

EXODUS 38:1-8 (JUSTIFIED AND SANCTIFIED BEFORE OUR GOD)

On the day I typed this sermon, which was 10 October 2016, I received word that a friend of mine had died. Jeff loved the Lord desperately and he often spoke to others about Him. He had a group on Facebook called “Homeward Bound” where he would post happy messages about Christ.

When I traveled the 50 states in 2010, I got to meet him personally and we shared a few hours together at a marvelous Greek restaurant. He also came to Florida to visit us for a few days sometime after that.

Jeff was saved by the Lord and He loved the Lord. But he also struggled with life. He had addictions that he couldn’t overcome. He was often depressed and would email asking for prayer. “Charlie, I’m in a very low spot right now.” We would pray and I carried him with me often in my heart during these times.

He would also have extreme highs, and he *never* failed to thank the Lord for them. He loved his family, he cherished his friends, and he connected me with more Facebook friends than any other person I know. He was always sending me new friend requests to approve. I have come to cherish many of them. He had the knack of knowing how to fit the right people together.

Well, my friend Jeff is no longer Homeward Bound. He has arrived at His final destiny, there to live in perfect contentment and peace with his Lord.

Today, we are going to look at two different pieces of tabernacle furniture that describe two different functions in the process of redemption. We’ve already seen what they picture, and so we will look deeper into how those pictures are actually realized in the work of Christ in and for us.

The first is the Altar of Burnt Offering and it looks at the process of justification. The second is the Bronze Laver and it looks to the process of sanctification.

Jeff got the first process settled at the foot of the cross. He was pardoned for the sins of his life, once and for all, through the work of Christ. Jeff struggled with the second process. He would go in fits and starts through cycles of sanctification and then falling back into the world.

Thank God that the race isn't up to us to complete. The sanctification of this life is one which keeps us healthy and in a right walk towards Christ. The full and final sanctification, however, comes solely through the work of the Lord. We'll see that as we go along today. But I cannot stress to you enough the importance of these two processes.

Text Verse: "Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, ³⁹ nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Romans 8:37-39

To stand justified before the Lord means that we are free from condemnation. We have overcome and we are guaranteed a place at the heavenly banquet which has been prepared for the redeemed of the Lord.

To be sanctified in its fullest sense is something that is accomplished the moment we were justified. We are made acceptable to God at that time. However, to be sanctified in this life is something that we need to pursue, from day to day, and even moment by moment.

Like I said, Jeff struggled with this aspect of our walk, but we all do to some extent. If we can just look beyond the pains, the trials, and the struggles and let the word dwell richly in us, then the sanctification process is a lot easier. The more we have the word in us, the less likely we are to fall back into old ways.

Like a tap that must be opened in order to receive the waters, our growth in the Lord will only come through receiving the waters He provides. And that tap ain't opening itself. The book is there, and the amount of dust on top of it will tell how long it has been since you opened it up.

And once it is open, the amount of notes in it, whether there are many or few dog ears in it, and the number of pages falling out of it are indications as to how seriously you take it to heart. I am quite certain that Jeff's Bible was well worn and marked up, but I think that at times, the dust started to pile up on it. Those are certainly the times he would call or email and tell me things weren't going so well.

Don't squander your time, and don't ever feel that you can make it without this precious gift of God. Trust this word, rely on this word, and let this word fill your heart and soul – in good times and especially in bad times. Pursue the word, and let it dwell richly in your soul at all times.

This is what the Lord would ask of you, and this is the lesson that is found in His superior word. And so let's turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. Justification (verses 1-7)

1 He made the altar of burnt offering of acacia wood; five cubits *was* its length and five cubits its width—*it was* square—and its height *was* three cubits.

² He made its horns on its four corners; the horns were *of one piece* with it. And he overlaid it with bronze.

³ He made all the utensils for the altar: the pans, the shovels, the basins, the forks, and the firepans; all its utensils he made of bronze.

⁴ And he made a grate of bronze network for the altar, under its rim, midway from the bottom.

⁵ He cast four rings for the four corners of the bronze grating, *as* holders for the poles.

⁶ And he made the poles of acacia wood, and overlaid them with bronze.

⁷ Then he put the poles into the rings on the sides of the altar, with which to bear it. He made the altar hollow with boards.

The concept of justification before God is given its greatest explanation to us from the hand of Paul in the book of Romans. There is a place where man's sins are atoned for. It is where the penalty for sin is paid. In the economy of the Law of Moses, that took place at the Altar of Burnt Offering.

