

EXODUS 27:9-21 (THE COURT OF THE TABERNACLE)

The altar of burnt offering was the last piece of furniture that we looked at. It is the place where the people would come to make their offerings to the Lord. But this wasn't just arbitrarily set outside of the tabernacle. Instead, it was to be located within a courtyard which would surround the tabernacle.

The courtyard itself isn't very ostentatious. It is simple in its form and that is how it would appear to anyone, both inside and outside. And yet, every detail has purpose and reflects order and harmony. But isn't that how Jesus appeared to the world?

He didn't come and live an ostentatious life. Viewing Him from a distance, all you would see is a regular Person. But as you got to know Him more intimately, the more perfect He would seem. One could never say, "This part, or that part, of His life is out of order."

Instead, you would consider every thing He did, and you would marvel at the perfection you witnessed. The same is true with the courts of the tabernacle. Walking around the courtyard, carefully evaluating each thing would reveal wisdom. There was nothing arbitrary or superfluous. Every detail served a particular purpose.

And this is true with the words of the Bible. The more we read them, the more perfect we realize they are. With each new commentary we read, or each new sermon we listen to, we find new insights, even in to old familiar passages. We see that everything that God does simply proclaims His glory.

Text Verse: "Give to the LORD, O families of the peoples,
Give to the LORD glory and strength.

⁸ Give to the LORD the glory *due* His name;
Bring an offering, and come into His courts.
⁹ Oh, worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness!
Tremble before Him, all the earth." Psalm 96:7-9

The people of Israel were admonished to bring an offering and to come into the courts of the Lord. There they could worship Him in the beauty of holiness. If the courts were haphazardly constructed, they would detract from such a notion. But they were precisely made and they were beautiful in their simplicity.

And so, standing in those courts on the unpaved ground, they could look towards the tabernacle and worship the Lord with their hearts directed to Him. Today we'll see what those courts looked like and we will see a small portion of the countless pictures that each detail makes. It's all to be found in His superior word. And so let's turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. The Courtyard of the Tabernacle (verses 9-19)

⁹ **"You shall also make the court of the tabernacle.**

Moses is now instructed to make a *khatsar*, or "court" for the tabernacle. This word is not new to Scripture, but it is the first time it is used for the sanctuary. It simply means "a yard, as if enclosed by a fence." In a broader sense, it can mean a small town enclosed by walls, and so on.

The detail for the construction of the brazen altar was given first and only now is the construction of the court described, of which the brazen altar will be the prominent piece of furniture. This is the same general idea as the giving of the

description of the Ark, the Table of Showbread, and the Menorah before the description for construction of the tabernacle. Each step is logical and orderly.

We should be reminded now of the various terms which are used to describe what is being erected. The first is *miqdash*. This is the sanctuary itself. After that is the "tabernacle" or *mishkan*. This is the inner part of the sanctuary where the holy place and the most holy place are located. These were both noted in Exodus 25 -

"And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them.

⁹According 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*." Exodus 25:8, 9

On top of the *mishkan*, or tabernacle, would be a covering called the *ohel*, or "tent." Surrounding all of this would be the *khatsar*, or "court." It is this which is being described and which is a part of the overall *miqdash*, or "sanctuary." It would be good to refer to an image of the entire structure so that one can see the various parts. In so doing, the description then makes much more sense.

This court, as will be described, will be formed as a parallelogram, meaning a double square where the length is twice that of its width. In modern measurements, it will be about 150 feet long and about 75 feet wide. In other words, it will be about half as long and half as wide as a football field.

It is into this courtyard that the people of Israel will be admitted for the purpose of bringing their sacrifices and offerings, and for bringing in their praise and worship of the Lord. The entire court area would be open to the skies excepting the tabernacle itself. This had its own coverings and then was covered by the tent.

The placing of the brazen altar in this area is for obvious reasons. When the sacrifices were burnt, they could rise into the open atmosphere. However, this isn't the only reason for its placement where it is as will be seen later when the placement of the other courtyard furniture is described.

