

The Tabernacle in the Wilderness

OVERVIEW

Exodus 25:8-9

⁸And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them. ⁹According to all that I shew thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it.

The tabernacle in the wilderness was a large tent made by the Israelites from a design God gave Moses on Mount Sinai. Nothing was left to chance. Every detail was given by God, and he left no room for error. He gave them a pattern he wanted it built by, and He was the designer. He wanted a place where He could dwell among the children of Israel. The tabernacle is a picture of the church as today he dwells in the hearts of his people.

God only builds with the materials of his own people. He has never asked man to support him; rather He supports us. He supplies our needs – we don't supply His needs. God went to his people who, a short time before, had been slaves in Egypt and owned nothing. This pictures the sinner in that everything they own was given to them by God. What the Israelis had became theirs because of the Passover. When God killed every first-born of the Egyptians, Pharaoh finally agreed to let the Israelites go. The people of Egypt were so anxious to have the Israelites out of their country, they gave them jewels of silver, and gold and raiment. God asked them to give back some of what they had received from the Egyptians to build the tabernacle. This wasn't a compulsory giving; it had to be given with a willing heart.

Exodus 36:5

And they spake unto Moses, saying, The people bring much more than enough for the service of the work, which the Lord commanded to make.

There is never a shortage when we trust God. When the people came and brought the materials for the tabernacle, they were in agreement with God. In our natural state we are rebels, but it is as we begin to agree with God that a place for Him to dwell begins to form in our hearts.

The tabernacle structure is called by two names: a tabernacle and a sanctuary. The word 'tabernacle' is mentioned in the book of Exodus 80 times, and means a residence. Christ dwells in us. In Colossians chapter 1, Paul tells of the mystery among the Gentiles – Christ in us, the hope of glory.

The word 'sanctuary' is found 11 times in the book of Exodus and means a consecrated place. It is a place for God only and not for show or entertainment. It is a place for God to be worshipped. During the time the tabernacle stood, God could be found there all the time. The only way to meet God is through his Son, Jesus Christ.

God alone chose the materials and the design for the tabernacle, and there were no substitutes allowed. This typifies Christ because there is no substitute for Him. He is all in all. There were many gods in that day, just as there are many gods today, but God – Jehovah, the true and living God – was the only one to give protection, life, and reality to his people. There are no “many ways” to Him; there is only one way and that is through Jesus Christ. We go to Him in weakness, just as we are.

Just like every letter is in the alphabet, everything was in the tabernacle. Apart from it, everything else was a wilderness. While in the world there was only one place God put his presence, and that was in the tabernacle. All of this is typical of Christ in the mystical church. According to Paul's letters to the Colossians and Ephesians, the church is the mystical body of Christ.

Church means 'a calling out.' Paul encourages us in Ephesians 3:10 that the manifold wisdom of God might be known by the church. In Ephesians 3:8, Paul preached the unsearchable riches of Christ, and in Ephesians 3:6, he tells us about being fellow heirs with Jesus Christ. In Ephesians 2:10 Paul tells us we are His workmanship, His masterpiece. We are privileged to be part of that masterpiece of God. To be in the bride of Christ is the greatest position in a relationship that has ever been offered to man. The great men and women of the Old Testament were not offered this opportunity.

This tabernacle represents Christ in every detail. It also represents God's people in every detail. While multitudes camped around it and marched with it, only the priests were allowed to enter into the holy place, and only the high priest could enter the holy of holies once a year. This also speaks of the small number in the bride of Christ versus the multitudes that don't enter in.

This tabernacle was the center of Israel's religious life. It was a sign that God was always with them. Even though they had been kept out of the Promised Land for 40 years because of their disobedience, God was still willing to protect and go with them. In the desert and in the whole world, this is where God chose to dwell. This doesn't mean his presence wasn't everywhere because in a sense it was. Wherever the tent went, God was there. Actually the tent went where God went. The pillar of fire by night gave God's people warmth, and the cloud that overshadowed the camp by day gave them shade. God wanted to dwell with men on the mercy seat of the ark. One day much later God became manifest in the flesh as Jesus and was crucified for our sins. He was on the earth 33 years and was seen of men. After He conquered sin and death He ascended back to heaven. As people believe Him, then Jesus comes and lives within us.

The tabernacle and everything in it are a shadow, a picture, of heavenly things. While he was on Mount Sinai Moses was given a blueprint by God that pointed to another tabernacle in the heavens. Where did Paul get his gospel? He got it by studying the tabernacle. God revealed to him what it all meant. Hebrews tells us that the physical earthly tabernacle was representative of the heavenly tabernacle:

Hebrews 8:1-2,5

- 1) Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens;
- 2) A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.
- 5) Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for See, saith He, that thou make all things according to the pattern that was showed to thee in the mount.

This is also shown in Hebrews 9:1-8. Hebrews 9:9 shows the offerings could not make them perfect. Hebrews 9:11 shows that Christ is the high priest in the heavenly tabernacle. Hebrews 9:23 shows Christ is the heavenly sacrifice. Hebrews 10:19-20 shows us that the veil pictured Christ's flesh. When He cried out on the cross "It is finished!" in the temple the veil that covered the most holy place was torn from top to bottom.

The way to the holy of holies – the throne of grace – had been opened to us. We are invited to come to this throne of grace to find help in time of need. Everybody can come to the most holy place and partake

of this wonderful grace. Because of what Christ accomplished on the cross, we have been brought right into the very presence of God. Hallelujah!!

This tabernacle and everything in it will be covered in much more detail. We'll start from the outside and go in. Keep in mind that man starts on the outside and goes in, but God always starts at the mercy seat.

First, when approaching this tabernacle we come to the entrance of the courtyard. The courtyard itself was enclosed by a screen of linen curtains. The entrance was on one side, and had a curtain of embroidered linen drawn across it.

Once inside, we see the brasen altar, known as the altar of burnt offerings. This altar is where animal sacrifices were made. The altar was made of wood and overlaid with bronze.

Past the brasen altar we come to the laver. This was a bronze basin on a bronze base. This basin was used by the priests to wash their hands and feet each time they were to enter the tabernacle and before they were to offer a sacrifice.

Beyond the brass laver we see the tabernacle (tent) itself. The frame of the tent was made of shittim wood. Four types of coverings were draped over the frame.

- 1) The first and innermost covering was linen curtains decorated with blue, purple and scarlet tapestry, and could be seen inside the tabernacle or tent.
- 2) Next were curtains made of goat's hair. They were a little longer than the linen ones. One of them formed the door of the tent.
- 3) Over the goats hair curtains were a weather-proof covering made of ram's skins dyed red.
- 4) Finally, there was another weather proof covering made from badger's skins.

The inside of the tent was divided into two rooms. The smallest of the two rooms, and farthest from the door of the tent, was called the holy of holies, or the most holy place. The larger room nearest the entrance of the tabernacle was called the holy place. Only the high priest, and only once a year, could he enter the holy of holies. A linen curtain separated the two rooms. The entrance to the holy place was covered by another embroidered linen curtain.

Traveling through the linen curtain at the entrance of the tent itself we enter the holy place. In the holy place we find the table of shewbread. Each Sabbath twelve new loaves of bread – one loaf to represent each one of the twelve tribes of Israel – were placed as an offering on a table overlaid with gold.

Next we see the golden lampstand also in the holy place. It was a seven-branched lampstand, and was hammered out of one piece of gold that weighed approximately 66 pounds. It was decorated with buds and flowers shaped like almond blossoms. This gold lampstand was the only source of light in the tabernacle.

Still in the holy place, in front of the curtain that screened the holy of holies, stood a small altar in which incense was burned each morning and each evening. It was made with Shittim wood overlaid with gold and had a horn on each of its four corners. The four rings were for carrying it when Israel traveled. Beyond the curtain that separated the holy place from the holy of holies was the ark with its mercy seat. The ark was a rectangular box made of Shittim wood and overlaid with gold. There were rings at the lower four corner. When the Israelites moved, the ark was moved by putting poles through the rings so the priests could carry the ark on their shoulders. The ark contained the two tablets on which were inscribed the ten commandments, a golden pot of manna, and Aaron's rod that blossomed overnight. The lid of the ark, the mercy seat, was made of one piece of solid gold.

In its entirety, the tabernacle reveals some progressive steps in our relationship with God. If we are going to understand the tabernacle and everything in it, we have to first accept the sacrifice of Christ for us which is pictured in the brasen altar. We have to know that we are secure and know that Christ took away all our sin and the guilt that goes with it, when He died on the cross for us. There is no way we can go beyond the brasen altar to the hidden mysteries of Christ if we don't fully accept the freedom he died to give us. God doesn't want us to be one of the multitude that is most of Christendom. He wants us to go beyond the brasen altar. Accepting Jesus and being saved is a wonderful thing, but He wants us to understand that there is a lot more he has for us beyond being saved.

The multitudes of Israel that lived in the camp never knew what was going on in the tabernacle, because they never got past the brasen altar. The wonderful mysteries beyond the altar were hidden to them. To the outward eye the tabernacle was anything but attractive. If the multitudes of Israel could have looked under the badger skins, they would have seen the beautiful and priceless pieces that were there.

The bible says that the Lord Jesus had no outward beauty that would make us desire Him. We have to look under the outer covering to see what He really is. Many people look on the Lord as someone who will be a burden to them and take the pleasure out of life. In reality it is the devil's way that makes us miserable. The only true joy in living is found with Christ. Following the Lord is always precious. The Israelites moved this tabernacle, fought with it, lived their lives with it, marched with it, but never fully understood what it all meant.

God wants to be everything to us. The Old Testament tabernacle is a perfect type of Christ and the church, His mystical body. The tabernacle was the first dwelling of God with man. In it there is a detailed explanation of what God is doing. It shows His plan and His purpose from before the beginning of time. In eternities past He chose us in Christ and we are His delight.

The four-fold purpose of the tabernacle:

- 1) God wanted to reveal Himself to men. There had to be something visible for man to see before he would want to get acquainted or find out about God.
- 2) The moment God reveals himself to man, man begins to get a revelation of himself. We see what we are without Christ and it is not a pretty picture.
- 3) God seeks to reveal the way of man's salvation.
- 4) God wants to reveal the exalted place man can attain in His plan. Man starts at the brasen Altar. He can finish with a full joy, being one with the mercy seat.

Christ identified himself with us when he came to earth, and it is our privilege to identify with Him in heaven. One day everything was done, but it wasn't just together. It was done according to all God commanded Moses. We have to learn to build by the word of God and not try to build by our thoughts. When it all came together it was God's church in the wilderness. It was like the day of Pentecost because that was the day when the Christian church began. We need to realize that this tabernacle is a very special picture of the church as a whole as well as a picture of Christians in particular. Christ is enthroned in Christians, and every phase and benefit of life is being supplied not from without, but from within. Christ is doing it all.

THE COURTYARD

EXODUS 27:9-18

VERSE 9

And thou shalt make the court of the tabernacle: for the south side southward there shall be hangings for the court of fine twined linen of a hundred cubits long for one side.

Court means yard or enclosure. In Leviticus 6:16 and 26 it is called a holy place. 100 cubits long is 50 twice, or doubled. 50 is the number of Pentecost and 50 days after Jesus arose, the Holy Spirit came and filled those who were of one accord in the house. Those gathered there began to speak with other tongues or languages according to the account in Acts chapter 2. Paul said, "We came not to you in word only, but in power." The Holy Spirit is here today lifting up the righteousness of Christ, and presenting an open door which leads us into the very presence of God. Pentecost is found all through this tabernacle.

The curtains of fine twined linen shows the righteousness of God. We are represented in these curtains. In them we see that all believers are righteous in God's sight.

VERSES 10-11

¹⁰ **And the twenty pillars thereof and their twenty sockets shall be of brass; the hooks of the pillars and their fillets shall be of silver.** ¹¹ **And likewise for the north side in length there shall be hangings of an hundred cubits long, and his twenty pillars and their twenty sockets of brass; the hooks of the pillars and their fillets of silver.**

The sockets and pillars were made of brass, which speaks of judgment. These pillars were set on the ground in sockets, which served as a base for them. There were brass pins that pinned the pillars into their sockets. There was one thing between you and me: judgment. Praise God, another was judged in our place.

2 Corinthians 5:21

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.

God made Jesus to be sin for us. When he took our place on the cross, he took our judgment upon himself. Christ is represented by the sockets, our base. He is the one who comes between us and the rest of the world. Judgment makes us stand upright. We were judged; then Jesus Christ was judged for us. The righteousness of God stands up before us because of judgment. In order for us to stand we have to recognize that Christ put away sin once and for all with the sacrifice of himself. There is no sin left, and the power of sin to put us in hell has been nailed to the cross. Would you not believe God and call him a liar? Did he not make Christ sin for us? The sin for which men are judged, the sin that can put them in hell is that Adamic sin. It is not charged to us when we believe Jesus, and let Him save us from sin and death.

There were 20 pillars of brass on the north side and on the south side: $5 \times 4 = 20$. 5 is the number of grace and 4 is the number of human weakness. Christ has the strength to bring us into the family of God. Human weakness is very necessary. We have to realize that we must come to God in weakness. We have to know that when we go to the brasen altar of sacrifice, there is nothing good we can bring because we go in weakness. We are unable to do anything about our sinful condition.

Luke 5:31

And Jesus answering said unto them, They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick.

Jesus found as he walked the shores of Galilee that it was the strong self-righteous people who rejected Him. We need to remember that we were nothing but slaves in bondage until Christ redeemed us. He lifted us out of the horrible pit, and our feet out of the miry clay. We shouldn't get the idea we were so good that we almost got saved without Him. The better we thought we were, the farther we got from Him for the simple reason we didn't recognize our need for Him. The apostle Paul, before he got saved, didn't recognize his need for a savior or for God. The Pharisee didn't need either; he thought he was good enough because he could search the scriptures. But in his self-righteousness he became blind to the realization that those scriptures testified of the man Jesus Christ who often stood in his presence.

The columns and sockets displayed grace and weakness. We go in unto God by grace. We read in 2 Peter 3:18 that we are to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and savior Jesus Christ

God wants us to be clean, but He wants us to do it his way and from His inspiration. Those who are strong in the Lord are to bear the infirmities of the weak.

20 pillars on the north and south sides also speak of perfect testing according to our ability doubled. 10 is the number of man's sufficiency according to his ability. We have 5 fingers on each hand and 5 toes on each foot. 5 is the number of grace; $5 \times 2 = 10$.

The hooks and fillets were made of silver. In the scriptures, silver speaks of redemption. Abraham gave 400 shekels of silver for Sarah's tomb; Joseph was sold to the Midianites for 20 pieces of silver. Zechariah 11 and Matthew 27 tell how Jesus was sold for 30 pieces of silver. On the day of the Passover, if a man lived too far away to bring his sacrifice, he would sell the sacrifice for a certain amount, and take the silver he collected, bind it up in his hand and take it to the tabernacle.

The silver fillets went from the head of one pillar to the head of the other pillar, and the hooks fastened them. The fillets secured the heads of the pillars and held them together. We are one with Christ. What is it that makes us one? We are quickened together with Him, raised together with Him, seated together with Him, and we are one body with many members. Sometimes we have to deal with things people do that we don't like, but Christ wants us to deal with people always in love, and always with grace, tenderly and with compassion. Anybody can play the part of a Pharisee, but it takes a true child of God to be a brother.

VERSES 12-13

¹²And for the breadth of the court on the west side shall be hangings of fifty cubits: their pillars ten, and their sockets ten. ¹³ And the breadth of the court on the east side eastward shall be fifty cubits.

In the Old Testament we find the number 50 occurs seven times. 7 is the number of spiritual perfection. Pentecost is spiritually perfect and the power of God is spiritually perfect, knowing no opposition.

Acts 1:8

But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall witnesses unto me.

10 pillars and 10 sockets on the west end and on the east end. 10 days before Pentecost, 500 people witnessed Jesus being taken into heaven. 10 days later, 120 of these people were filled with the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost.

