

TABERNACLE (PART III)

THE COURT AND THE ARTICLES IN THE COURT

Reading : Exo.27:9-18; 38: 9-20

Memory verses : Acts. 4: 11-12

Theme : To learn that the only way of salvation is Jesus Christ and only the saved ones are entitled to worship God.

Study aids: Pictures of the alter and the brass laver.

Introduction: We have learned that the court is the area set apart for worship around the tabernacle. How much is its length and its breadth? How is this place covered? On which side is its entrance? How is the curtain at the entrance different from the hangings on the other sides? How are the hangings joined together? What are the pillars made of? What are bases for the pillars? (Find out the answers from lesson 16). Now let us study about the court and the articles in the court in more detail.

GATE OF THE COURT: (Exo. 27:16;38:18-20)

1) There is only one entrance to the court, 20 cubits wide in the middle on its east side. The curtain at the gate is hung from four pillars and is embroidered using blue, purple and scarlet yarn and finely twisted linen. This gate points towards Christ. Man tries to reach God through rituals, good deeds, gifts, pilgrimages, etc. But Jesus Christ and His apostles teach very clearly that He is the only way to salvation: "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved" (John 10:7-9). There is no other name given to man for his salvation except the name of Jesus Christ (Acts 4:12).

2) The curtain is beautifully embroidered in four colours. For a believer, Jesus is the fairest in ten thousand (Song of Songs 5:10). Our Lord shines forth uniquely in His birth, His life, His death and His resurrection.

PILLARS OF THE COURT

The 60 pillars of the court made of shittim wood represent believers. We see the greatness of Gods grace in taking us from the wild forest and shaping us to become pillars in the court of the Tabernacle. The shittim tree is black in colour, full of thorny fruits and grow as a rough tree in the wilderness. It represents the natural man. The pillars are fixed on brass bases (sockets). Brass bases point to Jesus Christ who took our judgment upon Himself. We are standing on Christ (Rom.8:1). Top of the pillars are covered with silver. Silver represent redemption. Praise God for redeeming us and establishing us as pillars. Pillars are covered with white linen. White colour points to holiness. We are Justified through Jesus Christ and covered with the robe of righteousness (Isa. 61:10; Rev.7:9,14).

THE SPECIAL NATURE OF THE COURT

1) It attracts worshipers. The sons of Korah sing: "My soul longeth for the courts of the Lord" (Psa.84:1-4).

2) It is a place of separation and protection. Those who enter through the gate are separated from their surroundings and protected inside the white curtains all around. Similarly believers who enter the folds of the church through Christ are separated from worldly desires and protected inside the grace and righteousness of God.

3) The court is important as it is the place of atonement for sin. Sacrifices are continually offered there. We experience freedom from sin when we approach Gods presence through the door, Jesus Christ (Eph.1:7).

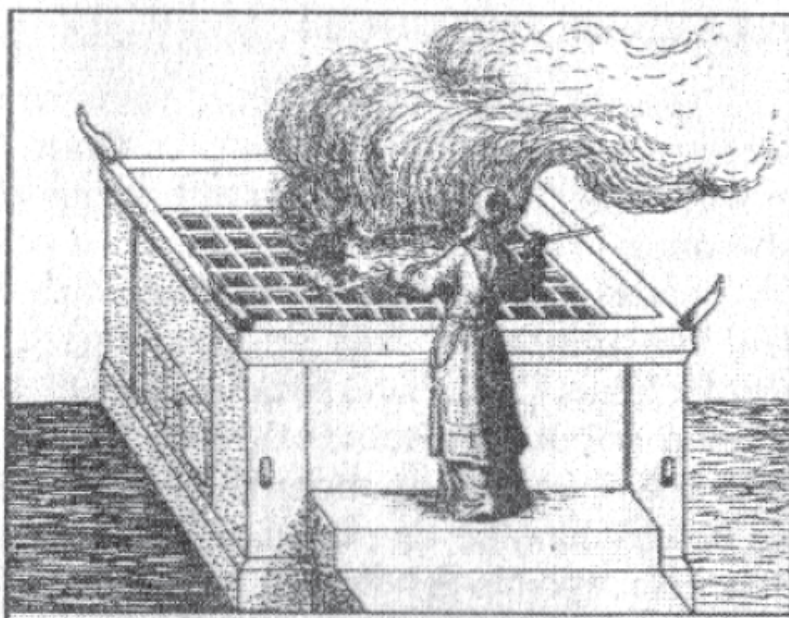
4) Court presents a scene of continuous activity. Most of the work of priests is in the court. There they kill they sacrificial animal, sprinkle blood, remove skin, cut it into pieces, burn it on the altar, remove ashes, etc. No place is provided to sit down or take rest. Believers who are the priests of God are expected to be engaged in His ministry continuously.