⁹ (con't) **For the south side**

liphat negev temanah, literally "The south side upon the right." The tabernacle faced east and so it was regarded as if looking from the west to the east from the Lord's vantage point, not from man's which would be entering with the south on the left. And as is the same with the description of the tabernacle, the instructions for the south side are mentioned first, then the north side, then the west side, and finally the east is described last.

⁹ (con't) ***there shall be hangings for the court made of fine woven linen,***

An unusual word, different from the curtains previously described is introduced here. It is *qela* which means "a hanging" or "a sling" for slinging stones. It comes from the verb *qala* which means "to carve" or "to sling a stone." The Greek translation of the OT uses the word *istia*, or "sails" to describe it.

Charles Ellicott says that it "seems to designate a coarse sail-cloth, woven with interstices, through which what went on inside the court might be seen." Like the tabernacle, the construction of these hangings was to be of fine woven linen.

As this entire sanctuary pictures both the work of Christ and the process of redemption, the picture this is making should be obvious. The fine linen, just like before, represents righteousness. That is stated explicitly in Revelation 19:8 -

"And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright: for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints." Jubilee Bible

The fact that it could be seen through, and yet keep people from entering in is to show that even though Christ's work is separate from the world, it is visible to all who are outside in the world. The process of redemption, leading to righteousness, and our inclusion in the body of Christ, is not to be hidden away, but to be transparent to all who are looking.

⁹ (con't) **one hundred cubits long for one side.**

The number one hundred can be obtained in several ways. The most obvious is 10x10. Ten is the perfection of Divine order, and so the length is simply that thought squared. The first ten is given as a first type of the whole. The length in feet, as I said a while ago, would be about 50 yards long. The hangings were to go all the way down the length of the court on the south side.

¹⁰ **And its twenty pillars and their twenty sockets *shall be* bronze.**

As has been seen, *nekhoshet*, or bronze, pictures judgment. The hangings of the court were to be supported by bronze. This indicates that what is outside requires judgment in order to become righteous and what is inside is righteous because of the judgment which has allowed one to come inside.

This is why the brazen altar was first described. It is also why the brazen altar is located where it is in the courtyard. Just so you know, some translations don't specify that the pillars are bronze, only the bases, but the Hebrew in the next clause follows the same pattern for the silver hooks and bands, both of which are silver. Therefore, the pillars are probably all bronze. However, verse 17, which is a summary verse, does not specifically say this.

¹⁰ (con't) **The hooks of the pillars and their bands *shall be silver.***

The hooks, or *vavim*, are the same things which were first described in verse 26:32. It is believed that they are hooks by which the hangings could then be attached onto the pillars. It is just a guess and no one is entirely sure what they are. *Vav* is also the sixth letter of the Hebrew aleph-bet and it has the meanings of "add," "secure," and "hook." Whether in ancient writing or modern, it has the appearance of a peg or a hook of some sort.

The *vav* as a letter is used in Hebrew to serve as a connector to words and members within a sentence, and even the sentences of a discourse. Thus it draws them together. Therefore, hook or peg is the obvious and preferred meaning.

The word translated here as "bands" is *hashuk*. This is the first mention of them and again, it is not clear exactly what they are. Some see them, as connecting rods between the poles. Others as some second implement to connect the hangings to the poles.

The word *hashuk* comes from the verb *hashak* which indicates to have a delight, have a desire, long for, or set in love. That in turn comes from a primitive root which figuratively means to join in love or delight in. For this reason, I would suggest that they were either silver connecting rods, or silver eyelets which would be woven into the hangings and upon which the hangings would then be connected to the silver hooks.

As has been seen, silver pictures redemption. This then makes the obvious picture. The bronze is for judgment upon which redemption is secured and from which righteousness hangs. It is a logical progression of the process of right-standing with God. As Arthur Pink says -

"There is an inseparable connection between Christ our Righteousness and Christ our Redeemer: these two must never be separated. Righteousness could never have been imputed to us unless the Lord Jesus had ransomed us by His blood."

