

Pentwater Bible Church

Hebrews Message 22

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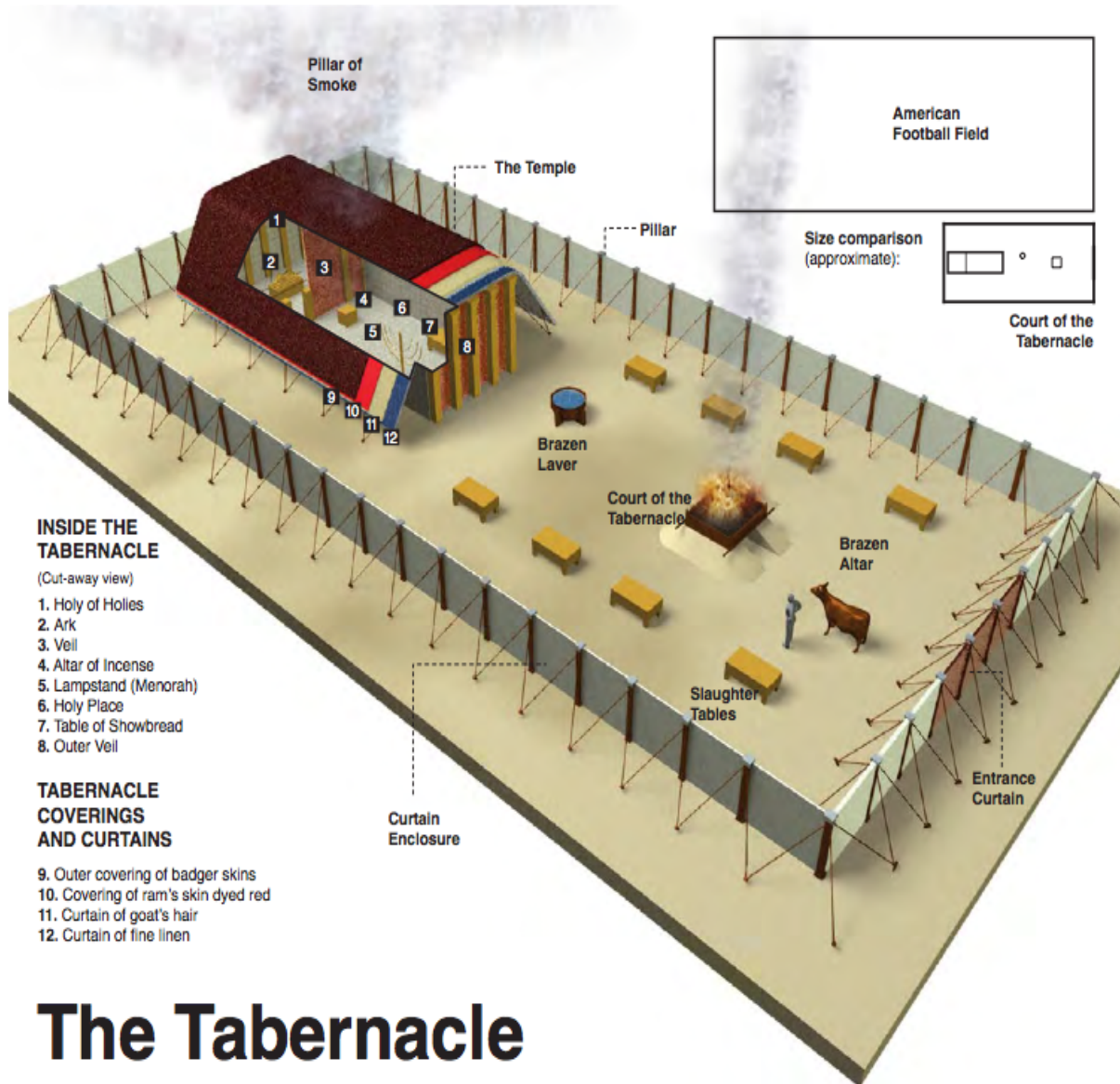
The Book of Hebrews

Message Twenty-Two

THE HEAVENLY TABERNACLE PART II

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The Tabernacle

This portable temple was built in the wilderness by the Israelites circa 1450 BC after they were freed from Egyptian slavery. The tabernacle was the first temple dedicated to God and the first resting place of the ark of the covenant. It served as a place of worship and sacrifices during the Israelites' 40 years in the desert while conquering the land of Canaan.

