

SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE

Message Title: "Raiders of the Lost Ark"

Speaker: Pastor Kevin Myers

Date: March 2, 2008

Icebreaker:

Whether you were present at the Highway 20 Campus and experienced the Tabernacle or listened to the service via download, what particular item either in or around the Tabernacle had, or would have, the most profound impact on you and why?

Message Overview:

Continuing in the Genesis to Revelation Series, today's lesson focused on Israel, God's Holy people, and how Holy God provided a way He could dwell among His people and they in turn could worship Him. God had to set the standard for this and it is high; otherwise mankind would set the standard low enough so we could attain it on our own.



Discussion:

(Leaders: Do not try to cover every question provided in this study guide, but rather review the complete list, selecting a mix of questions that work best for your group, mixing scripture research/discussion as well as personal application of the teaching principles.

Be Holy for I am Holy.

- The reason many of us feel good about where we stand with God is because we have dropped His standard to something we can slam dunk. This lowering of His standard begins with our relationship with Him. We have made God manageable by making Him our pal in the pocket or God in the box. How have you made God more manageable? When did this first begin in you and how can you readjust your relationship with Him?
- If God's Holiness were a 100 foot basketball goal, how would Israel slam dunk at 100 feet? They don't, and neither do we. God didn't drop His standard of Holiness, instead He made possible what otherwise could not be. He came to dwell with Israel and make holiness possible again. Why did He do that and how did He do that with Israel?

Never Confuse Sincere with Revere.

- In Exodus 25-27, God was very specific about the construction of the Tabernacle, all of the materials and dimensions of the construction, all of the items inside, and even their placement within the Tabernacle. Why do you think God did this? Was there significance in what materials were used in each of these items and if so what do you think they were?
- If Israel was wandering around in the desert, after having been slaves in Egypt for 400 years and there was not a local Home Depot around, where would they have come up with the materials God was now requiring to be used in the Tabernacle construction? How does that make you feel about God's fulfilled promise and provision? (See Gen 15:14; Ex 3:21-22)
- In Leviticus 10:1-3 we find the story of Aaron's sons Nadab and Abihu. What did they do that was so wrong and what was their punishment? Can you think of other examples in Scripture where casualness towards God brought about swift punishment? (See 2 Samuel 6:1-7; Acts 5:1-11)
- Aaron must have grieved in his heart for the loss of his sons (Lev. 10:1-3), but instead of shaking his fist and demanding an answer from God, what did he do and how is that a model for us of reverence?
- In Leviticus 9, just moments before the Nadab and Abihu incident, everything was done exactly "as the Lord commanded" by Israel in offering the first sacrifice. How did God bless Israel for their obedience? What were some of the obvious characteristics of this worship? What are your attitudes toward worship?
- Compare the differences between "Sincere" and "Revere" in regards to our relationship with God. Where are you at risk of getting stuck in "sincere" and not rising up to "revere"? Where have you become too casual before our Holy God?

Take Seriously What God Takes Seriously

- In some ways man-made religion tries to gain access into the Holy of Holies. What are some ways this might happen? What are some ways irreverence can be a tool of mankind to dismiss God's Holy Agenda?
- The world's view of marriage is that it is a manmade institution. How does Scripture refute that and what does God say about marriage? How are Christian marriages supposed to look different from other marriages?
- God wants His Holy people to keep their lives free from the love of money. Are your giving habits man made sincere? What is your view of the offering?
- In Romans 12:1-2 we are instructed to offer our bodies as living sacrifices to the Lord. What area are you offering yourself reverently, and what areas do you approach the bronze laver kicking and screaming?
- What things does God take seriously that you do not?

Wrap-Up:

You may want to have a time of worship where calling out the attributes of God is your sweet incense offered to the Lord. If this is a new concept for your group, begin by going through the letters of the alphabet and call out an attribute in each letter, skip over the ones that are too challenging. The idea is to get your group to quickly bring to mind God's many attributes and offer them up as praise. You might begin by saying "You are the God of ____" or "You are ____". When we are reminded of God's attributes we remember that we are not equal to Him and He deserves our praise and worship.

Throughout the Week: (Optional)

Memory verse:

"As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But just as He who called you is Holy, so be Holy in all you do; for it is written: 'Be Holy for I am Holy'.

(1 Peter 1:14-16 - NIV)

Appendix 1: The Tabernacle

God's Provision for the Tabernacle

Before God brought Israel out of Egypt, He provided through the Egyptians an abundance of material for building the Tabernacle (Ex. 3:21-22, 12:35-36). God had already planned this when he made his covenant with Abraham (Genesis 15:14), and He later asked Israel to willingly bring these items as an offering to Him to build the Tabernacle (Exodus 35:4-29).

Names for the Tabernacle

In Exodus 25:8 God told Moses why he wanted him to build the Tabernacle – so God could dwell among the Israelites. The different names used for the Tabernacle reflect some of its attributes.

