

CITY OF THE LIVING GOD

THE TABERNACLE OF GOD

32

SERIES

In dedication to all the soul-winners that need a Bible study on the application of the temple of God from the Old Testament and its fulfillment in the New Testament.

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“Who serve the copy and shadow of the heavenly things, as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle. For He said, “See that you make all things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain.” (Hebrews 8:5).

The tabernacle in the Old Testament and its sacred vessels had not only a purpose in the day that they existed, but they served the purpose of casting a shadow of something in the future. We use terminology such as types and shadows to explain the significance of the Old Testament events, people, and institutions that represented something in the future New Testament. In this case we are going to study how the tabernacle had a deeper significance than just the place where people went to worship God and that held the sacred vessels that were set apart for the temple ceremonies.

In the next few sections of this study, we will study the tabernacle of God in the Old Testament and some of the furniture pieces and its relationship with salvation in the New Testament.

THE TABERNACLE

The earliest form of a central location for the worship of God among the children of Israel was the tabernacle of God that was built during the 40 years of wanderings in the wilderness. Moses was instructed by God how to build it with very precise measurements and what material to use, and how to use it in their worship of God.

Exodus 25:1-9

“Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: “Speak to the children of Israel, that they bring Me an offering. From everyone who gives it willingly with his heart you shall take My offering. And this is the offering which you shall take from them: gold, silver, and bronze; blue, purple, and scarlet thread, fine linen, and goats’ hair; ram skins dyed red, badger skins, and acacia wood; oil for the light, and spices for the anointing oil and for the sweet incense; onyx stones, and stones to be set in the ephod and in the breastplate. And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them. According to all that I show you, that is, the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furnishings, just so you shall make it.”

The tabernacle was to have three areas for the children of Israel: The Courtyard, the Holy Place, and the Holy of Holies. There were restrictions for most everyone that wanted to be acquainted with the tabernacle. Only the children of Israel were allowed to enter the Courtyard, and only the priests were allowed to perform the sacrifices and enter the Holy Place for their ceremonial rites. And only the High Priest was allowed to enter the most inner room called the Holy of Holies once a year at the ceremony of the Day of Atonement, where God cleansed the whole nation of Israel through the sprinkling of blood on both the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies.



The Tabernacle included several very important vessels within the three areas:

1. The Courtyard included the Brazen Altar that was used for sacrificing animals and the Brazen Laver where the priests would wash.
2. The Holy Place included the 7 Candelabra (Menorah), the Altar of Incense, and the Table of Shewbread.
3. The Holy of Holies included a veil separating the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies and the Ark of the Covenant which contained the 10 Commandments, Aaron's Rod that budded, and a bowl of Manna.

For our study, we will focus on the three furniture pieces: the Brazen Altar, the Brazen Laver, and the Ark of the Covenant within the Holy of Holies.

THE BRAZEN ALTAR

God prescribed in a very specific manner how the brazen altar was to be made. He not only described the dimensions, but he included from what it was to be made. It was made of acacia wood and covered with bronze. He also describes where it was to be placed which would be the first furniture piece within the temple courtyard.

Exodus 38:1-2

“He made the altar of burnt offering of acacia wood; five cubits was its length and five cubits its width—it was square—and its height was three cubits. He made its horns on its four corners; the horns were of one piece with it. And he overlaid it with bronze.”

Exodus 40:6

“Then you shall set the altar of the burnt offering before the door of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting.”

This is where the sacrifices of bulls and goats would take place. The animal would be slaughtered on the altar and the blood would be caught in basins below. It would then be burnt on the altar.

This blood sacrifice would represent the removal of the sins of the people and applied to the animal. The Bible states that Jesus became the perfect sacrifice for the sins of the world. The Brazen Altar represented the future death and sacrifice of Jesus on the cross.

Brazen Altar

Death of Jesus

THE BRAZEN LAVER

God also prescribed how the brazen laver was to be made. He gave the dimensions and the material which it would consist of. It was made completely of bronze. He also describes where it was to be placed.

Exodus 38:8

“He made the laver of bronze and its base of bronze, from the bronze mirrors of the serving women who assembled at the door of the tabernacle of meeting.”