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CLEANSING OF THE HEAVENLY TABERNACLE

Hebrew 9:23_24

²³ It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these ²⁴ For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us (KJV).

This section of scripture gives a glimpse into Heaven. The apostle continues on with his discussion of how the earthly Tabernacle was a pattern of the same things in Heaven. Continuing with this thought he then says that the blood of the sacrifices in the earthly Tabernacle were sprinkled on both the Tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry used within the Tabernacle. Christ who needed to purify the Heavenly Tabernacle had to do it with the perfect sacrifice of the Lord Jesus. First it is important to realize what the earthly Tabernacle had within it and how it represented the one in Heaven. Today we continue with more of the components found within the Tabernacle.

THE VEIL

Exodus 26:31–35

³¹ And thou shalt make a veil of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen: with cherubim the work of the skilful workman shall it be made: ³² and thou shalt hang it upon four pillars of acacia overlaid with gold; their hooks shall be of gold, upon four sockets of silver. ³³ And thou shalt hang up the veil under the clasps, and shalt bring in thither within the veil the ark of the testimony: and the veil shall separate unto you between the holy place and the most holy. ³⁴ And thou shalt put the mercy-seat upon the ark of the testimony in the most holy place. ³⁵ And thou shalt set the table without the veil, and the candlestick over against the table on the side of the tabernacle toward the south: and thou shalt put the table on the north side (ASV, 1901)

An important feature of the Tabernacle was the *Veil*, which separated the Holy of Holies from the Holy Place. The Ark of the Covenant was placed within the Holy of Holies. This was a special room into which only the high priest was permitted to enter once a year on Yom Kippor, the Day of Atonement to offer the blood of the sacrifice. On the Day of Atonement, he would go into the Holy of Holies twice; the first time he entered was to offer the blood for his own personal sins and the second time was to offer the blood for the sins of the nation Israel. One purpose of the Veil was to separate the Holy of Holies, which contained the Ark of the Covenant and the presence of the Shechinah Glory, from the Holy Place, which contained the Table of Showbread *on the north side*, the Lampstand *toward the south*, and the Altar of Incense.

The importance of the Veil is that it was a barrier of access to God. It marked a point of demarcation in two ways. The Veil that separated the Holy of Holies from the Holy Place also separated the high priest from all the common priests who only were allowed in the Holy Place.

This separation meant that only one man, out of one family, out of one tribe, out of one nation, out of the entire world, was ever allowed to enter into the very presence of God. Even for him, it was only for one day out of the entire year, the Day of Atonement. The more significant separation was between God and the earth's population in that no one had access to the presence of God, except this one being, the High Priest.

It was this Veil that split from top to bottom at the moment of the death of Jesus (Matthew 27:51). The rending or tearing of the Veil demonstrated that the separation between God and man had now been broken by the death of the Lord Jesus now all have access to God through faith (Hebrews 9:12; 10:19–22). The rending of the Veil meant that access to God was now available to the entire world merely by believing that Jesus had died, went into the ground for three days and rose from the dead, which is the Gospel (I Corinthians 15:1–4).

Because it was the death of Jesus that caused the separation to end and caused the rending of the Veil, this Veil also was the symbol of the body of Jesus (Hebrews 10:20). It was through the death and resurrection of His body that this access was now provided.

