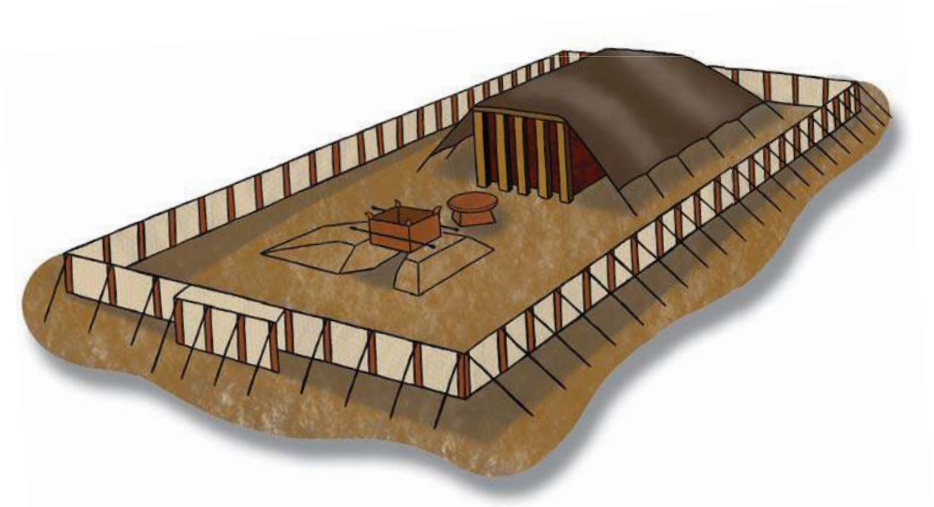
*THE MISSIONARY BAPTIST VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL*
*LITERATURE COMMITTEE PRESENTS*

# TOURING THE TABERNACLE



## SEEING CHRIST THROUGHOUT

**HIGH SCHOOL**

*THE MISSIONARY BAPTIST VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL*
*LITERATURE COMMITTEE PRESENTS*

# TOURING THE TABERNACLE

## SEEING CHRIST THROUGHOUT

**For High School Grades or Ages 14-18**

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# Lesson One: **AT THE GATE**

**Written By: Brother Trent Forshee**

**LESSON TEXT: EXODUS 27:9-19**

Welcome to all who have joined together to tour the tabernacle. We believe it will be an enjoyable experience for you to see firsthand the different areas making up the tabernacle, as well as the various colors, fabrics, metals, and other materials used throughout. You will also have opportunity to see the priests and Levites at work. **But be forewarned: You will see blood.** Blood, from an animal sacrifice, is a requirement for a true tabernacle experience. Even though the blood of bulls and goats does not take away sins (*Hebrews 10:4*), nor does the Lord delight in burnt offerings or desire sacrifices (*Psalms 51:16 and Hebrews 10:6),* God required these in the pattern of worship so that His Son Jesus Christ would be typified and His coming foreshadowed before the people. And friends, seeing Christ revealed along each of the tour segments is exactly the purpose of this effort. For now, we will begin the first stage which leads up to the Gate. And please, silence all phones so as not to distract yourself or others as the material is being presented. And one more thing: Please stay close and with the group. After all, we are out in the wilderness. And any one of the Hebrew people around will surely testify that, but for the providence of God, water and food are scarce to be found.

We begin this part of the tour on the south side and on the outside perimeter of the courtyard. Instead of looking toward the tabernacle setting, first turn around and see many camps of the Children of Israel. Immediately and closest to the courtyard are where the Kohathites are encamped. These Levites are so named because they descend from Kohath, the second son of Levi. To be clear, the men of this tribe are not priests. Whereas all priests are of the tribe of Levi, not all Levites are priests. Yet this group had an important duty in the care and transport of the tabernacle. The Kohathites were charged by God to care for the Ark of the Covenant, the table, candlestick, altars, vessels and the hangings that make up the sanctuary within the tent. All of these things were to be in proper working order for the priests to perform their duties. And when God commanded the people to move, and the tabernacle was taken down, it was the Kohathites who packed up these holy items and carried them upon their shoulders to the next stop.