A.W. Pink

¹¹ Likewise along the length of the north side *there shall be* hangings one hundred *cubits* long, with its twenty pillars and their twenty sockets of bronze, and the hooks of the pillars and their bands of silver.

The instructions for the north side match those of the south side. Therefore, there are now a total of 40 pillars and 40 sockets.

¹² "And along the width of the court on the west side *shall be* hangings of fifty cubits, with their ten pillars and their ten sockets.

The west side was to be one half the length of the south and north sides. Therefore, there are only 10 pillars and 10 sockets. What is noticeable here is that there is no mention of either the materials to be used for them, and there is no mention of silver hooks or bands. But, we will see in verse 17 that they are of the same materials.

And what should be highlighted is that almost all depictions of the courtyard show one pole in each corner of the hangings. Because of this, there are only 48 poles displayed. Or some show a total of 21 poles on the north and south in order to have 20 hangings. Thus, there would be 51 poles for these three sides.

Both are incorrect. It says there are ten pillars and sockets on the west and so there are a total of 50 sockets so far. The distance is reckoned not by the hangings, but by the pillars and sockets.

¹³ The width of the court on the east side *shall be* fifty cubits.

liphat qedemah mitsrakhah - "The side front eastward." The front side of the tabernacle faces east, towards the rising sun. Unlike Egypt which worshipped the sun as it arose, the people of Israel would worship towards the Lord with their back to the sun. This was to prevent the idolatry of sun worship, something actually seen as a reason for the destruction of Jerusalem in Ezekiel 8 -

Then He said to me, "Have you seen *this*, O son of man? Turn again, you will see greater abominations than these." ¹⁶ So He brought me into the inner court of the LORD's house; and there, at the door of the temple of the LORD, between the porch and the altar, *were* about twenty-five men with their backs toward the temple of the LORD and their faces toward the east, and they were worshipping the sun toward the east.

¹⁷ And He said to me, "Have you seen *this*, O son of man? Is it a trivial thing to the house of Judah to commit the abominations which they commit here? For they have filled the land with violence; then they have returned to provoke Me to anger. Indeed they put the branch to their nose.

¹⁸ Therefore I also will act in fury. My eye will not spare nor will I have pity; and though they cry in My ears with a loud voice, I will not hear them."
Ezekiel 8:15-18

Like the west, the width of the courtyard is fifty cubits total. The number "50 is the number of jubilee or deliverance. It is the *issue* of 7×7 (7^2), and points to deliverance and rest following on as the result of the perfect consummation of time" (Bullinger).

The depth of the courtyard looks to the perfection of Divine order while the width of it points to deliverance and rest as of the perfect consummation of time. Together, the courtyard would be 5000 square cubits in size.

¹⁴ The hangings on *one side of the gate shall be fifteen cubits, with their three pillars and their three sockets.*

What we have being described here is the means of access into the courtyard. From one corner, there would be hangings like those on the other three sides. These would be fifteen cubits in length and would stand on three pillars in three sockets. The word translated here as "side" is *katheph*. It is a new word in the Bible and it means "shoulder" or "shoulder blade," and hence, a "side."

Again, the materials for the sockets are surprisingly not named here, nor are any hooks or bands. However, they will be specified in verse 17. Also, almost every depiction shows three hangings being represented. This is incorrect. There would be two hangings on three pillars and sockets. We are now to 53 pillars and sockets.

¹⁵ And on the other side *shall be* hangings of fifteen *cubits, with their three pillars and their three sockets.*

Like the first side of verse 14, the opposite side will be the same. There would be three pillars and their sockets which were connected by two hangings of linen. The fifteen cubits of each side means that the opening for the gate will be twenty cubits. In all, we now have 56 pillars and sockets.

Before looking at the next verse, we can deduce that the total length of the linen hangings is 280 cubits. This is a multiple of 7x4x10. This then would be a picture of *spiritual perfection in creation* which is *according to Divine order*. This is something that the tabernacle actually claims to be. It is the place where the Lord dwelt on earth.