THE SCREEN

Exodus 26:36–37

³⁶And thou shalt make a screen for the door of the Tent, of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen, the work of the embroiderer. ³⁷And thou shalt make for the screen five pillars of acacia, and overlay them with gold: their hooks shall be of gold: and thou shalt cast five sockets of brass for them (ASV, 1901).

The screen was *the door of the Tent*. Its purpose was that it separated the Levites from the non-Levites. Just as the Veil separated the high priest from all the other priests, the Screen separated the Tribe of Levi from all the other eleven tribes of Israel. Only the Levites could go into the first room of the Tabernacle, the Holy Place.

THE ALTAR OF SACRIFICE

Exodus 27:1–8

And thou shalt make the altar of acacia wood, five cubits long, and five cubits broad; the altar shall be foursquare: and the height thereof shall be three cubits. ²And thou shalt make the horns of it upon the four corners thereof; the horns thereof shall be of one piece with it: and thou shalt overlay it with brass. ³And thou shalt make its pots to take away its ashes, and its shovels, and its basins, and its flesh-hooks, and its firepans: all the vessels thereof thou shalt make of brass. ⁴And thou shalt make for it a grating of network of brass: and upon the net shalt thou make four brazen rings in the four corners thereof. ⁵And thou shalt put it under the ledge round the altar beneath, that the net may reach halfway up the altar. ⁶And thou shalt make staves for the altar, staves of acacia wood, and overlay them with brass. ⁷And the staves thereof shall be put into the rings, and the staves shall be

upon the two sides of the altar, in bearing it. ⁸Hollow with planks shalt thou make it: as it hath been showed thee in the mount, so shall they make it (ASV, 1901).

Another very important feature of the Tabernacle was the Altar of Sacrifice. The Altar of Sacrifice emphasized the entire concept of justification, for it was here that the blood was actually shed. The Altar of Sacrifice was outside the Tabernacle building in the courtyard. This was the place where the sacrifices were killed and where blood was shed. Blood was never shed within the Tabernacle itself. No blood was shed within the two rooms of the Tabernacle.

The Altar of Sacrifice demonstrates that access to God has always been by means of blood (Leviticus 17:11; 1 Timothy 2:5–6; Hebrews 9:15, 22). It also demonstrates since Jesus' death and resurrection that He was the final sacrifice. His shed blood would be the final shedding of blood for sin. As clearly expressed in Hebrews 9:1–10:18, this fact is given a very lengthy discourse comparing the work of Jesus with the activities in the Tabernacle. The Altar also symbolizes Jesus as the Altar itself (Hebrews 13:10–15). In chapter ten the apostle not only says that Jesus is the final sacrifice, but the very Altar itself.

THE COURT

Exodus 27:9–19

⁹And thou shalt make the court of the tabernacle: for the south side southward there shall be hangings for the court of fine twined linen a hundred cubits long for one side: ¹⁰and the pillars thereof shall be twenty, and their sockets twenty, of brass; the hooks of the pillars and their fillets shall be of silver. ¹¹And likewise for the north side in length there shall be hangings a hundred cubits long, and the pillars thereof twenty, and their sockets twenty, of brass; the hooks of the pillars, and their fillets, of silver. ¹²And for the breadth of the court on the west side shall be hangings of fifty cubits; their pillars ten, and their sockets ten. ¹³And the breadth of the court on the east side eastward shall be fifty cubits. ¹⁴The hangings for the one side of the gate shall be fifteen cubits; their pillars three, and their sockets three. ¹⁵And for the other side shall be hangings of fifteen cubits; their pillars three, and their sockets three. ¹⁶And for the gate of the court shall be a screen of twenty cubits, of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen, the work of the embroiderer; their pillars four, and their sockets four. ¹⁷All the pillars of the court round about shall be filleted with silver; their hooks of silver, and their sockets of brass. ¹⁸The length of the court shall be a hundred cubits, and the breadth fifty every where, and the height five cubits, of fine twined linen, and their sockets of brass. ¹⁹All the instruments of the tabernacle in all the service thereof, and all the pins thereof, and all the pins of the court, shall be of brass (ASV, 1901).

