

Exod 05-01-09a

Let's continue our worship this morning. This is the 9th of January 2005. We're in the book of Exodus.

We'll take a moment at the outset to clear our minds and prepare our hearts and ensure that we are able to concentrate in the spiritual sense, that God the Holy Spirit can minister God's word to our souls. Because it is a strange and unique process that takes place when we study the word of God under the ministry of the Spirit. Because our human IQ is not a factor.

Our level of previous knowledge of the Bible is not a factor when it comes to learning what it is that God has for us. There is a great resonance and there is a great filling in of gaps. It always seems to me like when you have a large thousand piece puzzle out on the table and you study and another piece falls into place and you begin to see more and more of the picture that that puzzle represents.

But regardless of how much we have ever learned, regardless of how smart we are in the human sense, when we come to the study of God's word and God the Holy Spirit is able to minister it to us because we have acknowledged our sins, because we are seeking to walk in the light, because we are positively motivated, God does a unique thing. Whatever the passage of Scripture is, whoever is communicating it, is really secondary. It is God's Spirit taking something from God's word and energizing our soul and providing nutrition to our spirit so that we are built up and edified.

This is why it is a fascinating thing that after a Bible lesson you can talk to ten different people who heard it and they will have been impressed with ten different things because we are all different and we all have different needs. God the Holy Spirit is uniquely able to take things from God's word and cause us to hear the thing that we need to hear. That is why John says, you are not dependent on a man to teach you.

It is helpful and it is great to have someone take the word of God and present it. But it is not necessary. The real energy and the real effect is God's Holy Spirit taking the things of God and ministering them to our hearts in the same way that He takes our expressions of praise, thanksgiving, of intercession, of request, and takes them from our soul and takes them back to God.

God the Holy Spirit is the intermediary in the communication sense. He takes the word of God and makes it understandable to us. He takes our prayers as twisted and strange as they may be and makes them presentable to God.

He is the facilitator for the communication. He is the translator from the earthly to the heavenly and from the heavenly to the earthly. So it is a very important thing that we do when we pause at the beginning of each study to ensure that He is able to do that work.

So let's take a moment here to go to the Lord in prayer. Father, we are grateful for another opportunity to gather to receive the benefit of the spiritual gifts that you have distributed to each one of us. We are thankful that there are believers of like mind in our periphery with whom we can have fellowship, with whom we can relax, with whom we can share our enthusiasm, our devotion, our appreciation of your word and of your plan and your purpose.

Most of all, our appreciation for the Lord Jesus Christ. We are grateful for Him, for His dedication to your plan and your purpose, His complete willingness to perform your will, to do your work and to accomplish our salvation at the expense of His own life, at the expense of great suffering, at the expense of separation from you, fulfilling a priestly service on our behalf that He still maintains as He intercedes for us, as He serves as our high priest, as we seek to offer ourselves as living sacrifices. We thank you for the pictures that we find in your word that teach us so clearly, especially in the Old Testament of the great work that He accomplished for us, the picture that we see in the book of Exodus and the design and construction of the tabernacle.

We pray your blessing on us as we study it this morning. Pray that our lives will reflect your glory not only to the benefit of ourselves and our families, but for our nation and for the remainder of human history that is left before the Lord Jesus returns and takes us to be with Himself. We pray all these things in Jesus' name.

Amen. For a Scripture reading this morning, turn with me to Job chapter 23. Job chapter 23.

We've looked recently at Job for a Scripture reading and other chapters. We're going to look at chapter 23. It's relatively short, but it is a reminder that there are non-essentials and there are essentials.

There are things that we can comprehend and figure out. There are other things that we can't comprehend and can't figure out. But whenever we are dealing with the unknown, it reminds me of math or algebra, when we're dealing with variables that we don't know the exact value of, how do you work with an equation that's got an x or a y or a z or all three in it? How do you simplify that equation? You work with your known values.