Interestingly, it is the same length as the curtains which overspread the tabernacle. Those presented Christ in a way that the world couldn't see, being covered over. However, the white curtains are evident to any and all in view. Thus, they picture Christ whose purity of nature was apparent to any who saw Him.

This is evident throughout the gospels, but a few examples are that Jesus asked, "Which of you convicts Me of sin?" in John 8:46, None could. Pilate likewise confessed that he found no fault in Him. The exterior of the sanctuary is that which is seen realized in the eyes of those who beheld Christ. As E. Dennett says -

"Not a single speck could be detected upon the fine twined linen of His holy life, His life of practical righteousness which flowed from the purity of His being" E. Dennett

¹⁶ **"For the gate of the court *there shall be* a screen twenty cubits long,**

The opening to the courtyard is 20 cubits in length. However, there is a screen which is at the opening which is 20 cubits long. Most depictions of this screen have it evenly lined up with the other hangings and then some type of opening in it by which people could enter.

The KJV confuses the wording here, and for the screen in Exodus 26 for entry into the holy place, by calling them the same term as the rest of the tabernacle, "hangings." However, it then calls this a "curtain" in Numbers 3:26. It is not precise or consistent in the translation, thus making it difficult to know what is what. It is not a great translation here.

16 (con't) **woven of blue, purple, and scarlet thread, and fine woven linen,**

The same colors previously used for the colors of the tabernacle are prescribed for this screen. It is to be of blue, representing the law, of purple representing royalty and the prerogatives of royalty - upholding the law, executing war, and judging; and also of scarlet which is the result of war and shedding blood. With these, it is to be woven with fine linen. All of these picture the work of Christ.

16 (con't) **made by a weaver.**

maaseh roqem - "worked embroider." The word *raqam* is a verb which means "to variegate color," and so it is translated variously as "an embroiderer," "a weaver," or "with needlework." It is used only one time other than in the building of the tabernacle where it says this in Psalm 139 -

"I will praise You, for I am fearfully *and* wonderfully made;
Marvelous are Your works,
And *that* my soul knows very well.

¹⁵ My frame was not hidden from You,
When I was made in secret,

And skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth." Psalm 139:14, 15

Therefore, the screen is something the weaver would skillfully and meticulously fashion according to Moses' instructions. As there is only one entry point to the courtyard, and because the materials and colors picture Christ, it is an indication that there is but one way to approach the Lord and that is through the work of Christ.

What is seen here in the *shaar*, or gate, is reflective of what was proclaimed by Jacob after his night of sleeping on the stone outside of Luz. Using the same word after his vision in the night, we read -

"Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, 'Surely the LORD is in this place, and I did not know *it*.' ¹⁷ And he was afraid and said, 'How awesome *is* this place! This *is* none other than the house of God, and this *is* the **gate** of heaven!'" Genesis 28:16, 17

As John later reveals, the ladder which ascended to heaven in his dream was a picture of Christ. The gate, or door (it is the same word in Greek and Hebrew), is also a picture of Him as He proclaimed -

"I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture." John 10:9

The courts of heaven are available, but only through one access point. The Door is Christ. But the fact that Christ is there is a point of grace all by itself. This screen is 20 cubits in length. According to Bullinger, the number 20 signifies *expectancy*. And this is exactly what one would have as they approached the beautiful weavings, expectancy.

Every detail, in one way or another, points to Christ and everything about this marvelous edifice fits perfectly into what all other numbers of the Bible clearly show. The wisdom behind each item, in size, color, or material is set to the tune of perfection.

16 (con't) **It shall have four pillars and four sockets.**

The woven screen is to be twenty cubits long and it will stand on four sockets. Nothing is stated about how one gains access into the courtyard. Sometimes depictions show the screens fully displayed but people walking around inside, as if they had to continuously lift or pull back the screen in order to get in.