VERSES 14-15

¹⁴ The hangings of one side of the gate shall be fifteen cubits: their pillars three, and their sockets three. ¹⁵ And on the other side shall be hangings fifteen cubits: their pillars three, and their sockets three.

There were 3 pillars on the one side of the gate and three pillars on the other side of the gate. 3 is the number of the trinity (the Godhead) and of the resurrection. We worship a risen savior when we enter through this gate. He isn't dead and in a tomb like Mohammed, or Joseph Smith, or Mary Baker Eddy or other religious leaders. He is in heaven.

These pillars were spaced 5 cubits apart. Everywhere you look in this tabernacle the message is the same: grace. It doesn't come down to 2 here and 5 there, it all fits perfectly and adds up. These measurements are not accidental or coincidental. Only the mind of God could have conceived and created this.

The hangings for the court on either side of the gate were 15 cubits long. 15 is the product of grace and resurrection: $5 \times 3 = 15$. Christ had to come in grace and was resurrected from the grave for us to be able to come to God.

VERSE 16

And for the gate of the court shall be an hanging of twenty cubits, of blue, and purple and scarlet, and fine twined linen, wrought with needlework: and their pillars shall be four, and their sockets four.

20 cubits for the gate hangings. We have the number 5, the number of grace multiplied by 4, the number of human weakness: $5 \times 4 = 20$. While we know more than likely it must have been 5 1/2 cubits long, the bible doesn't say that. There are some things that have no real specification or dimension. Who can measure what the righteousness of God in this gate really adds up to?

Blue speaks of heaven; purple speaks of royalty, and scarlet speaks of shed blood. Blue, purple and red on the gate reveals what was there all the time. In the natural it usually takes time to fall in love with someone. There is such a thing as love at first sight, but usually you are around someone for awhile before you realize you love them. They were there all the time, but you didn't know you loved them.

When the realization that you love them finally sets in you see things you couldn't see before. Their faults float away and you become blind to them because of your love for them. Can you imagine what we are in God's sight? The bible says we are blameless and faultless in his sight. When he dresses us up in that robe of righteousness, and that new body, He'll challenge anybody to find blame or fault in us. He loves us beyond what we can even imagine. Only the love of God could look at man in his natural state and still love him. If we could see what we are apart from Christ in God's eyes, we would be shocked and sickened. God doesn't overlook facts, but His grace is more than sufficient for the facts. We are blameless in His sight, and He overlooks our faults in His love. Don't find fault in your brother, overlook facts as God does.

Fine twined linen shows the righteousness of God. The only way God deals with mankind is if they are clothed in his righteousness. All believers are clothed in this righteousness when they become saved.

The gate has four pillars and four sockets. We go to God in weakness, just as we are. His strength is made perfect in our weakness. There was only one entrance to get into the tabernacle, and there is only one way to get to God, and that is through his Son Jesus.

John 14:6

Jesus said, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

Acts 4:12

Neither is there salvation in any other: there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby ye must be saved.

Jesus is the one way and the only way to the Father.

VERSES 17-18

¹⁷ All the pillars round about the court shall be filleted with silver; their hooks shall be of silver, and their socket of brass. ¹⁸ The length of the court shall be an hundred cubits, and the breadth fifty everywhere, and the height five cubits of fine twined linen, and their sockets of brass.

Again, the number 100 is the number of Pentecost doubled. Pentecost is the power of the Holy Spirit, and is found all throughout this tabernacle.

The wall was 5 cubits high; 5 is the number of grace. We must understand as we look at God in the pillar of fire that it takes grace to get to him. All of our morals, all of our righteousness, all of our goodness, and even our very best – would never be acceptable apart from grace. The apostle Paul said That concerning the law he was blameless. But he wasn't. One day he found out there was no way to get to God by his own righteousness. He had to go like all men, by grace. We may be somewhat self-righteous when we come to God, but we do recognize our need of God. It's amazing how little of God's grace we see when we first give our hearts to him, though we are saved by grace through faith, and that is the gift of God. It doesn't matter if you are legal to the bone, it is the grace of God, not of works lest any man should boast. Our righteousness is like filthy rags in God's sight. When we really begin to rest in the righteousness of God, we don't go around trying to condemn others.

Romans 8:1

There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.

That doesn't mean we should go out and live after the flesh. There is only one way to get into the presence of God and that is in Christ's righteousness, by the grace of God.

The wall was 5 cubits high or 7 1/2 feet. It was too high to climb over. We have to enter in through the gate in human weakness.

In Exodus 35:18, the pillar cords are mentioned. These cords are mentioned 7 times in the bible. Without those cords the walls and pillars could never have stood. In the same vein, without the love of God we can't stand. We are here because God loves us. The only one way the world is going to know that love is for it to operate through us. The love of Christ constrains us and keeps us going. This is the same love that took Jesus to the cross.

The material these cords were made of is not mentioned. Who knows what the love of God is? Can you explain why God can love us even though He knows all about us? This is beyond natural love. A mother can forget her suckling child, but Paul got a revelation and said, "What can separate us from the love of God?" Who can understand the love of God? His love passes all understanding. We can know the love of God, but it's above and beyond our understanding.

Merari had charge of the cords. His name means 'my bitterness.' It is love that will keep us through the bitter experiences we go through if we submit and do what God wants us to do. We are to love our brothers no matter how mean they are to us. If a Christian brother does us wrong and we feel bitter against him, we don't have the real love of God in our hearts. Joseph's brothers sold him into slavery, but after 14 years he wept for joy when he saw them. God had worked something in Joseph through those 14 years that made him love everybody. Joseph went through what he went through because his love was being tested.

Ask God to put His love in your heart and in your life. This love will last forever – not stocks and bonds, bank accounts, diamonds, your spouse, or your children, but in the love of God. Tribulation works patience. As the cords kept the pillars and walls standing, love never fails. Love supports the truth of God.

THE BRASEN ALTAR

EXODUS 27:1-8

Upon entering the courtyard, the first thing we come to is the brasen altar of sacrifice. The brasen altar is called the altar of shittim wood in Exodus 27. In Exodus 39:39 it is called the brasen altar. The word 'brasen' indicates copper, or brass. Brass in scripture always speaks of judgment. This altar speaks of Calvary, and the fire on the altar shows the passion of Calvary. It shows the passionate manner in which Christ pursued His purpose until it brought Him to the cross. The brasen altar is figurative of God's power to save the sinner. God's Son Jesus died to save all humanity. We are accepted by God through His sacrifice.

In this brasen altar God wants to teach us there is no beginning with Him without Christ. In this altar, Jesus is not only the altar but the lamb on the altar as well. He is the everything, and by sacrificing himself for us, He has made the way for us to be cleansed from all sin and be reconciled to God. The way to God is not by the ten commandments. We come to God on the basis of what took place at the brasen altar. We can't get anywhere with God until we realize the price that was paid at this altar. Jesus paid the price, all of it, on the cross at Calvary. This is why the devil fights doctrine and tries to keep us from the truth. He doesn't want us to go the brasen altar and find Christ, the bread of life.

God's nature is holy and he is determined to destroy sin. God dwells in the tabernacle on the mercy seat and He looks out at the children of Israel from upon this mercy seat. They can dwell with Him and He completely takes care of sin. He finds a way he can be just and still justify the ungodly sinner. How sweet this is! Apart from God's justification and His grace, we would have to spend eternity in the lake of fire.

After we are saved, when God looks at us He sees His Son, Jesus Christ. When He sees His Son He is satisfied because Christ took away all our sin forever on the cross, and He dwells in us. Hebrews 10:20 speaks of Christ's flesh as being a veil. God sits on the mercy seat and looks at the blood and not our sin. He is as just, and holy, and as righteous as He was at Sinai, but here grace and mercy have made a way for His power to work for us, and not against us. He is our helper. He doesn't want to destroy us. He wants to help us so badly that He gave His only begotten Son to die for our sins.

VERSE 1

And thou shalt make an altar of shittim wood, five cubits long, and five cubits broad; the altar shall be foursquare: and the height thereof shall be three cubits.

The shittim wood tree (called the Acacia tree today) was the only tree that grew in the desert. Isaiah said that Jesus was a root out of a dry ground. In the wood we have the perfect humanity of Christ. He was the only person who grew up among humans, and was cut off to be our savior. He grew up and God cut him down. This wood pictures Christ who was cut off from before the foundation of the world. God knew before the world was created or a star set in heaven that He was going to cut Christ off for us. Just as the boards were cut off before the altar was made, God, in his thoughts, cut Christ off before Jesus became the altar for us.

Shittim means 'to stick, prick, or pierce.' The shittim tree is a thorny tree, and thorns speak of a curse. In Genesis we read how thorns appeared on the earth after Adam and Eve sinned. Out of the cursed human race, Christ is the one that grew up and the curse was on Him. Jesus became the cursed person for our sakes so we could go free and be reconciled to God. Shittim wood was used in 12 different items in the tabernacle. 12 is the number of perfect governmental rule, and of the 12 tribes of Israel.

The altar was 5 x 5 x 5 x 5. Since 5 is the number of grace, no matter how you approached this altar, you came by grace. Everything we do we do by grace. We are told to come boldly before the throne to find grace and mercy in time of need. Because we come to God by grace, Paul tells us the law is contrary to us. Jesus took the law out of the way. We come to God needy, lost, and undone. Foursquare: grace, grace, grace, grace.

This brasen altar was 3 cubits high. 3 is the number of the Godhead and the resurrection. It took the grace of God to bring us into the resurrection. Because Christ arose we will too.

VERSE 2

And thou shalt make the horns of it upon the four corners thereof: his horns shall be of the same: and thou shalt overlay it with brass.

Horns speak of power and four speaks of man's weakness. There are four corners of the earth. This shows that the power of God reaches to all humanity in all the earth. Whosoever will can come to the brazen altar. There is never a sinner too bad for God to save.

God's strength meets our weakness. When we are weak He is strong. Life's experiences weaken us, and our own strength defeats us. We must learn to rely on God's strength and not our own.

Just like the altar, the horns were overlaid with brass, indicative of judgment in the scriptures. The horns overlaid with brass pictures the Son of man bearing fully God's judgment. God's judgment covered Him when it should have covered us. In His great love for man, Jesus took all our judgment on himself at the cross. He died once for all, and any who accept Him as savior lose all the guilty stain of sin. Past sin, present sin, and future sin; He covered it all and we are made free indeed. Only the blood of the sin offering was ever put on the horns. Only God alone has the power to take care of sin, and the power of the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin forever.

On the day of atonement, the sin offering cleansed the children of Israel for one year. On the day of atonement, with the sin offering, the blood of the sacrifice was shed and sprinkled before the golden altar of incense. Then it was sprinkled before the curtain before the ark. It was poured out at the altar and put on the horns of the altar. The blood poured out at the altar and put on the horns of the

altar secure our relationship to God. The blood sprinkled before the ark secures God's thoughts toward us. The blood on the horns of the altar of incense secures our worship to God.

There was a sacrificial lamb placed on the altar in the morning, and another lamb placed there in the evening. There was a lamb on the altar day and night. There will never be a time when there isn't a sacrifice in God's presence for us. Christ is there all the time and can save at anytime day or night. There is no time when Jesus is not God's power to our salvation. We can't make a sacrifice for sin with good works, or by joining a church. There is only one way to be saved and that is through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. The only place Israel could make a sacrifice for sin was at the brazen altar, and there is only one place for us to be free of sin, and that is at the cross of Christ.

VERSE 3

And thou shalt make his pans to receive his ashes, and his shovels, and his basons, and his fleshhooks, and his firepans: all of the vessels thereof thou shalt make of brass.

When a man brought a sin offering, he laid hand on the head of his offering, confessed his sin, then killed the offering. We have to take responsibility for Christ's death on the cross if it is ever to mean anything to us, or if we are ever to get anywhere with God. We have to kill the sin offering ourselves. Even though we were not there when Christ was crucified, we have to realize that our sins killed Christ on the cross. He was made sin for us. Because of that, the very righteousness of God is ours.

When the priest took the sin offering they cut it piece by piece, washed it, and examined it. By the Word of God every detail about Christ was examined and found to be clean.

In order to burn the sin offering, fire was needed. The first fire was put in the altar by Moses, who got it from God. God started the fire, which represents the energy. The energy for worship must come from the cross, not from entertainment. There is just one energy and one inspiration, and it comes from Christ. We need to be led to the truth. The energy of Christ to save sinners never ceases. This is why the fire on the altar was never to go out.

Two sons of Aaron, Nabab and Abihu, got drunk one day, took their incense burners, and instead of getting coals from the brazen altar, they took the coals from the incense altar. Energy must always come from Christ (the brazen altar). Aaron's sons were noted as having "strange fire" because they got the fire from someplace other than the brazen altar. God knew the difference and struck them dead.

Any other way to try to get to God besides glorying in the cross is strange fire. The way of the cross has gone out of churches, and out of many lives in this day we now live in. The cross crucifies us to the world, and the world to us. If we take up our cross, the carnal Christian will not have anything to do with us. Don't hate the sinner but hate the sin. Be tender and gentle and present Christ, but never compromise Christ for anyone or anything. To compromise the Word of God to keep a friendship is a weight around our necks.

When the sacrifice was placed on the altar and burned it was reduced to ashes. We must accept what took place at the brazen altar. We see our sins reduced to ashes there, and cast on the east side of the altar. The east side is toward God, toward the new day.

Then the ashes were taken outside the camp and put in a clean place. When Jesus was taken down from the cross He was taken outside the city and put in a clean place. He was placed in a tomb that had never been used before. In Christ we see our sins reduced to ashes. You can't make fire from ashes.

God's judgments are thorough; they have burned themselves out in his Son, and ashes of sin are all that remain.

At the brazen altar God's wrath was quenched. God is satisfied that our uncleanness has been fully met. Because of this our consciences became clear, and now we can have peace. When our sins became ashes there was nothing left that the energy God could burn against or be angry against. Our sin is gone and it is gone forever. When Christ died, He died for our sin once, in that He liveth, He liveth unto God. If the blood atoned for our sin, what happened to our sin? God removed our sin as far as the east is from the west, and no one can say how far that is. He has put our sins in a sea of forgetfulness, never to be remembered against us anymore.

We need never to be occupied with our sins again. We are no longer sinners, but we are the people of failures, infirmities, and weaknesses. The blood of Jesus saved us from the guilt of sin. Now the Word of God saves us from the power of sin, the defilement of sin, and from our infirmities and weaknesses. Be satisfied with God and not occupied with infirmities. We can't be worried about our infirmities and go with God. We should give our infirmities to God and believe for His strength, cleansing, and power. Don't get occupied with the infirmities of others, but learn to look at them in Christ. Christ died for sin once, and when we believe on Him we become new creatures, old things are passed away, all things become new.

If we never go beyond the brazen altar, we can't go on into the mysteries of Christ that are manifest in all the other vessels in the tabernacle. If you can't fully accept your freedom from sin forever, and if you still think the 10 commandments can condemn you to hell, there is no way you can get any farther with God than the brazen altar. It is wonderful to be saved, but there is so much more for the Christian life than being saved. Being saved is just the beginning for all the things God has for us, and he longs for us to say "I will go."

Legal people believe you can lose your salvation and get saved more than once. After being saved they think if they slip they can lose their salvation and go to hell. You can only be saved once and it is a forever thing. Christ died once for all and said before He died, "It is finished." There are people who could speak kindly of legality, but Paul didn't. He said of those who would bring the children of God into legality, "I would that they were cut off that trouble you." We need to realize the subtle, evil trap of legality that serves no good purpose but to keep a saved person in bondage. Come to the place where you hate such things with a perfect hatred. Love the victim, but hate that which is victimizing them.

However, if we do understand and accept what God has accomplished through Christ at the brazen altar, and we believe we are the children of God forever, we can find peace and go on with God to find the hidden mysteries of Christ. We can have perfect peace with God, and we can run the race to attain His best. We keep our eyes solely on the goal. We can't keep our eyes on the goal if we have them on the brazen altar, for the goal is beyond the brazen altar.

