
Christ in the Tabernacle

Exodus 27:9-15, 17-18

“The Tabernacle – Part 2”

III The Tabernacle

A. The Outer Court

1. The Linen Fence and Pillars
 2. The Gate and Pillars
 3. The Brazen Altar
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Well, I'm glad to see you all made it here to the entrance of the tabernacle. I hope you remembered sun screen. This morning we're going to start here at the Outer Court.

First, I'd like to remind you of a major point I made last time. While the Tabernacle is a picture of Christ and stood in the place of the mediator of Israel, we also saw the sacrificial system was one that generated distance between the individual Israelite and God. We noted how much we have to be grateful for, in that, because of Christ's sacrifice for us we individually have direct access to the Father anytime we want it. We must remember how blessed we are and not take that access to God for granted.

A. The Outer Court: First, I want you to notice the placement of the tribes, specifically the fact that Judah is located on the east side of the tabernacle, in front of the entrance of the outer court. It was through the tribe of Judah we approach God today, for Jesus was born within this tribe and He is our access to God.

The court was approximately 87.5' x 175'. The entrance was called the gate. It is through this gate we see the structure of the Tabernacle. When God instructed Moses to build this tent, he took up an offering to provide the materials. He collected so much that He had to tell the people to stop giving. I don't think that's too likely to be a problem for most churches today.

“The LORD said to Moses, Tell the Israelites to bring me an offering. You are to receive the offering for me from each man whose heart prompts him to give. These are the offerings you are to receive from them: gold, silver and bronze; blue, purple and scarlet yarn and fine linen; goat hair; ram skins dyed red and hides of sea cows; acacia wood; olive oil for the light; spices for the anointing oil and for the fragrant incense; and onyx stones and other gems to be mounted on the ephod and breastpiece.

Then have them make a sanctuary for me, and I will dwell among them. Make this tabernacle and all its furnishings exactly like the pattern I will show you” (Exodus 25:1-9).

I checked for this study and one source estimated the cost of the Tabernacle in current dollars would be about 10 million. As you can see the whole structure is mobile. It is enclosed by a

fence of white linen, hung from 60 pillars, 20 per side and 10 on each end. This linen was made from grown flax and therefore represents Christ's sinless humanity and earthly ministry. It is a picture of the Righteousness and Purity of the Lord.

“It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption.” ... “God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God” (1 Corinthians 1:30; 2 Corinthians 5:21).

Now this fence kept men separated from any approach to God. Mankind was cut off from Him. It was by bringing the proper sacrifice they were able to get through the gate. The structure stands between us and God, showing Jesus Christ in His role as our mediator. His humanity is one factor needed for Him to serve in this role, for the true mediator must have the nature of both parties for whom he is mediating and Christ is both deity and humanity. We will see this dual nature pictured through out the tabernacle.

“For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus ...” ... “But the ministry Jesus has received is as superior to theirs as the covenant of which he is mediator is superior to the old one, and it is founded on better promises.” ... “... to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel” (1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 8:6, 12:24).

Once we are inside the gate we are also separated and protected from the world. When we are in Messiah we are now part of a body separated from the world to God. *How should this affect the way we live?*

We still haven't entered the courtyard because we still have a little more to look at out here.

1. The Linen Fence and Pillars: As we have seen, the linen fence speaks of the purity and humanity of Christ. It shows by what nature He serves as our mediator. Christ is able to serve as our mediator because He partakes of the nature of both parties of the New Covenant. He is of the nature of both deity and humanity.

Picking up at this point we will take a quick look at the Pillars. The pillars holding up the linen fence are topped in silver and set in brass, actually bronze. Brass will stand the test of fire, in other words, God's judgment.

“The LORD Almighty will come with thunder and earthquake and great noise, with windstorm and tempest and flames of a devouring fire.” ... “The LORD will cause men to hear his majestic voice and will make them see his arm coming down with raging anger and consuming fire, with cloudburst, thunderstorm and hail.” ... “See, the LORD is coming with fire, and his chariots are like a whirlwind; he will bring down his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire” (Isaiah 29:6, 30:30, 66:15).

We will make this clearer when we get inside and take a look at the brazen altar. Here the picture is of the judgment and suffering of Jesus.

“ ... a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not ” (Isaiah 53:3).

