

LESSON - 20

THE TABERNACLE (PART V)

THE MOST HOLY PLACE AND THE ARTICLES PLACED IN IT

Reading : Exo.25:10-22; 37:1-9

Memory Verses : Heb. 9:24-25

Theme: To understand the glory of god and he greatness of the interceding work of our High Priest, Jesus Christ, by the study of the Most Holy Place of the Tabernacle and to become strong in our faith.

Study Aids: (1) picture of the Ark of the covenant. (2) Picture showing the position of the Ark in the Tabernacle.

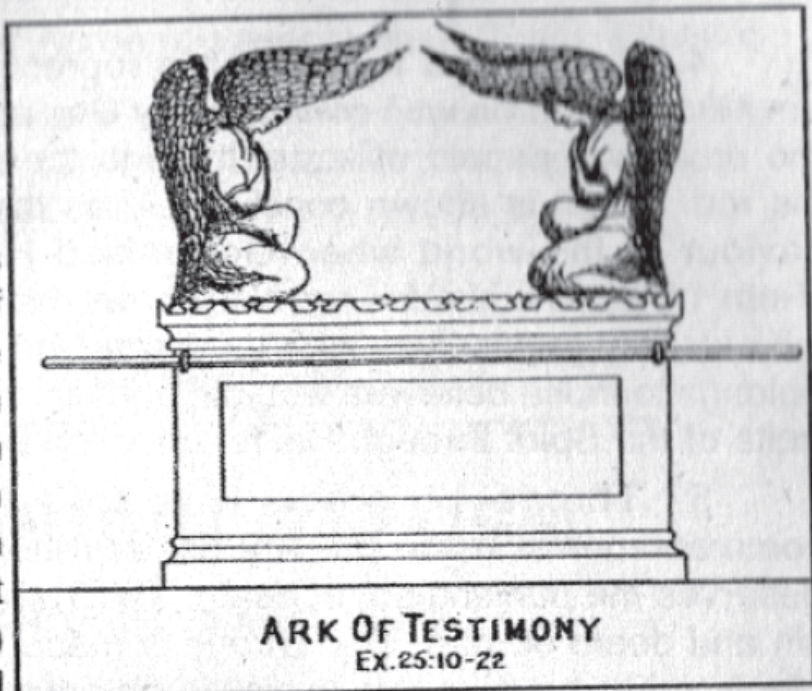
Introduction: We have already learnt quite a few things about the Tabernacle. What are its length, breadth and height? Where is the Most Holy Place located? What are its dimensions? What is the difference between the curtain at the entrance to the Tabernacle and the curtain separating the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place? Both the curtains are 10 cubits long and 10 cubits wide. Both are embroidered with yarn of four colours. But the cherubims are inlaid only on the curtain separating the two sections of the Tabernacle. The article inside the Most Holy Place is the Ark of covenant with the Throne of grace and two cherubims on its top. Let us learn some very important truths regarding this most important section of the Tabernacle.

ARK OF TESTIMONY

Its importance: Out of the seven articles in the Tabernacle, the Ark is mentioned first of all in the Scriptures. The Throne of grace is situated on top of the Ark. It was to be made by Moses himself (Deut,10:1-5). Inside the Ark are tablets of commandments, golden pot containing manna and Aarons rod that budded. This is the only article taken by Solomon from the Tabernacle to be kept in the Temple. The Tabernacle and later the Temple were primarily made to house the Ark of testimony. Holiness of the Tabernacle is

centred around the holiness of the Ark (2Chro.8:11).

Description: The ark is two and half cubits long, one and a half cubits broad and one and half cubits high and made of shittim wood. It is covered both inside and outside with gold. The Mercy Seat (Throne of Grace) made of gold, two and



a half cubits long and one and a half cubits broad, is placed on top of the ark with two cherubims at the ends. The stretched out wings of the chrubims cover the Mercy Seat. Glory of God would dwell between the cherubims and rise upwards as a pillar of cloud giving light during neights and shade during daytime to the Israeli camp (Exo.25:10-12; 37:1-9); Num. 3:31; 10:13).