If you've got numbers on each side of the equal sign that are divisible by two, you divide by two and simplify each side. If you've got like terms, if you've got $2x$ times $3x$, you know that that's the same as $6x$, and you simplify. You work with what is known and simplify so that you can come to a better understanding of what the unknown is.

This is what Job expresses here in chapter 23. Job answers. This, of course, is a book of dialogue where there are points made.

I think Job is one of the most fascinating books in the Old Testament in terms of advanced study. I think it is up there approaching Ecclesiastes in terms of its complexity. And the more complex a book gets, the more misunderstood it tends to be.

This is the problem with Romans in the New Testament and Revelation in the New Testament. And I think it is also a big reason why Ecclesiastes is misunderstood and Job is misunderstood. But listen to what Job says in chapter 23.

Even today my complaint is bitter. My hand is listless because of my groaning. All that I knew where I might find him, that I might come to his seat.

I would present my case before him and fill my mouth with arguments. I would know the words which he would answer me and understand what he would say to me. Would he contend with me in his great power? No, but he would take note of me.

There the upright could reason with him and I would be delivered forever from my judge. Look, I go forward, but he is not there, and backward, but I cannot perceive him. When he works on the left hand, I cannot behold him.

When he turns to the right hand, I cannot see him. But he knows the way that I take. When he has tested me, I shall come forth like gold.

My foot has held fast to his steps. I have kept his way and not turned aside. I have not departed from his commandment of his lips.

I have treasured the words of his mouth more than my necessary food. But he is unique, and who can make him change? And whatever his soul desires, that he does. For he performs what is appointed for me.

And many such things are with him. Therefore I am terrified at his presence. When I consider this, I am afraid of him.

For God made my heart weak, and the Almighty terrifies me. Because I was not cut off from the presence of darkness, and he did not hide deep darkness from my face. This is the puzzle that the book of Job represents.

Here is a righteous man who has held fast to God's word, and yet is facing darkness. In some cases, at a terrifying level. And he says, if I could just get through to God and make my case, if I could stand before him, he would take note of me.

The upright could reason with him in verse 7, I would be delivered forever from my judge. To sort of do a mini-conclusion to the whole book of Job, what is the answer to Job's complaint here, to Job's expression? He himself has said, he knows the way that I take. When he has tested me, I come forth as gold.

I have done no wrong. This is Job's answer to his three friends and fourth friend in the book. They keep saying, well, you've been afflicted, you must have done something wrong, because it's cause and effect.

You do well, God blesses. You do poorly, God jumps on you with both feet. You've been jumped

on with both feet.

You have done something wrong. And this is a sound biblical conclusion. The friends of Job are no dummies.

They're not corn huskers. They're not hay balers. These are smart, intelligent men, and they are Job's closest friends, because they are like Job.

They are men of the word of God. They are men of faith. And the interesting thing about the book of Job is, that it is a dialogue between men of great faith who know a lot of the word of God.

When you consider that there's nothing in writing at this point, the doctrinal statements that are made throughout this book are astonishing in their depth. And these men are doing their best to apply what they know of God to Job's situation, but God is teaching them something new. God is giving Job a very advanced trial, because it is not as simple as, do what's right and you're blessed, do what's wrong and you're hammered.

Here is a man doing what's right and he's hammered. Why? Because God has a grander purpose. What is the ultimate expression of that? Where is the ultimate expression of a righteous man suffering when he has done no wrong? It's at the cross.

What does the Apostle Paul talk about when he says, I share the sufferings of Christ? I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus. This is the category you move into when you are challenged and you are going through painful experiences, and it is not discipline. It is reflecting the glory of Christ in that particular aspect.

We can reflect Christ's glory in a lot of ways. We can reflect it when we are generous. We can reflect it in love.

We can reflect it in faith. We can reflect it in hope. We can reflect it in our prayers.

We can reflect it as we intercede for one another, as he intercedes for us. We reflect it when we forgive one another, as he forgives us. We reflect it when we wash one another's feet, as he washed the feet of the disciples.

We reflect it when we are persecuted for his namesake. If they have hated me, they will hate you, Jesus said. Another way that your more mature believers get the chance to reflect Christ's glory is in suffering wrongly.