Man would come before the Lord, place his hands upon an innocent animal which would then be slaughtered and burnt up on the altar. In this, an innocent would take the place of the guilty. The sin would be transferred to the innocent, and the sinner was considered, at least temporarily, "justified" before God. The penalty for his sin had been paid, and it was thus removed.

This was the standard for all of Israel throughout the time of the law, and of course, there was much more involved in the process. There were several types of sacrifices, and there were certain days where more was done than on other days, such as the Day of Atonement. But the common theme was that a substitute died in place of the guilty.

As we saw in the giving of the instructions for the altar described here, every single detail pointed to Christ. Thus, in the study of the altar, both of its construction and use, we find foreshadowings of the marvel to come. Concerning the concept of being justified before God, it is all here in those types and shadows. Paul speaks of what it means to be "justified" in God's sight in Romans 2 –

“For as many as have sinned without law will also perish without law, and as many as have sinned in the law will be judged by the law ¹³ (for not the hearers of the law *are* just in the sight of God, but the doers of the law will be justified...” Romans 2:12, 13

We are told that if one sins under the law, he will be judged by the law. Only a person who actually “does” the law, meaning adhering to it perfectly, will be justified. But Paul gives us an all-encompassing statement in Romans 3:19, 20 –

“Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. ²⁰ Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin.”

How can it be that only “the doers of the law will be justified” and yet, “by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight”? How can this be? It is because nobody is able to live out the law as it is written. It is an impossible task. Thus, within the law itself, there was a way given to obtain mercy from violations of the law. It was found in the sacrifices of the law, highlighted by the sacrifices of the Day of Atonement.

Without them, man stood guilty before God, but because of them, man could be pardoned for another year. But... the truth then follows that the removal of the sin was actually only temporary. If sacrifices needed to be repeated, year after year, then it means that there was a constant reminder of sin. This is explained in the book of Hebrews –

“For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect. ² For then would they not have ceased to be offered? For the worshipers, once purified, would have had no more consciousness of sins. ³ But in those *sacrifices there is* a reminder of sins every year. ⁴ For *it is* not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins.” Hebrews 10:1-4

This is why Paul says that “by the law no flesh will be justified” in the sight of God. There was only a temporary stay of God’s wrath, not a permanent taking away of

sin. However, there is good news...marvelous news for us. This altar and its associated sacrifices was only a temporary fixture which was intended to both picture, and lead us to, an understanding of the greater work of Christ. Paul continues to explain this in Romans 3:21-23 –

“But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets,²² even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference;²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God...”

We are told here that “the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed.” In other words, this righteousness is one which is not at all associated with the law, meaning deeds of the law. He even tells us that the Law itself, along with the Prophets, bear witness to this. How can we know what is witnessed unless we study it?

Paul’s words have to be rooted in something, or they are meaningless. *This is why we study the law!* It is because in understanding the law, we can *then* appreciate the absolute marvel of what Christ has done for us.

We were just told that “all have sinned and all fall short of the glory of God.” It is the law which gives us the knowledge of sin. Without a law, there is no law to break. If there were no legal speed limit, then we could drive at any speed we wanted. But as soon as someone passes that dang law which restricts us to 70 mph, we will become lawbreakers when we drive at 71 or more.

Likewise, the law gives us the *knowledge* of sin, but it does nothing to *take away the guilt*. When the law is broken, it is broken. We can pay the fine, but the infraction remains as a permanent part of our history. Therefore, there must be something which comes apart from the law to remove our guilt, or we will always have that guilt in memory.

In the United States, we have a provision which actually fits this need quite well. It is call the Pardon. When the president pardons a person, their record is wiped clean. It is as if the law was never broken. It can never be brought up again, and it is to be released from all record and memory. This is a marvelous type of what

occurs for the believer in Jesus Christ. Paul continues with the good news in Romans 3 –

“...being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵ whom God set forth *as* a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, ²⁶ to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.”

The Day of Atonement was a day of faith in the provision of God for another year. Now, in fulfillment of what that day signified, we see Christ Jesus. He was “set forth *as* a propitiation by His blood.” The animal that was slaughtered at the altar had its blood carried into the Holy of Holies where it was sprinkled before the Lord and on the mercy seat. Paul says that Christ *is* that Mercy Seat.