They had bronze pans to hold the ashes, shovels to scoop the ashes, basins to catch the blood of the sin offering, fleshhooks and firepans. The firepans were used to keep the fire burning when the Israelites traveled.

There were five kinds of offerings burned on this altar. Again, 5 is the number of grace, and the grace at this altar met every need. Grace is everything to us.

1) Burnt offering

The whole animal, except for the skin which went to the priests, was sacrificed to God. The worshipper placed his hands on the animal to show that it was a sacrifice for his own shortcomings. The animal had to be in perfect condition, without blemish, just as Christ was, because only the best is good enough for Almighty God. The blood of the animal was sprinkled on the altar as a further sign that the life of the animal had been dedicated to God. This offering is detailed in Leviticus chapter 1.

2) Grain offering

This was an offering of flour, baked cakes, or raw grain together with oil and frankincense. It was a good will offering to God. Part of it, a memorial portion, was burnt on the altar. It was a way of asking God to remember the worshipper for good. It was also a contribution to the upkeep of the priests. This portion was the best the worshipper could give. This offering is detailed in Leviticus chapter 2.

3) Peace (fellowship) offering

This offering was similar to the ritual of the burnt offering, except that only the fat, which the Israelites considered the best portion, was burnt on the altar. The meat was shared by the worshipper and his family. Since God also shared in the sacrifice, it was also thought of as a friendship meal with God. This offering is detailed in Leviticus chapter 3.

4) Sin offering

These sacrifices were offered when a person had sinned against God, or against someone else. The sin defiled the holy place of the tabernacle and needed to be cleansed. The blood of the sacrifice was sprinkled as a sign that the defilement had been removed through the death that had taken place. Some of the sacrifice was taken as food for the priest. When the worshipper saw the priest eat the meat without being harmed, he knew that God had accepted his act of repentance. This offering is detailed in Leviticus chapters 4, 5, and 7.

5) Ritual of sacrifice on the day of atonement

This sacrifice is somewhat different. Here, two goats were used. One was killed as in the usual sin offering, but the other, a scapegoat, was sent into the wilderness as a symbol that the sins were far removed. This was done once a year for the sins of the people as a whole. This offering is detailed in Leviticus chapter 16.

VERSES 4-5

⁴ And thou shalt make for it a grate of network of brass; and upon the net shalt thou make four brasen rings in the four corners thereof. ⁵ And thou shalt put it under the compass of the altar beneath, that the net may be even to the midst of the altar.

In the midst of the brasen altar was a grate, a network of brass. The bars on the grate work protruded through the sides in four places and were formed into four rings 'in the midst.' Jesus was lifted up between heaven and earth. He didn't die on earth, He was pulled away from earth, just as the shittim wood was cut away from earth.

"Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world." When Christ died on the cross, four nails held Him to the cross. The grate that held the sacrifices in the tabernacle up between heaven and earth pierced the shittim wood of the brasen altar in four places. We find this grate, or network, in the midst and the sides being pierced by the bars.

VERSES 6-7

⁶ And thou shalt make staves for the altar, staves of shittim wood, and overlay them with brass.

⁷ And the staves shall be put into the rings, and the staves shall be upon the two sides of the altar, to bear it.

Where the four corners of the grate pierced the altar and formed rings and where the bars of shittim wood overlaid with brass were put in the rings was taken on the shoulders of the priests, the Kohathites, whenever it traveled. The only way for God to get His gospel out is for His people to carry it out. This altar never rode on a cart, but was carried on the shoulders of the priests just as the ark was. We bear the burden of carrying the gospel to others on our shoulders. When the altar rested, the altar bore up the grate. When picked up, the grate carried the altar.

VERSE 8

Hollow with boards thou shalt make it: as it was shewed thee in the mount, so shall they make it.

Shittim wood was a very hard wood and the growth rings were almost solid and very hard to count. The width of the growth rings on the boards that went into the altar had to be over 400 years old. God's children were in bondage in Egypt for 430 years, so God must have planted those shittim wood trees used to build the altar when he promised Abraham that his offspring would come out of Egypt. God always makes a provision for every promise He makes. This tree grew in the wild. Jesus came and God made Him sin for us who were wild things. He took our place.

The hot fires that burned in this altar consumed the animals and various other things that were put there, but the fire never burned the shittim wood. Where could you find a stove that would take the kind of heat it took to burn all those sacrifices? There had to be a fire in it all the time except when it was moving. 443 years later the altar that was made of wood was still there. Jesus could withstand all the fires of judgment, and come forth on our behalf. The fires that burned over all those years prove His perfect humanity.

The brasen altar corresponds to our experiences as we become new creation. If we believe what takes place at the brasen altar, we will never be troubled with the guilt of sin again. Because of the marvelous truth, we can now go further into the things of God. We go into the tabernacle and find all the deeper things that are there. The multitude of the Israelites never knew what went on beyond the brasen altar. They were around it every day, but never understood what all it meant. God wants us to know.

At this brasen altar we see our sins consumed in an ash heap. We are now identified with another who personally is holy, righteous, and pure. In Hebrews 2:14-17 we read how He became human to save us and destroy death. We have to understand what took place at the brasen altar before we can ever know what is beyond this altar. Made free from sin's guilt, we can now learn to feed on Him, worship Him, and attain His best. No one can worship freely until all infirmities and failures are left with God, and there comes a personal occupation with Jesus Christ. We aren't to be occupied with sin; we are to be occupied with the Savior.

Christ was crucified on Thursday morning. In Matthew 26:2, we read, "Ye know after two days is the feast of the passover." The day Jesus said this was Palm Sunday (Matthew 21). Matthew 21:17-18 tells us that Jesus left the disciples and lodged in Bethany. In the morning He returned to the city and was hungry. Matthew 21:17-25 describes one day. He says in Matthew 26:2 that in two days the feast of the passover would be hold, which would be Wednesday evening. On Thursday morning at nine o'clock He

would be crucified. Exodus 12:6 tells how the passover lamb was killed between Wednesday and Thursday evening.

THE LAVER (WATER BOWL)

EXODUS 30:18-21

VERSE 18

Thou shalt also make a laver of brass, and his foot also of brass, to wash withal: and thou shalt put it between the tabernacle of the congregation and the altar, and thou shalt put water therein.

This laver, or water bowl, represents the word of God. After being pardoned from sin at the brasen altar, we need to get into the word of God. This is a picture of what happens in the Christian life. This is where you are made fit to go on. If we are to go on with God, we will have to understand the worth of his word to our lives. We'll never know what Christ means to our lives unless we come face to face with the word of God. We are encourage to become students of the word and to study with an open heart. God will withhold nothing good from us. He that wills to know shall know of the doctrine. Doing God's will is what will bring us into His best.

The laver makes us know what we have been saved to. Many never get past what they have been saved from. When we get saved we become heirs of God. We have the opportunity to be joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, if we are willing to go without the camp and bear His reproach.

The laver was brass and shows God's judgment. The laver contains God's thoughts. We must put off our thoughts before we can have His thoughts. His ways are not our ways, and His thoughts are not our thoughts. Our wisdom is foolishness to God.

The laver was made of the brass mirrors given by women who stood by the doors of the tabernacle. The mirrors were melted down to make the brasen laver. Mirrors show us looking at ourselves, but the mirror will never tell us what we need to know about ourselves, only the word of God can do that (James 2:22-25). God's word is the only place we can go to get a true picture of our condition, what's in our nature, what our need is before God, and what God has provided for us. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God – by this book. This book alone presents the plan of God for our lives to us. It is absolutely necessary to know the word of God.

The brasen laver stood between the brasen altar and the tabernacle of the congregation. The word 'laver' means something round, bored, excavated, a wash bowl. There is no measurement for this laver. Who could ever measure the word of God? It can't be exhausted. Like the alphabet, you can use it, and use it, but you can't use it up. Nothing was said about its size, who carried it, or where it was carried in the procession of the people of God as they journeyed. God is omnipresent and omniscient. He is anywhere and everywhere. He wants His word to be everywhere, and He wants everybody to know His word. He has given us the capacity to take it in. As we seek God, He will show himself to us, He is in the word.

The believer never has to be occupied with the re-application of the blood, because our sins were taken away at the brasen altar. We go to the brasen laver to cleanse our ways. We need to bring our lives

into the power and the harmony of what the word of God says. God said it. All we need to do is believe it, and it becomes the truth. We don't have to struggle to be good. We are good in the eyes of God when we accept Christ into our lives and his seed is in us.

VERSE 19

For Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and feet thereat.

Before Aaron could minister, he had to wash his hands and feet. The hands speak of our service to God, and the feet speak of our walk through life. When Eleazar went to get Rebekah to be Isaac's bride, he put jewels on her hands and feet. In other words, her feet were dedicated to Isaac now, and the jewels of God were put on her service. In Psalms 119:9, David says, "Wherewith shall a young man cleanse his ways? By taking heed thereto according to thy word." This is the only way our ways can be cleansed in God's sight. In Psalms 119:105 David said, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path." He walked in what the word of God said. Nothing else will safely light up the path. The word of God is so valuable to our lives, and in it is the power to cleanse us.

By the action of the water, which represents the word, the priests were cleansed and fit to worship. In John 13:2-11, we find the Lord washing the disciples' feet. Peter said to Jesus, "Thou shalt never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me." Peter said, "Lord not my feet only, but also my hands and my head." Jesus said, "He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all." Here the Lord is acting out that which He will do for us in this age. Those that are cleansed need only to wash their feet. Our feet get dirty when we walk through our daily lives. Christ put away sin forever by sacrificing himself. When we minister or worship, there has to be a submission of life to the word. This is the only way we can be free of our defilements and minister scripturally and effectively.

VERSES 20-21

²⁰ When they go into the tabernacle of the congregation, they shall wash with water, that they die not: or when they come near to the altar to minister, to burn offerings made by fire unto the Lord.

²¹ So they shall wash their hands and feet, that they die not: and it shall be a statute for ever to them, even to him, and to his seed throughout their generations.

Aaron and his sons couldn't enter in without washing or they would die. If you don't wash in the laver (word of God), your life, as far as God is concerned, becomes a dead life. This doesn't mean a loss of salvation, because we can never lose that. It means that we don't make any progress, and we don't make the living steps of life that lead to God's best. The word of God is what takes hold of a life, transforms it, and makes it what God wants it to be.

The priests washed twice, once toward man and once toward God. We can't do any good to others unless we wash, and we can't do any good to God unless we wash. Both of these things are closed to us unless we wash in the word of God.

We can only have service that glorifies God if our lives are possessed by a personal laying hold of His righteousness and His holiness. This comes as we take in and study the word of God, Christ's own personal righteousness. We can only find out about the security of the believer when we come to the laver of God's word. We are created in righteousness and true holiness. God has made Christ to be unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. The power of the word acts on our works and our manner of life. Nothing else can change that.

The self-righteousness of the Pharisees was like filthy rags to God. Paul tells us they were ignorant of God's righteousness, and went about to establish their own ways. Jesus, speaking of the Holy Spirit, said He would convict the world of righteousness. The world has a righteousness that is absolutely not acceptable to God. We have the idea of being good to be clean, etc. John 15:3, "Now are ye clean through the word which I have spoken to you." The word cleans us.

In John 17, we read the Jesus' prayer to His Father in the garden. In verse 17 he prays, "Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth." In Ephesians chapter 5, Paul is speaking of the church. In verses 25-27 he tells us that Christ gave himself for the church, that He might "sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of the water of the word that He might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, but that it should be holy and without blemish." Paul clearly tells us this can only be as we are washed in the water of the word.

After we get saved we can have a life of worship, we can know Christ's strength in our lives, we can feed on the bread of life, come into the light of the candlestick, and run to race to qualify for the bride. We do all this this by first coming to the laver. Our personal communion demands obedience to the word. In 1 John 1:6, we read, "If we say we have fellowship with Him and walk in darkness, we lie and do not the truth."

We go on with God as we learn to wash in the laver. We need to put the word of God in our hearts and let it become a reality to our lives. The only way these things can become real is as we wash in the laver. This is where we are made fit to go on. We must become students of the word of God. Until we see the grace of God, we won't get too far with Him.

THE CURTAINS FOR THE HOLY PLACE AND THE HOLY OF HOLIES

CHAPTER 26: 1-14

VERSE 1

Moreover thou shalt make the tabernacle with ten curtains of fine twined linen, and blue, and purple, and scarlet: with cherubims of cunning work shalt thou make them.

The tabernacle was the first item made and it is the only item separately called the tabernacle. It included the holy place and the holy of holies. All of the structure is commonly referred to as the tabernacle in the wilderness, but only the structure housing the holy place and the holy of holies is specifically said to be the tabernacle.

The tabernacle represents the body of Christ. We are a part of that great mystical body. From the day of Pentecost when the Christian church first began, God has been adding millions to His mystical body, of which He is the head. Christ had His own physical body that was nailed to the cross. But every time a person is saved in this dispensation of grace during this church age, they are added to this mystical body.

So here we must see that Christ is the tabernacle, and the dwelling both of God and men in union with one another. We are members one of another. A true parent would stand by their child whether they agreed with them or not, or a brother or sister in time of trouble no matter what. If you come to where God wants you to be, you will love all your brothers if the Spirit of the love of God is in your heart. We are the church, Christ is the head.

The tabernacle was made of 10 curtains of fine twined linen. 10 is the number of responsibility according to ability. Fine twined means to twist and twist the threads that make up the linen until they are strong. This is what God has to do with us. This is a tested righteousness. Our own self-righteousness is as filthy rags in the sight of God. In the linen covering we see all believers are righteous in his sight. When Paul spoke of being ready for the coming of the Lord, he said, "Having not mine own righteousness which is of the law."

The majority of ministers today teach living the 10 commandments – all the laws of what to do or not to do. This is not how we are meant to live in Christ. It is Christ in us, the hope of glory. We get saved, then we feed on God's word, then we grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and savior, Jesus Christ. This is how we are changed from glory to glory, even to the very likeness of the Lord. Our faith will be tried if we go with God, so we count it not strange the fiery trials which will try us. We have to be twisted to be strong. The more fine twisted, the stronger. The trials twist the linen in our lives and produce faith more precious than gold. His strength is made perfect in our weakness. God will give us grace to bear the trials. He is able to make all grace abound toward us, that we have all sufficiency in all things, and may abound to every good work. We shouldn't think we can't when we can.

Moses couldn't part a red sea, but he did. Moses couldn't get a river to flow out of a dry flinty rock, but he did. One time the children of Israel were complaining about no water, so God told them to take their staffs and sing. They started pushing down with their staffs and water came gushing up. They had been walking on the river all the time. This is how it is with God's people. We are walking over God's blessings and just don't know it. God will put us through the marvels of the school of Calvary because He wants to make us like His Son. If you want to marry Jesus, you need to be like Him.

We are represented in these curtains. In the linen coverings we see that all believers are righteous in His sight. Linen speaks of God's righteousness, and as God works in us, He produces His own righteousness in us. In Revelation 19:8, the bride is clothed in "fine linen clean and white."

These curtains are noted as being "blue, and purple, and scarlet with cunning work." Blue speaks of our heavenly ties, purple speaks of royalty, and scarlet speaks of the shed blood (redemption). A 'cunning work' means to weave into the cloth. The needle had to go in and out to leave its pattern. God is weaving in our hearts to leave a cunning pattern. A songwriter said, "My heart is a leaf on which he doth write the wonderful words of life and light. My body is a temple in which he doth dwell, my wonderful Savior, Immanuel."

The grace of God works in us. God doesn't have anything to work in us but Christ, and that is all we need because the gospel works. God's choice for this age is the gospel. The gospel is foolishness to the Greek, and a stumbling block to the Jew, but to those that believe, it is the power of God unto salvation. Let the word of God dwell richly in us.

VERSE 2

The length of one curtain shall be eight and twenty cubits, and the breadth of one curtain four cubits: and every one of the curtains shall have one measure.