Now beyond the Kohathites camp, you shall see the camp of Reuben. Three tribes of the children of Israel make up this group: Reuben, Simeon, and Gad. They are set up in this order, but you can also tell who they are



by the specific ensign (banner or flag) under which the three gathers. When God commands Israel to move, this camp marches second in the rank.

You may now turn back around to face the courtyard. Stretched across before you for 100 cubits is a white curtained wall. A cubit was to approximate the distance of a man's forearm from the bottom of his elbow to the tip of his middle finger. Obviously, men of different sizes would yield different measurements, so most now consider a cubit to be 18 inches. Therefore, this wall runs for 150 feet (half of a football field). The curtain is also five cubits high, or about 7-1/2 feet tall.

Compared to the tents behind you, the clothing of yours and the Hebrew children, and the overall drab and dusty landscape around you, notice how brilliantly white this curtain is. This brightness is the result of the fine twined linen material, made from Egyptian flax and carried out by the Israelites during the exodus.

The curtain is held up by twenty pillars, made of Acacia (or Shittim) wood, and covered in brass. The pillars are each set in a socket also made of brass. The chapiters, or the ornamental tops of the pillars, are overlaid with silver. The pillars are joined together at the tops by a silver rod, or fillet, which support the hanging curtain. Cords of rope attach to silver hooks upon the pillar and are then anchored in the ground by brass pins on both sides of the curtain. You will get a better view of these pillars once you are inside the courtyard. For now, they are obstructed on the outside by the hanging curtain.

This hanging curtain establishes a clear "**barrier**" between the outside world and what is inside. Physically, we are now standing outside, representing the world. But Christians, though in the world, are not to be of the world (*John 15:19*). The white linen represents "**righteousness**". Revelation 19:8, in describing the upcoming marriage of the Lamb unto His Bride, the church, explains the clean white fine linen as the righteousness of the saints. Not our own, but what Christ did for us.

The wooden pillars portray "**incorruptible humanity**". Like everything else in the make-up of the tabernacle, God's details are important. The wood used was hard and closed-grained, difficult for insects to penetrate, was durable and did not rot. Consider the tabernacle was still around up until the time of the building of the temple. So, the wood shows Christ, taking on the flesh and body of man; yet that body not following the

path noted in Ecclesiastes 12 where it returns unto the dust. But instead portrays the prophecy in Psalms 16:10 of Christ being resurrected and not remaining in the grave.

Brass (or bronze) symbolizes "**judgement of sin**". In depicting God's anger over a people, scripture says the skies over them will be brass (*Deuteronomy 28:23*). With the pillars being overlaid in brass, we can see Jesus taking upon Himself God's heat, wrath, and fury for our sins. Additionally, those pillars placed in brass sockets (bottom) give image of who John saw in the revelation: one with feet of fine brass (*Revelation1:15*). Though Jesus bore God's judgement on the cross, when He returns, He Himself will be administering judgment.

Silver denotes "**redemption or atonement**". I Peter 1:18-20 clearly reminds us we are not redeemed by corruptible silver. But the silver on the top (or head) of the pillars represents the redemptive power of Christ's blood. Exodus 30:11-16 tells of ransom money and the census. A half shekel of silver was given by every head counted, the same amount for everyone, to make atonement.

Now let's proceed left and around the corner to the west side. The white curtain is similar here, except the length is fifty cubits or 75 feet, thus only ten pillars are in place. Behind you is the encampment of the Gershonites, named after the first son of Levi. They were responsible for the care, upkeep, and transportation of the curtains and coverings. In contrast to the Kohathites, they were allowed to load these materials on wagons. Beyond the Gershonites was the camp of Ephraim, which consisted of the tribes of Ephraim, Manasseh, and Benjamin. When Israel was on the move, this camp marched in the third rank.