Silver is a picture of atonement or redemption. Joseph was sold for a price of silver as was the Lord. This was the price He paid for us. He

“ ... gave himself as a ransom for all men” (1 Timothy 2:6).

If the tabernacle is a picture of Christ then we can also draw parallels with His body the Church, for believers are often referred to as pillars.

“... and our daughters will be like pillars carved to adorn a palace.” “... and recognizing the grace that had been given to me, James, Peter and John, those reputed to be pillars,...” (Psalm 144:12, Galatians 2:9).

It is through God judging Jesus in His humanity the price was paid for our redemption. It is by Jesus' death and resurrection we receive eternal life. We are joined with Him and receive His righteousness.

“This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe.” ... “But he who unites himself with the Lord is one with him in spirit” (Romans 3:22, 1 Corinthians 6:17).

The Lord's substitutionary death is absolutely necessary, regardless how offensive it is to the unbeliever and the liberal theologian.

2. The Gate and Pillars: Before we go inside the court let's take a look at the gate and its four pillars (see Exodus 27:16). Obviously the Gate is the picture of Jesus Christ as the only way to approach God.

“I am the way ...” (John 14:6).

The first thing you'll see as we go inside is the altar and that stands for the cross. Jesus is our way to God through the sacrifice on the cross.

“ Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).

The size of the gate is about 30' X 7 1/2'. The colors of the hanging are blue, purple, scarlet and white, woven into the same linen material as the rest of the fence. *I suspect you could make a correct assumption as to what the four colors stand for. Any one want to take a chance?*

- The blue can be seen to talk of heaven, ***“And the Father who sent me has himself testified concerning me” (John 5:37)***, and relates to the origin of Christ as God coming down from Heaven.
- Purple is the color of royalty and can speak of the Kingship of Jesus, ***“God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords” (1 Timothy 6:15).*** Also Purple is

made up of blue and scarlet and therefore can picture both His deity and the need for His sacrifice.

- Scarlet, therefore is the color of blood and as noted refers to His atoning death, ***“When Christ came as high priest ... he went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle ... he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood ...”*** (Hebrews 9:11-12).
- Finally as we have already noted, white speaks of His righteousness or purity, ***“Was there ever a prophet your fathers did not persecute? They even killed those who predicted the coming of the Righteous One. And now you have betrayed and murdered him”*** (Acts 7:52).

Anyone who brought an acceptable sacrifice could enter through this gate. The Messiah’s sacrifice allows us into the presence of God. Christ himself is the gate by which we enter,

“Enter through the narrow gate. ... But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.” ... “Therefore Jesus said again, “I tell you the truth, I am the gate for the sheep. ... I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved” (Matthew 7:13-14; John 10: 7, 9).

Once again we see the need of shed blood. The penitent would bring his sacrifice through the gate for the priest to offer up for him. The sacrifice we present is Christ.

As you can see in the hangings of the gate, we see all aspects of Jesus and His ministry; His coming from the Father, His role as King of Kings, His shed blood, and finally His righteousness and purity.

Now some see the four pillars, supporting the Gate, as the looking to prefiguring the four gospels, though I must say I find view a bit hard to accept. Another view, which makes more sense to me is to identify them with the four fold sonship of Christ:

Jesus is the son of David,

“... The Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David;” (Luke 1: 32).

He is also a son of Abraham,

“The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, ... the son of Abraham” ... “Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, ‘And to seeds,’ as referring to many, but rather to one, ‘And to your seed,’ that is Christ.” (Matthew 1:1 ; Galatians 3:16).

Jesus is also called the son of man,

“... and He gave Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the son of man” (John 5:27).

Finally He is called the Son of God,

“ God,... in these last days has spoken to us in His Son,...” (Hebrews 1:1-2).

3. The Brazen Altar: Wait a minute now while I have the priests open the gate so we can get inside. The first thing we see is the brazen altar (Exodus 27:1-8.) The size of the altar was about 7 1/2' x 7 1/2' x 4 1/2' and it is here that the sacrifice was made for the sins of the people. This is apart from the one sin made on the Day of Atonement. It was here the blood flowed down through the years.

“ ... And according to the Law, one may ... say, all things are cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness” (Hebrews 9:22).