Here he uses the word *hilastérion*. It is the same word as is found in the Greek translation of the OT for the Mercy Seat. Christ is our place of propitiation and restoration. Again, this is explained in Hebrews 9 –

“For Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, *which are* copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; ²⁵ not that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood of another— ²⁶ He then would have had to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now, once at the end of the ages, He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.” Hebrews 9:24-26

What we are being told, is that each of these articles was only a copy of something which heaven requires for our justification before God, and that Christ is the fulfillment of those things. He came under the law, fulfilled the law, and then put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.

Think of it! If He never sinned under the law, then the law has no power to condemn Him. And so in dying under the law, but without violating it, the law, through Him, is finished. Hence, His final gasping words of His torturous time on Calvary’s cross –

Tetelestai – “It is finished.”

In Greek, it is in the perfect tense. It is finished, completely and absolutely. Unlike the sacrifices of the altar which had to be repeated again and again (and again!), this was a one-time-for-all-time thing. But before the reality, came the types and shadows.

What God has done in Christ is first hinted at in these objects which were instructed by the Lord through Moses, and which are now being carefully and meticulously made by Bezalel and those who are appointed under him.

Now arises a question for us to consider. The people agreed to the law which was presented by the Lord. They placed themselves under both its protection and its penalties. Within the law, God provided them a means of being forgiven for violations of the law. Right? If they came forward acknowledging those violations, then it means that they *knew* they were guilty before the law, yes? Otherwise, they would have no need of coming forward.

And so, if they came forward and received God’s needed mercy for the forgiveness of their sins, then could they turn around and boast about their forgiven state? Well, technically, they could. But it would be a vain boasting!

Being granted mercy implies that they simply did not receive what was justly deserved. They *were* guilty before the law and their guilt was mercifully transferred to an innocent. As this was temporary and only given in anticipation of the Christ to come, Paul asks the question for us, and then he follows up by answering it –

“Where *is* boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith.” Romans 3:27

If someone perfectly lived out the law, they wouldn’t need to come and ask for mercy. Therefore, boasting is excluded. If we have faith that Christ died for us, it means that we needed Him to die for us! How can we boast in ourselves concerning what He has done? Rather, we are to boast in Him for what He has done.

This is what it means to be justified before God. All boasting is set aside, except for that boasting which is in the Lord. This is what the people are being taught in this marvelous piece of shittim wood and bronze.

And this is what we are taught as we carefully and meticulously wind our way through the pages of Scripture. We are coming back to God through the work of Another; through the work of God in Christ. Paul sums up the transaction here, pictured by this ancient wooden box which was lavishly covered in bronze –

“Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law. ²⁹ Or *is He* the God of the Jews only? *Is He* not also the God of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also, ³⁰ since *there is* one God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith.” Romans 3:28, 29

The law was given to Israel, the Jewish people, but there is one God who created all people. The people *outside* of the covenant required justification before God, and the people *inside* of the covenant required the same justification. The badge of circumcision didn't nullify their need for justification; it highlighted it.

And so both Jew and Gentile must come to God in the same manner, by faith in the work of a Substitute. Only in this vicarious act can we stand justified before God. And so Paul's final question, and explanatory response, of Chapter 3 of Romans is given for us to consider.

“Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law.” Romans 3: 30

What does it mean that “we establish the law?” It is that we acknowledge that the law exists, that it had power over us, and that we had no ability to meet its precepts. However, we further establish that Christ could and did. He lived out the law, and died in fulfillment of that same law – as is pictured in the sacrifices which were made at this very altar that Bezalel is so faithfully constructing for Israel.

Thus, by faith in what He has done, we “establish the law.” We acknowledge our guilt before God, place our hands on the Innocent, and the transfer is made from

imperfect us, to our perfect Substitute. In this act, pictured by this transfer at the altar, Paul says in 2 Corinthians 5 –

“For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” 2 Corinthians 5:21

Paul will go on speaking of the process of justification throughout the book of Romans and throughout the rest of his writings as well. We have simply taken a very short trip through a long and detailed process which involves the most serious of contemplation and careful consideration.

This was the intent of presenting Israel with these implements, rituals, and practices. And yet, they failed to come to an understanding of what God was trying to show them. Even in the coming of Christ, they rejected Him and considered their own righteousness before God as an *inherent righteousness*.