We will continue around the next corner to the north side. Similar white linen and pillars stretched for 150 cubits, mirroring the south side. Behind you is the encampment of the Merarites, named after the third son of Levi. This group was charged to keep the boards, bars, pillars, sockets, pins, and cords. They had twice as many wagons as the Gershonites to transport their heavier material. Looking beyond the Merarites is the camp of Dan. The three tribes of this group are Dan, Asher, and Naphtali. This camp marched in the rear.

Rounding the last corner, we finish on the east side. First look behind you. See the tents of Moses, Aaron, and Aaron's sons. Technically Kohathites, Aaron's family has been further separated to perform the priestly duties of



caring for the tabernacle and the method of worship, while Moses served as Israel's intercessor to God. Set up beyond is the camp of Judah, consisting of the tribes of Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun. They marched first.

Judah is the line of the kings. Dan is the tribe representing God's judgement (see what his mother proclaimed when he was born in Genesis 30:6). Jesus Christ, the Alpha and Omega, represented by the marching order --- first as King of Kings and the Final Judge. To further the type, God chose two craftsmen to make the articles for the tabernacle: Bezaleel, from the tribe of Judah, and Aholiab from the tribe of Dan (*Exodus 31:1-6*).

Facing back to the tabernacle, we see a curtained wall of 50 cubits, same as the west side. However, it is not entirely white as the other three sides. From each corner inward, the white linen remains for 15 cubits. But in the center stretching for 20 cubits (30 feet) is a curtain serving as the **Entrance Gate**. The curtain, supported by four of the ten pillars on this side, is fine white linen with needlework of blue, scarlet, and purple thread.

See Jesus in this gate. Blue (**heavenly and loyalty**), Scarlet (**atoning sacrifice**), and Purple (**royalty**) all project attributes of Christ. (Mixing Blue plus Scarlet results in what?). Notice we did not see any other entrance as we encircled the outer courtyard. This gate, Jesus, is the only way to enter, the only way to access God. Whether you be Moses, Aaron, or a common Hebrew, everyone comes through this gate. Anyone who was and is to be saved did or will come through Jesus. (John 14:6)

One final thought on the gate being on the eastern side. Entering in, you are moving westward. In the Bible, going west indicates toward God --- east away from Him. Where was the entrance to the Garden of Eden? Read Genesis 3:24. Genesis 4:16 tells which direction Cain went when he left God. When Lot split from Abraham, he went toward the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. Which way? Read Genesis 13:11. Think about which direction Israel was carried when taken into captivity by the Babylonians.

This portion of the tour has come to a close. Thank you for being patient and good listeners. To continue on through the gate, there is no monetary charge. And no one will make you go. We desire for you to continue, but that choice is ultimately yours alone.

# Lesson Two: IN THE COURTYARD

**Written By: Elder Roger Carter**

**LESSON TEXT: EXODUS 27:1-8; 30:17-21**

## INTRODUCTION

Having begun our tour of the tabernacle and realizing that the dwelling place of God is inside, we know from lesson one that the only way to enter is through the gate. The good part is that it was a "whosoever will" gate, open to all. It is almost impossible to believe that whoever walked through the gate could not feel the presence of God. It is our hope that you may feel the same presence of God as you look through your mind's eye into the courtyard of the tabernacle. This lesson will focus on the Brazen Altar and the Laver and their place in the courtyard. As with each part of the tabernacle, God directed the make up and placement of the Brazen Altar and the Laver. Through this study we hope you will understand the significance and purpose of each.

## THE BRAZEN ALTAR

When you walk through the gate of the tabernacle the first thing you will come upon is the Brazen Altar. What does it represent? What was it made of? What was to be offered on it? Why was it placed right in front of the gate?

We must realize that all who are born are sinners, except Jesus, and there had to be a way made to satisfy the claims of God's justice, punishment, and wrath toward mankind. An altar is defined as something that lifts up. We read that Jesus said, *"…even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life"* (John 3:14-15). If we who are sinners want forgiveness from God we must look to Jesus who is the only one who could be lifted up for our sins. The altar and the sacrifice that was offered upon it represent the sacrifice Jesus made for us.