Each curtain was 28 cubits long and 4 cubits wide. 4 is the number of human weakness and 7 is the number of perfection. 4 (human weakness) plus 3 (the Godhead) equals 7. The product of 7x4 is 28. We don't become part of the bride by our works of righteousness which we have done, not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit saith the Lord. We please God most when we are weak, because when we are weak He is strong. We are saved by grace and kept by grace, and we are what we are by the

grace of God. His grace is present with us, and His righteousness will take care of our weakness. Give the glory to God always, because we have nothing to boast except Christ.

The curtains were all one measure. We were all born in sin and shapen in iniquity, but when we are born in Christ we become equal to other Christians in God's eyes. Christ sees all Christians the same. One is not above another. God is no respecter of persons, and all Christians are blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavens in Christ. We should know who and what we are in Christ. When we were born again, we were born into the very family of God. Now are we the sons of God.

VERSES 3-6

³The five curtains shall be coupled together one to another; and other five curtains shall be coupled one to another. ⁴And thou shalt make loops of blue upon the edge of the one curtain from the selvedge in the coupling; and likewise shalt thou make in the uttermost edge of another curtain, in the coupling of the second. ⁵Fifty loops shalt thou make in the one curtain, and fifty loops shalt thou make in the edge of the curtain that is in the coupling of the second; that the loops may take hold one of another. ⁶And thou shalt make fifty taches of gold, and couple the curtains together with the taches: and it shall be one tabernacle.

The loops of blue speak of our heavenly ties and 50 speaks of Pentecost (Holy Spirit). These were held together by taches (clasps) of gold. Gold in scripture always speaks of deity. The curtains were joined together and made into one unit. We were made one with Christ, and we are now citizens of heaven. We were brought to Christ by the Holy Spirit, we were made one with Christ when we got saved, and now we are citizens of heaven. We are heirs of God forever, and can be joint-heirs with Jesus Christ if so be we are willing to suffer with Him, to go without the camp and bear His reproach. The Bible tells us that the Lord Jesus is the tabernacle both to God and man. Here is where we dwell, and here is where God dwells. We read in Colossians chapter 2 that the fullness of the Godhead dwells in Jesus.

'Coupled' means to join, or fasten, compact, press together, or have fellowship with. We are coupled and compacted together as Christ's precious Body. We need to learn to love others just as they are. God loves them too. If God loves them we have no excuse not to love them also. We can see the weakness in others, but see others in Christ. We are as righteous as Jesus because He is alive in us. We shouldn't condemn our brothers and sisters, but pray for them.

There were 50 loops of blue, 50 fastenings of gold, the court was 50 cubits wide. The day of Pentecost (when the church was born) was 50 days after the resurrection, and Israel's journey from Mount Sinai took 50 days. We are to "endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit." The Holy Spirit has begotten a unity. When we accept this is when we begin to enjoy the Lord like He enjoys us. Love covers a multitude of sins. We are to let love be without dissimulation.

VERSE 7

And thou shalt make curtains of goat's hair to be a covering upon the tabernacle: eleven curtains shalt thou make.

Above the linen curtain was a covering of goat's hair. It's called 'the covering' in verses 7-13. In verse 14 it is called a 'tent.' On the day of atonement, when the two goats were brought to the altar, one was killed and the other one was taken into the wilderness of an uninhabited land (Leviticus 16:20-22). The goat that was taken into the wilderness had all of the sins of the people on him. He was never to be seen again. When Christ died on the cross, He removed our sins as far as the east is from the west never to be remembered against us. We'll never be at peace until we embrace this wonderful truth.

This is the security of the believer. It doesn't mean we won't fail Him, it means He'll never fail us. Though we fail, we shall not utterly be cast out, because underneath are the everlasting arms. 1 Peter 2:24 says, "Who His own self bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we being dead to sins should live unto righteousness, by whose stripes we are healed."

To make this covering, the goat's hair had to be cut off. It was once alive and on the goat. Isaiah 53 tells us that Jesus was cut off out from the land of the living. He was cut off not because of His righteousness, He was cut off for our sins. This puts Him on the level that we were crucified with Him. Galatians 2:20 says "I was crucified with Christ." There was no other reason for Him to die.

VERSES 8-9

⁸The length of one curtain shall be thirty cubits, and the breadth of one curtain four cubits: and the eleven curtains shall be all of one measure. ⁹And thou shalt couple five curtains by themselves, and six curtains by themselves, and shalt double the sixth curtain in the forefront of the tabernacle.

The tabernacle was made of 11 curtains: 5 curtains in one group, and 6 curtains in another. The 6th curtain was bent back. Though Christ was equal to God, He made himself of no reputation. He took 7 great steps down to a death on the cross. This is where we start, worthy of death on the cross. God executed Christ in our place because He so loved us. He died for everyone. Jesus, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man. He humbled himself and became obedient even unto the death of the cross.

When Aaron turned the 6th curtain back, he doubled some of the hairs on themselves. We humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God. When we do that we go to the front place. Jesus and God love humility. We are what we are by the grace of God, and not by anything we did. People who are willing to be brought under and brought low are the ones in front. Being proud and haughty won't get us anywhere with God. Humility keeps us from making judgments on others.

5 curtains were in one group, and 6 curtains were in another group. 5 is the number of grace, and 6 is the number of man. It was the grace of God that coupled Christ to us and made us what we are. Grace added to man. Great grace was on Christ because he took the lowly place.

Four cubits wide suggests our weakness as well as His. How Christ had to lay aside His everything! He did always the will of God his Father. God enabled Him, and He waited on him. Christ laid aside all His deity and became the weakest of the weak. 2 Corinthians 13:4 tells us He was crucified through weakness. When the Holy Spirit spoke the gospel to us He offered us faith that would enable us to take hold of Christ and His wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. We should lay aside our all just as He did. Hebrews 11:34 speaks of those Old Testament people who had God's best. Out of weakness they were made strong.

The 6th curtain doubled over into the forefront of the tabernacle first suggests how Christ humbled Himself. Then it shows how we are pinned under and humbled under His mighty hand. God will not humble us, we have to humble ourselves under his mighty hand. God will put us in hard places in order for us to yield to Him, and humble ourselves under the situation. Those who take such a place are in the front of God's holy place. The tribe of Judah (Judah means praise) led the children of Israel. They were at the forefront. We are never going to praise God until we see our need to praise Him. Praise happens when we realize what He has done for us and what He means to us.

30 cubits long. 6 (man's number) x 5 (number of grace) equals 30. Christ, full of grace, was the perfect man before God. We who realize who we are in Christ, enter in to his perfection. We don't have to try and to struggle to do this. It just is. We don't have to hold out faithful to the end, because we learn to rest in Him.

VERSES 10-13

¹⁰ And thou shalt make fifty loops on the edge of the one curtain that is outermost in the coupling, and fifty loops in the edge of the curtain which coupleth the second. ¹¹ And thou shalt make fifty taches of brass, and put the taches into the loops, and couple the tent together, that it may be one. ¹² And the remnant that remaineth of the curtains of the tent, the half curtain that remaineth, shall hang over the backside of the tabernacle. ¹³ And a cubit on the one side, and a cubit on the other side of that which remaineth in the length of the curtains of the tent, it shall hang over the sides of the tabernacle on this side and on that side, to cover it.

These two groups of curtains were held together by 50 fastenings of brass. Brass speaks of judgment. Christ was judged in our place, and was cut off that we might be redeemed. The 50 fastenings held together the curtains making them one. Pentecost is what baptized us into one body. God would have us endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit, and this is the only thing that works in the gospel of the grace of God. We are failures apart from the truth, and the truth is the blueprint, and shouldn't be changed, added to, or taken away from. God isn't going to change His plan for anyone, so take it as it is.

VERSE 14

And thou shalt make a covering for the tent of rams' skin dyed red, and a covering above of badger skins.

There were two other coverings for the tent. The first covering above the goats' hair covering was one made of rams' skin dyed red. Red speaks of the blood of redemption. Christ's salvation covers and keeps us. The ram was the first offering on the brasen altar (Exodus 29:15-16). When Abraham took Isaac up to offer him, it was a ram that was caught in the thicket by his horns (horns show power). It was Christ's own power that caught Him, and He was the only one who could redeem us. In the bible a ram speaks of manliness (Leviticus 8:22, Exodus 29:22, 26, 27, 31). The ram's skin has no dimension. How could we ever limit, or give a dimension to the redemption of Christ? What it really does is beyond our comprehension.

The final layer on top was made of badgers' skins. To look at Christ outwardly, there would be no beauty that we should desire Him. The badger goes into the earth and hibernates during the winter. Christ went into the heart of the earth, and it was when He came forth after the resurrection that He was declared the Son of God. All the multitudes of the Israelis never realized what was in the tabernacle beyond the outer covering of the badger skin.

VERSE 31

And thou shalt make a veil of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen of cunning work: with cherubim shall it be made.

This curtain was made of blue (speaks of heaven), purple (shows royalty), scarlet (blood of redemption), and fine twined linen (righteousness of God). These curtains had cherubim on them, and they show the potential God has given us. Any Christian can be in the bride of Christ if they are willing to know the truth, let the truth set them free and bring them to maturity. We grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and savior Jesus Christ. The grace of God will build us up and give us an inheritance. It takes the grace of God to accomplish this.

VERSE 32

And thou shalt hang it upon four pillars of shittim wood overlaid with gold: their hooks shall be of gold upon the four sockets of silver.

The four pillars represent the place where we have to forgo our own strength and learn to rely totally on God's strength. Religions of the world try to make us strong, make us be something, do something, or accomplish something. But God's strength is made perfect in our weakness. To go to the four pillars and beyond is a hard thing to do, and very few will be able to do it.

Cherubims are found three places in this tabernacle; on the curtains, on the mercy seat, and on the curtains that went above. The cherubims here represent the overcomers who are one with God. Once we reach these curtains, the cherubims are no longer a mystery to us. By this time we realize that Christ will have a bride, and we begin to know the deeper things of God and His purpose for our lives.

Shittim wood overlaid with gold. Christ left the glory of heaven, came down to earth, and became human to sacrifice himself for all mankind. After He arose, He went back to heaven where He now sits on the right hand of God. Wood shows Christ was human, and gold shows He was (and is) God.

Hooks of gold were upon the four sockets of silver. Four represents human weakness, silver represents redemption, and gold represents God. Christ died to redeem us because humans were helpless to do anything about our sinful condition. Now we are made one with God. He holds us together.

VERSE 33

And thou shalt hang up the veil under the taches, that mayest bring in thither within the veil the ark of the testimony: and the veil shall divide unto you between the holy place and the most holy.

The veil, or curtain, divided the holy place and the most holy place. As we embrace the word of God, as we go further and further, deeper and deeper into the things of God, divisions will happen. This shows the progress of the Christian life. Many Christians get all the way in to the holy place, wash in the laver (study the word). Some will get to the place where they understand that Christ is the bread of life, that His word is a light unto our feet.

We learn to worship as He reveals more and more how precious He is. When God tests us, He is opening up new vision and new territory. These are the things that get us ready to sit on the throne with Him.

The veil barred entry to the most holy place. The high priest, once a year on the day of atonement, was the only person permitted to enter. The way was barred to everyone else. When Christ died on the cross this veil was torn from top to bottom, thus signifying that the way into the holiest of all had been opened. We are brought into the very presence of God. We are invited to come boldly to the throne of grace in time of need.

VERSES 36-37

³⁶ 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. ³⁷ And thou shalt make for the hanging five pillars of shittim wood, and overlay them with gold, and their hooks shall be of gold: and thou shalt cast five sockets of brass for them.

When we leave the brasen altar, we go to the laver (God's word) and begin to study the word, we then come to the entrance of the tabernacle itself. The curtains we see are blue, purple and scarlet, and are

made of fine twined linen wrought with needlework. What is behind these curtains is suggested to us in the needlework, but we are not aware of it yet. The satisfaction of being saved soon gives way to a need and a hunger to go on with God.

When we first get saved, the needlework is still a mystery. We must go farther with God to understand what it all means. The needlework shows there is more beyond the brasen altar. There is much more God has for us after we get saved. The Holy Spirit leads us to the brasen altar, then takes us on with God. The Holy Spirit's purpose is to take out from among the Gentiles a bride for Christ, just as the servant Eleazar went and found a bride for Isaac. The Holy Spirit wants to administer what God has made possible for our lives. He doesn't want us to be saved and stop there. He wants us to go all the way with God. Christ will never be complete until His bride is with Him. Jesus is now in heaven, waiting for the bride the Holy Spirit is searching to find.

This hanging (i.e. curtain) is made of fine twined linen which speaks of strength, and shows the righteousness of God. By this time we have to see the righteousness of God, and not our own self-righteousness. When we point to our brother's failures, it's self-righteousness. Paul said when he spoke of being ready for the coming of the Lord, "Having not mine own righteousness, which is of the law, let them that steal, steal no more," etc. These things are of the flesh.

The new life is not just the removal of the fruits of the flesh, it is the productivity of the Spirit. Our new life should have the fruits of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, longsuffering, meekness, gentleness, temperance, goodness, and faith. The life of the Christian is positive, it isn't doing and doting. If Christ lives in us, we don't have to put on fruit, we don't have to try to be Christians, we are Christians. We don't have to try to be good, we are good in God's eyes. We are created in righteousness and true holiness.

The cherubims are not on this curtain, but there is royalty in the purple curtain. The scarlet not only represents the blood of redemption, but also shows the understanding of what royalty means. The blue speaks of heaven.

There are 5 pillars the curtain was hung on, and the pillars rested in 5 sockets of brass. 5 is the number of grace, and brass represents judgment. We'll never pass through these curtains into the holy place until we understand the grace of God, and that judgment is forever past. God was satisfied with judgment at the brasen altar, but there is so much more than just judgment. We recognize that judgment has brought us this far, and grace as well.

The legalist never knows the deeper things of God, because he doesn't understand that everything is by grace. We'll have to see the grace of God if we ever want to come to the place where we feed on Christ. The true meaning of the word of God is closed to the legalist. Only when he sees the grace of God does the truth begin to dawn on him. A legalist is not taught to feed on the word of God, but rather to go by feelings. The just shall live by faith – not by feelings.

If we go on with God, there will be times when the heavens seem like brass. It will seem like God doesn't hear us, and this is when we have to have faith in God's word. There is strength and courage in faith. He told us he would never leave us or forsake us. He will not fail us. The Lord Jesus Christ has trampled every enemy beneath His feet. He has risen triumphant, and sits on the throne for us today, ever living to make intercession for us. He is a high priest after the order of Melchisedech - there is no beginning or end to His priesthood. We are what we are by the grace of God.

The pillars speak of strength. Jesus said in Revelation 3, "I will make him a pillar in the house of my God." The pillar speaks of that which is strong, and that which you see first.

The hooks, or fillets, were made of gold. The word 'fillet' means to cling, to join to, or to love or delight in. Deuteronomy 7:7 translates it as 'love.' God's love is what connects Him to you and me. Jesus joined us to God, and He steadies us. The one that joins us to God is the one that joins us to one another – all by love.

We have to pass through these curtains to get to the place of worship. God doesn't demand worship, and we can't make people worship God. There is only one way we will worship God, and that is when we see how precious He is to us in all of the full meaning of the redemption that is ours in Christ. Worship has to come freely, from within. We are to worship God in Spirit and in truth.

THE CANDLESTICK

EXODUS 25:31-40

VERSE 31

And thou shalt make a candlestick of pure gold: of beaten work shall the candlestick be made: his shaft, and his branches, and his bowls, his knops, and his flowers, shall be of the same.

