
Christ in the Tabernacle

Exodus 27:1-8, 30:17-21

“The Tabernacle – Part 3”

III The Tabernacle

A. The Outer Court

3. The Brazen Altar

4. The Blood

5. The Brazen Laver

Chap 27:1-8

Various Passages

Chap 30:17-21

We have been looking at the Tabernacle’s Court Yard. Last time we primarily dealt with the outer fence, entrance, pillars, etc. This morning we will continue our examination of the brazen altar.

3. The Brazen Altar: The altar was used to make the sacrifice of the lamb, the blood sacrifice, which was the passport to God. Again the point is made that the shedding of blood is the basis of the entire system, a system which points toward Christ.

The altar was accessible to all who brought the appropriate sacrifice. But it was without any beauty in and of itself. In fact as we have already noted the altar was actually offensive. It was the place of spilled blood and burnt flesh. The altar **was** offensive and the cross **is** offensive. People don’t want a God who died for them, “that’s primitive.” People want to earn their way into the presence of God. The real offensive of the cross isn’t just the blood of Christ. It is the truth that we are totally helpless to satisfy God or win His approval.

“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 message of the Tabernacle is God’s love, sacrifice and grace.

Now you’ll notice there are four horns on the corners of the altar. Horns in Scripture speak of different kinds of power. For example in Daniel 7:24 we read:

“The ten horns are ten kings who will come from this kingdom. After them another king will arise, different from the earlier ones; he will subdue three kings.”

These horns speak of ruling power. We also find horns speaking of political power in Revelation. Here the horns, being on the altar of sacrifice, speak of the power in the blood, Christ’s blood shed for our sins.

“Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God’s wrath through him!” (Romans 5:9).

Not only is the altar a picture of the cross, but it reminds us that Christ Himself is the lamb of God who is sacrificed on the altar. And He is still our lamb ...

“... Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”... “Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing in the center of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders. He had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth” (John 1:29; Revelation 5:6).

The horns, picturing the power in the blood, tell us the altar is the place of salvation.

“At this, all Adonijah’s guests rose in alarm and dispersed. But Adonijah, in fear of Solomon, went and took hold of the horns of the altar. Then Solomon was told, “Adonijah is afraid of King Solomon and is clinging to the horns of the altar. He says, ‘Let King Solomon swear to me today that he will not put his servant to death with the sword.’”

Solomon replied, “If he shows himself to be a worthy man, not a hair of his head will fall to the ground; but if evil is found in him, he will die.” Then King Solomon sent men, and they brought him down from the altar. And Adonijah came and bowed down to King Solomon, and Solomon said, “Go to your home.”

“When the news reached Joab, who had conspired with Adonijah though not with Absalom, he fled to the tent of the Lord and took hold of the horns of the altar. King Solomon was told that Joab had fled to the tent of the Lord and was beside the altar. Then Solomon ordered Benaiah son of Jehoiada, “Go, strike him down!”

So Benaiah entered the tent of the Lord and said to Joab, “The king says, ‘Come out!’”

But he answered, “No, I will die here.”

Benaiah reported to the king, “This is how Joab answered me.”

Then the king commanded Benaiah, “Do as he says. Strike him down and bury him, and so clear me and my father’s house of the guilt of the innocent blood that Joab shed. The Lord will repay him for the blood he shed, because without the knowledge of my father David he attacked two men and killed them with the sword. Both of them—Abner son of Ner, commander of Israel’s army, and Amasa son of Jether, commander of Judah’s army—were better men and more upright than he. May the guilt of their blood rest on the head of Joab and his descendants forever. But on David and his descendants, his house and his throne, may there be the Lord’s peace forever.”

So Benaiah son of Jehoiada went up and struck down Joab and killed him, and he was buried on his own land in the desert” (1 Kings 1:49-53; 2:28-34).

We must go to the cross or we will spend eternity under judgment, in Hell.

The Staves: The application we can draw here is the two aspects of the message of death and resurrection. The altar needs the two staves to be carried and the truth of our salvation must include both the elements of Christ’s death **and** resurrection, if not we have nothing. Without the resurrection, Christ’s death would have no ability to provide us with salvation. It is His resurrection that makes His death for our sins unique.

“For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures,...” (1 Corinthians 15:3-4).

The Fire: When the nation was not moving the fire was to burn constantly, never to be allowed to go out. The message here is that as long as there is sin there will be judgment. It is only after the final judgment of the wicked we find no further sin in creation. While the price for sin has been paid, the reminder of men’s sin remains and the day is coming when Christ will bring the final judgment.

