

Exodus chapter 29

We need to understand that this isn't just a list of ancient rituals. This is a beautiful, unfolding picture of what it means to be set apart for the Lord.

In this chapter, we see the consecration of the priests. The word "consecrate" literally means to "fill the hand." It's the idea of being fully occupied with the things of God.

The Preparation and the Washing

In the first four verses, we see Aaron and his sons brought to the door of the tabernacle. Before they could put on the holy garments, they had to be washed with water. This is so fundamental. Before we can serve the Lord, there must be a cleansing. We can't serve Him in our own filth or by our own merits. As believers, we are washed by the "washing of water by the word," as the New Testament tells us.

The Robes and the Anointing

Then Aaron was clothed in those magnificent garments—the ephod, the breastplate, and the miter. Once clothed, the anointing oil was poured over his head.

Notice the order: cleansing, clothing, and then anointing. The oil represents the Holy Spirit. You see, God never calls you to a task without providing the "clothing" of His righteousness and the "oil" of His Spirit to empower you for the work.

The Sin Offering: Dealing with Guilt

Before Aaron could ever represent the people to God, his own sin had to be dealt with. They brought a bullock, and Aaron and his sons laid their hands on its head.

"And thou shalt cause a bullock to be brought before the tabernacle of the congregation: and Aaron and his sons shall put their hands upon the head of the bullock." (Exodus 29:10)

This was a transference. By laying on hands, they were symbolically saying, "My guilt, my sin, my failure is being transferred to this innocent substitute." The animal died so the priest could live and serve.

The bullock was killed outside the camp. Why? Because sin is a reproach. This points us directly to Jesus Christ. The writer of Hebrews reminds us that Jesus suffered "outside the gate" to sanctify the people with His own blood. He took our place; He became our sin offering.

The Blood of Consecration

Now, look at this fascinating detail in verses 20 and 21. They took the blood of a ram and put it on:

1. The tip of the right ear.
2. The thumb of the right hand.
3. The big toe of the right foot.

This is so practical for us today!

- The Ear: "Lord, I consecrate my ear to hear Your voice. I want to tune out the static of the world and tune into Your Spirit."
- The Hand: "Lord, I consecrate my hands to do Your work. Whatever I touch, let it be for Your glory."
- The Foot: "Lord, I consecrate my feet to walk in Your paths. I won't go where You don't lead."

It's a total life commitment. Every part of our being belongs to Him.

The Covering and the Reality

In verse 33, the text mentions "atonement." In the Hebrew, this is the word *kaphar*, which means "to cover." In the Old Testament, the blood of bulls and goats could only cover sin; it could never take it away. It was like a "promissory note" pointing toward the Cross.

But praise God, when Jesus shed His blood on the cross, He didn't just cover our sin; He put it away! He paid the debt in full. And when He rose from the dead, the resurrection declared to the entire universe that He is God, He is Savior, and He is Lord. The tomb is empty, and because He lives, we have a living hope!

The Continual Presence

The chapter ends with a beautiful promise. God says if they follow these instructions, He will meet with them and dwell among them.

"And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God." (Exodus 29:45)

That is the heart of God. He wants to be with you. He didn't save you just to keep you out of hell; He saved you for fellowship.

Practical Application & Challenge

For the Believer: Have you "laid your hands" on the Altar lately? Romans 12:1 tells us to present our bodies as a living sacrifice. Once something is placed on the altar, it belongs to God. You don't have the right to take it back. I challenge you this week: Consecrate your ear, your hand, and your foot. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you if there is any area of your life you've been trying to "take back" from the altar.

For the Non-Believer: Perhaps you've been trying to "wash" yourself. You've been trying to be a better person or do enough good works to cover your mistakes. It will never work. You need a substitute. Jesus Christ went outside the camp for you. He shed His blood so that you could be forgiven, and His resurrection proves He has the power to give you new life.

Will you give your life to Him today? Simply admit your need, believe that He died and rose again for you, and receive Him as your Lord.