



A Passion To Connect ~ April 28, 2019

OPEN

Have you ever watched a movie, based on history, which concludes with several paragraphs explanation? These “post-script credits” answer a lot of “what happened next” questions. We have just come through a vivid movie, so to speak, portraying the passion and resurrection of Jesus, the glorified Lamb of God. Let’s take a “post-script peek” at what our risen Lord is doing right now.

Jesus’ work now is tied God’s passion to connect with us. Forty days following His resurrection, Jesus ascended to heaven (see **Acts 1:9-11**) to be our High Priest. Consider how He intercedes for us by reading His prayer in **John 17**.

DIG

Read Hebrews 10:19-25. Consider how Jesus as our High Priest makes it possible for us to be in God’s presence.

In Exodus 25 we can see this passion to connect in God’s instructions for the construction of the Tabernacle which was used in the wilderness. “Make a sanctuary for me, and I will dwell among them” (v.8). Consider the details.

The setting - story of Israel’s rescue from slavery and wilderness wandering

Courtyard, Building - a display of God’s passion to connect, only one gate

Altar, Laver, Door - journey of progress into relationship

Table of Showbread - our relationship enjoyed – nourished by Christ and the Word

Gold Lampstand - illuminated by the Spirit of God

Golden Altar - communing in worship and intercession

Holy Of Holies, Veil, Ark - our relationship sealed by the blood, access to God

All this set up would be incomplete without a priest. Exodus 28 gives a vivid picture of the special garments that were made for Aaron (and sons).

Calling - “to give [Aaron] dignity and honor” (v. 2)

Consecration - the “setting apart” of Aaron to facilitate God’s presence (v. 3)

Carry - to step between the sin of man and the holiness of God (v. 4)

Character - the materials reveal Jesus! Gold – deity; blue – son of God; purple – royalty; scarlet – suffering; fine white linen – sinless (v. 5)

So, if Moses had only built the Tabernacle and its furnishings the project would have been terribly incomplete. Why? The Tabernacle only made sense when there was a priest to serving, enabling the people of Israel to *connect with God*. The same is true today. All that Jesus accomplished in His life, death, and resurrection leads to Jesus’ role as our High Priest. Of course, this is not in a physical, temporary Tabernacle. Jesus is now the High Priest of the eternal tabernacle (see **Hebrews 9:11 and 24**).

Hebrews 10:19-21 reveals that in Christ we have access into God’s presence. Jesus purchased our standing before God with His blood. In Hebrews 10 we are told the physical Tabernacle and High Priest are *shadows* – significant, but not the substance. Only the High Priest could enter behind the curtain into the Holy of Holies annually. But the death of Jesus tore the veil in two (see **Matthew 27:51**) guaranteeing that every believer could have access to God.

The human High Priest made animal sacrifices for sin over and over. Jesus came as the fulfillment of the work of the High Priest (see **Hebrews 9:11-14**). When the human High Priest entered the Holy place he would “bear the names of the sons of Israel over his heart.” (**Exodus 28:29**). Even more, Jesus made it possible for us to come into the very presence of God in intimate relationship!

REFLECT

So what are we to do with all this information? Thankfully our passage does not leave us hanging – we are given some clear action steps. Think of applying this truth as a “salad” with four types of “let us”.

1. *Let us draw near* - v. 22

Since Jesus opened the way into God’s presence, let us go in! Let us approach God with confidence! (see **Hebrews 4:16**). Prayer is one obvious application. Check out an exciting new prayer initiative in our community at www.prayridgemeadows.com

2. *Let us hold fast* - v. 23

We are to hold firmly to our confession (“agreement”). We should remain faithful to our Lord Jesus without wavering (“leaning”) from Him or His work in our lives. As our High Priest, He is holding onto us!

3. *Let us spur on* - v. 24

Christians are to “spur” each other. The term used in verse 24 was adopted in English to describe the chemical peroxide. So this invitation is to be strong and frank when we urge and challenge one another in appropriate ways.

4. *Let us encourage* - v. 25

Think of hot coals in your camp fire. Heap them together and they burn bright. Spread them out and they diminish in strength. Christians must not be spread out by neglecting to fellowship with and encourage one another.