'Candlestick' means a candle, to glisten, a lamp, and a lampstand. This candlestick weighed 125 pounds troy weight, the same weight as a talent. There was enough gold in this candlestick to make a thread long enough to reach around the world 3 times at the equator. This candlestick pictures Christ and His mystical body, the church. Christ is the head, and His body is made up of all the saints, the church. (Ephesians 1:23-24)

The candlestick was made of pure gold of beaten work. 'Beaten' means a rounded work, a work shaped by hammering. It was one solid piece. Countless times, the gold that made up this candlestick was hammered and chiseled in order for it to take its shape. In like manner, Christ had to suffer to give us light. The only way light can get into our lives, and we can become one with the candlestick, is for us to suffer with Christ. The development of light comes from trials and suffering. The trials and suffering we would rather not have are working for our good.

Found in the worship area of the tabernacle, this candlestick only burned at night. It was the only light in the holy place apart from the shine of glory. This light wasn't for the outside; it was for the holy place. Only priests entered here. This shows a development that only those who go farther with God know, those who learn about the plan and purpose of God and take instruction from Him. Most of God's people never get past the brasen altar. They never know the wonderful truth that can be found in the holy place and in the candlestick.

The middle shaft of the candlestick represents Christ. There we find 4 knops and 4 bowls, etc. 4 is the number of human weakness. Much is accomplished through weakness – not failure, but weakness. Today the church boasts and trusts in its numbers, its wealth, and its prominent members. We should trust God because these things don't impress God, He is no respecter of persons.

'Shaft' means generative parts of the human body. The word is translated thigh, loins, shaft, side. It is from the shaft that the generative power comes. We are the sons of God, His children. The first man Adam begat a race of men and women. The second man Adam, Jesus Christ, was a quickening spirit. We were born of a corruptible human seed when we came into the world, but when we were born into God's family, we were born of an incorruptible spiritual seed – the word of God which lives and abides forever.

VERSE 32

And six branches shall come out of the sides of it; three branches of the candlestick out of the one side, and three branches of the candlestick out of the other side

In Zachariah, Christ is referred to as 'The Branch.' The word branch means a reed, and resembles an erect rod, something that stands up and it used for measuring. What we are in Christ is our measure in God's eyes. God measure us in Christ. He is our life and our measure.

'Branch' comes from a root word which carries the thought of redemption. We came to the family of God through redemption. There was a price paid for us. There were 3 branches on each side. 3 is the number of the resurrection and the Trinity. All the light of forever is represented in the candlestick.

6 branches and one shaft. $6+1=7$. 7 is the number of perfection; 6 is man's number, and 1 is God's number. Through Christ we are one, made perfect in God's eyes.

VERSES 33-36

³³Three bowls made like unto almonds, with a knop and a flower in one branch, and three bowls made like almonds in the other branch, with a knop and a flower: so in the six branches that come out of the candlestick, ³⁴And in the candlestick shall be four bowls made like unto almonds, with their knops and their flowers. ³⁵And there shall be a knop under two branches of the same, and a knop under two branches of the same, and a knop under two branches of the same, according to the six branches that proceed out of the candlestick. ³⁶Their knops and their branches shall be of the same: all of it shall be one beaten work of pure gold.

The word 'bowl' translates as a goblet, envelope, petals, or husks of a flower. A flower has a cup that holds nectar, and can also hold water. 'Bowl' also translates as a house, a cup, or a pot. We read in 2 Timothy 2:20, "But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and earth; and some to honor, and some to dishonor."

The bowls on the candlestick held the oil. The oil enables the wick to burn and shed light. The wick soaks up the oil, and when fire (energy) is added, light is shed. We represent the wicks, the Holy Spirit is represented by the oil, and the energy represents God and his word. When we come to God by the power of the Holy Spirit, and we begin to learn the word of God, we give the light to others.

The word 'knop' means to encircle. It is a word used only in an architectural sense, that is, the capital of a column. It is a wreath-like button on a candelabrum, and carries the thought of a crown. Christ is the fairest of ten thousand. Humanly speaking, Christ had no natural beauty that we would desire him, but when we look at Him as the glorified Christ, He will be the most beautiful, magnificent being in the universe. It is no wonder we will adore Him. It is as we come to Him in this life, and the Holy Spirit fills our lives, and we travel on in the precious word of God, more and more we will realize that He excels and outshines everything.

We become aware not only of what we have been saved to, we become aware of what we have been saved from. The things we have been saved from will fall off like leaves fall off the trees. Sometimes old dead leaves still hang from a tree in early spring. When the sap comes up the tree trunk in the spring, the old dead leaves fall off. In like fashion, as new life springs up in us, old habits and ways of behaving will fall away.

'Flower' means bloom or blossom. Flowers are fragrant. In the Word of God they represent promise and the blessed hope that lies in the things of God. Now we are sons and heirs of God. We have been blessed with all spiritual blessings. We have been quickened, raised, and seated together with Christ in the heavens. This truth won't be real in our lives until we take it by faith, by simply agreeing with God and accepting Jesus for what and who he is.

Blossoms can come on a tree, but if they are not fertilized there won't be any fruit. Fertilization comes when one flower mates with another flower. Bees and birds accomplish this as they pollinate the blossoms. The brother who does us the worst actually does us the best. Christ lives in us and gives us the victory. There must be heresies among you that they which are approved might be made manifest. Each of us are what we are by the grace of God.

The branches with knops, blossoms, buds and almonds show an illustration of the three stages of the Christian life. When we are first saved, Christ is the branch, and our Christian lives are like a bud. As we go farther with God and get into His precious word, our lives begin to flower and give off a fragrance. As we go farther with God we begin to bear fruit. The fruit is small at first, but as time goes by it matures and develops and starts to ripen. The last thing that happens just before the fruit is ready is that the sweetness comes into the fruit. So it is as we develop and mature as Christians. The maturity, development, and sweetness in our lives depends on how much of God's word we take in. Just as fruitful plants need sunshine to grow, we need the light of the word of God to grow.

VERSE 37

And thou shalt make the seven lamps thereof: and they shall light the lamps thereof, that they may give light over against it.

The word 'lamp' in the Hebrew is the same as the word candlestick. Both words come from the same root word. Light was within this holy place of worship. We can't worship God without light. We can't walk in the darkness without light.

There are three kinds of light in this world: the light of the sun, the light of human intelligence, and the light of divine truth, which is what the candlestick represents. In John 1:4 we read, "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men." If we don't have light, we don't have life. John the Baptist was not the light, but was sent to bear witness of the light. This is what we are to do.

In John 8:12 we read that Jesus is the light of the world, and only He can expose darkness. Psalms 27:1 says, "The Lord is my light and my salvation: whom shall I fear?" Psalms 119:105 tells us that the word is a light unto our path and a lamp unto our feet. Ephesians 5:8 tells us that now we are light in the Lord. We are not actually the light, but we bear witness of that light. Christ is the only true light there is.

The lamps shine over against the shaft. Our one consuming desire should be to throw light on Jesus. He is the only one who can help us and the world. There is just one light, one savior, and one bread.

VERSES 38-39

³⁸ And the tongs thereof, and the snuffdishes thereof, shall be of pure gold. ³⁹ Of a talent of pure gold shall he make it, with all these vessels.

The word 'snuffer' means a cutting back, or a chastening. In Hebrews chapter 5 we read of sons being chastened. If we are not chastened, then we are bastards and not sons. It takes cutting and pressure to make progress.

The dish was made of pure gold, and was used to preserve the cuttings when the lamps were trimmed. As Aaron went in to trim the wicks made of linen, the trimmings were put in snuff dishes. God trims us so our light will burn bright.

'Tongs' were tweezers, only in two parts instead of one. Tweezers carry the thought of seizing, or taking hold of, receiving, acceptance, to carry away, to fetch. When Aaron was trimming the wicks and some of the trimmings fell out of the snuffer onto the earth. Aaron was provided with golden tweezers to pick up what fell. When he picked up what fell, he would put it in the snuff dish. Isaiah 61:3 tells us how he will give us beauty for ashes. This also brings to mind Psalms 37:24, when we fall we shall not be utterly cast out, because underneath are the everlasting arms.

Aaron trimmed the lamps every morning, and as they were trimmed, incense was burned on the altar of incense. Do we complain when we are being trimmed, or do we learn the trimming is for our good, and worship Him? Are we learning to give thanks in all things – even in the trimming – knowing it is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning us?

'Dressing' the lamps means to make well, beautiful, happy. If we learn to submit to God's trimmings we will be happy in the long run and rejoice in tribulation. The trying of our faith is more precious than gold that perishes. If we burn for God, one day we will find the trimmings we thought were so severe were actually the best thing that happened in our lives. Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them all. Paul said, "We are pressed out of measure beyond strength, insomuch that we despaired of our lives." When God is trimming, it is His business and we should not judge that individual that God is trimming. If we, by faith take hold of God's plan for our lives, and refuse to back away from it, God will bring His plan to pass no matter the circumstances. We can put our confidence in God. We are not to back away from the trimmings. It was given to us not only to believe, but also to reign with Him. If we deny God the right to trim us, He will deny us the right to rule and reign.

After the lamps were trimmed, the ashes were taken outside the camp and put in a clean place. There is a first Adam, and there is a second Adam. God took the first Adam out of the dust of the ground. God took the second Adam out of the ash heap at the brasen altar. After the burning at the brasen altar, there was nothing left of the sacrifice but ashes. This is where the new creation comes from. We are the result of the ash heap.

As noted earlier, the lamps didn't burn during the day. Incense was burned in the morning when the wicks were trimmed, and also at night when the lamps were lit. There comes those seasons in our lives when we don't burn. Burning speaks of energy, fire. God knows how to fix up a life, i.e. 'dress the lamps.' 'Dress' means to be accepted, amend, use right, be better, benefit, make best, be comely, and content. We need to learn to be content in whatsoever state we are in.

The only way we can be light is to take our place in the suffering of Christ. This candlestick wasn't cast, it was beaten into shape. The tests and trials will develop us. Numbers 4:16 tells us the first duty of Eleazar

pertained to the oil for the light. The lamps must be filled and kept filled. In Acts 2:4, on the day of Pentecost, those men gathered together were filled with the Holy Spirit, who is represented by the oil. A short time later in Acts 4:31, after being tested, they cried out to God and they were filled.

Ephesians 5:18-20 tells us to be filled with the Spirit. We are filled when we receive the Holy Spirit, as on the day of Pentecost, but as we go on with God the capacity for the reality of the Spirit's fullness increases. We need to continue to add oil to our lamps. How long would the lamps have burned if Eleazar hadn't kept filling them with oil? Like the song that says, "Give me oil in my lamp, keep me burning! Give me oil in my lamp I pray! Give me oil in my lamp keep me burning! Keep me burning till the break of day!"

Numbers chapter 4 tells us that when the Israelites traveled, the candlestick was covered with a blue cloth. A badger's skin covered the blue cloth. Once again, the beautiful meaning of the candlestick was hidden from the majority of Israel, just as many Christians today never see or realize what the candlestick represents.

VERSE 40

And look that thou make them after their pattern, which was shewed thee in the mount.

We are not to add to, or take away from. The pattern is exact and perfect as it is.

TABLE OF SHEWBREAD

EXODUS 25:23-30

VERSE 23

Thou shalt also make a table of shittim wood: two cubits shall be the length thereof, and a cubit the breadth thereof, and a cubit and a half the height thereof.

This table is referred to as 'the table' 18 times, as the 'table of shewbread' 3 times, as the 'table of shittim wood' 2 times, and as the 'pure table' 2 times. It was located on the north side of the holy place.

This table was 2 cubits long, two being the number of sufficient testimony. Matthew 18:16 says. "In the mouth of 2 or 3 witnesses every word may be established." Jesus sent his disciples out two by two. 2 cubits long tells us that the word of God in Christ is all the testimony we need.

This table was one cubit wide. One is God's number, for God is one. God is one, but consists of three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We see a similar pattern in the natural as one finger has three joints and is made up of three things: skin, bone, and flesh. Light has three primary colors: red, green, and blue. Water has three forms: water, steam, and ice. There aren't three waters - there is one water in three forms. The trinity is seen everywhere in the world. This is the true God.

It was a cubit and a half high. Anytime a fraction is found in the bible it speaks of something being cut off. Isaiah 53:8 says He was cut off out of the land of the living in order to become the bread of life for us. Shittim wood grew in the desert, and before it could become this table it had to be cut off. We see the redemption and crucifixion everywhere in the tabernacle as Christ was cut off for us.

VERSES 24-25

²⁴ And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, and make thereto a crown of gold round about. ²⁵ And thou shalt make unto it a border of a hand breadth round about, and thou shalt make a golden crown to the border thereof round about.

This table was made with shittim wood overlaid with pure gold. Wood always represents humanity. In Hebrews 2:14 we read, "Inasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that hath the power of death, that is the devil." Throughout the book of Luke, Christ is called the Son of man. His genealogy traces back to Adam. He was a man who took the place of another man. The bible speaks of two Adams. We were in the first man Adam who was of the earth, earthy. Christ was the second man Adam, identified as a quickening Spirit. As we bear the image of the earthly, we will bear the image of the heavenly. Christ was human and He identified himself with the human race. He took upon Him the form of a man. In Colossians 1:15-17 we see what He provided for us, what He is to us, and what we can be in Him. All things were created by Him and for Him.

The table was overlaid with pure gold, which speaks of deity and shows Christ's divine nature throughout the word of God. Jesus is the perfect God, and the perfect man. A perfect man was judged for us.

On the inside of this table was a crown, and then a hand breadth, then another crown. Jesus represents both the inner crown and the outer crown. John 1:1 tells us, In the beginning was the word, the word was with God, and the word was God. All things were made by Him and for Him and He was equal with the Father. In Philippians 2:6-8, Paul tells us that Christ thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation. Paul describes the seven great steps that brought Christ down to death on the cross.

In the beginning Christ was a king, but there was a hand breadth. The hands speak of work, service, and labor. One day Christ came. He became a servant, and He worked. He said the work his Father gave Him to do, He would do. In the eternities past He was the delight of His Father, they had a plan and Christ became the servant of the Father. He did always the will of his Father. He never acted on his own, but always with the Father's purpose and plan in mind. This has always been true, and thus, He makes a way for us. In serving God, He also became man's servant. In Mark's gospel He is seen as the servant, the faithful ox, the servant of man. He was the perfect servant. Mark saw Christ as a servant, and Mark's account shows no genealogy, because servants have no genealogy.

In the book of Revelation we read about the four living creatures. They represent the characteristics of Christ. His bride will be like Him, and she is also representative of the living creatures, because she will possess all Christ's characteristics. The first creature was like a lion (king), the second like a calf (servant), the third had the face of a man (human being), and the fourth was like a flying eagle (the heavenly one). Like it is with humans, a mature person marries a mature person. So it is with Christ. His bride will be mature, not a babe. Our safety begins at the brasen altar, the maturity comes as we go on with God. We become one with Him as the cherubim are one with the mercy seat.

After His service on earth, He arose to heaven and became a king again. Twice in the book of Revelation he is called KING OF KINGS and LORD OF LORDS. So He was a king, the hand breadth speaks of service, and there came that interlude in which He served both God and man. Then when He arose he said that all judgment and power was given to Him in heaven and on earth (Matthew 28:18). In Revelation, Christ is seen in the midst of the golden candlesticks, His eyes are as a flame of fire, and His feet as burnished

brass. Christ is the king now, but the world doesn't know it. As we feed on the word of God, we become one with Him, and look forward to being crowned with Him.

VERSE 26

And thou shalt make for it four rings of gold, and put the rings in the four corners that are on the four feet thereof.

Four rings, four corners, four legs, and four sides. Four is the number of human weakness. Christ was crucified by His weakness, not His power. He could have called twelve legions of angels come to His aid, but He knew He had to give himself in perfect weakness. He was set on doing what God wanted Him to do. He was the Son of God, yet He became a man because only a perfect human life could die for us. If we go free, someone must die for us, and Christ did. Praise the Lord! In human weakness He became the bread of life for us, and we have to recognize our weakness before we can ever feed on Him. The way up with God is down. When we get a right vision of God, we won't be high minded, we'll be low and humble at His feet.