Peter writes a whole book centered around this theme. If you are suffering and you deserve it, what is your complaint? But if you are suffering for the sake of righteousness, if you are suffering for the name of Christ, and this is not just persecution because you are a Christian, this can be because you have moved into the realm where God can do this, and he knows you are not going to fold. He knows you are going to follow the attitude and the example of Job and

hold fast, and reflect the character of Christ in a very unique way.

He knows the way that I take. When he has tested me, I shall come forth as gold. Why? My foot has held fast to his steps.

I have kept his way and not turned aside. I have not departed from the commandment of his lips. I have treasured the words of his mouth more than my necessary food.

Job has the key here that is ultimately going to be expressed in the last few chapters of the book. Because you have nearly 40 chapters of dialogue where men are talking to each other and trying to make application of what they know of God. What happens at the end of the book? God speaks and everybody else quits.

What does Job say? I am all done talking now. Oh, that I knew where I might find him, that I might come to his seat. I would present my case before him.

What is the message of the book of Job? Be quiet and let God present his case to you. Isn't that what ultimately happens? Job presents his case before his friends. His friends present the case against Job to him.

You must have done something wrong. The man is presenting the case. There is a time when you have to be still and know that I am God and let God make the case.

That, by the way, was a quote from him. That's not me. Be still, God says, and know that I am God.

And everybody is quiet. You don't hear Eliphaz the demonite or anybody else speaking up once Job hears the voice of God say, Where were you when I set the earth on its foundations? When I put the stars in the sky? When the stars of heaven sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy? Where were you? And there is a purpose that God has that we may not fully understand. In fact, we seldom fully understand God's purposes in our lives.

But we can do what Job did. Hold fast to his steps. Keep his way and not turn his side.

Not depart from the commandment of his lips. What is the problem in Israel that we have seen in the book of Exodus and now in the book of Hebrews and in retrospect in the book of Ezekiel? All three of our studies point in the very same direction. The people of God were not persuaded.

They did not hold fast. They didn't stay the course. When difficulty came, they folded.

They caved. They gave up. Every single one of us has difficulty.

Every single one of us bears pressure in one area or another. What is the message of the Word of God? In every single study that we're in, there is a convergence. There is a vertex.

There is a fix. When you do navigation and you take a bearing to a lighthouse and you take a

bearing to a known point and you take a bearing to another known point and you draw them on the chart, the lines all converge and that's where you are. Well, for us, right now, the Word of God is telling us in all of our studies, do not fall according to the same example of unconvincedness, faithlessness that you see with Israel.

Israel in the wilderness. Israel in Jerusalem, the southern kingdom of Judah, not listening to 40 years of ministry by Jeremiah. Rebecca is upstairs right now giving the children's class out of Daniel.

You know what Daniel says in chapter 9? It's very interesting because Daniel says, I know from the prophecies of Jeremiah that 70 years are appointed for our captivity. Jeremiah is almost a contemporary of Daniel and Daniel says he's got the inspired Word of God and Daniel knew it and Daniel applied it. In that same chapter you move on down and he says, I know from the law of Moses that this has come upon us for a specific reason and he goes back to Deuteronomy.

It's Jeremiah 23 and Deuteronomy 25. Daniel knew the Word of God and his foot never departed from it. You look at the catastrophe and the calamity of the evisceration of the southern kingdom, the knocking down of the walls of Jerusalem, the destruction of God's temple built by Solomon on the plans that God revealed to David.

Every single stone of it knocked down. What does Daniel do? What do his three friends do? Mishael, Hananiah, Azariah, what do they do? What does Ezekiel do? What does that faithful remnant do in captivity? My foot has held fast to his steps. I have kept his way and not turned aside.

I have not departed from the commandment of his lips. When he has tested me, I shall come forth like gold. That is the mast that Job lashes himself to.

He says, I know that God is right. I don't understand it. It makes no sense to me.

I'm depressed. I'm discouraged. I've got people telling me I've done something wrong when I haven't.

