

THE LEVITICUS FIVE

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THE WELL IN THE DESERT.

Not every well has water. Not every source gives life. Not everything that calls itself spiritual can sustain a soul. And if we are not careful, we will drink from something that looks ancient, organized, religious, even feels right and still walk away thirsty.

JEREMIAH SAID, *"They (The People of God of his day) have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns for themselves... broken cisterns that can hold no water."*

Notice the exchange. They did not abandon water. **They abandoned living water. A counterfeit well is any source that promises life, identity, or security apart from the presence of God.** It looks sufficient. But it does not transform. Regions drink from whatever well is most accessible. The wells that are most accessible right now are the wells coming from government (welfare), schools, divisive politics, and churches that have settled for access and not encounter.

We must sacrifice for the living water from the well of Jesus. **The well is Jesus, the Holy Spirit is the water.** Families, churches, and communities drink from "wells". If the well is shallow, polluted, or dry, the people become shallow, polluted, and desperate. The enemy does not have to destroy a people if he can replace their well: their source.

And this battle is not new. Long before modern churches, platforms and programs, denominational debates, religious ideologies, or political power struggles, there was a tent in the wilderness. When we talk about the tent in the wilderness, we are talking about the Tabernacle described in the Book of Leviticus and detailed beginning in Exodus. It was not impressive from the outside. From the outside it looked like badger skins and desert dust (oversimplification).

But inside that tent was the manifested glory of God. A cloud by day. Fire by night. Glory resting between cherubim. God chose to dwell in the middle of a redeemed but still imperfect people. And that tent was structured with layers.

Not to create distance. But to teach intimacy. There were levels of proximity. Not everyone in that day experienced God the same way.

1. THE OUTER COURT – SALVATION AND SUBSTITUTION

When you first entered, you encountered the bronze altar. Blood. Sacrifice. Reverential slaughter house. A substitute dying in your place. Before intimacy, there had to be atonement (compensation or payment) . Before one encountered the glory of God, there had to be cleansing. **No one bypassed the altar.**

Then came the bronze laver (basin). Water for washing. This is where identity shifts. You are no longer just forgiven. You are cleansed. **The Outer Court represents salvation.** Access begins here. You can live forgiven and never go further. Many people stop at the altar. They are redeemed, but not close. The New Covenant invites us to go beyond forgiven through cleansed and now to relationship.

2. THE HOLY PLACE – FELLOWSHIP AND FORMATION

Beyond the first veil was the Holy Place. It gets quieter. It gets intentional. Three pieces of furniture filled this room. 1. The table of showbread. 2. The golden lamp stand. 3. The altar of incense.

Look at how Jesus gave us access past the first veil. The Table of showbread: Bread speaks of sustained communion.

***JOHN 6:35 (ESV)** Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst.*

Light speaks of revelation. The Golden lamp stand: Jesus is the Light. During the Feast of Tabernacles, Jesus speaks these words.

***JOHN 8:12 (NIV)** When Jesus spoke again to the people, He said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows Me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."*

Altar of incense: Incense speaks of prayer.

***JOHN 14:6 (ESV)** Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.*

This is daily relationship. Worship wasn't emergency repentance sessions or crisis-driven worship, but daily tending. Only priests entered here. It required calling, discipline, consecration. This level represents fellowship. You move from being saved to being formed. From visiting God to ministering before Him. Many believers know the altar, fewer know the table. Even fewer tend the lamp. You know a God who ministers to you, but do you minister to Him?

3. THE MOST HOLY PLACE – GLORY AND INTIMACY

Then there was another veil. This is the one that God tore, top to bottom. Behind it sat the Ark of the Covenant. The mercy seat, the cherubim, the Shekinah glory. This was not symbolic religion. This was manifested presence. Only the high priest entered once a year. Only with blood and trembling. This level was not about activity, it was about presence. No lamp, no bread, no noise. The glory was light enough. The presence was enough. Just awe. This was intimacy at its highest level.

Not information about God. Encounter with God. And here is what is powerful. The tent was arranged so that as you moved inward, **distractions decreased**

and glory increased. Noise decreased. Light shifted from natural to golden to supernatural. Access narrowed. Holiness intensified. It was progressive intimacy. Not because God was unwilling. But because holiness must be approached rightly.