They failed to see that the animals which died as their hands were placed on its head meant that they *were not righteous, but unrighteous*. The sacrifices were simply an act of “going through the motions.” Isaiah explained this to them as did many of the other prophets, but their eyes were glazed over and their ears were made dull. Here is how Isaiah explained it to them, right at the beginning of his writings –

Hear the word of the LORD,
You rulers of Sodom;
Give ear to the law of our God,
You people of Gomorrah:
¹¹ “To what purpose *is* the multitude of your sacrifices to Me?”
Says the LORD.
“I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams
And the fat of fed cattle.
I do not delight in the blood of bulls,
Or of lambs or goats. Isaiah 1:10-11

Just a few verses later, the Lord calls out for them to reason things through. If they failed to do so, there would be consequences...

¹⁸ “Come now, and let us reason together,”

Says the LORD,

“Though your sins are like scarlet,

They shall be as white as snow;

Though they are red like crimson,

They shall be as wool.

¹⁹ If you are willing and obedient,

You shall eat the good of the land;

²⁰ But if you refuse and rebel,

You shall be devoured by the sword”;

For the mouth of the LORD has spoken. Isaiah 1:18-20

If they, who had these articles and rites before their very eyes, failed to make the necessary connection to a right-standing with God, how much less likely are we to do so unless we pay heed to the word which has been given to us!

Don't ever assume that because you belong to a certain church, or because you have done certain things, or even that because you are of a particular blood line, that you have somehow merited God's favor. That is the crucial mistake which only further removes a person from their Creator. Only by faith in what Jesus Christ did can we stand justified before our glorious God.

In our Thursday night Bible studies right now, we are going through the book of Romans. It is a long, detailed, and intricate book of explanation concerning these things. I would recommend that you put your best foot forward and join us for that marvelous trip each week.

*Justified! Free from sin; released from all guilt
Justified! In Christ my pardon is won
Through His life and death, when His precious blood was spilt
I am reconciled to my God; the work is done*

*O! That Christ would take the place for someone like me
What manner of love would bring this about?
There He hung, on the cross of Calvary*

Until those final words, He did breathe out

*It is finished! The price has been paid
For all who will place their sins at the foot of this cross
What a most exceptional trade
His righteousness as gain; my sin and guilt as loss*

II. Sanctification (verse 8)

⁸ He made the laver of bronze and its base of bronze, from the bronze mirrors of the serving women who assembled at the door of the tabernacle of meeting.

Like justification, sanctification is explained to us in detail in the New Testament. The Bronze Laver, though lacking in any significant detail, is the implement which pictures our process of sanctification.

Something is added into the details here that was not included in the details that the Lord gave to Moses on the mountain. It is that the laver was made from the bronze mirrors of the serving women. It is a detail which has great significance, and yet Bezalel probably never gave it a second thought.

But the Lord specifically included that information for us to consider and, pun intended, reflect upon. That is exactly what a mirror is, it is something which reflects who we are. We reflect on what we look like and then work to improve the shabby figure we see, adjusting ourselves until we look the very best that we can.

That is what the process of sanctification is for; to mold us into an image other than the one we started out as. As fallen, fallible sons and daughters of Adam, we have flaws and imperfections which are displeasing to the Lord. We were born that way and we often only make things worse as go from bad decision to bad decision.

We wind up as vessels which are wholly and completely unacceptable to God. Here is how Paul describes us when we come to this state –

“Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, ¹⁰ nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.” 1 Corinthians 6:9, 10

This is a real problem because even though this seems horrible in the extreme, it pretty much covers all of us in one way or another. God looks at us based on intent. Coveting is something that happens inside of us.

Nobody else may even know that we are coveting, but God does. I dare say that there isn't a person here who hasn't coveted something at some time in his life. We may or may not have done many of the things on the list, but we have all done some of them.

But through the process of coming to Christ, we are forgiven of sin's penalty and we receive the pardon which He purchased for us. Along with that, comes something more, something which we experience, at least positionally...

And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God. 1 Corinthians 6:11

Christ's shed blood washes us from these things and we stand not only justified, but also sanctified. As I said, this is a positional sanctification. It is what allows us to immediately come into God's presence. Should we call on Jesus and die that same day, we would be considered acceptable to God because of what Jesus did for us.

Paul reiterates this type of sanctification in Ephesians 5. There he equates Christ's sacrifice of Himself directly with our sanctification...

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, ²⁶ that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, ²⁷ that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.” Ephesians 5:25-28

It is Christ, and Christ alone who sanctifies us and makes us acceptable before God the Father. Through Him, all past defilement is washed away. The things of the past are gone, and in Christ all things are made new – clean, and presentable to our heavenly Father.