But I'll tell you this, I know my Redeemer lives. Even if the worms eat my flesh, I know that I will see him on the last day. And I know that when this test is over, I'm going to emerge like gold.

That well-known analogy of the refiner, when he heats silver or he heats gold to a certain temperature, it becomes liquid enough that the impurities, which are less dense, are forced to the top. And the refiner scoops them away. Then he increases the heat.

And the molten metal becomes more liquid. And more of those lighter impurities float to the top. And he scoops them away.

And he keeps doing that until he can look at the surface and it is so free of impurities that he can see his own reflection. That's when he knows it is sufficiently refined. And then he can cool

it and mold it into something or hammer it into something, as we're going to see with the lampstand.

That seven-branch lampstand is not cast gold. They took a lump, took a whole talent of gold, 90 pounds of gold. What do you figure? Gold is up over \$400 an ounce.

I just figure it's \$400 an ounce times 90 pounds. What's that? 36 something. Is that 36,360,000? What? 400 times... Yeah, I'm an English major.

I don't know what that works out to. 36 with a bunch of zeros after it. It's a lot of money.

It's a lot of gold. But it was all one piece. And it was hammered into shape.

Not cast, but hammered. And hammering is kind of like the iron sharpens iron, so a man sharpens the countenance of his friend. It's the friction and the heat and the sparks that shape something.

Well, hammering speaks of force applied to put us in a particular shape. And the lump of gold doesn't know what it's going to be hammered into when it's getting banged on, but God knows. God has the design.

And there's going to be 22 knobs and 22 almonds and 22 flowers, and it's all going to reflect His glory. So, as we turn back now to Exodus 34 and 35, we pick up in the implementation now of the design revealed to Moses in Exodus 25 through 30, roughly, of the elements of the tabernacle. So, let's just take a quick trip now through the curtains, through the outer gate, if you will, of the linen fence.

And what's the first thing we see? What's the first thing revealed? As an Israelite approached the tabernacle from the east, heading west, and came through those portals, entered the tabernacle court, the first thing you see is the giant brazen altar, hollow box made of acacia wood overlaid with brass, seven and a half feet square, four and a half feet high, four horns pointing outward at each corner, a brass grate in the middle where brass rings at each corner, wooden staves covered with brass put through for carrying it, stands just inside the court gate facing the tabernacle. It is the largest piece of furniture. All of the other pieces of furniture could fit inside it.

It's that big. It is open. It is visible.

All Israelites can see it, and you can't get past to see the dwelling place of God or to approach the presence of God without hitting the altar first. The brass, of course, is typical in the technical sense. It typifies judgment.

It typifies that which reflects fire. It is the color of fire. It contains fire.

It has the coals. It was ignited, apparently, by the Lord Himself, and that fire was never allowed to go out. But when Aaron dedicates the tabernacle and they offer the first sacrifice, Aaron is

going to put the sacrifice on there, and fire is going to come out from the Lord and consume that sacrifice.

There was no previous fire there, but now there's a fire, and they maintain that fire, and they never let it go out. They kept the coals. Coals from that fire are taken to ignite the altar of incense.

Coals from the altar of sacrifice fuel the altar of incense. Even our incense, of course, representing the prayers of the saints going up as a sweet savor before God. You don't have the ability to pray without that sacrifice taking place first.

It's the same fire. The coals go from the altar of sacrifice to the altar of incense. Leviticus 17.11 tells us that without sacrifice, there is no atonement for sin.

So the Israelites had to bring offerings without blemish, without spot. Leviticus 17.11 says, For as the life of the flesh is in the blood, I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls. For it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul.

You'll notice, though, that there is a container for the blood. Why didn't they just slit the throat of the animal, get a vessel full of blood, and then go pour it out before the Lord? The flesh is also consumed. And there's a picture there in the sacrifice, and we'll study the sacrifices in more detail, but just think about it.