- Sanctuary (Exodus 25:8) – Literally the Hebrew word means ‘a holy place’ or ‘a place set apart’. This name emphasized God’s holiness.
- Tabernacle (Exodus 25:9) – The Hebrew words for Tabernacle and ‘to dwell’ contain the same root, so Tabernacle literally means ‘a dwelling place’.
- Tent of Meeting (Exodus 29:42) –The place where the people presented themselves before God and met with Him.
- Tent of the Testimony (Numbers 17:7-8) – Testimony was the common name for the stone tables bearing the Ten Commandments that were kept in the Ark of the Covenant.

Entering the Tabernacle

- **Court Fence and Gate of the Court (Exodus 27:9-19)** - First a person would enter the Gate of the Court to make an offering (the five offerings are described in Leviticus 1-6), either a sacrifice for sin or thanksgiving. After passing through the gate, the person would come into the court. The court fence was made of long pieces of white linen held up by posts that surrounded the Tabernacle.
- **Bronze Altar (Exodus 27:1-8)** - This altar is the one place where all the sacrifices of the people were to be offered. Most offerings were made for the people’s sins (intentional and unintentional sin). Because these sacrifices only temporarily covered the sins of the people, they needed to be offered on a regular basis. God asked them for a perfect, flawless animal (Leviticus 1:3; 4:28) because the animal represented an undeserving recipient of a deserved punishment.

- **Bronze Basin (Leviticus 30:17-21)** – In front of the tent stood the bronze basin for washing. Before making the sacrifice or entering the tent, the priest washed himself at the bronze laver, to purify himself.
- **Tabernacle (Exodus 26)** - The priest entered the Tabernacle through the curtains at the entrance. The Tabernacle was divided into two sections- The Holy Place and The Most Holy Place. Everyday some of the priests entered the Holy Place to serve the Lord. This outer room contained the table of showbread, the lamp stand and the altar of incense.
- **Golden Lampstand (Exodus 25:31-40)** - The lampstand (menorah) provided light in this otherwise dark room. The lampstand was made from a single piece of gold that had a central shaft and six branches, three on each side. Each branch had knobs, flowers, and an almond-shaped bowl to hold pure olive oil. The lamp was never to be extinguished (Leviticus 24:1-4) and was supposed to light the area in front of it where the Table stood (Numbers 8:1-4).
- **Table of the Presence (Exodus 25:23-30)** - On the table of the Presence, the priests placed twelve loaves of bread (probably to represent the 12 tribes of Israel). The priests were to set out fresh bread every Sabbath and were allowed to eat the old bread (Leviticus 24:5-9).
- **The Altar of Incense (Exodus 30:1-10)** – This altar was rather small and was used to burn special incense (Exodus 30:34-38). The High Priest burned the incense every morning and evening.
- **Curtain (Exodus 26:31-35)** - The curtain was a divider between the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place where the Ark of the Covenant was kept. It was a barrier between God and man. Only the High Priest could enter into the Most Holy Place and even he could enter only once a year, on the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16).
- **Ark (Exodus 25:10-22)** - The central focus of the entire Tabernacle was the Ark in the Most Holy Place. The Ark was a chest with a very special cover (atonement cover, also called Mercy Seat) made of pure gold, with two winged cherubim on the top facing each other. Inside the Ark were the Tablets of Stone (Ex. 25:16) with the Ten Commandments engraved in them, the golden jar of manna (Exodus 16:32-33), and Aaron's Rod that budded and bore fruit (Num. 17:10).
- **Cloud and Pillar of Fire** - The Lord manifested His presence with a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. This cloud or pillar of fire would rest above the Atonement Cover (Exodus 25:21-22). From there, God spoke to Moses (who stood in front of the tent) and gave him His commands (Exodus 25:22, Leviticus 1:1-2). When the cloud or pillar of fire moved, the children of Israel followed it. Wherever it stopped, they camped there until it moved again (Exodus 40:34-38).

Appendix 2:

Genesis to Revelation Series Calendar

Message Topics:

February 3
Mirror Image

February 10
In the Beginning

February 17
Three Pivotal Promises

February 24
Why is it called the Old Testament?

March 2
Raiders of the Lost Ark?

March 9
The Lord is My Shepherd....

March 16
Christmas Gifts

March 23
Why is it called the New Testament?

March 30
Who Needs the Church?

April 6
In the End

Read Before:

February 3
(No reading – series overview)

February 10
Genesis 1-3 (& 1-11)

February 17
Genesis 12 & 15

February 24
Exodus 1-4 & 20

March 2
Exodus 25-27 & 40

March 9
1 Samuel 8, 16-17, Ps. 23

March 16
Luke 2 & 4, John 3, 8 & 10

March 23
Matthew 26-28, Acts 3

March 30
Acts 1-2 & Jude

April 6
Revelation 1, 19-22

Email any questions or feedback about this Study Guide to robin.ritchie@12stone.com.