ARTICLES IN THE COURT

1) **Altar** : (Exo.27:1-8;38: 1-7). The first article in the court is the altar. It is 5 cubits long, 5 cubits broad and 3 cubits high and made of shittim wood. It is hollow inside and covered with brass. There is a horn at each of the four corners. A brass network surround the altar reaching upto the middle. Rings are fixed at the four corners

through which two staves are inserted for carrying the altar on shoulders while traveling. Brass implements associated with the altar are pans, shovels, basins, flesh hooks and fire pans for use by the priests.

The altar stands as a shadow for Jesus Christ and His death on the cross. It is the largest article in the Tabernacle. Likewise, salvation



THE BURNT - OFFERING ALTAR

through faith in the death of Jesus is the most important truth revealed in the Bible. The altar is kept at the entrance to the court. The worshiper must associate himself first with altar before he enters the Tabernacle :A person cannot approach or worship God until he obtains remission of his sins through the cross of Christ. Cross is the initial step for a person to experience other spiritual blessings.

Shittim wood used for making the altar points to the human nature of Jesus Christ and the brass covering shows His divinity which emerged victorious through the fire of Judgment. The rope used to bind the sacrificial animal to the horns of the altar stands for the love of God which binds a sinner to the cross. The horns are a place of refuge to escape from fear to death from the avenger. The sacrifice of Christ saves us from the fear of death and condemnation (Rom.8:1, Heb.2;15). The horns denote the power of Christ to save (Luke 1:71).

2) Brass laver: (Exo. 30:17-21; 38:8; 40:30-32)

A brass laver filled with water is placed on a brass stand between the altar and the Tabernacle. The priests must wash themselves with this water before they enter the Tabernacle.

In Solomon's Temple a huge brass vessel with a capacity of 6000



Brass laver

gallons of water was installed in place of the brass laver. It was kept on top of 12 oxen with their backs inward and faces outward. Water would fill the bellies of the oxen and flow out of their mouths. Looking at this arrangement, Jesus said: he that believeth on me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water" (John 7:37-38). In the vision of the Temple which Prophet Ezekiel saw (Eze.47:1-3) and in the New Jerusalem which John saw (Rev.22:1-2) , the living waters flow like rivers. It points to the outpouring of Holy Spirit.

The main work of the Holy Spirit is sanctification. As both water and fire have cleansing action, Holy Spirit is compared to both water and fire (John 7:38-39; Matt. 3:11; Acts 2:3). Hence the brass laver and the water inside show Holy Spirit. No shape or dimension is specified for the brass laver. God gives the Holy Spirit without measure (John 3:34). There is also diversity in the work of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor.12:4). A believer who is saved by the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ must be cleansed by the Holy Spirit. Otherwise he has no right to go into the Tabernacle and carry out any of his priestly duties.

The scriptures speak also of sanctification by the Word of God (Eph.5:26-27; John 15:3; 17:17; James 1:23-24). A person approaching the brass laver sees his face as if in a mirror. It helps in seeing himself as he is and purifying himself. The brass laver is also a shadow of the baptism in water after repentance. Apostle Peter asks people to be baptized after repenting of their sins (Acts 2:38).

Therefore, every one should be saved through faith in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. A saved person must take baptism in water and be filled with the Holy Spirit. He must be continually cleansed by the Word of god and the Holy Spirit. What is your experience?

QUESTIONS

1. What are the specialities of the court?
2. Show that the gate of the court represents Jesus Christ.
3. Whom do the pillars of the court represent and in what way?
4. Which are main articles kept in the court?
5. Where is the location of the altar? What are the truths that it teaches?
6. Where is the location of the brass laver? What are the truths that it teaches?
7. What was the arrangement done in Solomon's Temple in the place of brass laver?