If the life of the flesh is in the blood, then why not just offer the blood? The blood makes atonement for the soul. Why is the flesh also consumed? Well, they are inseparable, aren't they? Where you have life, you have flesh and blood. This is what Jesus told the disciples when He appears after His resurrection.

He says, Touch me, handle me. You see that I am made of flesh. And they are associated together in an inseparable kind of way.

This is why the New Testament tells us that Jesus bore our sins where? In His own body on the tree. So, Hebrews 9.22 reflects the same idea. Without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sins.

So, the priest would receive the sacrifices from the offerer, and place them upon the altar where they were consumed. There were serving utensils. We've seen the plans for those, the shovels and the pans and all of that, because after a sacrifice, they would take the ashes and carry them outside the camp and dispose of them in a clean place.

They didn't take them out to the latrine area. They didn't take them out to the animal pens. They took them to a place that was not ritually unclean and disposed of them there.

And this is a reminder of the finished work of Christ. The ashes speak of a finished sacrifice. Where did the body of the Lord Jesus go after it came down from the cross? It went into the

earth in a clean place, a tomb that had never before been used, that belonged to Joseph the Arimathean.

Of course, you find that in John 19. So, every implement speaks of the work of Christ. They had the flesh hooks.

Remember that from the story of Eli and his sons? They would take the flesh hooks and pull meat out of the boiling pot and eat it rather than letting it go where it was supposed to for the offerer. Those flesh hooks represent the pain and the piercing that took place in the flesh of the Lord Jesus that you find represented in Psalm 21 and other places. All of the fire pans and the censers and the hooks and everything else are made of that bronze that are a picture of judgment.

As you pass the altar, what is the next piece of furniture that we've studied? It's the brazen laver. You have your priests working with these sacrifices. They get blood on them.

They pick up dust and who knows what all as they walk around the outer court there. So there is the laver. It has two basins.

It has the upper basin and then it has the foot or the lower basin. And this makes sense because if you're going to wash your feet and you've got a bowl up high, you can't very well flop your foot up there and try to wash it so you have water above and you have water below. All of the priests remembered the words of Moses in Exodus 30.

They shall wash with water in order that they not die. You cleanse yourself. They're already priests.

They're already commissioned. They're already in service. But they've got to cleanse themselves lest they die.

It's a picture of our priesthood. We are priests. We are saved.

We are enrolled in the Melchizedekian priesthood of which Christ is the high priest. But if we do not cleanse ourselves on a regular basis in the laver, this is after salvation. This is after the great sacrifice on the altar.

But we require regular cleansing. The laver was not used by the congregation. Regular Israelites didn't go in there and wash their hands or wash their feet.

This was a priestly cleansing. And it sits just outside the door of the tabernacle proper. Exodus 29.4 Aaron and his sons.

God told Moses to bring them to the door of the tabernacle and wash them with water. The high priest washed in this thing each year on the Day of Atonement when he put on his holy linen garments and made an atonement for the entire nation. This is over in Leviticus chapter 16.

But it was in daily use by all the rest of the priests. The Word of God was clear that they were to be sanctified in the performing of this office. We have responsibilities in a lot of different areas.

Some of us are parents. Some of us are employers. Some of us are employees.

Some of us are family members. And we have authority over us, our parents. We have the authority of our nation and the laws of our country and of our community.

And we are to be obedient and we are to be free of guilt in all of those areas. God says, Be ye holy for I am holy. And if we commit an infraction, if we fail in some way, we need to go to the labor and wash.

I find it interesting that the washing here, they do not take... It could have been just as easy a picture. I think if human beings were writing this, they would have said, Well, we're going to keep some of the sacrificial blood. And whenever a priest is defiled, he'll go stick in some hyssop and sprinkle himself with blood and ritually cleanse himself in this way because he'll be implementing the sacrifice.

But it's not a cleansing by blood. It is a cleansing by water. And water represents the Word of God.

And specifically, the ministry of the Holy Spirit in effectually using the Word of God within us. What did Jesus say? Come to me, O him that thirsteth, let him come, and out of his belly shall flow forth rivers of living water. This he spake concerning the Spirit, the Bible tells us.