“His feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace,...” (Revelation 1:15).

As we pointed out last time the Hebrew bringing his sacrifice for sin could go only as close as the altar itself. The priest could go on into the holy place and The High Priest could go once a year into the Holy of Holies. The priesthood was an intercessory organization looking towards the mediatory work of Jesus. The only approach to God is through a substitutionary sacrifice.

Only the Levite could serve in the priesthood. He was born into the proper family. Even then it wasn’t guaranteed that he could serve as a priest. But for us to be priests we too must be born into the priestly family and this is God’s family.

“... everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God,...” (1 John 5:1).

We are born into it through the second birth and we serve both in God’s temple and as God’s temple. After all we are the temple of the Holy Spirit.

“Don’t you know that you yourselves are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit lives in you?” (1 Corinthians 3:16).

All believers are members of the spiritual priesthood.

“... you ... are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood ...” (1 Peter 2:5).

Remember originally the entire nation of Israel was called to be a nation of Priests,

“you will be for me a kingdom of priests ...” (Exodus 19:6).

We now are called a kingdom of priests who don’t have to stop at the altar, but can go on into the Holy of Holies.

This brings us to the point where some comment about the substitutionary nature of the sacrifice should be made. The person bringing the sacrifice would place his hand on the animal dying in the place of the sinner. In the same way Jesus took our punishment sin. The cross therefore is God’s altar ...

“I can count all my bones; people stare and gloat over me” (Psalm 22:17),

... where Messiah hung looking down on those for whom He was dying. He was innocent, the lamb without blemish. For the first three hours man did his best taunting and laughing at Jesus, then God drew a veil of darkness and for the last three hours God acted, how, we don't know.

“From the sixth hour until the ninth hour darkness came over all the land. About the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?”— which means, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”” (Matthew 27:45-46).

4. The Blood: On the altar was sprinkled the blood of animals.

- a. In Scripture we find the blood used as protection or payment to provide away to avoid God's wrath. One place we find is where the blood is placed on the door posts of the homes of the Hebrews while they dwelt in Egypt. (see Exodus 12) The Angel of Death seeing the blood passed over their homes taking only the lives of the first born of the Egyptians. And so on the altar was poured out the shed blood as a sacrifice for the sin of Israel.
- b. Death is the divine judgment for all sin. Because of Adam and Eve's sin all mankind faces physical death. Because of Adam and Eve's sin and our own sins all face spiritual death. Realize all around us are already dead before the Messiah is accepted. Then the dead is resurrected and receives eternal life. After you leave this morning look around you and you'll see the living dead.
- c. In Leviticus 14 we see blood shown in its cleansing nature, the cleansing of sin. It is used in the law of the cleansing of the leper. In the Old Testament the leper is the picture of sinful man. Leprosy starts off as a small spot and eventually takes over the entire body. In the believer a small ignored sin can eventually take over our entire life.
- d. Blood was sprinkled over the book of the Covenant, which we will go into at a later time.
- e. The priests and the vessels of the Tabernacle were dedicated with the sprinkling of blood. This shows that the power to serve God comes only through Messiah's death and we can do nothing on our own.
- f. The blood sprinkled on the mercy seat we'll look at a little later.
- g. There is living blood. Jesus said,

***“He who...drinks My blood has eternal life; and I will raise him up on the last day...My blood is true drink...He who drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him.”
“Whoever ... drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. ... my blood is real drink. Whoever ... drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him” (John 6:54-56).***

- h. Jesus' blood was sprinkled on the altar in the heavenly temple as the final payment for all the sins of mankind, that is if they're willing to accept it.

“He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption” (Hebrews 9:12).

5. The Brazen Laver: Now if you’ll move up here past the altar, *I got you special permission for this so I hope you appreciate it*, you’ll see the Brazen Laver. This speaks of the Doctrine of Sanctification. It relates to Christ’s ministries through and after His resurrection. Remember that the altar spoke of the Doctrine of Satisfaction.

The Laver was made from the brass used by the women of Israel.

“They made the bronze basin and its bronze stand from the mirrors of the women who served at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting” (Exodus 38:8).

It was made from the mirrors of the women and notice what James says in James 1:23-24,

“Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like.”

The Laver therefore is a picture of the work of the word of God. It shows man his true nature. In tabernacle service the priests had to be continually washing — ritual cleansing. Remember Christ Himself is the living word —

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God” (John 1:1).

The application is fairly clear. The washing at the laver was only performed by the priests therefore it speaks to the washing that is provided to the believer from Christ through His ongoing work in our lives on this side of the cross.

