

## ***THE ONE YEAR BIBLE Reading For February 9:***

In Today's Old Testament reading (Exodus 29) we read of the consecration of the priests. To consecrate literally means to "set apart". Sacrifice was to be made for the priests themselves (v. 1) since the priests were sinful. Though the sacrifices could not truly bring forgiveness, by faith God's people offered them, the sacrifices taught the need for sacrifice and looked forward to the sacrifice which would forgive—Jesus Christ (see Romans 3:24-26 [On the basis of the future death of Jesus Christ God forgave their sins in the Old Testament since they acted in faith]). The need for consecration reminds us that God cannot be approached by those who are sinful. This is why Habakkuk 1:13a says of God: "You who are of purer eyes than to see evil and cannot look at wrong..." This is also why mere human priests, who were sinful and had to offer sacrifices for themselves (Heb. 5:3; 9:7), could not offer sacrifices which remove sin. It must be the priest who was without sin—Jesus Christ (Hebrews 7:26). Most likely Exodus 28-29 are inserted where they are since they follow the instructions for the bronze altar where sacrifices were made. It was natural to speak of the priests at this point before moving inside the tent to address furniture in the Holy Place.

Matthew 26:14-46 covers events on the Thursday night of the week of the crucifixion. This is the night Jesus was betrayed; the night during which He ate the Passover meal with His disciples and instituted the Lord's Supper; the night He washed their feet (John 13), instructed them of His necessary departure, the need to abide in Him, and the coming of the Spirit (John 14-16); and it was the night He prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane (Matthew 26:36-46; John 17). There are some noteworthy truths in this section of Matthew. Jesus went to the cross both because it was decreed by the Father and therefore prophesied (24), but also because Judas sinfully betrayed Him (24). This is another clear example of compatibilism—God's sovereignty and man's responsibility side-by-side. During the institution of the Lord's Supper Jesus calls the cup "my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins." (28) This reminds us that Jesus' death was a sacrificial death to pay the penalty for the sins of men, women, boys, and girls, but it also ratified the New Covenant whereby God's Spirit writes His law upon men's hearts and radically changes them. (Jeremiah 31:31-33; Ezek. 36:26-27) Finally, as we read of Jesus praying in the garden we are reminded that He is 100% God and 100% man—His two natures coming together to form one person without the natures being confused, changed, divided, or separated. Though as the true divine Messiah and Savior He knew (Mark 8:31) it was necessary for Him to die since the Triune God had decreed in eternity past to save sinful man (Luke 17:25; Acts 2:23; 4:27-28), yet, since He was and is 100% man, He wrestled with bearing the sins of mankind on the cross. Thus, He prayed that this cup, this assignment to bear judgment, may pass from Him. Yet, He submitted to the will of the Father which was to go to the cross for those whom the Father gave Him. (See Matthew 26:36-46; John 10:15)

Three important points of application arising out of the Psalms and Proverbs readings today are: True biblical faith is more than head knowledge, it involves love for the LORD (Psalm 31:23-24). Next, the results of biblical wisdom are better than the greatest riches (Proverbs 8:19), so search diligently for wisdom which will lead to your finding it (8:17).

Finally, those who find true wisdom will walk in the way of righteousness and justice since this is the direction wisdom leads. (8:20)