

May 2-8, 2022

## Exodus 35-40; Leviticus 1; 16; 19

“HOLINESS TO THE LORD”

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**Summary:** *Exodus 35. Israel is admonished to observe the Sabbath—Free gifts are offered for the tabernacle—The calls and inspiration of certain artisans are confirmed.*

*Exodus 36. Wise-hearted men are chosen to work on the tabernacle—Moses restrains the people from donating any more material.*

*Exodus 37. Bezaleel makes the ark, the mercy seat, and the cherubims—He makes the table, the vessels, the candlestick, the incense altar, the holy anointing oil, and the sweet incense.*

*Exodus 38. Bezaleel and others make the altar of burnt offerings and all things pertaining to the tabernacle—Offerings are made by 603,550 men.*

*Exodus 39. Holy garments are made for Aaron and the priests—The breastplate is made—The tabernacle of the congregation is finished—Moses blesses the people.*

*Exodus 40. The tabernacle is reared—Aaron and his sons are washed and anointed and given an everlasting priesthood—The glory of the Lord fills the tabernacle—A cloud covers the tabernacle by day, and fire rests on it by night.*

*Leviticus 1. Animals without blemish are sacrificed as an atonement for sins—Burnt offerings are a sweet savor unto the Lord.*

*Leviticus 16. How and when Aaron must enter the holy place is explained—Sacrifices are offered to reconcile Israel to God—The scapegoat carries away the sins of the people—The sins of all Israel are forgiven on the Day of Atonement.*

*Leviticus 19. Israel is commanded: Be holy, live righteously, love your neighbor, and keep the commandments—The Lord reveals and reaffirms sundry laws and commandments—Enchantments, wizardry, prostitution, and all evil practices are forbidden.*

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### Supplemental Jewish and Holy Land Insights

#### What can I learn from Sabbath rules invoked in the second set of “tablets?”

The Sabbath is a day of great meaning in the Bible. It is introduced in the Genesis creation account as the period during which God rested. Accordingly, the Children of Israel were instructed to rest on the seventh day in emulation of their

God. When the Children of Israel rejected the responsibility of the “higher Law,” the original God given governance standard for all mankind, a lesser or second set of laws was given to Moses. He received, the “do’s and don’ts,” clearly removing the “exercise of choice,” the substance of the “Higher Law.” “Six days shall work be done, but on the seventh day there shall be to you an holy day, a Sabbath of rest to the LORD: whosoever doeth work

therein shall be put to death. Ye shall kindle no fire throughout your habitations upon the sabbath day.” (Exodus 35:1-3) Widespread Jewish discussions have included more modern interpretations of fire, energy, and kindling, yet a personal view (based on the restoration of the higher law) may include the preparing of things needed on the Sabbath day, BEFORE the Sabbath begins. In other words, “Never let what you cannot do get in the way of what you can do!”

### **How did the Lord propose or include the concept of choice within the do’s and don’ts?”**

Take ye from among you an offering unto the LORD: whosoever is of a willing heart, let him bring it, an offering of the LORD . . . (Exodus 1:5) “The children of Israel brought a willing offering unto the LORD, every man and woman, whose heart made them willing to bring for all manner of work, which the LORD had commanded to be made by the hand of Moses.” (Exodus 1:29)

### **What do the “Cherubim” represent?**

In the Biblical Hebrew Bible, the word *kaporet* refers to the mercy seat. It was the gold lid placed on the Ark of the Covenant, with two *cherubim* facing each other and a space between them where the LORD was said to appear. This was associated with the rituals of *Yom Kippur*, the Day of Atonement. The name also appears in later Jewish sources, and twice in the New Testament. “And he made two cherubim(s) of gold, beaten out of one piece made he them, on the two ends of the mercy seat; One cherub on the end on this side, and another cherub on the other end on that side: out of the mercy seat made he the cherubims on the two ends thereof. And the cherubim(s) spread out their wings on high, and covered with their wings over the mercy seat, with their faces one to another; even to the mercy seatward were the faces of

the cherubim(s).” (Exodus 37:7-9) “. . . God, as depicted by the rabbis, embodies a combination of justice and mercy, of strict judgment and lenient compassion. This combination of justice and mercy in God is represented by the two names of God—Elohim and YHWH. The former stands for justice and the latter for mercy. Though they may seem contradictory, one actually complements the other and, when there is a conflict between the two, God usually favors mercy.” (Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.) Chayyim Paltiel, a 13th century French Jewish Biblical commentator suggested that the two “Cherubim” represent the two attributes of God, mercy and justice.