As believers we have to be continually cleansed so we will finally be presented spotless before God.

“So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him” (2 Peter 3:14)

The ongoing work of Jesus through the Holy Spirit is to cleanse us on a day to day basis. When Jesus died both blood and water flowed; blood for eternal cleansing; water for daily cleansing. The work of the Holy Spirit is to make real the Word of God by which we are cleansed. In Scripture water is both a type of the Word and the Holy Spirit.

The rivers of life flowed out of the Garden of Eden,

“A river watering the garden flowed from Eden; from there it was separated into four headwaters” (Genesis 2:10).

As with the blood, water also flows through out the Scripture. The water gushed forth from the rock that Moses smote in the wilderness.

“I will stand there before you by the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it for the people to drink.” So Moses did this in the sight of the elders of Israel” (Exodus 17:6).

As we already noted this speaks to the “striking” of Christ and the blessings that have flowed from His death and resurrection.

The water continues to flow all the way up to the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptizer,

“ When all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized too” (Luke 3:21).

And finally pure water flows, sin no longer a problem, in heaven,

“ Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb ...” (Revelation 22:1).

The Laver itself is also a picture of the Word of God. As we pointed out before it’s like a mirror that reveals man’s sin. This is why the word of God is called the judgment of God. Sin has to be continually judged. This is why in the service of the altar the priests continually washed. Either we have to judge our sins ourselves or God will judge us.

The Laver was on the level of the priests. Sins have to be taken care of here. To serve God, (in the Holy Place), first cleansing is necessary. To serve God properly we have to deal with the sins in our life.

The unique thing about this piece of equipment is that it is the only item for which no measurements are given. This may be take to refer to the fact that it relates the Holy Spirit, whom is immeasurable. His duty is to cleanse us through the Word.

“ In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen” (Acts 1:1-2).

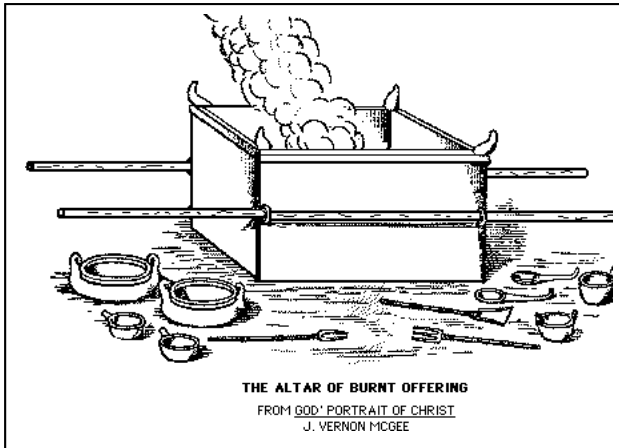
And again the point is that this work has to be a continuous one.

A final comment regarding the Laver should be made. It was replaced by a brass sea holding twenty four thousand gallons of water, in the court yard of the Temple of Solomon. Finally in Revelation we find the sea of glass.

“ Also before the throne there was what looked like a sea of glass, clear as crystal” (Revelation 4:6).

The sin problem is finally resolved.

“Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.” Therefore as Paul said to us; ***“For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures;”***... we must pass on to others, that they might also be saved. ***(Acts 4:12; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4).***



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3. The Brazen Altar:

(Acts 4:12; Daniel 7:24; Romans 5:9; John 1:29; Revelation 5:6; 1 Kings 1:49-53; 2:28-34)

The Staves

(1 Corinthians 15:3-4)

The Fire

(Revelation 1:15; 1 John 5:1; 1 Corinthians 3:16; 1 Peter 2:5; Exodus 19:6; Psalm 22:17; Matthew 27:45-46)

4. The Blood:

a. The blood is used as _____ or _____ to provide a way to avoid _____ *(see Exodus 12)*

b. _____ is the judgment for _____.

- c. Blood is shown in it's _____ nature. (*see Leviticus 14*)
- d. Blood was _____ on the _____ .
- e. The priests and vessels of the Tabernacle were _____ with the _____ of blood.
- f. Blood was _____ on the _____ .
- g. There is _____ blood. (*John 6:54-56*)
- h. _____ blood was sprinkled on the altar in the _____ .
(*Hebrews 9:12*)

5. The Brazen Laver:

(*Exodus 38:8; James 1:23-24; John 1:1; 2 Peter 3:14; Genesis 2:10; Exodus 17:6; Luke 3:21; Revelation 22:1; Acts 1:1-2; Revelation 4:6; Acts 4:12; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4*)