Other depictions show the screen furled up or back at the center for people to walk in. This may be the case, but it also might be that the screen is one continuous piece on the four pillars which is then offset from the rest of the hangings. The reason why I say this is because of what it says in Ezekiel 46:9 -

"But when the people of the land come before the LORD on the appointed feast days, whoever enters by way of the north gate to worship shall go out by way of the south gate; and whoever enters by way of the south gate shall go out by way of the north gate. He shall not return by way of the gate through which he came, but shall go out through the opposite gate."

It would seem logical that people would enter the gate at one side and exit at the other by walking between the openings at either side. There is still only one entry, but the screen would remain free standing and the weavings would never be hidden from view.

This is only me speculating, but it would alleviate unnecessary handling of the screens and maintain their overall beauty. No matter what, the screen is to be supported on four pillars in four sockets. This now makes 60 pillars and sockets for the courtyard.

It is obvious that a pillar is a picture of support and of strength. There are sixty pillars standing in sixty sockets to support and sustain the walls of the court of the tabernacle. A particular verse comes to mind concerning this -

"Who *is* this coming out of the wilderness
Like pillars of smoke,
Perfumed with myrrh and frankincense,
With all the merchant's fragrant powders?
⁷ Behold, it *is* Solomon's couch,
With sixty valiant men around it,
Of the valiant of Israel.
⁸ They all hold swords,
Being expert in war.
Every man *has* his sword on his thigh
Because of fear in the night." Song of Solomon 3:6, 7

Surprisingly the couch of Solomon, meaning the king of Israel, is said to be coming out of the wilderness, just as the tabernacle came forth out of the wilderness. A palanquin which is used for carrying a king is actually a curtained litter. The symbolism is the same as the tabernacle which was a curtained edifice carried throughout the wilderness.

There is the King of Israel, being carried about on the shoulders of the Levites, and when stationed, He is surrounded by sixty mighty pillars. Such is the nature of the tabernacle in which He dwelt. However, there is more.

It is also assumed that these sixty pillars are a picture of the sixty Hebrew letters of the *birkat kohanim*, or the high priestly blessing, found in Numbers 6. It would be from within these courts that this blessing would come from -

y'berekhekha adonai v'yshmerekha

ya'er adonai panav eleyekha v'khoonekha

y'sha adonai panav eleyekha

v'yasem lekha shalom

“The LORD bless you and keep you;
²⁵ The LORD make His face shine upon you,
And be gracious to you;
²⁶ The LORD lift up His countenance upon you,
And give you peace.” Numbers 6:24-26

Further the number sixty points to grace and government (5) x (12). Thus it is again a picture of the grace of Christ who reigns in righteousness. He is the wall which surrounds us.

¹⁷ All the pillars around the court shall have bands of silver; their hooks *shall be* of silver and their sockets of bronze.

For whatever reason, the materials for the sockets, bands, and hooks were left off of the west and east end details. Now, this clarifies what they all are made of. However, the material for the pillars is not mentioned. It is for this reason that one can only speculate that they are made of brass. The wording of verses 10 & 11 in Hebrew leave the possibility open that they are not made of brass at all.

¹⁸The length of the court *shall be* one hundred cubits, the width fifty throughout, and the height five cubits, *made of* fine woven linen, and its sockets of bronze.

The total area of the court is 5000 cubits square. With the additional 5 cubits in height due to the height which is now mentioned, it would equal a total of 25,000 cubed cubits. Interestingly, the total district which surrounds the place of the Lord as recorded in Ezekiel 48 says -

"The entire district *shall be* twenty-five thousand *cubits* by twenty-five thousand *cubits*, foursquare. You shall set apart the holy district with the property of the city." Ezekiel 48:20

Therefore, the number 25,000 is not without significance to the Lord. The number 5000 squared cubits, as we saw earlier, pointed to the perfection of Divine order and deliverance and rest as of the perfect consummation of time. If we add in grace, represented by the number five, we see that the total area of the courtyard speaks of Divine order, deliverance and rest, through a process of grace.