But, there is another type of sanctification which the Bible speaks of. This is also what is pictured in the Bronze Laver. The priests would come to this laver to wash at certain times and before doing certain things. This instructed them that even though they were ordained as priests and acceptable to God to conduct their priestly duties, they still needed to purify themselves in the presence of the perfectly holy Lord.

In the New Testament, we are called a kingdom of priests, and we are expected to perform our priestly duties properly and with a sense of purity, just as Christ did. Paul gives us an insight into this process of sanctification in 2 Timothy 2 –

But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay, some for honor and some for dishonor. ²¹ Therefore if anyone cleanses himself from the latter, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work. 2 Timothy 2:20, 21

It should be pretty obvious by evaluating ourselves that even after we call on Christ, we have a long way to go as far as living in the manner that the Bible expects of us. Some of us never progress in this way; others are full steam ahead, living out the word and growing in holiness before the Lord.

But even those who are ever striving forward still pick up the dirt of the world. None of us are exempt from this. And so we are to come to the laver and wash ourselves. It is the word of God which is being referred to. We read the word, apply it to our lives, and we are purified by the water.

This most precious gift of all is given to us to lead us into all righteousness, to purify us in our life's walk, and to make us acceptable vessels, useful for our Master. And yet, Paul tells us elsewhere that it is God who is the One who sanctifies us. He said this in his first letter to the Thessalonians –

“Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” 1 Thessalonians 5:23

And yet there is more. The mystery is further explained by Paul in his second letter to the Thessalonians –

“But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth...” 2 Thessalonians 2:13

It is the third member of the Trinity, God’s precious Holy Spirit who is behind the process of sanctification. But how do we tie these things together so that they make sense? 1) We are told that we are to cleanse ourselves in order to be sanctified, and yet 2) we are told that God is the one who sanctifies us in this manner. And even more specifically, 3) it is the Spirit of God who does it.

How do we reconcile these verses so that they make sense? The answer is that in our sanctification, we passively receive from the Spirit as we actively cleanse ourselves with Him.

In the tabernacle and at the temple, the priests would go to the laver, open the spigot, and they would receive the water for cleansing of their physical bodies. The priests actively did something, and the water passively passed to them. And yet, it is the water which is what cleansed them.

In our lives, if we are willing to go to what the laver and its water picture, we will receive sanctification and cleansing. The water is the word of God, the Holy Bible. It was given to us by inspiration of the Spirit. We are, when we go to the word, washed and cleansed. We actively pursue the word, and we passively receive the Spirit. And yet, it is the Spirit which cleanses us.

There is a synergism which cannot be denied in this process, just as there is a synergism in our justification. On the Day of Atonement, the people had to actively come to confess their sins, but as we saw, they could not boast in that. It

would be utterly foolish to boast in receiving forgiveness for sins that we had just confessed that we committed!

Likewise, in Christ we must come to Him in order to be saved, but in coming to Him we are saved by Him. There is a synergism involved in the process. In the same manner, we must come to the word in order to be sanctified. When we receive what it says and apply it to our lives, we are sanctified.

It is an immensely sad thing to contemplate, but the water is right there for us if we desire it. The word is written; it was divinely inspired by the Spirit to lead us into all righteousness; its precepts are available to any and all who will pick it up and read it; and the yielding of our lives to it will bring us back into a holy and right standing with our heavenly Father. And yet so few avail themselves of this fount of spiritual blessing.

Bezalel's hands fashioned this laver with skill and care from the mirrors of the women who assembled at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. God fashioned the Bible as if from the mirror of His perfection through holy men of God, selected by Him.

When people looked at the Bronze laver, they would remember the story of where it came from. When we look at the Bible, we are likewise to remember where it came from. When the priests opened the spigot, they would feel the refreshing water purifying them for service to the Lord. When we as priests of the Lord open the Bible, we should naturally expect the same as it purifies us for our acceptable service to the Lord. How is it that we can be sanctified? Paul sums the thought up so well with these words –

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.” Colossians 3:16

In doing these things, we will keep ourselves from temptations, we will be kept from falling into evil practices, we will stay on the right path, and be able to resist the devil. He is there, setting snares for us each and every day, but in knowing the word and having it dwell richly in us, those traps will be evident long before they draw near to us. This is the power of the word of God to affect our lives. Like the

water of the Laver, its contents are able to cleanse us fully. This is why Paul says to us in 2 Corinthians 7:1 –

“Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.”