Exodus 40:7

“And you shall set the laver between the tabernacle of meeting and the altar, and put water in it.”

This is where the priests would wash after the sacrifice. This part of the ceremony represented the future burial of Jesus Christ.

Brazen Altar	Brazen Laver
Death of Jesus	Burial of Jesus

THE ARK OF THE COVENANT

On the Day of Atonement, the high priest of Israel would not only perform the sacrificing the goat on the altar and the washing at the laver, but he would also enter the Holy Place and this time even go as far as entering the Holy of Holies. There he would apply the blood of the goats on the lid (Mercy Seat) of the Ark of the Covenant. The Ark of the Covenant contained the 10 Commandments, Aaron’s rod that budded, and the bowl of manna.

Exodus 37: 1-9

“Then Bezalel made the ark of acacia wood; two and a half cubits was its length, a cubit and a half its width, and a cubit and a half its height. He overlaid it with pure gold inside and outside, and made a molding of gold all around it. And he cast for it four rings of gold to be set in its four corners: two rings on one side, and two rings on the other side of it. He made poles of acacia wood, and overlaid them with gold. And he put the poles into the rings at the sides of the ark, to bear the ark. He also made the mercy seat of pure gold; two and a half cubits was its length and a cubit and a half its width. He made two cherubim of beaten gold; he made them of one piece at the two ends of the mercy seat: one cherub at one end on this side, and the other cherub at the other end on that side. He made the cherubim at the two ends of one piece with the mercy seat. The cherubim spread out their wings above, and covered the mercy seat with their wings. They faced one another; the faces of the cherubim were toward the mercy seat.”

The Ark of the Covenant was the place where the Spirit of God would reside. It was not only brilliant from the gold that it was made from within and without, but the Glory of God shone all around it from the Spirit of God that resided there. This is often referred to as the Shekinah Glory of God.

2 Kings 19:15

“Then Hezekiah prayed before the Lord, and said: “O Lord God of Israel, the One who dwells between the cherubim, You are God, You alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven and earth.”

Because the Ark of the Covenant resided in the Holy of Holies, this place was well known to be the place where the Holy Spirit of God dwelled. This part of the tabernacle represented the resurrection of Jesus. It is the

Spirit of God that will quicken our bodies and change it from mortality to immortality.

So the Altar of Sacrifice, the Brazen Laver, and the Holy of Holies which contained the Ark of the Covenant represented the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Brazen Altar	Brazen Laver	Holy of Holies
Death of Jesus	Burial of Jesus	Resurrection of Jesus

THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST

Of course, these events are so significant since that is the gospel of Jesus Christ: The Death, Burial, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul describes exactly what the gospel is in his Letter to the Corinthian Church.

1 Corinthians 15:1-4

*“Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: **that Christ died** for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that **He was buried**, and that **He rose again** the third day according to the Scriptures.”*

That is the gospel that was preached in every city by the apostles. That was the good news. The death, burial, and resurrection gave everyone a hope in the eternal future resurrection of the dead. So, the sacrifices performed in the tabernacle and temple was always a type (symbol) of the future gospel of the New Testament.

When we read the Book of the Acts in the Bible, it is very apparent that when the disciples preached the gospel everywhere that they went they preached repentance, baptism in the name of Jesus, and the infilling of the Holy Spirit. This is a direct application of the gospel. The only way to apply the gospel of the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord to our lives is through these three elements of salvation. The apostles believed that the death, burial, and resurrection was only applied by repentance, baptism and the receiving of the Holy Spirit. The Apostle Paul states it very clearly.

Romans 6:1-5

*“What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not! How shall we who **died to sin** live any longer in it? Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were **buried with Him through baptism into death**, that just as Christ was **raised from the dead** by the glory of the Father; even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection,”*

The apostle states that being “dead to sin” is accomplished by repentance. In addition, applying the burial of Jesus to our lives, we are “buried with him in baptism”. Last of all, we are “raised” in the “newness of life” by his Spirit. So we can see how the tabernacle of God had everything to do with the future gospel of Jesus found in the New Testament.

Brazen Altar	Brazen Laver	Holy of Holies
Death of Jesus	Burial of Jesus	Resurrection of Jesus
Repentance	Baptism	Holy Spirit

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