
Christ in the Tabernacle

Exodus 26:1-14, 38:25-27

“The Tabernacle – Part 4”

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Well here we are again out in the wilderness. I'm sorry about you having to share your accommodations this week with camels, but there is a convention of used camel dealers in town and there isn't any free space. Anyway, we have gotten past the Laver and have made it to the structure of the Tabernacle proper.

Once again it is probably helpful to note that the Tabernacle is a picture of Christ in His various ministries. Here we see Christ as mediator, God's presence between man and Himself. We have seen the need for shedding of blood as the price of God's judgment.

Today we will see how the building continues to tell us of who Christ is and how His ministry relates to both the world and the believer.

B. The Tabernacle Proper: 1. The Coverings:

a. The Badger Skins: There are four sets of coverings that make up the “roof” of the Tabernacle, as the boards make up the walls. From the inside out the coverings are made up of Linen, woven with Cherubim, Goat Hair curtains, Ram skins, dyed red and on the outside Badger skins. It is the Badger skins that would be seen looking at the Tabernacle. Inside the Linen would be seen as the roof. This means the middle coverings were unseen except when taking down and putting up the structure.

The Badger skins are therefore the outer covering. There isn't any real description of this covering given. What we have is an unattractive covering that hides from the world the treasure enclosed.

“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. He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and fa-

miliar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not” (Isaiah 53:2-3).

Christ is certainly unattractive to the world because He is a constant reflection of God’s standards and the sin of mankind. He is a reminder of the world’s inability to do anything about its sin problem. Without His sacrifice men would receive the judgment they deserve.

“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 6:23).

For the believer there was protection from the elements when they were inside the Tabernacle. It is by being in Jesus that we are truly separated from the world. The unrighteous can’t understand what we have because it is only after one has accepted the Lord that His blessings and riches can be experienced.

“See that what you have heard from the beginning remains in you. If it does, you also will remain in the Son and in the Father. And this is what he promised us— even eternal life” (1 John 2:24-25).

b. The Ram Skin: The Ram is another picture of the substitutionary nature of Christ’s work.

“Abraham looked up and there in a thicket he saw a ram caught by its horns. He went over and took the ram and sacrificed it as a burnt offering instead of his son” (Genesis 22:13).

The ram therefore pictures Christ’s death used as a sin offering. The substitutionary nature of Christ’s death is clearly shown in Peter’s words in 1 Peter 2:21

“... Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps” and again “... who gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father” (Galatians 1:4), and also “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinner, Christ Died for us.” (Romans 5:6). and finally “We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all” (Isaiah 53:6).

The fact the skins were dyed red obviously speaks of the shed blood of Christ. If the substitutionary nature of Jesus death is left out of the picture, (also the resurrection), then Jesus’ entire life ministry and death would seem more of a picture of defeat than anything else.

c. The Goat Hair Curtains: The goat was the animal used in a sin offering.

“Aaron then brought the offering that was for the people. He took the goat for the people’s sin offering and slaughtered it and offered it for a sin offering as he did with the first one.” ... “Include one male goat as a sin offering to make atonement for you” (Leviticus 9:15; Numbers 28:22).

We find then this curtain is a picture of Jesus as the Antitypical sin offering.

“Yet it was the Lord's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the Lord makes his life a guilt offering ...” ... “How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, ... Then Christ would have had to suffer many times since the creation of the world. But now he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself. ... so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.” ... “And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all ... because by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.” ... “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.” ... “God made him who had no sin to be sin [a] for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God” (Isaiah 53:10; Hebrews 9:14, 26, 28; 10:10, 14; Ephesians 5:2; 2 Corinthians 5:21).

Christ became sin; **you must** understand this fact. This is the thrust of some of these verses. Christ took the world's sin on Himself. He became sin on the cross. He was the criminal of the Universe.

“And at 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?”” (Mark 15:34).

Just as the goat would be put to death for the sins of the people, so Christ died, not for anything He had done, but for the sins of all mankind. Jesus repudiated self to pay for our sins. It is our sin covered by His blood that saves us. The red covering standing for blood, covers the goat covering, which stands for the sin offering.

d. The Linen Curtains: In actuality there are ten linen curtains joined together by gold clasps, (speaking of divinity). These coverings served as the roof of the Tabernacle, as we already noted, the boards serving as walls.