The altar was made of Shittim wood and brass. Shittim wood is a hard, durable wood that is resistant to decay. This represents the human side of Jesus, who is everlasting to everlasting (durable), and although he died on the cruel cross, He rose and lives now and forever, and will never see corruption. The altar was like a large table. It was five cubits (about seven and one-half feet) square. It was large enough to hold all the other vessels used in the tabernacle. This was necessary as everything needed to be sprinkled with the blood of the sacrifice as we read in Hebrews 9:21-22. Jesus shed his blood once for all mankind. He is the one who came to fulfill the law and prophets. Jesus can fulfill all blessings for us. A horn was placed on each corner of the table. Just as the horns that bound the sacrifice pointed out in all directions from the altar, so does the offer of salvation through Jesus, who was bound to the cross by His love for mankind, go out to all the world. Because it was made of wood, the whole altar would have been consumed by the fire that burned the offering had God not commanded for it to be covered with brass. The brass represents the divine character of Jesus. A normal man could not have gone through all that Jesus went through. It was His divine nature that gave Him the power to overcome death on the cross.

The burnt offering was to be a male, without blemish, offered of his flock voluntarily. Once it was brought to the altar and killed, its blood was sprinkled over the altar and then the whole creature was to be totally consumed. Only the skins were not burned. Jesus, *"Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:"* (1 Peter 2:22), voluntarily gave up His life and shed His blood for all and by this, our sins can be covered through faith in Him. Hebrews 9:22 states that *"...without shedding of blood is no remission."* The blood of the sacrifice poured out on the ground below the altar, just as the blood of Jesus flowed from His body onto the ground of Calvary as He hung from the cross. As the sacrifice burned, smoke rose up in the air as a sweet savor before God and the ashes fell into the brazen grate. The ashes were then taken to a clean place outside the camp. God is well- pleased with His Son as we read in the scriptures. How

Jesus spent His life on this earth must have been a like a sweet savor going up to God, but when He sacrificed His life on the cross God, though saddened, must have been pleased with the complete obedience of His Son. Jesus was then taken from the cross and put in a clean new tomb.

The placement of the altar was most important. We see it was placed in front of the gate as you first came in. Why? Why not after something else? The reason one came into the courtyard is to commune and be in fellowship with God. Jesus said *"… no man cometh unto the Father, but by me"* (John 14:6). As the people were to offer up a sin offering for forgiveness when they first came in, we must first repent of our sins to God and believe through faith in Jesus, who died for us so we could have fellowship with God. This must be done first and is the only way to approach God. Man uses his imagination and comes up with other ways he says will work, but the sacrifice and belief in the sacrifice must come first and with complete faith.

## THE LAVER

A laver is defined in Webster's 1828 dictionary as "a washing vessel; a large basin." This laver was filled with water for the priest to "...*wash withal:...*" (Exodus 30:18). What was it made of, where was it positioned, and why was it needed?

The laver was made of brass looking glasses furnished by the women. There was no need of wood in it as the sacrifice (Jesus) had already been fulfilled. It was then filled with water. It was made so the priest could see their reflection as they washed and it was commanded for the priests to wash here or they would die. When we stand before a mirror to wash we look at the reflection of ourselves to make sure we clean all the dirt from us. Sometimes before we wash, we may look at ourselves and consider just how unclean we are. The priests realized this was not a one time thing but something that needed to be done continually. The laver filled with water was placed between the altar of sacrifice and the door into the holy place. It was sprinkled with the blood of the



sacrifice. A saved individual, though cleaned inside by the blood of Jesus, still has the uncleanness of his outward self to tend to. The apostle Paul speaks of this constant battle in Romans chapter 7. Jesus promised He would send help for His own in the form of the Holy Spirit (John chapter 14). The laver represents a type of the Holy Spirit and water in the laver represents a type of the Word of God. Just as the priests needed the laver to see their uncleanness, the Holy Spirit lets us know of our failings before God and man. The priests washed with water from the reflecting laver to clean themselves; we have the Holy Word of God and the power of the Holy Spirit to follow in the way God wants (John 14:28). The Holy Spirit shows us our uncleanness and the Word teaches us what is needed to be clean. Just as the priests need to wash in the laver before entering the doorway of the Holy Place, we need follow the Word and the Holy Spirit to be able to come before God and commune with Him.