With the exception of the tent curtains of the tabernacle from Exodus 26:2, all of the measurements of both the tabernacle and court area are either five cubits or a multiple of five. Thus, the entire pattern speaks of grace in one form or another.

As the height of the outer court hangings is only five cubits, and the tabernacle boards were 10 cubits, the tent would be easily visible from outside of the court hangings.

19 All the utensils of the tabernacle for all its service, all its pegs, and all the pegs of the court, *shall be* of bronze.

Everything made of metal which is associated with the workings of the tabernacle was to be bronze. These utensils wouldn't be the things for ceremonial use, but for the care and stability of the tabernacle itself. They would certainly include things like knives, hammers, shovels, picks, and axes that would be needed for repairing, setting up, and taking down the tabernacle.

The peg, or *yathed*, is introduced here. It signifies a nail, shovel, pin, or stake. It comes from a word which means to pin through, and so it means especially a "peg." Even these were of bronze.

The word is mentioned twice, signifying two different things. First it says "of the tabernacle" when mentioning pegs. Then it says "and all the pegs of the court." What it implies is that the pegs which were staked in the ground would be bronze, even for the ropes connected to the tabernacle itself, as well as all of the pillars of the courtyard.

There is nothing wrong with this view. Even though all of the things associated with the tabernacle were of either gold or silver, the pegs being bronze would not in any way diminish the picture of the holiness of the Lord.

As in all cases, the bronze symbolizes judgment. As the pegs which touched the earth are bronze, so it is a picture of the feet of Christ in judgment. This is seen in Revelation 2:18 -

"These things says the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet like fine brass:" Revelation 2:18

Before we go on to the second section, we should take the time to note that the entire court, including the tabernacle, was simply set on bare ground. It is thus an indication that no matter where one is within the compound, there is nothing on earth which can satisfy us. Instead, we are to see and look to Christ.

In Isaiah 53:2, he is called "a Root out of dry ground." The tabernacle standing, as it were, out of dry ground, pictures Christ. Standing in the courts on that arid ground one would realize that only when looking toward the Lord, there behind the veil and dwelling in the gold-lined room where He rested, is there anything of true value.

The entranceway to the compound was adorned with the colors of His kingship and authority, but once inside, each step is given to tantalize the soul to go a step further... paradise awaits up ahead; there behind the veil! This is why the psalmist said -

"How lovely *is* Your tabernacle,
O LORD of hosts!
² My soul longs, yes, even faints
For the courts of the LORD;
My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.

³ Even the sparrow has found a home,
And the swallow a nest for herself,
Where she may lay her young—
Even Your altars, O LORD of hosts,
My King and my God.

⁴ Blessed *are* those who dwell in Your house;
They will still be praising You. Selah" Psalm 84:1-4

*How lovely is Your dwelling place, O Lord
How marvelous are Your courts which do surround
And how beautiful is Your gate, it pulls my heart toward
The marvelous place, there on the dry ground*

*I long to enter into the place where You dwell
And to smell the burning of the sacrifice
Accept my offering O Lord, and be pleased to tell
That we are again in fellowship, so sweet and so nice*

*How lovely is Your dwelling place, my God
I long to stay here with You for eternal days
And to gaze upon the beauty of my Lord
And with my soul, forever to sing Your praise*

II. The Maintenance of the Lamp (verses 20 & 21)

²⁰ “And you shall command the children of Israel that they bring you pure oil of pressed olives for the light,

Suddenly, and even with surprising abruptness, the maintenance of the Menorah comes back into focus. Just as chapter 25 closed out with the requirements for the construction of the Menorah, the requirements for its maintenance will close out this chapter.

The words are given as a command to the people. They are expected to bring "pure oil of pressed olives for the light." The word "pure" is the adjective *zak*. The word "pressed" is not a good translation. Rather, it should say "beaten." It is the adjective *kathith*. Both are introduced into the Bible in this verse.