How can we know the promises unless we are told of them? And how can we cleanse ourselves unless we avail ourselves of the tool and manual which is given for this very purpose? Open it, read it, study it, live it, share it, teach it, and preach it. I do believe the time is short and we desperately need to use it wisely.

As a final note today, we need to remember who it was that was given charge of constructing these particular items, Bezalel. The name Betsalel is made of three different parts. The *el* at the end means “God.” The “*b*” at the beginning signifies “in.” and the middle part comes from the noun *tsel*, meaning “shadow.”

And so his name means “In the Shadow of God.” As shade is considered a protection in the Bible, such as from the heat of the sun, it is a metaphor for “In the Protection of God.” Considering my friend Jeff who has passed on to the arms of Christ, we have no worries if his failings somehow separated him from God. Such is not the case.

The true Altar was designed by the Lord, and it was fashioned by He who dwells in the protection of God. If He died for Jeff, then Jeff was and is in that protection. And the same is true for each and every one of you who have called on Jesus. God has given us a place of safety and refuge from His wrath, there in His shadow. It is Jesus Christ the Lord. Let us avail ourselves of that by coming to His cross and confessing our sins before Him.

And then Bezalel made the next piece, the Bronze Laver. Its purpose and use is behind Jeff now, but for each of us, we have it available to us. If we consider and reflect upon those who have gone before us in various ways and in various states, maybe the Bible will have more meaning to us.

Jeff may have been able to endure the struggles of this life a little better if he had more of the word in him during his low spells. It is incumbent on us to do our very best to fill ourselves now and always with the precious, marvelous word. In so doing, we can more easily face the many trials and woes that come our way.

Life may be painful, but with the word in our hearts it will be less so. Our walk may be filled with many sorrows, but with the word open before our eyes, we can also find many comforts. Our days may be long and tedious, but when pondering the promises of the word, the time ahead takes on a new and an exciting meaning.

Let us remember these things and thank God who has done so very much for us, all of which is reflected in these two beautiful pieces of handiwork which stood in the sanctuary and which were then used until they were no longer needed. The true Altar and Laver have come. Let us go to Christ so that we may stand approved, justified and sanctified, before our glorious Creator.

Closing Verse: Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, ²¹ make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom *be* glory forever and ever. Amen.” Hebrews 13:20, 21

Next Week: Exodus 38:9-31 *He is the One we are to fix our eyes toward...* (The Always Evident Lord) (102nd Exodus sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if a deep ocean lies ahead of You, He can part the waters and lead you through it on dry ground. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

Christ, Our Altar and Our Laver

He made the altar of burnt offering of acacia wood

Five cubits was its length and five cubits it was wide

It was square, as is understood

And its height was three cubits; with the instructions he complied

He made its horns on its four corners
The horns were of one piece with it
And he overlaid it with bronze
Thus he fashioned as the Lord did submit

He made all the utensils for the altar:
The pans, the shovels, the basins, working in his trade
The forks, and the firepans as well
All its utensils of bronze he made
And he made a grate
Of bronze network for the altar
Under its rim, midway from the bottom
His workmanship did not falter
He cast four rings for the four corners
Of the bronze grating

As holders for the poles
Here is where the altar and the poles were mating
And he made the poles of acacia wood
And overlaid them with bronze
From the directions, this was understood
Then he put the poles into the rings
On the sides of the altar, the directions he did follow
With which to bear it

He made with boards the altar hollow
He made the laver of bronze
And its base of bronze, as was called for
From the bronze mirrors of the serving women
Who assembled at the tabernacle of meeting's door
Lord God, we thank you with all of our soul

For what these things we have seen look forward to
We can have certainty that all is under control
And that every detail has been handled by You
Our destiny is secure; we stand justified
Because of Jesus Christ and the blood that He shed
Though His cross we have been purified
Our pardon is purchased and we are brought back from the dead
And through Your word, we can grow in sanctification
And we will daily become more like You

Walking in holiness through the Spirit's ministration
This is what coming to Your word will do
Help us, O Lord, to pursue Christ now, and always
May our lives be a pleasing offering in Your sight
O, for this to be true for all of our days
May we pursue Jesus with all of our might
And then in eternity's splendid glory

We will walk in Your light for unending days
We shall behold the unfolding never-ending story
And in that brilliant light, we shall give you eternal praise

Hallelujah and Amen...