The Cherubim were woven in blue, purple and scarlet on a white background. The interpretation of these colors should be consistent with the comments already made in relationship to the gate. We read of these creatures in Ezekiel 1:10:

“Their faces looked like this: Each of the four had the face of a man, and on the right side each had the face of a lion, and on the left the face of an ox; each also had the face of an eagle.”

First, note that they are living creatures, having four faces and wings. The four faces are normally understood as follows.

1. The Face of a Man — This is seen as speaking of the intellect, the mind, thought, knowledge and personal will power. This obviously speaks of Christ as the ultimate power—the omnipotence or the all powerful nature of the God/man.

“But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins” (Matthew 9:6).

2. The Face of a Lion — The lion is seen as the king of Beasts — therefore speaking of Christ as King of Kings. C. S. Lewis uses this imagery, the Lion Aslan as king of beasts, and the parallels to Christ are obvious.

“On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.” (Revelation 19:16).

3. The Face of an Ox — The role of Christ as a servant, one who uses His strength in service of his master.

“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (Mark 10:45).

4. The Face of an Eagle — speaks of the power of supreme perception or the omniscience of Christ.

“... and among the lampstands was someone “like a son of man,” ... and his eyes were like blazing fire. ... 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” (Revelation 1:13-14; 5:6).

Christ is then the one who is all seeing, and encompassed in His vision is judgment, of both the believer and unbeliever.

If you trace these images in Scripture you see they are often used this way. These creatures are highest order angels. Their name mean strength and mightiness. These beings have the following characteristics. They have almost limitless power in the areas of nature’s forces, ie. winds and lightning. They are executors of God’s judgment.

“The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth” (Matthew 13:41-42).

These are the ones who guarded the entrance to the Garden of Eden, until the time of the Flood.

“After he (God) drove the man out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life” (Genesis 3:24).

Angels constantly proclaim the deity of the man Jesus Christ and they symbolize the protection of God’s wings.

“Keep me as the apple of your eye; hide me in the shadow of your wings” “How priceless is your unfailing love! Both high and low among men find refuge in the

shadow of your wings.” ... “I long to dwell in your tent forever and take refuge in the shelter of your wings” (Psalm 17:8; 36:7; 61:4),

... etc. All of the attributes then speak of the characteristics of Jesus.

2. The Structure - a. The Foundation: The foundation is made up of 100 sockets of silver. There were 2 under each of the 48 boards and 4 under the pillars of the veil. Each socket weighed approximately 100 lbs. The silver was raised from atonement moneys. (see Exodus 30:11-15.) This was the redemption price for each man. The price paid by Christ for each one of us.

“ ... you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.”... “For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect” (1 Corinthians 6:20; 1 Peter 1:18-19).

We were redeemed not by silver or Gold, but by the blood of Christ and it is this foundation of the blood price on which the Tabernacle is placed, on which our salvation exists, on which the church rests. But as with the price of redemption price for the Hebrew it was for each individual and it was the same price for all, rich, poor, etc. All must be saved by the shed blood of Christ. There is no other way to be saved.

We will pick up next week by continuing to look at the structure of the Tabernacle. We may also get to the furniture inside.

The message then we have been seeing with the Tabernacle is one of the corruption of men's sins, the death of Christ and our salvation.

“ Woe to you, ... For you are like whitewashed tombs which on the outside appear beautiful, but inside they are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. This is the message to the unbeliever who is further warned. “for the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” ... “He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” ... “For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.” (Matthew 23:27; Romans 6:23; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Corinthians 6:20).

How much we have to be grateful for!

1. The Face of Man – *Matthew 9:6*

2. The Face of a Lion – *Revelation 19:16*

3. The Face of an Ox – *Mark 10:45*

4. The Face of an Eagle – *Revelation 1:13-14; 5:6*

2. The Structure:

a. The Foundation – *1 Corinthians 6:20; 1 Peter 1:18-19; Matthew 23:27; Romans 6:23; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Corinthians 6:20*