Four corners, four sides, four rings and four legs shows He in no way used His own strength, but trusted God. Out of our weakness we are made strong. We can't accomplish anything unless God is in what we want to accomplish. How much can really be done in the light of eternity unless He does it? Jesus said, "I am the true vine and ye are the branches. Without Me you can do nothing." God's strength is made perfect in our weakness. Learn to trust Him! The more we feed on the word the weaker we will become, and we'll realize we are nothing apart from Him. Cease from man whose breath is in his nostrils. Our need of Him makes us feed on Him. We need to know we need Him for everything. If we feed on Him, we'll learn what He wants to be to us.

A ring has no beginning and no end. Christ has no beginning and no end. He is alive forever! Revelation 1:18.

VERSES 27-28

²⁷ Over against the border shall the rings be for places of the staves to bear the table. ²⁸ And thou shalt make the staves of shittim wood, and overlay with gold, that the table may be borne with them.

The staves were shittim wood overlaid with gold. Humanity surrounded by deity. We can't get to God unless we go through Christ. There is only one way to get things from God and that is to ask in the name of Jesus.

By the staves was the table lifted and carried. We represent these staves, and we lift Him up by faith. In John 12:32 we read, "If I be lifted up, I will draw all men unto Me." When Israel traveled, the table was wrapped in a cloth of blue which speaks of heaven. We don't want to ever lose sight of where we are headed, and what life is really about. We should never forget that we are pilgrims and strangers here on earth. We are bound for heaven!

Only the priestly family knew what the shewbread really looked like. The majority of Israel never saw or partook of the bread. In like manner, the majority of God's people never draw near enough to know what the true Bread of Life is about.

VERSE 29

And thou shalt make the dishes thereof, and spoons thereof, and covers thereof, and bowls thereof, to cover withal: of pure gold shalt thou make them.

All the utensils needed for the table were made of pure gold. Again, gold in the scripture represents deity. Dishes, spoons, etc. speak of eating, nourishment. We feed on the Word. Christ is the bread of life, and He supplies everything we need.

VERSE 30

And thou shalt set upon the table shewbread before me alway.

In the Hebrew the word 'shewbread' means exposed, or the bread of His presence. It was called the bread of His presence because it was always on the table. He is ever with us no matter what. He'll go everywhere with us. If we go with Him our path will shine more and more. In Leviticus 24:5 the bread is called 'cakes' which means punctured. Before Jesus could become the bread of life He was punctured.

In Leviticus 24:5 we see that the bread was made of 2/10 deals of fine flour. Flour had to be ground thoroughly over and over to become fine flour. When God judged Jesus, He was thoroughly examined. There was no fault found in Him, no sin.

According to Leviticus 24:5-6, twelve loaves (cakes) were baked and set in two rows of six on the pure table. Twelve shows there was bread for each one of the twelve tribes, bread for everybody. Christ is sufficient for us. He is bread for everybody, and a personal loaf for each of us. The word 'row' indicates a military array. It is translated an army, to fight, set in order, ordered place, rank. This shows the battle. It was more than just a row as we think of a row, it was a military row and had to do with a battle. We encounter battles in our everyday lives as soldiers of the living God. We battle with principalities, and powers, and spiritual wickedness in high places.

Leviticus 24:7 tells us that pure frankincense was put upon each row as a memorial, an offering unto the Lord. The offering was made by fire. Christ came to us through suffering, and was made perfect through the sufferings. Frankincense made it a sweet savor. As they ate, God ate, and it was sweet to Him. We worship as we feed on Christ. The sweet frankincense goes up to God, and He inhabits the the praise of His saints. As we begin to feed on Him we become aware that He is more than just bread. He is fragrance, there is worship in Him, and a joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Leviticus 24:8 tells us the shewbread was replaced every Sabbath. Sabbath means rest. He is our rest and our peace, and we feed on Him in the holy place. The bread became cold after 7 days and was replaced by fresh bread. It lay on the table for seven days, seven being the number of perfection. Christ was perfect before His Father. As the perfect Son of God He became bread for us. The bread was put on the table hot and fresh. Christ is warm, loving and always before God, new every morning. Lamentations 2:22-23 tells us his compassions fail not, they are new every morning.

In Leviticus 24:9 we are told the bread being replaced was to be eaten by Aaron and his sons in the holy place. It was the most holy of the offerings made by fire, as a perpetual statute. The bread was furnished by Israel and was the strength of the priest. Christ was born into the Israeli nation as a Jew, and He became the bread of life for us. We need to feed on Him. Jesus said, "Except you eat my flesh and drink My blood, you'll have no part with Me." He is the true bread come down from heaven. The shewbread is a picture of Christ as the bread of life.

This table was covered in blue and this blue cloth could be seen as they journeyed. Again, blue speaks of heaven. We should never forget that we are pilgrims and strangers in this world. It is not our home. We are to set our affections on things above, not on things of this earth. Israel's objective was

the things of this earth and their inheritance here. When Paul came along with his glory message, he told us to set our affections on things above, not things on earth, for we have died and our lives are hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with Him in glory. We are part of the mystical Body of Christ, a part of his church. We are not Israelites. Paul tells how God made Jew and Gentile one mystical body by breaking down the middle wall of partition between the nations. All who believe in Christ are part of this mystical body. We have no identity other than in Christ.

As Israel journeyed, as they marched, many dropped out. God takes us from place to place. We move on if we move with God. But many fall by the wayside along the journey.

This table is in the worship section of the tabernacle, the holy place. As we come into this section, we begin to realize what Christ means to us, and what we have become in Him. Many can tell us what we have been saved from, but few can tell us what we have been saved to. God brought Israel out of Egypt that He might bring them to the land of Canaan, the Promised Land. God saved us for a purpose – not just to make us safe, but that He might bring us into His best which is to be part of the bride of Christ. We become children of God when we get saved, but He wants us to go on with Him and attain His best. He provides everything we need for the journey.

ALTAR OF INCENSE

EXODUS 30:1-10

VERSES 1-3

¹And thou shalt make an altar to burn incense upon: of shittim wood thou shalt make it. ²A cubit shalt be the length thereof, and a cubit the breadth thereof: foursquare shall it be: and two cubits shall be the height thereof: the horns thereof shall be of the same. ³And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, the top thereof, and the sides thereof round about, and the horns thereof: and thou shalt make unto it a crown of gold round about.

The instructions to build the altar of incense came after the brasen altar, the instructions of the priesthood, and the laws that governed it. There has to first be a sacrifice and there has to be a priest before there can be an altar of incense. There can be no worship or anything sweet we can offer to God until there is a sacrifice and a priest.

At the brasen altar God's wrath was quenched. At the altar of incense God's worship is ignited. One fire goes out, and the other one starts as we bring the coals from the brasen altar to the incense altar. The same energy that took care of our sins will enable us to worship and gather strength from God. Jesus is our strength and our song. Because of Him we can sing.

This altar of incense was made of shittim wood and was overlaid with gold on the four sides and top, but the bottom was just wood and touched the earth. This shows that Jesus as the root taken out of a dry ground was in direct contact with the earth. It also connects Him to us because we are human. The shittim wood was the only tree that grew in the wilderness. In all the wilderness of humanity, there was only one man that grew up: the Lord Jesus. He was the only one worthy to save the human race.

Gold over shittim wood speaks of deity that covers humanity. Jesus was the perfect God-man. He was Immanuel, meaning 'God with us.' Everything in this tabernacle shows Him to be the God-man. There was one man that brought us into the world, Adam. There is one man that will take us to heaven, Jesus Christ.

Each side of this altar was one cubit, indicating the indivisible number of the Godhead. One denotes unity. God is one, but there are three persons in union that form the Godhead. Two cubits high denotes sufficient testimony as we reach up to God.

That this altar of incense was 'foursquare' indicates human weakness. As a man, Jesus was crucified in weakness, not in strength. When we are weak, God is strong. His strength is made perfect in our weakness.

The horns of this altar speak of God's power and strength. Prayer is a place of power. When we pray we must believe God will give us what we ask, and He will. Don't ask for things amiss. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. We can do all things through Christ which strengthens us. In God's plan for our lives, there is nothing that can back us down if Christ is in our lives.

A crown of gold was round about the altar of incense. Here we realize what we are before God. The crown is royalty. It shows that at this point in our development we begin to conquer, and we begin to reign. If we reign with Him here, we'll reign with Him there. Paul spoke of reigning in life with Christ Jesus. We are the conquerors, not the conquered. If we truly believe Romans 8:28 we'll always be in harmony knowing everything works together for good to those who are the called according to His purpose. We may not understand how this happens, but God does.

VERSES 4-5

⁴ And two golden rings shalt thou make to it under the crown of it, by the two corners thereof, upon the two sides of it shalt thou make it: and they shall be for places for the staves to bear it withal. ⁵ And thou shalt make the staves of shittim wood, and overlay them with gold.

The two golden rings under the crown speak of the endless and eternal promises of God. A ring has no beginning and no end. God has no beginning and no end. Two is the number of sufficient testimony, and that is what this altar is about.

The staves that the altar were carried by were made of shittim wood overlaid with gold. This altar was a small altar. Not many people come to it because they don't pray much. There is not much incense put on this altar.

Numbers 4:11 tells us that when the Israelites marched, this table was wrapped in blue cloth, then in badger skins. The Kohathites carried it, but they never saw what they were carrying. The old badger skins remind us that "it doth not appear what we shall be, but when He appears, we shall be like Him" in glory.

VERSE 6

And thou shalt put it before the veil that is by the ark of the testimony, before the mercy seat that is over the testimony, where I will meet with thee.

This altar of incense was placed immediately before the veil that separated the holy place from the holy of holies. This put it closest to the ark of the covenant. It was the vessel closest to God. This is the last step God's precious people come to: a life of worship, and a life of devotion in prayer.

The things of God always appear unattractive to us in the beginning. The more we know about the Lord, the more we'll want to praise and worship Him. Here at the altar of incense, we have the power that will bring us into a life of sweet worship and fellowship.

VERSES 7-8

⁷ And Aaron shall burn thereon sweet incense every morning: when he dresseth the lamps, he shall burn incense upon it. ⁸ And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before the Lord throughout your generations.

Aaron burned sweet incense every morning when he trimmed the wicks on the lamps. In the evening when he came in to light the lamps, he burned incense on this altar again. How much incense do we put on this altar when God trims us? We murmur and complain rather than put incense on the altar. God help us to be thankful for the trials in our lives. It's easy to burn incense when all is well, but it is sometimes hard to burn it when the wicks are being trimmed – in the night seasons, in the times of testing, when we are pressed out of measure. But those are the times when the incense should burn.

Give thanks in all things, learn to praise God no matter what the circumstances look like. The only reason these wicks are ever trimmed is so they'll burn brighter. When we suffer, we suffer with Him. The whole time we suffer He is getting us ready to rule and reign with Him. 'Perpetual' means burning all the time, constantly. It is often a sacrifice to pray, but pray without ceasing.

VERSE 9

Ye shall offer no strange incense thereon, nor burnt sacrifice, nor meat offering: neither shall ye pour drink offering thereon.

God didn't want strange incense, burnt sacrifice, or meat or drink offering on this altar. In this we are made to realize what Christ is before God, and that we are one with Him. We are everything in Him that He is before God. The devil wants us to be occupied with our being trimmed, but we need to get occupied with the Lord and send the sweet savor of incense up to God.

VERSE 10

And Aaron shall make an atonement upon the horns of it once in a year with the blood of the sin offering of atonements: once in the year shall he make atonement upon it throughout your generations: it is most holy unto the Lord.

The blood of the sin offering was applied once a year to the horns of the incense altar. In Leviticus 4: 1-18, we read more on God's instructions about the sin offering. Blood was applied to these horns for three reasons: when the whole congregation sinned, when a priest sinned, and when the priest's household sinned. Putting the blood of the sin offering on the horns looks back to the brasen altar, where the basis for all true worship must begin. True worship comes from the sacrifice Christ made, not the good we do. Christ's sacrifice is always the basis for everything we do. Our sin is atoned for once, and only the memorial of it is applied to the horns of the incense altar. Everything that took place at the brasen altar finds its fulfillment at the incense altar. The blood put there serves as a constant reminder that we have progressed thus far because Christ's blood was shed for our sins.

Aaron put the blood on with one finger. One finger shows the power of God. There is nothing hard for God, he can do anything as easy as lifting one finger. If we have something difficult to face, rest. The longer we struggle with our problem, the harder it will get, and the more confusing it will be. Our problems are easy for God. We just need to turn them over to Him.

THE INCENSE

EXODUS 30:34-38

VERSE 34

And the Lord said unto Moses, Take unto thee sweet spices, stacte, and onycha, and galbanum: these sweet spices with pure frankincense: of each shall there be a like weight.

This perfume is especially to show forth the meaning of Christ the man to God. There was one man that was perfect, and that was Jesus Christ. Jesus didn't come to perfect his deity, He was already perfect. In Him dwells the fullness of the Godhead. He will never be exhausted. Everyday His salvation is new.

Only as we enter in and embrace these things can we have God's best. In Luke 1:31-35, the angel tells Mary of Christ's birth. He calls Christ the 'holy thing.' God made a man that was physically, morally, and mentally perfect, Adam. Jesus was holy and perfectly righteous, nothing could be added to perfect him more. Only he could grow and produce what His life was meant to be. The picture here is that of a man, because as a divine being no perfection could be added to Him. He didn't keep the law that he might be perfect, He gave the law. He himself was all the righteousness and holiness of the law, and the law couldn't bring one charge against Him. Here we find Him perfecting our lives. In the book of Hebrews we read, "Inasmuch as the children of men were partakers of flesh and blood, He likewise took part of the same that He might destroy Him that hath the power of death; that is the devil."

The incense was made up of four different ingredients: statce, onycha, galbanum, and pure frankincense. 4 is the number of human weakness. As a man, Jesus was totally dependent on his Father. This was perfect weakness. We need to learn this weakness in our lives We are not strong in ourselves, but strong in the Lord and the power of His might. We are what we are by the grace of God.

These four ingredients also remind us of the four gospel records: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. The perfect blending of these four gospels is a description of the Son of God. Matthew saw Jesus as a king, and traces His genealogy back to David. Mark saw Jesus as a servant; servants had no genealogy. Luke saw Christ as a human, and traced His genealogy back to Adam the first human. John saw Christ as the Son of God with no human genealogy. All these gospel records blended together to be this one very wonderful man.

The first ingredient mentioned was statce. 'Statce' means 'to drop' and was a substance that distilled of its own accord, without puncturing the bark of the tree from which it came. It was freely given. Jesus did not have to come to us under pressure because He owed us anything. Rather, it was His extreme pleasure to do the will of God. Statce also means 'a true witness', and that means there was no effort on the part of man to produce it. It was genuine and true. Christ also was a perfect witness. He said, "Have I been so long among you and you say show us the father? He who hath seen Me hath seen the Father." Everything we know Jesus to be – tender, loving, sympathetic, longsuffering, always with us and won't fail us – the Father is to us as well. Christ represents God one hundred percent. Jesus is the only person who ever produced a perfect testimony and a perfect life to God. He didn't have to try to do it, He simply was. Nothing is hard for the Lord!

The second ingredient was onycha. 'Onycha' means 'a cover.' It is a lid of a species of muscle. A muscle's shell is produced in the sea, and is the cover for a muscle inside. Onycha also means 'a travail as of a lion roaring.' When ground and beaten to a fine powder, it releases a wonderful aroma that is not apparent before it became a powder.

If coffee beans are not ground up we can't make coffee. The bean has to be ground to release what's in it. This is true of the life of Christ, and of our life in Christ. He had to be ground, in a manner of speaking, like fine flour. The grinding released what He was. The incense was then released to God.

The next ingredient was galbanum. 'Galbanum' means 'the best' or 'fatness.' The fat is what makes an animal beautiful, yet fat was always in the offering burned up to God. This is the excess, that which we don't see. It didn't take the fat of the animal to remove sin, it took the blood of the animal. The fat of the animal pleased God, and went up to God.