MEANING OF THE ARK

1. Ark of the covenant represents the complete personality of Jesus Christ. Accacia wood shows His human nature. Shittim is a black, thorny tree which grows in dry ground. Christ grew up as a man without any form or comeliness (Isa.53:2,3). Gold points to His divinity. Only Ark of the covenant is kept in the Most Holy Place where the High Priest enters just once in a year. As glory of God is seen on the Mercy Seat, glory dwells bodily in Jesus Christ. Ark shows that man can see God only through Jesus Christ (1 Tim.2:5).

2. The tablets of commandments are kept inside the Ark. All commandments of God are safely deposited in Christ. Jesus came into the world to fulfill all commandments. The law fulfilled in Jesus Crhist is written on the hearts of believers by Holy Spirit(Ezek.36:6-7; Jer.31:33-34).

3. A golden pot filled with manna is kept inside the Ark. Christ is the bread of life. The pot contains one omer of manna which was the total requirement of an Israeli for a day in the wilderness. A believer can receive full spiritual nourishment from Christ (Exo.16:14-34; John 6:7-58).

4. The budded rod of Aaron represents the risen Lord (Num.17:1-11). Aaron was confirmed by God as High Priest in front of the rebellious people of Israel through the miraculous budding of his rod. Christ is shown conclusively as the Son of God and the saviour of the world when God raised Him up from the dead (Rom.1:5-6). The budded rod also shows the fruitfulness of believers who identify themselves with the risen Christ. The real priesthood belongs to those believers who die and rise with Christ and produce fruits of the Spirit through His resurrection power.

5. Throne of grace (Exo.5:17-18): The tablets of commandments inside the Ark declare that man is a sinner and deserves the punishment of death. The Throne of grace covers the sin and death of man. The Throne is made of gold purified by fire. Man's works have no role to play in his salvation. Salvation is freely given to man by the grace of God. The veil was torn at the time of Christ's death and hence we can now boldly enter the presence of God. The Throne of grace is a place of fellowship.

6. Cherubims: Two cherubims are positioned at the ends of the Mercy seat with their faces downwards and their stretched wings covering the Mercy Seat. The golden cherubims and the glory shining between them point to the majesty and glory of God. The posture of the cherubims indicates the great depth of the grace of God which even the angels desire to look into (1Pet 1:12).

The Position of Tabernacle in the midst of Israel: The Tabernacle was stationed in the center of the multitude of Israel numbering about 30 lakhs. The tribe of Levi camped on four sides of the Courtyard of the Tabernacle. Moses and Aaron camped on the east side, Merarites on the north, Kohathites on the south and Gershonites on the west. Around the Levites the twelve tribes of Israel put up their tents, three tribes on each side. Is Christ in the center of our family and personal lives?

Try to learn more about the Tabernacle which reveals the glory of God and many New Testament truths. Let us equip ourselves for the life to come in New Jerusalem.

QUESTIONS

1. Explain the importance of the Ark of Testimony.
2. Describe its external appearance.
3. The Ark points to the complete personality of Christ. How?
4. What does manna kept in the golden pot inside the Ark signify?

5. The budded rod of Aaron represents risen Christ. Explain.

(Please note: The book entitled. The Tabernacle, written in Malayalam by Mahakavi K.V. Simon is recommended for additional reading)

LESSON - 21

CHRISTIAN BAPTISM

Reading : Matt.28:18-20; John 3: 22-23

Memory verse : Mark 16:16

Theme : To learn that all those who are born again through faith in Jesus Christ must obey the commandment of God and be baptized by immersion in water in the name of Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Introduction: What is church? How does one become a member of the Church? Which are the commandments concerning this matter? Baptism is the public testimony of a person about his experience of conversion. Baptism is accepted by all Christians in one form or the other except by Salvation Army and the quakers. Let us study this important topic on the basis of the scriptures.

The word, 'BAPTISM': The word used in the original Greek is "Baptidso" and in Aramaic (Chaldean Syrian), it is "Mammodeesa". The meanings are respectively "immersion" and "immersion bath". There are two important rituals given to the church by Christ himself: Baptism and Lord's Table, Of these, the first and important ritual is baptism.

Why baptism? : According to the Scriptures, a person must identify himself with the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We must experience that in our hearts. The same experience is publicly proclaimed by baptism (Col.2:12;Gal 3:27). It is the justice of God that man who is born from Adam with the nature of sin should get the punishment of death. Man receive remission of sin through faith in Christ Jesus and receives life from God. Hence he dies to sin. He is buried with Christ in baptism. He rises from under the