The altar pictures the Doctrine of Satisfaction. Remember that Exodus starts with Israel in slavery and ends with God's presence among the people. We as believers started as slaves to sin and Jesus' death freed us. Today Jesus stands outside and knocks to be let in, but at this time the believer stood on the outside and brought sacrifice to be able to come in.

Without the Tabernacle and the altar Judaism is helpless. While the law shows man's imperfection, Judaism has nothing to solve the problem of that sin. There is no sacrifice Here is God's answer to the problem of sin. Satisfaction for sin is provided through the blood sacrifice, ritually through the blood of animals, actually through the blood of Christ.

It should also be noted that unlike altars of the day, the Brazen Altar is not one showing its origins in idolatry. It was here the people offered up sacrifice for their sin. The blood wasn't, as was often the case in pagan worship, to somehow quench the thirst of some god for violence, but was the payment for their own actions.

The altar is made from Shittim (acacia) wood overlaid with brass. Shittim is a close grained wood used for ship building in Egypt. This wood was like brass, able to withstand fire. As previously noted, brass is symbolic of God's judgment. Here we find a picture of the cross - judgment - sacrifice. Christ withstanding judgment for us all.

“ He set the altar of burnt offering near the entrance to the tabernacle, the Tent of Meeting, and offered on it burnt offerings and grain offerings, as the Lord commanded him.” “... and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God” (Exodus 40:29; Ephesians 5:2).

The **burnt offering** was made here,

“ He is to slaughter the young bull before the LORD, and then Aaron's sons the priests shall bring the blood and sprinkle it against the altar on all sides at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting. He is to skin the burnt offering and cut it into pieces. The sons of Aaron the priest are to put fire on the altar and arrange wood on the fire ... He is to wash the inner parts and the legs with water, and the priest is to burn all of it on the altar. It is a burnt offering, an offering made by fire, an aroma pleasing to the LORD” (Leviticus 1:5-7, 9).

The **meal offering** was made here,

“Bring the grain offering made of these things to the LORD; present it to the priest, who shall take it to the altar. He shall take out the memorial portion from the grain offering and burn it on the altar as an offering made by fire, an aroma pleasing to the Lord” (Leviticus 2:8-9).

The **peace offering** was here ...

“Then Aaron's sons are to burn it on the altar on top of the burnt offering that is on the burning wood, as an offering made by fire, an aroma pleasing to the Lord” (Leviticus 3:5),

... as well as the sin, transgression, and atonement offerings. (see Leviticus 4:10; 5:10; 16:9 if you are interested.) Remember, it was on here at the tabernacle sacrifice could be made. We will look at the Golden Altar later.

To reinforce the fact that Christ's death is the only acceptable sacrifice for sin, God made it clear to the Hebrews that they were to go to no other altar, and to sacrifice to no other god.

“Jehoram received a letter from Elijah the prophet, which said: “This is what the Lord, the God of your father David, says: ‘You have not walked in the ways of your father Jehoshaphat or of Asa king of Judah. But you have walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, and you have led Judah and the people of Jerusalem to prostitute themselves, just as the house of Ahab did. You have also murdered your own brothers, members of your father’s house, men who were better than you. So now the Lord is about to strike your people, your sons, your wives and everything that is yours, with a heavy blow. You yourself will be very ill with a lingering disease of the bowels, until the disease causes your bowels to come out.’”” (2 Chronicles 21:12-15).

And God did judge the nation for disobedience.

“All this took place because the Israelites had sinned against the LORD their God, who had brought them up out of Egypt from under the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt. They worshiped other gods and followed the practices of the nations the LORD had driven out before them, as well as the practices that the kings of Israel had introduced. The Israelites secretly did things against the LORD their God that were not right. From watchtower to fortified city they built themselves high places in all their towns. They set up sacred stones and Asherah poles on every high hill and under every spreading tree. At every high place they burned incense, as the nations whom the LORD had driven out before them had done. They did wicked things that provoked the LORD to anger. They worshiped idols, though the LORD had said, “You shall not do this.” The LORD warned Israel and Judah through all his prophets and seers: ‘Turn from your evil ways. Observe my commands and decrees, in accordance with the entire Law that I commanded your fathers to obey and that I delivered to you through my servants the prophets.’” (2 Kings 17:7-13).

The altar speaks of the **Nature of Christ**. The Shittim is a desert shrub with a long tap root that reaches to the subterranean dampness.