It didn't take the incense to save us, we were saved at the brasen altar, but the incense was brought on into the holy place to worship God. God is pleased when we want to know more, and more, and more about Jesus. This is what satisfies God. Christ brings us into fellowship with God, as we learn to follow Him. Galbanum also means 'a fortress' or 'a lamenting.' Galbanum, as it dropped from trees, was like tears dropping down. It was a gum plant that held together the other ingredients, and it was this that made it one. This is the marvelous sacrifice of Christ in its fullness.

The last ingredient was frankincense. It received its name, 'whiteness', from the freedom with which it gave off its odor. It was a clear substance, and very little heat was needed to be applied for it to give off the sweet perfume. Christ didn't have to go to the cross to give off the sweetness of his life, He gave it off all through his life. At the wedding at Cana of Galilee Jesus' mother said, "Whatever He says to you, do it." She had lived with him for 30 years, and had never seen Him make one mistake. She could find not one fault in Him. As they obeyed Him, He turned the water into wine. This was the first miracle He performed. His life was a fragrant life although for thirty years God was satisfied that His life be silent.

Each of these ingredients was of like weight. All weighed the same, but the weight is never recorded. How much do you need? Jesus is sufficient for the little, the big...everything. Like weight, His was a perfectly balanced life. He, and what He meant to His Father, was immeasurable. We'll never be able to measure or fully understand all that He is now, and all that He will be in eternity. In the ages to come, He will show forth the exceeding riches of His grace to those who believe.

His virtues were those things only God could fully understand and appreciate. Even the priests who took the incense into the holy place morning and evening, didn't fully understand what it was all about. Though we receive its benefits, few of us understand why such benefits are ours. He keeps us every day in all things, but we don't fully understand it. Christ is altogether lovely.

VERSE 35

And thou shalt make it a perfume, a confection after the art of the apothecary, tempered together pure and holy.

In Exodus, the book of redemption, we find the recipe of the sweet spices tempered together, pure and holy. With God's prescription, Moses was able to make this exquisite perfume representing what Christ means to God. All of this incense went to God. God said, "It is sacred unto the Lord." It was forbidden for man. This was only for God, although under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, we can grasp its meaning to a great extent.

Every child of God knows Christ died for them; some know about being filled with the Spirit, some know about divine health, some know about the provision for every need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus, some know about being delivered. But the majority know next to nothing about the meaning of Christ to God. Jesus said, "Father I pray that they would be one as we are one; thou in me,

and I in you, and they in us." The Lord wants us to see more in Christ than that He died for us, and that He can heal us, deliver us, etc. There is much, much more to Christ than most people realize.

VERSE 36

And thou shalt beat some of it very small and put of it before the testimony in the tabernacle of the congregation, where I will meet with thee: it shall be unto you most holy.

That the incense was beaten very small speaks to showing that Christ's every act, deed, word, and thought were always in harmony with God. He could give off nothing but sweet fragrance. When God looks at us He only sees and smells Christ. We are accepted in the beloved! God accepts us as freely as He accepts Christ.

VERSES 37-38

³⁷ And as for the perfume which thou shalt make, ye shall not make to yourselves according to the composition thereof: it shall be unto thee holy for the Lord. ³⁸ Whosoever shall make like unto that, to smell thereto, shall even be cut off from his people.

Anyone making this incense for himself would be cut off from Israel. This suggests the tragedy of self-righteousness. God wants us to be what He wants us to be. When we try to worship God in our goodness or credit ourselves with what belongs only to God, that is self-righteousness. It is an awful thing. God wants us to know His righteousness and not our own. We can't make anything like it, we can't have anything for ourselves like it; it belongs only to God. Jesus Christ himself presents it. Only Jesus could satisfy God, and we can only satisfy God as we embrace the Lord Jesus for everything.

It is next holy for the Lord. For us to do something for God, we need first to recognize what Christ means to us. God gave us Christ, and in Him we have the God's best. He blessed us with all spiritual blessings. All things are ours, because we are Christ's and Christ is God's.

This incense was put on the meat offering and on the shewbread. The sweet savor was the same. Christ never changes; He is a fragrance to God all the time.

In this incense we get a small grasp of the meaning of what Christ is to His Father. All that Christ means is beyond the understanding of most of God's people. We know that God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes on Him should not perish but have everlasting life. Christ wanted to come to earth to die for us because He loved us. But His main objective was that He wanted to please His Father. He loved His Father so much that He wanted us for Him.

THE ARK OF THE COVENANT

EXODUS 25:10-22

VERSE 10

And they shall make an ark of shittim wood: two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof, and a cubit and a half the height thereof.

The ark is the first item in the tabernacle mentioned. We are made one with Him at the ark; no other place. We accept Him at the brazen altar, wash in His word, feed on Him, suffer with Him, and worship

Him, but we never become one with Him until we get to the ark. Christ will receive a bride from the Church age. Everyone will have a chance to be part of it.

God begins at the ark. All his beginnings are in Christ, and this ark is a beautiful picture of Christ and His bride. His bride will be one with Him. This ark is where God begins with man although we begin at the brasen altar. From before the foundation of the world, we were chosen in Him. Every plan and purpose God has is in his Son. Only Christ is at the center of God's plans and purposes. Paul said, " In the ages to come He will shew forth the exceeding riches of grace through Jesus Christ." He was ever, and only, and always will be, God's foundation.

Isaiah said, "His name shall be called wonderful, counselor, mighty God, everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace." God doesn't have a plan in anyone else. If we want to please God, we need to get in touch with his Son. God made Jesus everything to us. When we come to God, we begin at the brasen altar. Men and God are separated, but it is Christ that brings us together. It is from the ark that God speaks to us. This is where we have to come to meet with Him. Man is not left to his own ways and means to come. God shows every step of the way. God supplies all we need to come to Him.

At the brasen altar our sins were reduced to ashes and taken out of the way forever. We have to accept 'it is finished' at the brasen altar. We are no longer under the law, but have now come under grace. If we can't see that it was finished, we will never see the grace of God. And if we can't see His grace, we'll never go any farther than the brasen altar. If we do see His grace, we'll go beyond the brasen altar to the laver.

The laver represents God's word, and it is here we learn to wash in the word. We need to read and study God's word.

Just past the laver we pass through the curtain hanging on 5 pillars. 5 is the number of grace, and these 5 pillars tell us we have come this far by God's grace.

Once inside the curtain, we see the table of shewbread. This is where we learn that Christ is the bread of life, and we learn to feed on Him.

The candlestick shows that He is a light to the world. We give light when we take our place in the sufferings of Christ. This candlestick was a beaten work.

Then the altar of incense shows a life that begins to be fragrant, a life of worship and prayer. What is it that we worship God with? There was incense, and that incense was made after the apothecary, and God gave the ingredients. We can't worship God in just any way. God loves a humble, sweet approach. We have to worship Him with his Son, Jesus Christ.

Beyond the incense altar we come to the curtain that separates the holy place from the holy of holies. This curtain hung on 4 pillars that were set in sockets of silver. Silver shows redemption: 'It is finished.' When we get this far we know that Jesus did it all. 4 pillars shows weakness as the number 4 is the number of human weakness. The only way we can be one with the mercy seat is in weakness. In weakness we recognize our need of Him. God's power comes to us in our weakness. A.D.A.M. is 4 letters. He was weak. Adam's name is found exactly 28 times in the bible. $7 \times 4 = 28$. 7 is the number of perfection, and 4 is the number of human weakness. Adam was perfectly weak. This shows man on earth under redemption. This curtain is different from the one at the entrance of the holy place, in that this curtain has cherubims on it. These cherubims suggest what is beyond this curtain. The ark and all it represents is beyond this curtain. This is where we become one with God.

The dimensions of the ark were 2 1/2 cubits long, 1 1/2 cubits wide, and 1 1/2 cubits high. 2 is the number of sufficient testimony, and 1 is the indivisible number of God. The word 'ark' means a box or a chest. A half measure shows something lacking and cut off. Christ was cut off because we were lacking. It will be forever prominent that Christ died for us. Everything is because of the blood.

Compared to the brasen altar, the ark was small. With salvation there is quantity, but with His jewels there is quality. Many get to the brasen altar and find salvation, but only to a very few is revealed what the ark represents. God doesn't want us to stop at the brasen altar, at salvation. He has much more for us beyond this altar. Unfortunately, many of God's people never hear the bridal message in the ministry of the apostle Paul.

This ark was made of shittim wood. Only one tree could grow in that wilderness, and that was the shittim tree. The shittim tree shows Christ was the root out of a dry ground, and the wilderness shows a place of judgment where all the human race was unable to grow. Christ was cut down in His humanity, and became everything to the human race.

VERSE 11

And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, within and without shalt thou overlay it, and shalt make upon it a crown of gold round about.

Within the ark was the shittim wood. It was overlaid with pure gold within and without. The gold on the outside shows His divine nature was uppermost. Christ was human, but His divine nature is what constantly showed.

A crown of gold round about shows Christ is king. He is ruling everything from the mercy seat. He rules the world today in mercy and grace, but in a short time He'll rule with a rod of iron. Three times in the Bible, Jesus is spoken of as having crowns. 3 is the number of the Godhead, and the resurrection. He first wore a crown of thorns, as told in the four gospels. In Revelation 14:14 he is seen with a crown of gold. In Revelation 19:12 He is seen with many crowns.

There are 5 crowns associated with believers:

- 1 Corinthians 9:25 - an incorruptible crown
- Philippians 4:1 and 2 Thessalonians 2:19 - Paul calls the saints his crown
- 2 Timothy 4:8 - the crown of righteousness to be given to all who love Christ's appearing
- James 1:12 & Revelation 2:10 - the crown of life
- 1 Peter 5:4 - the crown of glory

There are also 5 crowns associated with this tabernacle in the wilderness. The crown on the ark, the crown on Aaron's miter, the table of shewbread had two crowns, and the altar of incense had one crown. 5 is the number of grace, and only the grace of God can make it possible for us to win the crown.

VERSE 12

And thou shalt cast four rings of gold for it, and put them in the four corners thereof; and two rings shall be in the one side of it, and two rings in the other side of it.

The 4 rings of gold took a hold of the ark. Gold speaks of deity and God adheres to gold. The three persons in the Godhead adhere to one another. The number 4 shows that Christ became weak for us, and died a cruel death on the cross so that we might be reconciled to God the Father.

VERSES 13-14

¹³ And thou shalt make staves of shittim wood, and overlay them with gold. ¹⁴ And thou shalt put the staves into the rings by the sides of the ark, that the ark may be borne with them.

The staves were made of shittim wood overlaid with gold, and were used to bear the ark. When Israel traveled, the ark was carried on the shoulders of the priests. Jesus is ever a burden to us in this world, but what a precious burden. We are to carry Him to others. When we get to heaven, Christ, who is a burden to us now, will no longer be a burden. We have the opportunity to bear Him now, but a day is coming when we won't have that opportunity.

Only two times was the ark not carried on the shoulders of the priests: when the Philistines took it on a cart and when David took it on a cart. When the Philistines had the ark it was no burden to them, for they had no true kinship with it. If we allow Christ to dwell in our hearts the way He wants to, He'll be a burden to us. David borrowed the contemptible way of moving the ark on a cart from the Philistines.

In Exodus 40:36-37 and in Numbers 9:15-23 and 10:33 & 36, read that the ark was first in line when Israel marched. The ark searched out a resting place for them. God takes us on a journey, but then there are times He wants us to rest. He wants us to make progress, not stay in one spot going nowhere. He is taking us on to His best but He'll let us have periods of rest along the way.

VERSE 15

The staves shall be in the rings of the ark: they shall not be taken from it.

The staves remained in the ark for hundreds of years until Solomon built a temple for the Lord. Then the staves were removed. (1 Kings 8:4-11) The tabernacle in the wilderness represents the earthly church, and Solomon's temple represents the heavenly church. The ark, which represents the gospel of Christ, is carried on the shoulders of God's precious people. God wants us to bear the gospel to His people. When we get to heaven, Christ will no longer be a burden and the staves will be removed.

VERSE 17

And thou shalt make a mercy seat of pure gold: two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof.

This mercy seat shows that God rules with mercy. His throne is a throne of mercy and grace. We'll never arrive at the mercy seat unless our eyes are on mercy, until we know and understand mercy. The farther we go with God, the more mercy and compassion we'll have in our lives.

The crown around the mercy seat shows that Christ is the king of mercy. The Bible tells us the law was the ministration of condemnation, but in Colossians 2:14 we read that He took the law out of the way nailing it to His cross. The ark and the mercy seat are not one in the same. They are separate pieces and each is incomplete without the other. All of the dimensions here are one half; half speaks of cut off. This is a most magnificent display of the cross. Every dimension about the ark is something cut off. In the midst of the throne was the blood of the Lamb as it had been slain.

VERSES 18-19

¹⁸ And thou shalt make two cherubims of gold, of beaten work shalt thou make them, in the two ends of the mercy seat. ¹⁹ And make one cherub on the one end, and the other cherub on the other end: even of the mercy seat shall ye make the cherubims on the two ends thereof.

The ark is one, the mercy seat is one, and the cherubims are one; and together they become one. This

is like the trinity: three persons make up the Godhead, but they are considered one God. Any part of the ark taken away would make it incomplete. This is also true of the trinity.

In Genesis 3:24, we find the first mention of cherubims, and in Hebrews 9:5 we find the last mention of them. 'Cherubims' means imaginary figures representing heavenly things. Psalms 18:10 says God rode on a cherub. The cherubims are associated with God's glory. (Ezekiel 9:3 and 10:4) In Ezekiel 10:20 they are called living creatures. In Revelation 4:6-7, this bridal company is just at the beginning of their time in heaven. The sea in this passage represents the laver. These creatures sang a new song of redemption. They represent humans that yielded, ran the race, and became one with the mercy seat. They all had the characteristics of Christ.

VERSE 20

And the cherubims shall stretch forth their wings on high, covering the mercy seat with their wings, and their faces shall look one to another: toward the mercy seat shall the faces of the cherubims be.

Cherubims spread out their wings on high. Their wings spread over the mercy seat is almost as if they are embracing it, loving it. The longer we go with God, the more valuable His mercy becomes to us. One of the greatest demands and one of the greatest achievements in our lives is when we learn the meaning of mercy. It's amazing what we can accomplish with mercy, and amazing what we can't accomplish without it.

In Ezekiel 1:4-8, these cherubims are called living creatures. They have four wings, showing earthly activity. These cherubims are a picture of the bride. They pour out God's wrath on earth in the tribulation hour. This group will be in complete harmony with God's judgment upon evil.

In Isaiah chapter 6, after the kingdom is underway, the cherubims are seen having six wings. They have an intimate association with Christ after He sets up His kingdom in the millennium. In Revelation 4, they are seen at the very beginning. Ezekiel shows them cooperating with Christ in the earthly side of His taking His throne. In Isaiah they are seen in association with Christ after He sets up his kingdom.

The cherubims are facing each other with their eyes always on the blood upon the mercy seat. God is rich in mercy! If we are to be like Him, we also have to be rich in mercy. The cherubims were one with the mercy seat. This is how we become one with Christ.

While Moses had the message of judgment, Christ brought the message of mercy and grace. We will all make mistakes, and we need to know the real meaning of mercy toward our brother. Sometimes it takes a great fall to make us what God wants us to be. Their eyes always on the mercy seat show that the interest of heaven is not in judgment, but in mercy. Peter tells us that it is according to God's abundant mercy that we are saved.

VERSES 16-17

¹⁶ And thou shalt put into the ark the testimony which I shall give thee. ¹⁷ And thou shalt put the mercy seat above upon the ark; and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony I shall give thee.

Four items were in the ark under the mercy seat: a golden pot of manna, two tablets of stone, Aaron's rod that budded, and parchment papers.

Manna represents the food of God's people, forever sweet and pure when you hide it away (consume it). This manna didn't go bad the whole time it was in there. Christ is always fresh, and He is the supplier of the manna. Manna is also the reminder of the wilderness journey.