## CONCLUSION

We hope that this tour in the courtyard will help each one to know that it takes the sacrifice of our Savior Jesus and the work of the Holy Spirit for us to be in fellowship with God and to be able to commune with Him. This is just as true today as it was when God's people met with Him in a physical tabernacle.

# Lesson Three: **OUTSIDE THE TENT**

**Written By: Elder Jerry Miller**

**LESSON TEXT: EXODUS 26:1-30**

In this series of lessons concerning the tabernacle, the first two lessons were At the Gate, and, In the Courtyard. In this lesson I have been asked to write about things, Outside the Tent (the coverings and the door).

To begin, it is important to note that the materials to be used for this purpose were not random choices made by men, but rather, they were instructed by God himself as to what was to be used. Exodus 25: 1-7, the Lord spoke to Moses and told him he was to instruct the children of Israel to bring to him an offering of various materials.

In Exodus 25: 8-9, we find that God said to Moses; *"And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them. According to all that I show thee, after the pattern of all the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instuments therof, even so shall ye make it."*

This lesson three types of material used. First, fine twined linen, and then three types of covering, goat's hair, ram's skins dyed red, and badger's skins.

As we begin in this lesson to consider what each of these may have symbolized, it is important to note that when God instructed them to use these various coverings, He did not give them an explanation as to what each of them meant, so, like many things we find in the scriptures, there are differing views.

"*For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect" (*Hebrews 10:1). Furthermore, "*But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us"* (Hebrews 9:11-12).



From this verse we can be confident that every instruction given concerning this earthly tabernacle, the material to be used on the outside, the material to be used on the inside, how the services of the tabernacle were to be carried out, **EVERYTHING** was a foreshadowing of something greater to come, as it has been said; Coming events cast their shadows before, so that reality in heaven casts it's shadow before in the form of this copy or type.

As we examine what we are told from Exodus 26, we see very detailed step by step instructions given. It seems to indicate that the tabernacle itself was made from ten curtains of fine linen, all of which would have the same measurements, and, would be joined together to make one tabernacle. (See Exodus 26: 1-6.) Many who have written about the outward coverings refer to **four** types of material. The first being that of fine linen, however, the scriptures do not refer to those ten curtains made of fine linen as **a covering**, the scriptures do however, specifically call the goats hair, rams skins, and badgers skins, coverings. Then, there was to be eleven curtains made, again, all having the same measurements, somewhat longer than the ten curtains, which would be made of goat's hair, and would be used to cover the ten curtains which were made of fine linen, and would overlap the front, sides, and back. (See Exodus 26: 7-13). Next, there were to be two additional coverings made, one, of rams skins dyed red, and one of badgers skins.(See Exodus 26:14).

It would appear that the tabernacle was made in a way that it's true beauty was inside, rather than what would be seen when looking at the outside of it. The outermost covering spoken of is badgers skins, of which few seem to believe this to be in reference to what we know as badgers in our present day. Some believe it was in reference to a larger animal, some believe it was talking about the skin of some type of sea creature, whose skin would be water resistant, the truth is we don't know with certainty; however, I believe the lesson we are to take from this is that the outward covering was not attractive to look at.