And if the Word of God by itself is like one tube of a two-tube set of epoxy, it has to be in the hands of the Holy Spirit. It doesn't work by itself. And you have a lot of people who know a lot of Bible but are not susceptible to the ministry of the Spirit, and it just does no good.

Be ye holy, for I am holy. Leviticus 11.44 What was the labor made of? Do you remember? Exodus 38.8 The circular brass bowl was made from the polished mirrors that the women brought with them from Egypt. How did people in the ancient world check to see if their face was clean? Find a bowl of water and look at your reflection.

Find a brass mirror and look at your reflection. Check and see. James uses this analogy.

When you look into the Word of God and see yourself, you need to go away and be changed by it. If you walk away, if you're a hearer of the Word and not a doer, you're like someone who looks into a mirror, but then you walk away and forget what you look like. And so the idea of a mirror and a reflection in both the water and in the brass is a reminder that we have to examine ourselves to see if we're in the faith.

And we need to cleanse ourselves through the grace that God has made available to us. There are no dimensions given for the laver. I told you the dimensions of the altar, 7 1/2 feet, 4 1/2 feet.

But the laver, there's no dimension given. It is circular. And it's a reminder, it is a teaching point that the cleansing grace of God is limitless.

It doesn't have a finite basis. Now there is a finite limit. There is a dimension that you can't cross to salvation.

Neither is there salvation in any other. There is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. And there is one way, used to be a Good News Club song when I was a little boy, one way, God said, to get to heaven.

Jesus is the only way. And there is a prescribed method of sacrifice. There is a prescribed dimension to the altar of sacrifice.

But the laver, circular, without dimension, and it is a reminder that as long as we are alive and breathing air, forgiveness and cleansing and restoration is available to us from God. If we choose it. If we pass that altar and move toward God.

The laver was used only by the priests. We are a priesthood. This is given to us by Peter in 1 Peter 2, verse 9. We are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people of his own, Peter tells us.

And so when we see the Levites and we see the Levitical prescriptions in the law, we should be able to make an application to ourselves. Again, I am fond of doing this to myself. I say, well, if God gave me a blue book essay test, I used to have mixed feelings.

On days when I had a blue book test, I was wishing that I had a multiple choice. And on days that I had a multiple choice test, I wished I had a blue book where I could just try to baffle them with my verbiage. But blue book tests are often difficult because you go to a history class or an English class, and they say, alright, I am going to give you a test and it is going to be essay.

And so you get in there and they give you this blue covered book and it is full of blank pages. They hand you a sheet or write something on the board that says, describe the history of the world detailing the various epochs, ages, major rulers and kingdoms. You have 20 minutes.

And so then you have to try to write everything you know and include all the relevant details, ex nihilo, starting with a blank page. Well, if we had such a test on our priesthood, how much could we say? Well, I know Romans 12, 1 and 2. I present myself a living sacrifice. I know I should cleanse myself, confess my sins.

And then what else would we say? What do we know about our priesthood? Well, we probably ought to know a lot more than we do. What is the nature of our priesthood? What are the details of how that works? The Bible is at pains to tell us over and over again that we are priests and that Jesus is our high priest. Well, as we look at the Levites, as we look at the Levitical service that takes place in the tabernacle and later the temple, we get enormous amounts of detail.

Aaron and his sons were born into the priesthood. It wasn't something you could choose. You didn't stick up your hand like we can today and say, I think God's calling me to be a pastor.

I think God's calling me to go to seminary. I think God's calling me to be a missionary or an evangelist. And we choose some sort of what is commonly called full-time Christian service.

I rebel against that term because every believer is in full-time Christian service. I think there is no such thing as anything else for a believer except full-time Christian service. You are in full-time Christian service, as am I. Whether or not a non-profit organization pays your salary.

Aaron and his sons were born into the priesthood. Exodus 28, verse 1. Each of us also enters our priesthood by means of the new birth. The washing of regeneration.

