

JESUS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

Lesson 22: The TABERNACLE

&

The PRIESTHOOD – Part 2

Aim: To show how the work of Jesus can be seen in the Altar of Sacrifice, Bronze Laver, and the Golden Candlestick, in the Tabernacle.

Key Scriptures: Exodus 27:20-21, Exodus 39:27-29. John 8:12, John 13:8-10. Ephesians 5:25-27. 1 John 1:5-9

In our last lesson, we began to look at the Tabernacle that Moses was commanded by God to build, and the Priesthood he was to establish amongst the nation of Israel whilst they were in the wilderness.

This was for a two-fold purpose. First, the Priesthood was established so that Israel could be cleansed from their ongoing sins that they committed subsequent to their salvation on the night of Passover and deliverance from Egypt. Secondly, the Tabernacle was built so that God could tabernacle, which means 'to dwell', with His Firstborn Son and chosen people, Israel. Both of which were made possible through Christ's sacrifice, as pictured in Passover, and through His role as High Priest, as seen through the earthly high priests such as Aaron and his sons. *(c.f. Le 26:11-12; Ezk 43:7; Re 21:3 & Re 13:8 ... the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world)*

Much of the Book of Exodus, the Book of Leviticus, along with Numbers, is given over to the building of the Tabernacle and its furniture, along with listing the regulations that the priests and Israel were to follow.

In today's lesson, we will look more closely at the purpose for the various pieces of furniture that Moses was commanded to make, and how they revealed aspects of the work and person of Jesus Christ.

The Outer Courtyard

The **Altar of Sacrifice** and the **Bronze Laver** for the washing of the priests' hands and feet were to be found in the outer courtyard surrounding the inner building of the Tabernacle. Both items were made of bronze, whereas all the other pieces inside were made of gold, or acacia wood overlaid with gold.

The Altar of Sacrifice



God established rules that Israel was to follow with respect to various animal sacrifices for different sins, along with daily, and also special offerings for holy days and feasts.

The animals to be sacrificed would be tied to the horns on the corners of the altar and there the priest would kill them and shed their blood. That blood would be poured out at the base of the altar, before the bulls, goats, or lambs were placed on the altar and a fire lit underneath to consume the sacrifice. *(This is a very simplistic explanation of the many regulations and intricacies involved in the various commands within the Law.)* **Hebrews 9:22** tells us: *And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission [no forgiveness of sins].*

As we have already learnt from our study of the Passover, Jesus is 'the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world' (c.f. Rev.13:8). His blood was shed, and He was sacrificed on the cross for all those who would put their trust in Him for salvation. Because Jesus is now in the heavenly Tabernacle,

which the earthly one was patterned after, He is also the Priest who provided the sacrifice. Again, in Hebrew chapter 9 we read:

Hebrews 9:11 But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation. 12 Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal [age-lasting] redemption.

Q: As you read these verses ask questions of the text and come ready to discuss.

A:

The Bronze Laver



The next piece of furniture is the bronze laver filled with water, and it is here where the washing of the priests' hands and feet took place.

On the night of the Last Supper, Jesus washed the disciples' feet with a towel wrapped around His waist. This was very significant because He was demonstrating to His disciples that following His crucifixion, resurrection, and

ascension into the heavens, He would be their **High Priest**. Jesus's actions pointed backwards to the work of the priests in the Tabernacle. The priests in the tabernacle had special garments that marked them out as ministers to God and to the people. Moses' brother Aaron was the very first high priest:

Exodus 39:27-29

27 They made tunics, artistically woven of fine linen, for Aaron and his sons, 28 a turban of fine linen, exquisite hats of fine linen, short trousers of fine woven linen, 29 and a sash of fine woven linen with blue, purple, and scarlet thread, made by a weaver, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

The priests had **a sash** that was worn around their waists, and so when Jesus put the towel around His waist and began to wash the disciples' feet, He was demonstrating how they were going to need to go to Him in the future for cleansing from their sins.

Peter evidently did not understand this at first:

John 13:8-10

8 Peter said to Him, "You shall never wash my feet!" Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me." 9 Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!" 10 Jesus said to him, "He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you."

Q: What did Jesus tell Peter would happen if He didn't wash his feet?

A:

Q: What do you think Jesus was referring to? A part with Jesus in what?

A:

Once Peter understood that he needed to be cleansed from his sins **if** he was to have a part with Jesus in His Kingdom, then Peter was determined to be thoroughly cleansed. Hence him telling Jesus to wash his hands and head as well! He didn't want to miss out! What can we learn from this for ourselves?

If we are to have a part with Jesus in His Kingdom, then we need to go to Him Who is our High Priest regularly for cleansing from sin.