The tabernacle complex was rectangular in shape (75' × 150', vv. 9, 13, 18) with an outer wall made of linen curtains supported by or hung on 20 posts on the south side.... 20 on the north, and 10 on the west end, all set in bronze bases and having silver hooks (for hanging the curtains) set in bands (vv. 10–11, 17). The posts were about 7½' apart, and the curtains were kept tight by bronze tent pegs (v. 19). The east entrance was 30' wide because the curtains at

each side of the entrance extended 22½' (75' - 22½' - 22½' = 30). Three posts helped support the curtains on each side of the entrance. Those posts were about 7½' apart.

The Court is described in this text as *hangings*, which were made of fine-twined linen, surrounded the entire Tabernacle area. These served as a “fence” for the Tabernacle, so that the area inside the fence became the courtyard. The court of the Tabernacle also demonstrated the principle of separation and access to God in that it separated Jews from Gentiles. Later in the Temple there would be an outer court called the Court of the Gentiles. Only Jews were allowed to go through the fence into the courtyard. There were three separations as one moved closer to the presence of God in the Holy of Holies. First the Court separated Jews from Gentiles; secondly, the Screen separated Levites from non-Levites; and thirdly, the Veil separated the high priest from the common priests.

Since the Court curtains separated Jews from Gentiles, it symbolized the *middle wall of partition* as explained in Ephesians 2:11–16. This *wall* was broken down with the death and resurrection of Jesus so that now Jews and Gentiles are reconciled into one Body, the Church. There are not two Churches, only one consisting of both Jews and Gentiles.

The Messianic significance of the Court is that the death and resurrection of Jesus reconciled Himself to the world.

II Corinthians 5:16–21

¹⁶Wherefore we henceforth know no man after the flesh: even though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now we know him so no more. ¹⁷Wherefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature: the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new. ¹⁸But all things are of God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and gave unto us the ministry of reconciliation; ¹⁹to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not reckoning unto them their trespasses, and having committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

²⁰We are ambassadors therefore on behalf of Christ, as though God were entreating by us: we beseech you on behalf of Christ, be ye reconciled to God. ²¹Him who knew no sin he made to be sin on our behalf; that we might become the righteousness of God in him (ASV, 1901).

THE BURNING OIL

Exodus 27:20–21

²⁰And thou shalt command the children of Israel, that they bring unto thee pure olive oil beaten for the light, to cause a lamp to burn continually. ²¹In the tent of meeting, without the veil which is before the testimony, Aaron and his sons shall keep it in order from evening to morning before Jehovah: it shall be a statute for ever throughout their generations on the behalf of the children of Israel (ASV, 1901).

In order to supply light within the tabernacle the lampstand with its seven individual lamps (cf. 25:31–39) required a constant supply of olive oil. The Israelites were to provide this oil so that the priests could keep the lamps burning continuously as a lasting ordinance. As already stated, the Testimony refers to the Ten Commandments on stone kept in the ark of the covenant. The lampstand, being in the holy place, was therefore in front of the ark, though a curtain (The Veil) separated the two compartments of the tabernacle.

This feature, the Burning Oil was to be made of beaten olive oil. It was this oil that was to be fed into the Lampstand to keep it burning continuously *on the behalf of the children of Israel*.

When used symbolically, oil is a symbol of the Holy Spirit. Just as the Burning Oil provided physical light, so the Holy Spirit provides spiritual light enabling the believer to realize his sinful condition and give thanks for his redemption.

The Lampstand with its seven lamps for which oil had to be continually provides emphasizes the concept of completion and totality. In this case, it symbolizes the fullness of the Holy Spirit that Jesus was to have.

Next message: THE TABERNACLE CONTINUED

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