In Isaiah 53:2, this was prophesied about Jesus coming into the world, "*For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and*

*when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him."*

Though it is very likely that there is more symbolism in the things God instructed them to use, which we will consider as the lesson continues, perhaps one of the things we are shown by that which was chosen for an outward covering of this earthly tabernacle was that Christ, though pure, and perfect, and holy, and beautiful, came to this world clothed in great humility. "*For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily,"* (Colossians 2:9). Also, in Philippians 2:5-8, we are told "*Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."*

The covering of goat's hair perhaps symbolizes Christ being offered for our sins. Consider these scriptures. "*And in the fourteenth day of the first month is the passover of the Lord. And in the fifteenth day of this month is the feast: seven days shall unleavened bread be eaten. In the first day shall be an holy convocation; ye shall do no manner of servile work therein: But ye shall offer a sacrifice made by fire for a burnt offering unto the Lord; two young bullocks, and one ram, and seven lambs of the first year: they shall be unto you without blemish: And their meat offering shall be of flour mingled with oil: three tenth deals shall ye offer for a bullock, and two tenth deals for a ram; A several tenth deal shalt thou offer for every lamb, throughout the seven lambs:* ***And one goat for a sin offering, to make an atonement for you****."* (Numbers 28:16-22). "*For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and the people, Saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you"* (Hebrews 9:19-20). Again, this was a foreshadowing, Hebrews 10:4 tells us, "*For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins."*



The ram's skins dyed red perhaps symbolized the blood of Christ that was shed for us on the cross. When Jesus instituted the Lord's supper, as He took the cup and blessed it, and gave it to His disciples to drink, He said, "*For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins"* (Matthew 26:28). I will reference these verses again. Hebrews 9:11-13 says this about the blood of Christ, "*But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"*

The last thing I will speak about in this lesson is the door of the tabernacle. I will share what we find recorded about it. "*And thou shalt make an hanging for the door of the tent, of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen, wrought with needlework"* (Exodus 26:36). Jesus said, "*I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture"* (John 10:9). Furthermore, in John 14:6 we find record of another statement made by Jesus. "...*I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."* Is it necessary for anything further to be said?

In conclusion, when God instructed those who made the tabernacle as to what material was to be used for outward coverings, He did not explain to them what they would symbolize, and, with this in mind, I would like to say that should any of you differ with the thoughts I have shared with you in this lesson, I certainly will not be offended, in fact, I encourage you to prayerfully study this great subject yourself, and may the Holy Spirit guide you in your study!

# Lesson Four: INSIDE THE TENT

**Written By: Brother Jackie Wheet**

**LESSON TEXT: EXODUS 25:23-40; 30:1-10**

Inside the tent there are two separate rooms divided by a veil. The first room that the priest entered is referred to as the Holy Place, the other room beyond the veil was called the Most Holy or Holiest of Holies, Exodus 26: 33. This lesson will focus on the first room called the Holy Place, the objects found in this room and what they represent.

As the priest walks directly inside the tent, the altar of incense was within the door, in the center of the Holy Place. This altar was in a straight line with the brazen altar, the laver, and the ark. These vessels all line up to indicate the provision made for us to approach God. This altar was also made of wood but instead of being overlaid with brass as the brazen altar outside, the altar was covered in gold. The wood and gold of this altar represented Christ. He was crucified in weakness, but raised in glory. He was both man in the flesh and God glorified. The altar also has horns to represent the power in Christ and a crown to keep the coals from falling out of the altar. Christ is crowned in glory and made King of kings and Lord of lords. The altar was made to be two cubits high, which was slightly higher than the other vessels. This also signified that Christ, being raised from the dead, is now highly exalted and lifted up far above all (Ephesians 1: 20-21).

The purpose of this altar was to burn incense, the sacrifice was made outside at the brazen altar. The horns of this altar were to be sprinkled with blood but only incense was to be burned. The brazen altar in the courtyard represented the death of Christ but the Golden altar inside the Holy Place represents the glorified Christ that now intercedes on our behalf. Christ is our advocate with the Father (1 John 2:1), who lifts up our prayers as a sweet smelling savor drifting up to God. The incense itself was a special blend of spices to only be used for this purpose. The Lord warned that no one was to use this same mixture of spices upon themselves for their own use. To do this would be an abomination, as there is nothing righteous about us to lift up to God. While the priest burned the incense, the people outside were to be praying (Luke 1:10), this showed that prayer is the



true incense that must be lifted up to God through Christ. It is only through Christ that we can approach the throne of mercy.