Titus 3, 5. A lot of us memorized this when we were kids. Not by works of righteousness, which we have done, but according to His mercy, He saved us through the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. We have been washed from our sins.

We have been made a kingdom of priests. Revelation 1, verses 5 and 6. He has made us rulers. He has made us priests through washing our sins in His own blood.

Through His love for us. We are priests to God. We are sanctified.

We are set apart. We ought to look sanctified. We ought to look set apart.

There ought to be something different. Do you think the Israelites could walk around in the milling throngs there and spot a Levite? Well, they should. What kind of a Levite would he be who is indistinguishable from any other? Who bears no marks of distinction, no marks of service, no marks of dedication to God? The Levites were excluded from owning any property, from inheriting any land, because God was their inheritance.

They were the tribe that belonged to God. And God belonged to them. He was their inheritance.

The service and the work of worship was their inheritance. So, in the same way, we ought to be set apart. God told the Levites, you look at 2 Chronicles 29.5, Hear me, Levites, sanctify yourselves, sanctify the house of the Lord God of your fathers, and carry out the rubbish from the holy place.

Later on in that same chapter, he says, the Levites gathered their brethren, they sanctified themselves, and went according to the commandment of the king at the word of the Lord to cleanse the house of the Lord. The priests went to the inner part of the house of the Lord to cleanse it, and brought out all the debris that they found in the temple of the Lord to the court of the house of the Lord, and the Levites took it and carried it to the brook Kidron. This is the Kidron Valley.

They began to sanctify on the first day of the first month, and on the eighth day of the month they came to the vestibule of the Lord. They sanctified the house of the Lord in eight days, and

on the sixteenth day of the first month they finished. Then they went to King Hezekiah and said, We have cleansed all the house of the Lord, the altar of burnt offerings, with all its articles, and the table of the showbread with all its articles.

Even down into the days of Hezekiah, these original articles still existed that Solomon had put in place. This was 300 years later. They sanctified the house of the Lord in eight days.

What's significant about eight days? When was a newborn son circumcised? Eighth day. You have eight days to be cleansed from the fluids of the body that were always ritually unclean. Blood, any other issue of the body was ceremonially, ritually unclean.

And on the eighth day, the baby that had emerged from the womb with the afterbirth and everything else was clean, was cleansed. Same thing with a leper in Leviticus 14. Like a newborn baby, he would replay, he would reenact his birth by shaving all of the hair on his body, even shaving his eyebrows so that he would look like a newborn baby.

Of course, some babies like me came out with a full head of hair and so on. But the idea is, you're newborn when you're cleansed and you're sanctified. We are supposed to do this for ourselves.

1 Thessalonians 4, verse 3, this is the will of God, your separation, your sanctification. That you should abstain from immorality and other things that defile. We are set apart.

Why? Not just to be distinct, not just to be different. The KKK separates itself by putting on white hoods. The Neo-Nazis separate themselves by tattooing themselves with swastikas.

It's not just being separate to be separate. I've read an article about the goth culture where people wear black eyeliner and black clothes and pierce themselves and walk around listening to strange music. And they say, oh, we're not any more violent than anybody else.

And they're not. But they tend to be viewed with suspicion by people who see them and say, you're weird. Which they are.

We're not just set apart to be different. We're set apart for a purpose. 1 Corinthians 1, 2, those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus called saints who are in every place calling on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Why? 1 Corinthians 6, 11. You are washed, you are sanctified, you are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of God. We are set apart for service.

We are set apart for worship. We are set apart to reflect the glory of the Lord. And that's what we looked at last time when we looked at the golden candlestick with those 22 decorations representing the 22,000 Levites hammered into a single unit, a lamp stand, a reflector, a carrier of the oil, the Holy Spirit, the flame, the glory of God shining in that holy place.

And that is our function. Set apart for service. We are set apart in three different ways which I'll

cover when we come back from the break.

But again, in your blue book, would you remember and could you detail, could you give a scripture for the three different ways in which we are sanctified? If not, come back from the break and we'll find out.