

# A STRATEGIC GRASP OF THE BIBLE-10 PORTRAITS OF CHRIST IN THE TABERNACLE

## **The Tabernacle is how God illustrates Spiritual Reality**

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TABERNACLE In seeking to interpret the Tabernacle, we must not dogmatize but humbly follow the method of the Holy Spirit as illustrated in the Epistle to the Hebrews. Referring there to the Tabernacle and the priesthood,

- o He speaks of the "shadow of heavenly things" (Hebrews 8:5);
- o "the patterns of things in the heavens" (Hebrews 9:23);
- o "the figures of the true" (Hebrews 9:24);
- o "a shadow of good things to come" (Hebrews 10:1).

Thus it is clear that the Tabernacle was intended to signify spiritual realities. In other words, in the Tabernacle we see shadows, patterns, and figures of heavenly or spiritual things that are revealed in Christ.

## **The Tabernacle illustrates God's Grace and Our Faith**

From the Brazen Altar to the Ark and Mercy Seat is the pathway of faith.  
From the Mercy Seat to the Altar of Brass is the pathway of grace.

## **The Tabernacle illustrates God's Plan for our Lives**

The Altar is the Cross for sinners, the Laver is the Cleansing for sin, the Holy Place is the Consecration for Service.

The Altar is for sinners and punishment (without the shedding of blood).

The laver is for children and cleansing (without holiness no one) John 13:10 Jesus said to him, "He who is bathed (Gr. **lelumenos** 'completely cleaned') needs only to wash (Gr. **nipasthoi** 'rinse') his feet, but is completely clean (Gr. **katharos** 'purified'); and you are clean (**katharos**), but not all of you."

## **The Tabernacle illustrates God's Salvation offered in Christ**

1. **The Gate is Christ Inviting us** John 10:9 I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.

2. **The Altar of Brass is Christ Saving us.** John 10:11 "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.
3. **The Laver is Christ Sanctifying us.** Ephesians 5:26 that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word,
4. **The Holy Place is Christ Serving us.** Hebrews 4:15-16 For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. 16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.
5. **The Holy of Holies is Christ Securing us.** Hebrews 10:19-22 Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, 20 by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, 21 and having a High Priest over the house of God, 22 let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

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1. **The Way to Redemption is the Altar of Brass.** "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself. ...For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Corinthians 5:19, 21).
2. **The Way to Consecration is the Laver of Brass.** Speaking to His disciples Jesus said: "He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit" (John 13:10). Later He said: "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you" (John 15:3).
3. **The Way of Illumination is the Golden Lamp Stand.** Jesus said: "I am the light of the world: he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John 8:12).
4. **The Way of Satisfaction is the Golden Table of Bread.** Jesus said: "I am the bread of life: he that cometh to Me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst" (John 6:35).
5. **The Way of Intercession is the Golden Altar of incense.** "By Him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His name" (Hebrews 13:15).
6. **The Way of Communion is the Golden Ark of the Covenant.** "Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ" (1 John 1:3).

# The Tabernacle is God's Portrait of Jesus

The Tabernacle is God's photo journal documenting salvation. It is not an after thought, it is His premeditated explanation of what Jesus would do perfectly on the Cross. The Tabernacle is the clearest portrait of Christ and His redemption to be found in any part of the Old Testament. While God only uses one verse to record Creation (Genesis 1:1), and two chapters (Genesis 1-2) to explain it, He takes 15 chapters (Exodus 25-40) to explain the construction of the Tabernacle and 27 more to describe it in action (Leviticus). This task was so important that God did not depend on the ingenuity of craftsmen to follow a blueprint, He actually came into them through His Spirit (Exodus 31:1-6) and guided each step of their work.

Before God sent a Person named Jesus Christ, He sent a picture called the Tabernacle. The Tabernacle is a photo album of the most detailed explanation of salvation in the Old Testament. The Tabernacle is the ABCs of Christian Doctrine, it is a systematic Theology that Paul actually uses in Romans to explain salvation. In the Old Testament the Tabernacle is the dwelling place of God. In the New Testament the Church becomes the dwelling place of God.

Walk again with me through Exodus 37-38.. The courtyard of the Tabernacle was one hundred fifty feet long and seventy-five feet wide. As we walk around it on a Scriptural Tour, we can find that every object we see in some way points to Christ. And also His great I AM declarations are featured in this sacred place.

The furnishings of the tabernacle reveal what God's presence in our lives has provided. Each of the furnishings speaks clearly of a ministry of God through which the believer is protected from himself and enabled to become all God intends. **All the pieces of furniture also picture Christ. Everything in the outer courtyard was connected with salvation and the cleansing of sins.** Jesus accomplished His sacrificial work on earth, outside God's heavenly presence. The outer court was accessible to all the people, just as Christ is accessible to all who will come to Him. But in His heavenly sanctuary He is shut off from the world, temporarily even from His own people.

1. **THE BRONZE ALTAR. EXODUS 38:1-7 The bronze altar is a perfect picture of Jesus Christ, who Himself was a sacrifice for sin.** Jesus reflected this when He declared I AM THE GOOD SHEPHERD WHO GIVES MY LIFE FOR MY SHEEP (John 10.11). So Jesus our Lamb offered Himself for us.
  - o The first article of furniture in the outer court was the **bronze altar**. It was made of acacia wood sheathed with bronze.
    - a. Isaiah 53:2 For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, And as a root out of dry ground. He has no form or comeliness; And when we see Him, There is no beauty that we should desire Him.
    - b. The root out of dry ground is most likely a reference to the acacia, which is a desert bush with an exceptionally deep root that goes down to a source of water. Acacia was also ship building tough wood. This wood covered bronze means Jesus covered by God's judgment.