“He grew up before him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of dry ground. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him” (Isaiah 53:2).

This shows the common humanity of the Lord.

The altar being the first item seen inside the gate says to men that to approach God the first thing they must look at, or come to, is the cross. If there is real desire to approach God, then we must go to the cross.

“He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.” ... “The law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming—not the realities themselves. For this reason it can never, by the same sacrifices repeated endlessly year after year, make perfect those who draw near to worship. If it could, would they not have stopped being offered? For the worshipers would have been cleansed once for all, and would no longer have felt guilty for their sins. But those sacrifices are an annual reminder of sins” (1 Peter 2:24; Hebrews 10:1-3).

It is worth noting that for us as believers, having already gone to the cross, we can go into the presence of God. But for the Jew, he could go no further than the altar. He had to depend on his representatives, the priests and the high priest.

Just as the altar was made according to plans given to Moses by God,

“... This is why Moses was warned when he was about to build the tabernacle: “See to it that you make everything according to the pattern shown you on the mountain”” (Hebrews 8:5).

Jesus’ death and resurrection was planned for our salvation from before creation.

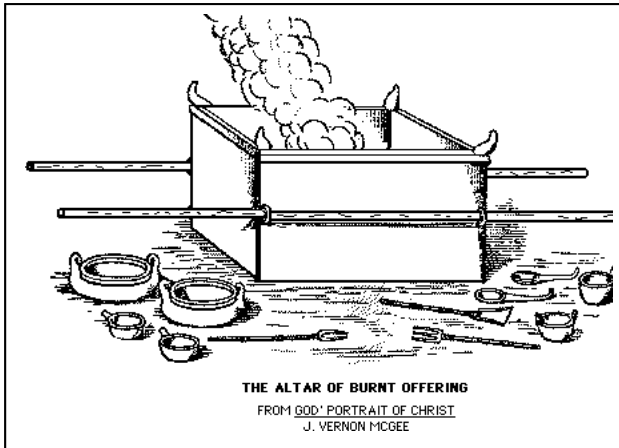
“But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth” (2 Thessalonians 2:13).

As you can see the altar is of major importance, and we will pick up here next time continuing to see that it is pictures our Salvation.

“... and there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved. For as we read, “He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; So let us praise the Lord, ... because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation” (Acts 4:12; 1 Peter 2: 24; 2 Thessalonians 2:13).

“You shall be Holy, for I am Holy. ... and if you address as Father the One who impartially judges according to each man’s work, conduct yourselves in fear during the time of your stay upon earth; knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the

blood of Christ. ... You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; for you once were not a people, but now you are the people of God; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. Blessed be the name of the Lord. (1 Peter 1:16-19; 2:9-10).



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“The Tabernacle – Part 2”

III The Tabernacle

A. The Outer Court

1. The Linen Fence and Pillars
 2. The Gate and Pillars
 3. The Brazen Altar
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III The Outer Court – A. The Outer Court

(Exodus 25:1-9; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 8:6, 12:24)

1. The Linen Fence and Pillars:

(Isaiah 29:6, 30:30, 66:15, 53:3; 1 Timothy 2:6; Psalm 144:12; Galatians 2:9; Romans 3:22, 1 Corinthians 6:17)

2. The Gate and Pillars:

(see Exodus 27:16; John 14:6; Acts 4:12; Matthew 7:13-14; John 10: 7, 9; Luke 1: 32; Matthew 1:1; Galatians 3:16; John 5:27; Hebrews 1:1-2)

Blue *(John 5:37)*

Purple (*1 Timothy 6:15*)

Scarlet (*Hebrews 9:11-12*)

White (*Acts 7:52*)

3. The Brazen Alter:

(Hebrews 9:22; Exodus 40:29; Ephesians 5:2; also see Leviticus 4:10; 5:10; 16:9)

- a. Burnt Offering (*Leviticus 1:5-7, 9*)
- b. Meal Offering (*Leviticus 2:8-9*)
- c. Peace Offering (*Leviticus 3:5*)

Nature of Christ –

(2 Chronicles 21:12-15; 2 Kings 17:7-13; Isaiah 53:2; 1 Peter 2:24; Hebrews 10:1-3, 8:5; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; Acts 4:12; 1 Peter 2:24; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Peter 1:16-19; 2:9-10)