Zak will be used just 11 times and it indicates something clean, clear, or pure. This would be the finest oil possible. Rather than being pressed under heavy stones, it would probably be gently beaten in a pounding mortar, just enough to break the skin.

From there the full olives would be placed in a strainer of some sort, like a wicker basket in order to allow their juice to drip through. The pure liquid would simply run through that and into a bowl. From there, the purest oil would float to the top and be skimmed off. From this, the anticipated result would be oil with no impurities at all.

Kathith - will be used just five times and it indicates something beaten. It is only used in connection with the olives that have been made into oil. The process of beating the olives is what the adjective implies. The oil which is expected would usually come from unripe fruit. It would come out clear and without color and it would give a pure, bright light and have very little smoke.

^{20 (con't)} **to cause the lamp to burn continually.**

There is debate as to whether the lamp was to burn continually, day and night, or if it was to burn every night continually. It appears from the next verse, and from Exodus 30:8 and Leviticus 24:3 that the Menorah only burnt throughout the night.

Later writers such as Josephus said that three of the lamps burned during the day and all of them at night, but this is not to be found in Scripture. It may have been a later tradition added into the rituals.

The word for burn here means "to ascend up." It doesn't mean to burn as if to consume. Instead it is a word which is normally used to express an action, such as the burning of a sacrifice which is offered to the Lord. It could thus be paraphrased to say, "...to cause the lamp to *ascend* to the Lord continually."

²¹ In the tabernacle of meeting, outside the veil which *is* before the Testimony,

These words are given after mentioning the obtaining of oil that it is for the lamp which is in the tabernacle of meeting. In other words, the Lord is being specific that this is the lamp He is referring to. Because of the abrupt change in the subject, this is being made clear to Moses now. It is the lamp which was already described and which is in the tabernacle, outside the veil, and before the Testimony. As John Lange says -

"In speaking now exclusively of the features of the ritual worship, it is to be observed that we must distinguish the general worship of the house of God from the specific, Levitical worship, the sacrificial ritual described in Leviticus." John Lange

Further, the term *ohel mowed*, or "tent of meeting" is used for the first time in Scripture. After this, it will become a common term. The KJV and NKJV get a demerit in their translation for saying "tabernacle of meeting." The word *ohel* means "tent."

21 (con't) **Aaron and his sons shall tend it from evening until morning**

The reason for the sudden jump to the oil for the lamp is now seen in these words. They are a preemptory look into what will next be detailed by the Lord to Moses. Although it has not yet been stated, Aaron and his sons will be selected to have the priesthood.

Beginning in the next chapter, the garments and ornaments for that priesthood will be detailed. Because of this, the special duty which highlights their priesthood and which illuminates the Holy Place, is mentioned first in preparation for that commission. This selection will be noted with the first words of Chapter 28, which say -

"Now take Aaron your brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister to Me as priest, Aaron *and* Aaron's sons: Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar." Exodus 28:1

Each step is methodically placed and structured to show intent, and each passage demonstrates immense wisdom.

21 (con't) **before the LORD.**

This is now the first time that name Yehovah, or the LORD, has been mentioned since 25:1. The burning of the lamp is of particular interest to the Lord. Again, John Lange provides an excellent insight into why the oil, lamp, and Lord have all been brought into the narrative at this time, which is just before the naming of the selection of Aaron and his sons -

"The first condition of life, in the house of the Lord as well as elsewhere, is light; and the prerequisite of that is oil. Light is the spirit in action, symbolized by oil, which is a symbol of the spiritual life itself. The first business of the priest was to be to prepare and produce light—even in the Old Testament. How is it in this respect with the sacrificial priesthood of the present time? The text says that this is to be a perpetual statute." John Lange

The first command that was given after the creation of the universe is found in Genesis 1:3 -

"Then God said, 'Let there be light'; and there was light." Genesis 1:3

Now, the first command for the care of the Most Holy things, even prior to the naming of the high priest, was to have there be light. About 1500 years later, we will see what this light pictures as it flows from the pen of John concerning Jesus -

"In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it." John 1:4, 5

And then on the last page of the Bible, we will see that the same light, which this pictures, will shine forevermore -

"There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever."
Revelation 22:5

As I said, there is design, intent, and wisdom seen in this seemingly misplaced passage of Scripture.