1 John 1:9

9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

To confess means 'to agree the same as', and what we 'agree the same as' is with God's Word. God's Word tells us that what we are doing is sin and then we can choose to agree with that, and in so doing Christ cleanses us from that unrighteousness. Repentance means 'to change our minds' and align our thoughts and actions with the Word of God.

We see this in Ephesians chapter 5:

Ephesians 5:25-27

*25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, 26 that He might **sanctify** and **cleanse** her with the washing of water by the word, 27 that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.*

Verse 25 gives instructions to husbands as to how they are to love their wives based upon the example of Christ. His love involved laying down His life for His Church.

Q: According to **v.26**, what 2 things might Christ's sacrifice make possible in the life of those who are His Church?

A:

Q: Again from **v.26**, how will that be brought about?

A:

Sanctification means ‘to purify’ and ‘be separated from’, and that which we are to be separated from is **our sin** and **the world**. This can only happen through the ‘spiritual washing’ that takes place as we read and study the Word of God. We do not need to go to an earthly priest for cleansing and confession of sins as Israel did. It is the Word of God, Jesus Christ our great High Priest in the heavens, who washes and cleanses us as we agree with what His word says about our sin.

Q: What does **Ephesians 5:27** say is the result for those who go to the Word of God for cleansing?

A:

Q: Where do we see the same thing in foundation?

A:

Q: When will the Church become that ‘glorious church’?

A:

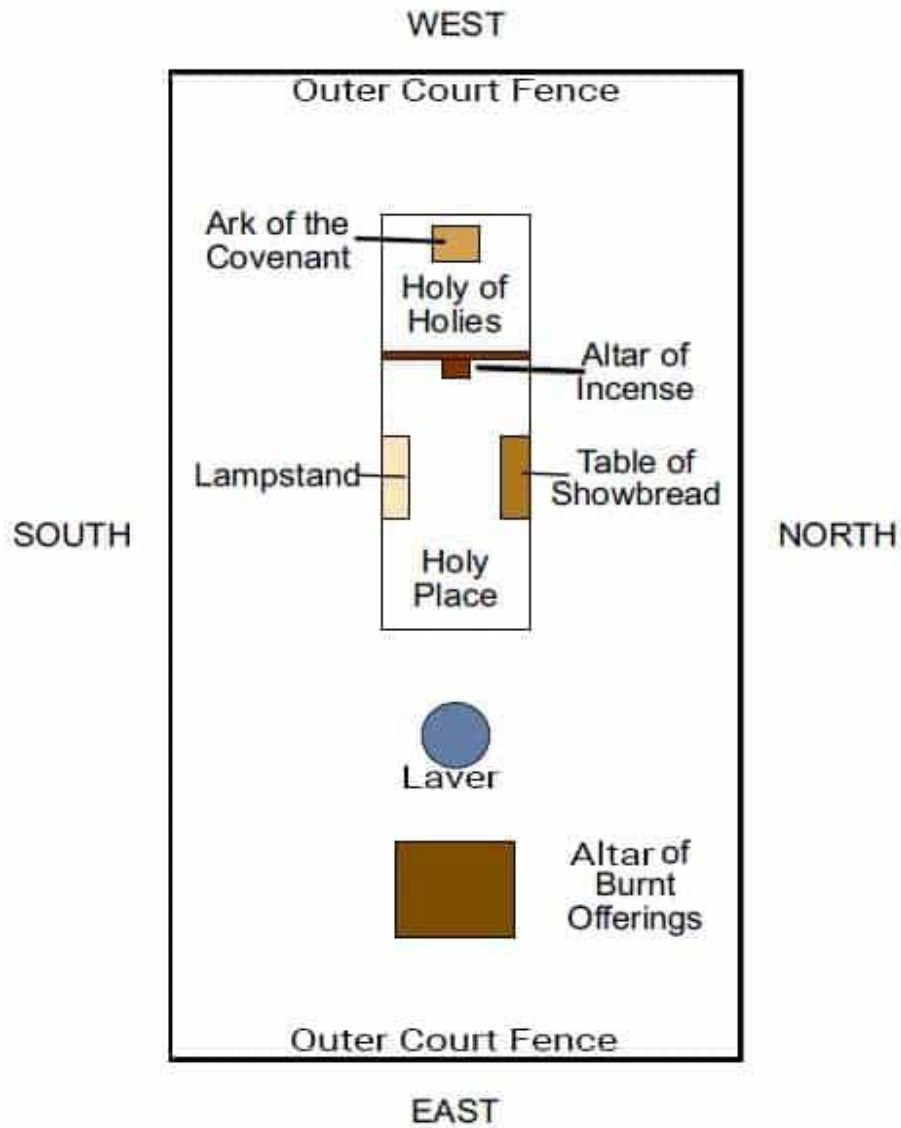
The Holy Place

If we return to the Tabernacle in the wilderness and look at the plan below, we can see that the altar of sacrifice and the bronze laver are in the outer courtyard before the curtained entrance into the Holy Place. Before the priests could enter the Holy Place, they had to first offer burnt sacrifices for their sins, and the sins of the people, followed by washing their hands and feet at the bronze laver. They needed to be cleansed and holy before they could minister in the Holy Place, or God would kill them (Ex.19:2 & 30:20).