Another item in this tent is the table of shewbread. The table is also made of wood and gold representing Christ as man and God. All the dishes spoons and bowls were all made of gold. The table was located on the right side of the room. On the table, there was to be twelve loaves of bread. The bread was to be eaten by the priest and replaced fresh every Sabbath. The twelve loaves represent the twelve tribes of Israel. These loaves were held up on the gold table which represents the Lord as the one who holds up all the tribes of Israel. Christ is also represented in the bread, as it symbolized both being satisfying to God and man, which none other is worthy to claim. Jesus told the Jews that He is the bread of life, the true bread sent from heaven by God the Father (John 6: 32-35). The bread is to remain fresh just as Christ is to be fresh in our daily lives, filling us up and satisfying our needs.

The purpose of this table of bread was to symbolize fellowship between Christ and His people. The priest had the blessed privilege to partake of the bread of God. We have the same blessing to daily feast with our Lord and Savior, who is the bread of life. Christ enjoyed taking time to break bread with His disciples and still desires that fellowship with His people daily. It is only through Jesus that we shall never hunger again and truly say, *"...I shall not want."* (Psalm 23:1)

The candlestick was made of one piece of solid gold, which was beaten into the desired formation. The beating is symbolic of the suffering of our Lord Jesus Christ. Christ was bruised for our sakes, paying the penalty of sin so we may be redeemed and be one with Him (Isaiah 53:10). There was the primary candlestick and the branches, symbolizing the people of God and how we come from Christ, *"I am the vine, ye are the branches:..."* (John 15:5). The branches had no support on their own without the main shaft. The candlestick has no measurement, representing the Holy Spirit and the church, which no man can measure.

The light was separate from the candlestick itself. The light was never to go out and was the only light to shine in the Holy Place. This represents the gift of God and letting our light shine means

letting the life of the Christ who dwells within us be seen. The light had several purposes in this room. It was to shine so that one would not stumble and fall in the darkness. As Christians, we are to live for Christ, letting our light shine. The light is to shine upon the table of bread. When Christians live a life for the Lord, they will shine a light for others to see the true "bread of life" (Matthew 5:16). The light shined upon the altar of incense, which shows the power of prayer. The world needs to see the redeemed of Christ praying, rejoicing and fellowshipping with the Lord.

There is nothing about ourselves that can shine bright. It is a light that is within us that must shine bright. This light in us is only fed by the Holy Spirit. The light on the candlestick had to be fed by a pure, clear olive oil, which represents the Holy Spirit. If the lamp was to burn bright, it needed an abundant supply of pure oil to feed it. If a Christian's life becomes spiritually dim and hazy, it is evidence of the lack of the Spirit. The Spirit wants to shine bright in a person with zeal, and a heart on fire for serving the Lord.

Notice there are also snuffers and tongs for the candlestick. While the priest is burning the sweet incense on the altar, they are to trim the wicks and remove ashes. The ashes are from the imperfect wicks and not the oil. Our flesh, being imperfect, needs trimming and our ashes cleaned up from time to time so that we may burn bright again. This represents the trials that people go through to make their faith stronger. May we eat the bread and send up our prayers and thanks to God daily, not relying on flesh and things of the world, so we will burn bright, otherwise, we may require more trimming.

On the left side of the room was the golden candlestick, the table of shewbread on the right, and the altar of incense in the center of the Holy Place. The table of shewbread and the candlestick stood by the way to represent the privileges and responsibilities of the saved people. God's people have the privilege to not only draw close to Him but to have a close relationship with the Lord and fellowship with Him. They also have the responsibility to serve God and show the world Christ by lifting up the one true Light.