The two tablets of stone had the 10 commandments written on them. The way to salvation is not through the 10 commandments. Colossians 2:14 tells us that Christ removed the handwriting of ordinances that were against us, that was contrary to us, and He took it out of the way nailing it to the cross. We are judged with mercy, not with the law. Christ is our righteousness, and the way we meet the demands of the law is through Christ who took those ordinances out of the way. The law was hidden under the mercy seat, hidden from view, and taken out of the way. Mercy covered all condemnation.

When there was opposition to Moses' and Aaron's ministry, out of twelve rods God made Aaron's rod bud to show Aaron was the one God chose to minister. One night the rod was put out, and the next morning it had budded and was alive. One night Jesus was lying dead in a tomb and the next morning He got up, alive for ever. The rod determined who was right and who was wrong so it settled a controversy. In this day there is a controversy over what is right, and what is wrong, the truth is the only way.

The parchment papers contained the writings of the testimony. Christ is the testimony and He keeps us.

As God looked down on these four things, he looked at them through the mercy seat. The mercy seat was between us and the things in the ark.

There came a day when Solomon finished the temple. This represents the time when we will be forever with God. When the temple was finished, the ark was brought in and the staves were removed. This shows that Christ will no longer be a burden to us. We will no longer need to carry His gospel to others.

When the ark was brought in, the pot of manna and Aaron's rod that budded were not in it. The missing pot of manna shows our wilderness journey is over, and the missing rod shows there will no longer be a controversy of who is wrong and who is right. In the true church there is no controversy, and in heaven there will be no controversy.

VERSE 22

And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel.

God spoke to Israel from the mercy seat. The glory of God came down on the mercy seat.

The ark is mentioned in the Bible under different names. It is called the ark of the testimony 10 times, the ark of the covenant 31 times, the ark of the Lord 32 times, the ark of God 41 times, the ark of thy strength 41 times, and the holy ark 1 time. This holy of holies is where God dwells, and it is like the spirit of man. The holy place is where man dwells, it is like the soul. The outer court is like the body of man.

THE PRIESTS AND THEIR GARMENTS

EXODUS 28

VERSE 1

And take thou unto thee Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office, even Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron's sons.

Aaron was appointed high priest by God. His name means 'light bringer.' The priestly ministry is what makes real the worth of Christ to all his people. Today Christ is the high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. He continually makes intercession for us. We never begin to know the value of Christ for our lives until we enter in to the priestly side of the works of Christ. We are priests to God and can be kings. We are the true aristocracy of the human race. Few of God's people ever discover the provision He has made for them. Paul called it 'the unsearchable riches of Christ.'

Aaron was three years older than Moses. When they went before Pharaoh, Moses was 80 years old and Aaron was 83. Numbers 26:59 tells us their parent's names were Amram and Jochebed. Their parents names weren't mentioned until the book of Numbers because God wanted us to see first and foremost what Moses was.

In Numbers 3:32 we learn that Eleazar was appointed by God to be the overseer of the tabernacle. His name means 'God's helper.' In Numbers 4:16 we read that he had charge of the oil, the daily offerings, and the sweet incense – the things by which God is worshipped. We can't worship God by ourselves, we have to worship God with Christ. We have the person, power, and purpose of God administered by the Holy Spirit. In John 14:16-26, John 15:26, and John 16:7, we read of another Comforter, the Holy Ghost. 'Comforter' means one called alongside to help. Just as another Eleazar went to get a bride for Isaac, the Holy Spirit is gathering a bride for Christ.

In Leviticus chapter 10 we read how Nadab and Abihu were killed by the Lord for having strange fire in their censers. They should have gotten it from the brasen altar, but instead they got it from the altar of incense. Fire speaks of energy, and our energy must always come from Christ and Him alone.

VERSE 2

And thou shalt make holy garments for Aaron thy brother for glory and for beauty.

In the statement 'for glory and for beauty' we have the inference that without these holy garments we have neither glory nor beauty before God. These garments represent something very precious, and apart from them we have no beauty or glory before God. The natural man cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God. Apart from God, man is a pawn in the grip of Satan. There is only one safety and that is to know Jesus Christ. Though we don't use these garments literally, they represent something to us in the ministry of Christ, us and Christ to God. We are accepted only in Him. Ephesians 1:6 tells us that we are accepted in the beloved. Acts 4:12 says there is none other name given among men, whereby we must be saved. In Christ, not only are we provided with a salvation for safety, but we are provided with a way to become one with Him. We became heirs – and joint-heirs if so be we suffer with Him.

VERSE 3

And thou shalt speak unto all that are wise hearted, whom I have filled with the Spirit of wisdom, that they may make Aaron's garments, to consecrate him, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office.

This incorporates, and takes in to its meaning, every member of the body of Christ. In Christ Jesus we minister. We are accepted, made strong and righteous. We pass from death unto life, are quickened, raised with Him, seated with Him, and blessed with all spiritual blessings. Apart from Christ, we have nothing that is acceptable to God. The singular pronoun 'He' shows we are one in Christ. We who are born again are seen as one body, the church. Christ is the head of that body.

VERSES 4-6

⁴And these are the garments which they shall make; A breastplate, and an ephod, and a robe, and a broidered coat, a mitre, and a girdle: and they shall make holy garments for Aaron thy brother, and his sons, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office. ⁵And they shall take gold, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen. And they shall make the ephod of gold, of blue, and of purple, of scarlet, and fine twined linen, with cunning work.

The rest of the chapter deals with the making of the garments. The ephod is the first item mentioned. It was made of fine linen and was embroidered. Aaron dressed in linen that completely enveloped his body. Linen is a cloth that cools. 'Ephod' was taken from a Hebrew word which means 'a representation.' Everything about the linen ephod represents Christ's character; what He was and what He is to us; all He is and all He makes possible for us.

Blue speaks of heaven, and Christ and His ministry came from heaven (John 6:38). Purple speaks of his kingliness, and He wants to make us kings (John 18:37). Scarlet shows the rich red of the shed blood (Mark 14:24 and 1 Peter 1:18-19). Linen speaks of righteousness (1 Corinthians 1:30). In 2 Corinthians 5:21, we read how He became sin for us so we could be made righteousness. "Surely this was a righteous man." (Luke 23:47) Gold speaks of divinity or deity. In Revelation 1:13 we see Him amidst the candlesticks, His paps girt with a golden girdle which speaks of strength. In Revelation chapter 14 He has a crown of gold. This all shows He is divine. Gold was beaten into a thin plate and cut into threads, and worked in and out of everything. He wants us to suffer with Him so we can reign with Him.

VERSES 7-10

⁷It shall have the two shoulder pieces thereof joined at the two edges thereof; and so it shall be joined together. ⁸And the curious girdle of the ephod, which is upon it, shall be of the same, according to the work thereof; even of gold, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen. ⁹And thou shalt take two onyx stones, and grave on them the names of the children of Israel: ¹⁰Six of their names on one stone, and the other six names of the rest on the other stone, according to their birth.

On the shoulders of the breastplate were two onyx stones engraved with the names of the tribes of Israel. On one stone on the one shoulder were Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Dan, and Naphtali. Engraved on the stone on the other shoulder were Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulon, Joseph, and Benjamin. The shoulders speak of safety and of our relationship with God. The names on the shoulders were according to birth, or when we were saved. We who are saved are all in that safe place. When a shepherd goes to rescue a lost sheep, he puts the sheep on his two shoulders, and around his neck. Our names were written in the Lamb's book of life before the foundation of the world. We are as safe in heaven as Jesus is, because we were born into God's family of incorruptible seed. The one who thinks he is saved because of what he does or does not do has fallen from grace. We can't do anything without grace; everything is by grace.

VERSES 15-16

¹⁵And thou shalt make the breastplate of judgment with cunning work; after the work of the ephod thou shalt make it; of gold, of blue, and of purple, and of scarlet, and of fine twined linen, shalt

thou make it. ¹⁶ Foursquare it shall be being doubled; a span shall be the length thereof, and a span shall be the breadth thereof.

The breastplate was made of several materials, one of which was linen. The linen part was not visible. The breastplate was a span of about nine inches; foursquare, meaning all sides were equal. It was the same any angle it was viewed.

It was called the breastplate of judgment. In this world there is unequal justice, but God is no respecter of persons. He is just. We are all equal in His sight. You can impress God by believing Him. Put your confidence in Him, because it is impossible to please God without faith.

The gold breastplate contained 12 stones: sardus for the tribe of Judah; topaz for the tribe of Issachar; carbuncle for the tribe of Zebulun; emerald for the tribe of Reuben; sapphire for the tribe of Simeon; diamond for the tribe of Gad; ligure for the tribe of Ephraim; agate for the tribe of Manasseh; amethyst for the tribe of Benjamin; beryl for the tribe of Dan; onyx for the tribe of Asher; jasper for the tribe of Naphtali.

The tribes of Joseph and Levi aren't mentioned on the breastplate. Joseph wasn't forgotten, his yielded life gave him twice as much as the rest of the sons of Israel. Joseph's sons Ephraim and Manasseh were mentioned. The tribe of Levi ministered to the tabernacle so they weren't mentioned on the breastplate.

The names on the shoulder went according to birth, but the names on the breastplate went according to how close they were to God. We can also have a name on the breastplate. How close are we to God's heart? How much do we embrace the truth and yield our lives to him?

VERSE 30

And thou shall put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim, and they shall be upon Aaron's heart when he goeth in before the Lord: and Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart before the Lord continually.

The breastplate was doubled to form a pocket into which the Urim and the Thummim were placed. The Urim and the Thummim were sacred stones that were a way of communicating with God. Whenever there was a question the leaders of Israel couldn't answer, the priest would reach into the breastplate. If he pulled out the Urim, the answer would be 'no.' If he pulled out the Thummim, the answer would be yes.

VERSE 39

And thou shalt embroider the coat of fine linen, and thou shalt make the mitre of fine linen, and thou shalt make the girdle of needlework.

This coat of fine linen had a girdle (belt or sash) of fine linen, with needlework (Leviticus 16:4). The coat was worn on the day of atonement under other garments and covered Aaron's body completely. It encircled his body so he was completely righteous. In Acts 3:14 Christ was called the Holy One and the Just. In Acts 4:27, he was called the holy child Jesus. Christ was completely righteous, and we are the righteousness of God in Him. Embroidered needlework shows the suffering He encountered to be what He is to us, and it left a pattern of what He accomplished.

The girdle speaks of strength. Christ's righteousness is strong enough and sufficient enough to cover the

most evil sinner. Though our sins be red like crimson, He makes them white as snow. Though they be as scarlet, they shall be as wool. God made Him who knew no sin, to be sin for us. He made himself of no reputation, took upon himself the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. He, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man. He could only do this as he came before God righteously. He had to pay the debt, and He did pay the debt. If we take Christ as our personal savior, we'll pass from death unto life, and will know what it is to be a Child of God. He is able to save to the uttermost.

The mitre, or crown, was also made of linen. Linen shows the only thoughts in the mind of Christ are pure thoughts. Natural man's thoughts and intents of his heart are wicked continually. We are a new creation in Christ; old things are passed away, behold all things are become new. God put everything having to do with our old creation to death on the cross.

On the mitre was a plate of gold bearing the words "Holiness to the Lord" engraved upon it. Christ's ministry as a priest in the heavens makes our works and our services acceptable to God (Ephesians 1:6). Everything that we have is ministered through Christ. We can only come to God in the name of Jesus.

Aaron's sons had linen coats and linen breeches, too, but only Aaron had the glory robes. Faith is the victory that overcomes the world.

VERSE 31

And thou shalt make the robe of the ephod all of blue.

This blue robe was worn inside the ephod; another garment that was hidden away. Something was hidden in Christ and His ministry to the Jews. Daniel longed to look into it, but God told him it was for a future time. In Ephesians 3:1-5, God revealed the heavenly kingdom to Paul. Paul was given a revelation and a dispensation that men of other ages weren't able to see. All of this was hidden in our great high priest, Jesus Christ. The church age and the glory of the kingdom were hidden from them.

VERSE 32

And there shall be a hole in the top of it, in the midst thereof: it shall have a binding of woven work round about the hole of it, as it were the hole of a habergeon that it be not rent.

There was a hole in the top of the robe that was secured by a binding so it wouldn't tear. The body of Christ, the church, cannot be torn apart from God. Man is weak. He can be defeated by the devil if he tries to fight him in his own strength. We fight the devil in God's strength.

We are safe because Christ is our keeper. When we understand redemption, we'll know we are safe and free from sin forever. Ephesians 4:3 tells us to endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. We come into the unity of the faith when we believe God.

It is impossible for us to come even faintly close to the meaning of the Christ as He lives in the heavens for us. Most people have very little grasp of the true meaning of the resurrected Christ in His priesthood, as He represents us in the presence of God. Not only is He ministering to God in our behalf, He is ministering from God to us.

The three sons of Levi were Kohath, Gershon, and Merari. Levites were set apart for service in God's tabernacle, because they defended God's honor when all the others were worshipping the golden calf. These three tribes that made up the Levites did not own land. They were supported by the 11 other tribes who gave one tenth of all harvest and livestock to God for tithes to support the Levites.

The Kohathite family of the tribe of Levi was set aside for special services. Aaron and Moses were part of this family. Aaron and his descendants were appointed to be priests. Their duties were mostly connected with the tabernacle. Only priests could do this. They taught the people the law, and answered questions using the Urim and the Thummim stones. The high priest, Aaron, was in charge of all the other priests. He had the privilege of going into the holy of holies once a year on the day of atonement. No one else was allowed to go there.

The Gershon and Merari families took care of more menial tasks and were more like servants to the priests. When Israel marched, the Kohathites were responsible for carrying the tabernacle furniture. The Gershonites carried the curtains and covering, and the Merarites carried and set up the tabernacle.

More on the Levites can be found in Exodus 32: 25-29; Numbers 3:12-13 & 18; 18:21-24, 35:2-8.

More on the priests can be found in Exodus chapters 28 and 29 and in Leviticus 8:8-10, 16, 21-22.

VERSE 33

And beneath upon the hem of it thou shall make pomegranates of blue, and of purple, and of scarlet, round about the hem thereof; and bells of gold between them round about.

The hem of the robe had pomegranates of blue, purple, and scarlet with golden bells between them. Pomegranates have a reddish skin and are loaded with seeds. This speaks of the fruitfulness in Christ, and how we become fruitful when we abide in Him. God doesn't want us to be barren.

Pomegranates of blue show the fullness in heavenly things. Our fruit comes from above. If we are to have God's blessing, we do things the way He says. Purple pomegranates show we are born a kingdom of Priests and kings, born to reign. Some of the greatest things we reign in are some of the most menial tasks. Jesus was a servant of all, and He is Lord of all. We learn to be kings and rule in this life. Pomegranates of scarlet show redemption.

The pomegranates had bells in between them. If the bells didn't ring as Aaron walked into the holy of holies it signified that he was dead. To hear the bells was a sound of joy as it meant Aaron the high priest was alive. The joy of the Lord is our strength. We can have the joy of the Lord no matter our situation. Long faces don't represent Christ or the joy of the Lord as our strength. He will keep thee in perfect peace whose mind I stayed upon Him. Paul wrote Philippians, the "joy book of the Bible", while enduring horrendous circumstances. Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice.

VERSE 42

And thou shalt make them linen breeches to cover their nakedness; from the loins even unto the thighs they shall reach.

The linen breeches are the first garment the priest put on to prevent his death. These linen breeches are what covered the life-producing parts of the body from the loins to the thighs. They covered his nakedness. Linen represents the righteousness of Christ. With the righteousness of Christ, life has its true beginnings, and in this righteousness we can be acceptable to God. Before the linen breeches were put on (although it isn't noted) the old clothes had to come off so the priest could bathe. The fig leaves Adam and Eve sewed together to cover themselves represent the first effort to cover our nakedness with our own efforts. Man-made garments make some people comfortable, but until we put on Christ's righteousness, we are naked before God. Until Aaron put on his garments, he couldn't minister to God.