousness that becomes ours only by trusting wholeheartedly in His finished work on the cross for us. Hebrews 10:10 says, "And by that will, we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." Friend, you must not continue to wait to surrender completely to the Lordship of Christ.

Paul wrote in Romans 10:9, "If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved." Don't delay any longer dear one. Recognize your sinfulness and Jesus as the only Way, and place, by faith, your hands on the only One who can save you. He is willing, are you? He paid for your sins, and he removed them as far as the east is from the west (Ps. 103:12).