# Lesson Five: BEYOND THE VEIL

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**LESSON TEXT: EXODUS 25:10-22**

## INTRODUCTION

Within the Holy Place of the Tabernacle (and of the Temple), there was an inner room called the Holy of Holies.

It was God's special dwelling place in the midst of His people. The Holy of Holies was also called the Sanctuary (Leviticus 4:6), the Holy Sanctuary (Leviticus 16:33) and the Most Holy Place (Exodus 26:31-33).

God gave specific instructions on how the Holy of Holies would be constructed and what would be included in the room. The Holy of Holies measured twenty cubits by twenty cubits by twenty cubits. A thick curtain separated the Holy of Holies from the Holy Place. This curtain was known as the "veil".

Within the Holy of Holies was kept the Ark of the Covenant. Inside the Ark of the Covenant was manna (Exodus 16:33), Aaron's rod (Numbers 17:10), and a copy of the ten (10) commandments (Deuteronomy 31:26). The Mercy Seat sat upon the top of the Ark of the Covenant. The Mercy Seat had two (2) cherubims. The cherubims sat on the ends of the mercy seat. The cherubims stretched forth their wings on high, covering the mercy seat with their wings, and their faces looked one to another, towards the mercy seat (Exodus 25:18-22).

## THE DWELLING PLACE OF GOD

The Ark of the Covenant was the place of God's presence. God dwelt, or sat, between the cheribums, on the mercy seat. He localized this presence in the tabernacle for the benefit of His sinful people.

The tabernacle was constructed so that the Lord would be among His people: *"And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell*

*among them."* (Exodus 25:8). But in an even more specific way, the ark served as the place of the presence of God.

The Holy of Holies was a representation of heaven itself, God's dwelling place, which we have access now through Christ.

## SEPARATION BETWEEN GOD AND HIS PEOPLE

Adam and Eve communed with God everyday until Adam sinned. Sin separates us from a righteous God.

The word "veil" in Hebrew means a screen, divider or separator that hides.

The veil was made of fine twined linen in blue, purple and scarlet, just as the decorated curtains surrounding the Holy Place. The heavy veil hung from ceiling to floor.

It created a barrier between the people and the presence of God. It did not allow anyone to look into the room. Essentially, it was shielding a holy God from a sinful man.

The Tabernacle and the Temple gave a clear picture of how sin separates us from the holiness of God. In Bible times, only the High Priest could enter the Holy of Holies by passing through once a year on the Day of Atonement. The High Priest would enter and offer a blood sacrifice to cover the sins of the people.

So the presence of God remained shielded from man behind a thick curtain during the history of Israel.

## RENT IN TWAIN

At the very moment when Jesus died on the cross, Matthew 27:51 says, "*And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent;"*. It is reported in the book "*Josephus – The Complete Works"* that the veil was four inches thick, was renewed every year and that horses tied to each side could not pull it apart.

Having been torn from top to bottom showed that God did it, not



man. It signified that the new and living way was now open into the presence of God.

Hebrews, chapters 8 and 9, explains how Jesus Christ became our High Priest and entered heaven (the Holy of Holies), once and for all, not by the blood of sacrificial animals, but by his own precious blood on the cross. Christ himself was the atoning sacrifice for our sins; thus, he obtained for us eternal redemption. Hebrews 10: 19-20 says *"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;".*

## SUMMARY

The presence of God remained shielded from man behind the veil due to the sin of Adam.

Jesus' sacrificial death on the cross changed that. When He died, the veil in the Jerusalem temple was torn in half, from the top to the bottom.

As the veil was torn, the Holy of Holies was exposed. God's presence was now accessible to all.

Jesus' death has atoned for our sins and allows us to be made right before God. The torn veil illustrated Jesus' body broken for us, opening the way for us to come to God.
The age of animal offerings was over. The ultimate offering had been sacrificed.

We can now boldly enter into God's presence, "the inner sanctuary behind the veil, where Jesus, who went before us, has entered on our behalf."