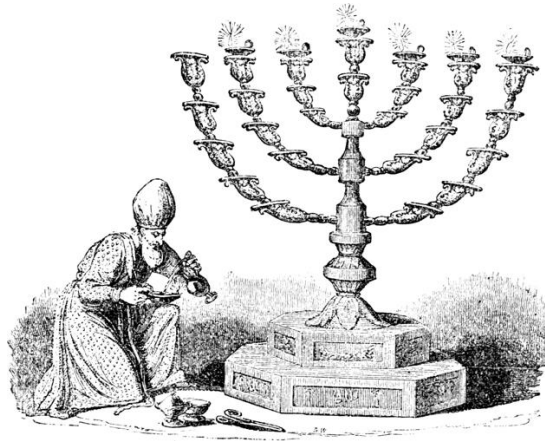
There was an example in Leviticus chapter 10 when Aaron's sons Nadab and Abihu offered profane fire before the Lord which He had not commanded them and fire went out from the Lord and devoured them.

Every day the Incense Altar, the Table of Showbread, and the Golden Lampstand inside the Holy Place needed to be attended to. Therefore before progressing inside, sacrifices were made, and cleansing would take place.

THE PLAN OF THE TABERNACLE



The Golden Lampstand



The Golden Lampstand made up of 7 individual lamps was fashioned from a solid piece of gold according to very specific instructions given to Moses while he was on the mountain with God (Exodus 25:31-40). It was the only source of light within the Holy Place, and it was to be burning continuously, so the oil needed to be constantly replenished and wicks trimmed by the priests.

Exodus 27:20-21

20 “And you shall command the children of Israel that they bring you pure oil of pressed olives for the light, to cause the lamp to burn continually. 21 In the tabernacle of meeting, outside the veil which is before the Testimony [the Ark of the Covenant], Aaron and his sons shall tend it from evening until morning before the LORD. It shall be a statute forever to their generations on behalf of the children of Israel.

Keeping the light burning continuously inside the Tabernacle with pure pressed olive oil was a command and statute forever, and the priests were to do this on behalf of the children of Israel.

Q: What is oil often a type of in Scripture?

A:

As we turn to the NT, we will discover more about how the light from The Lampstand reveals the work and person of Jesus Christ.

The Light of the World

John 8:12

12 Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness but have the light of life.

Jesus is the 'light of the world'. In our very first lesson we learnt how Jesus was there in the beginning when God said, "Let there be light", and there was light (Gen.1:1). As the Spirit of God hovered over the darkness and face of the deep in Gen.1:2 so the Word of God spoke and there was light!

In his first letter, the Apostle John, drew parallels with Jesus as the light of the world, and the Holy Place in the Tabernacle where the Lampstand was:

1 John 1:5-9

5 This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. 6 If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. 7 But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

God is light, there is no darkness in Him. Jesus is in the light, and we too can walk in the light and have fellowship with Him.

Q: If we are walking in the light where Jesus is in the light, where in the Tabernacle would we be?

A:

But before we can do that we must deal with our sins as we discovered earlier. It is only after we have been cleansed through that typified at the **bronze laver** can we enter into the light where Jesus is, in the **Holy Place**. As we confess (agree with the Word), then Christ will cleanse us from all unrighteousness - that which is associated with darkness - and we can fellowship with Him in the light.

Clearly, we are not physically in the Tabernacle either earthly or heavenly, so let's consider how we should understand this.

The verses in 1st John chapter one are drawing heavily from the OT Scriptures about the Tabernacle, to show Christ's function at this time. **IF** we go to Jesus our High Priest for cleansing, then spiritually - not literally - we too can fellowship with Him in the light of the heavenly Tabernacle where He currently is. And the perfect sacrifice that makes this possible was Christ Himself.

How do we fellowship with Him? Through the Word of God. This leads us to the inextricable connection between **the bread on the Table of Showbread** and **the Light from the Lampstand**, which we will look at in our next lesson.

Q: Once again what happened if a priest in the earthly tabernacle had not made atonement for their sins with sacrifices made by fire at the bronze altar, followed by washing their hands and feet at the bronze laver, before entering the Holy Place? (*See Exodus 30:17-21*)

A:

Q: What does this teach us with respect to our entrance into the 7th Day as kings and priests to our God? (*c.f. Re 1:6 & 5:10*)

A:

We have barely scratched the surface of the topics we have covered. Let me leave you with these 2 familiar verses to ponder as to how they might fit into what we have looked at:

Romans 12:1 *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.*

2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Let's pray...