And then something changed. When Jesus died, the veil was torn from top to bottom in the Gospel of Matthew 27. What only one man experienced once a year became available to all who are in Christ. But here is the tension. **Access expanded. Holiness did not diminish.** The veil was torn. Reverence was not. The tent teaches us this: You can live in the Outer Court and be saved. You can serve in the Holy Place and be useful. But you were created for the Most Holy Place. For glory. For communion. For encounter.

And the deeper you go, the less performance matters, the less applause matters, the less noise survives. **Because intimacy is not loud. It is weighty.** If we want living water to flow in a region, the tent must not just be built. It must be entered. Not casually. But consecrated. Not hurried. But hungry.

The wilderness tent was not about restriction. It was about invitation. Come closer, cleaner, deeper. Because the God who dwells in the camp is not just looking for attendance, He is looking for intimacy. It is about a Holy God choosing to dwell among a redeemed people.

Leviticus answers the question: How can a Holy God live in the middle of an unholy people? **The answer was not casual access. It was consecrated proximity.**

The altar, the sacrifice, the priest had to be right. The fire had to be holy. Because when God dwells in the camp, the source must remain pure. Nadab and Abihu offered strange fire. It looked like fire. But it was not His fire. And God made something clear: You cannot substitute emotion for obedience. You cannot

substitute creativity for holiness. You cannot attach My presence to polluted worship. Access does not eliminate holiness. Dwelling demands it.

Now rewind to Genesis 26. There is a famine in the land. And a man named Isaac stays where God told him to stay. He sows in famine. He prospers in drought. And the Philistines respond by filling in the wells his father Abraham had dug. They didn't poison them. They buried them. **Because whoever controls the well controls the region.** In the ancient world, wells meant survival, inheritance, and permanence. You didn't control territory by flags. You controlled territory by water. And the enemy understood something: **If you cannot create a better source, bury the true one.** So Isaac does something powerful. He digs again. He goes back to the wells of his father and calls them by the same names. Prayer. Covenant. Reverence. Fear of the Lord. He restores what sustained covenant life before Him. And every time he hits water, there is contention. The first well he names Esek — contention. The second well he names Sitnah — enmity.

Let me say something clearly: If there is no resistance, you may not have hit living water yet. Fresh water threatens established control. But Isaac keeps digging. And finally, the third well he names Rehoboth. Which means: Room. Expansion. Fruitfulness. And after the well is restored, the Lord appears to him. Notice the order. **The well flows. Then the encounter comes.**

Now fast forward. By the time Jesus walks into the synagogues, Israel has "wells". They have Scripture. They have leaders. They have systems. But many of those wells have been contaminated. In the Gospel of Matthew 23, Jesus confronts the religious leaders. "You shut the kingdom in people's faces." "You clean the outside, but inside you are full of corruption." "Whitewashed tombs." They controlled the synagogues. They controlled access. **But they did not control the Spirit.** It looked holy. But it did not flow. Structure without Spirit is a counterfeit well. Religion without encounter is a dry cistern. Authority without intimacy produces control, not transformation. And Jesus stands up in John 7 and says, **"If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink."** That is confrontation. He is saying: You have wells. But you are still thirsty. The issue was never buildings. The issue was the source.

Leviticus shows us the dwelling must be guarded. Genesis shows us the wells must be restored. The Gospels show us sacred systems can become counterfeit. **Holiness defines the encounter. Encounter shapes the region.** And whoever controls the well, influences the future. In our region. It's not just a battle between good and evil. It's a battle between God and good. Many have settled for good. Access is good. Encounter is when you have God. Good gets funded. Good leaves me access without having to be formed. The church is called to disciple, there is no true discipleship taking place without encountering the holy of holies.

So here is the question for us: Are we drawing from a living well, or have we grown comfortable with a counterfeit? We will not trade holiness for growth. We will not trade reverence for relevance. We will not trade living water for applause.

Because if God is going to dwell here, the well must remain clean. You do not win a region by noise. You win a region by water. And we will re-dig: The well of prayer. The well of uncompromised truth. The well of reverent worship. The well of holy fire.