### **How does the pomegranate symbolize the High Priest’s office?**

“And they made bells of pure gold, and put the bells between the pomegranates upon the hem of the robe, round about between the pomegranates; A bell and a pomegranate, a bell and a pomegranate, round about the hem of the robe to minister in; as the LORD commanded Moses.” (Exodus 39:25-26) Recent attention has focused on an ivory (actually, bone) ornament shaped in pomegranate form and purported to be the only surviving artifact from Solomon’s Temple. Some scholars claim that this two-inch tall carving with a hole bored at its base was placed atop a ceremonial scepter and used in Solomon’s Temple during the time of Hezekiah. This exquisite carving . . . served as the decorative head of a ceremonial scepter carried by Temple priests. The fragmentary inscription around the neck reads “holy to the priests, belonging to the House of Yahweh.” (This could be equivalent to the modern temple inscription, “Holiness to the LORD”). The paleo-Hebrew script dates to the late eighth century BCE, around the time of King Hezekiah who attempted to centralize all Israelite worship in the Jerusalem Temple” “. . . While a validated

inscription might confirm its use in a temple setting, the fact that alleged forgers used the already-ancient ivory pomegranate to simulate a temple artifact supports its recognition (even by criminals) as a sacred symbol.” “. . . The excavator, M. Artzy of Haifa University, suggested that the person interred . . . was a priest and that the tomb deposits represent cultic implements used by him when performing his office.” “. . . The pomegranate, replete with these same connected characteristics, therefore, qualifies as a worthy symbol of ancient Israel.” (Mary Abram, “The Pomegranate: Sacred, Secular, and Sensuous Symbol of Ancient Israel.” *Studia Antiqua* 7, no. 1 (2009). <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/studiaantiqua/vol7/iss1/4>)

### **How does the conclusion of the Savior’s atonement match Biblical sacrifices?**

“Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, If any man of you bring an offering unto the LORD, . . . he shall bring it a male without blemish. And he shall kill it on the side of the altar northward before the LORD.” (Leviticus 1:2-11) From that time on, other substitute animals, always firstborn and unblemished, were sacrificed on Mount Moriah. The sacrifice was always done on the northern side of the temple altar. Today on the northern end of the Temple Mount stands an abandoned quarry with caves that give it a grotesque skull-like look. Many people consider this the Place of a Skull, Calvary or Golgotha. They feel this is where the Lamb of God,

the firstborn Son of God, was sacrificed when He was crucified. “And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha:” (John 19:17) This Place of a Skull and the nearby empty first-century Jewish tomb, the Garden Tomb, looks like the location described as the crucifixion and burial site in the New Testament. Scholars and Christians have only recently recognized and identified it as such.

### **How can I better understand “fearing” God and His children?**

“Speak unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say unto them, Ye shall be holy: for I the LORD your God am holy. Ye shall fear (have awe for) every man his mother, and his father, and keep my sabbaths: I *am* the LORD your God.” (Leviticus 19:1) Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained that godly fear can help dispel mortal fears. Godly fear, he clarified, is both edifying and spiritually helpful. “[It] encompasses a deep feeling of reverence, respect and awe for the Lord Jesus Christ, obedience to His commandments and anticipation of the Final Judgment and justice at His hand.” “This kind of fear is loving and trusting in Him,” Elder Bednar continued. “As we fear God (and His children) more completely, we love Him (and them) more perfectly.”