21 (fin) *It shall be a statute forever to their generations on behalf of the children of Israel.

The lighting and maintenance of the lamp was to be *olam*, or forever to their generations. The word *olam* indicates that which is concealed. It is an indeterminate amount of time which simply extends on without knowing when it will end. Hence, the term "forever" is used.

In this case, forever is to be taken in the sense of the duration of the covenant which comprises the words we are looking at. As the covenant is annulled in Christ, then it is no longer a requirement. But for as long as the generations of the law were to remain, the statute was in force for the children of Israel.

Christ is the true Lamp, the Bible is the record of who He is, and the Holy Spirit is one who illuminates Scripture which points us to Him. He is the light of the world, and He is the fulfillment of all that these shadows only picture. Every detail displays to us hints of Him - His coming, His work, and His glory. It is all there for those who are willing to just look. He is there.

If you have never reached out and received Christ, please don't wait another day. All the head knowledge in the world, and all of the good deeds you could ever do, will never get you one step closer to God. Only Christ can do that. So reach out to Him today...

Closing Verse: "Enter into His gates with thanksgiving,
And into His courts with praise.

Be thankful to Him, *and* bless His name.

⁵ For the LORD *is* good;

His mercy *is* everlasting,

And His truth *endures* to all generations." Psalm 100:4, 5

Next Week: Exodus 28:1-14 *Intricate stuff we will be showed...* (Garments for the Priesthood - the Ephod) (76th Exodus Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if a deep ocean lies ahead of You, He can part the waters and lead you through it on dry ground. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Court and the Lamp

You shall also make the court of the tabernacle

For the south side there shall hangings for the court be

Made of fine woven linen

One hundred cubits long for one side, as instructed by Me

And its twenty pillars

And their twenty sockets bronze shall be

The hooks of the pillars

And their bands shall be silver, you see

Likewise along the length

Of the north side there shall be, just as I instruct you

Hangings one hundred cubits long

With its twenty pillars and their twenty sockets of bronze too

And the hooks of the pillars and their bands of silver also

These accompany them, as you now know

And along the width of the court
On the west side shall hangings of fifty cubits be
With their ten pillars and their ten sockets
Heed these instructions carefully

The width of the court, as you can see
On the east side shall fifty cubits be
The hangings on one side of the gate
Shall be fifteen cubits, as I now instruct you
With their three pillars and their three sockets
This is what you are to do

And on the other side shall be
Hangings of fifteen cubits also
With their three pillars and their three sockets
Follow each step carefully as you go

For the gate of the court there shall be a screen twenty cubits long
Woven of blue, purple, and scarlet thread
And fine woven linen, made by a weaver
It shall have four pillars and four sockets, just as I have said

All the pillars around the court
Shall have bands of silver, such shall it be

Their hooks shall be of silver
And their sockets of bronze; thus you shall do certainly
The length of the court shall be one hundred cubits
The width fifty throughout, this is its size
And the height five cubits, made of fine woven linen
And its sockets of bronze, as to you I apprise

All the utensils of the tabernacle
For all its service, every thing as I say
All its pegs and all the pegs of the court
Shall be of bronze, as I now relay

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
Yes, it is to burn throughout all the night

In the tabernacle of meeting
Outside the veil which is before the Testimony, hear My word
Aaron and his sons shall tend it
From evening until morning before the Lord

It shall be a statute forever, this I now to you tell
To their generations on behalf of the children of Israel

Thank You, Lord for the wonderful detail we see
Every word is precious for us to ponder
And all of it points to Jesus ever so marvelously
Thank You for sharing with us such splendid wonder

Hear our thanks as we praise you for all of our days
Forever and ever we shall sing to You with joyous praise

Hallelujah and Amen...