

Exodus Chapter 27 Commentary

Ex 27:1 ¶ "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. 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. 3 And thou shalt make his pans to receive his ashes, and his shovels, and his basons, and his fleshhooks, and his firepans: all the vessels thereof thou shalt make of brass. 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."

We want to point out that the altar for sacrifice was in the outer court. The sin debt had to be settled before one could enter the holy place. This sets things in order for us today, how? We must have our sins forgiven and be born again first, then we can join the local church body and be baptized. Then, being made kings and priests to God, we may enter the holy place.

We see a picture of the work of Christ and a portrait of the established church on earth by Christ. How? Let's look at the order of this building and compare it to what happened when Christ came to earth in a body of flesh. The altar is outside the tabernacle and in the courtyard, where the people must enter to make their offerings for sin. That was the purpose of the altar in this text. The altar is comparative to the cross of Christ in the New Testament. Where was Christ crucified? Outside of Jerusalem, outside of the temple in open sight for all to see.

Who looked upon the crucifixion of Christ? Those who wanted him dead and those who wanted him alive. The lost and the saved. Don't we have the same situation today? There are those who wish for Christ to be dead forever, and there are those who wish for him to be alive to and for them.

2 "And thou shalt make the horns of it upon the four corners thereof:" These horns had several purposes. One was the grate of the network of brass was to be hung from the horns, about halfway between the top of the horns and the altar surface. This allowed the fire to be under the grate, and the sacrifice was placed on top of the grate over the fire on the altar.

We are also told of another use of the horns in: **Ps 118:27 God is the LORD, which hath shewed us light: bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar.**" This text makes it plain that some sacrifices required being tied to the horns of the altar, to keep it in place and not let it fall from the altar.

There is a prophetic picture here of Jesus being fastened to the tree of the cross. It was necessary that he remain upon the cross until his sacrifice for sin was totally completed. But, you say, they used nails to fasten Christ on the cross. This is true; however, it was the cords of God's love, which made Jesus willing to be bound to the cross, and to be the only true sacrifice, for the eternal remission of the sins of God's people.

We are also told in scripture that some people used the horns of the altar as a place of refuge. If someone was seeking their life, they would go and take hold of the horns of the altar. As a place of refuge, this reminds us that in the times of conflict in our lives, we need to take hold of the horns of the altar, because our sure refuge is Jesus Christ.

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

Moses was commanded to make staves and rings to carry the brazen altar when they moved the tabernacle from place to place. This gives us the picture of a child of God who has been born again. How? They are indwelt with the Holy Spirit in the new birth, and they are to bear about the body of Christ wherever they go, seen in:

- **2Co 4:10; 7 "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. 8 ¶ We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; 9 Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; 10 Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. 11 For we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh."**
- **Lu 9:23 "And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me."**

It is easy to see this concept in these texts.

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 an hundred cubits long for one side: 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. 12 And 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. 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. 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. 17 All the pillars round about the court shall be filleted with silver; their hooks shall be of silver, and their sockets 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."

9 "And thou shalt make the court of the tabernacle:" The court of the tabernacle was built differently than the tabernacle itself. The tabernacle had boards that held up the weight of the tabernacle curtains, which went over the top and the sides of the tabernacle. The court of the tabernacle has pillars to which the curtains were hooked that held them in place as a wall of cloth. There is no ceiling above the courtyard. It is open above. These curtain walls were of fine twined linen.

The gate of the court was of the same materials as the gate for entering the holy place: **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:**" It did not have the cherubims woven in it as the vail to the most holy place.

The height of the court of the tabernacle was only half as tall as the tabernacle itself. The tabernacle boards were 10 cubits high, and the curtains of the court are only five cubits high. This always gave a view of the tabernacle proper to all of Israel. As the tabernacle projects the imagery of Christ, so Christ should be the high focus in our lives as disciples of Christ.

Although the court of the tabernacle was a large area, it would only hold a very few people at one time. This area was the place that the individuals brought their sacrifices to the priests, the priests then took the sacrifices and offered them upon the altar as required by God.

As we think upon this scene, we see the prophetic picture that a remnant shall be saved, coming to the cross for the remission of their sins, seen in: **Ro 9:27 "Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved: 28 For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth."** This scripture does not say that all of Israel shall be saved, but rather a remnant. The same is true today, not all mankind are saved to eternal life in Christ, just a remnant.

This remnant consists of: **Re 5:9 "And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; 10 And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth."** Just as there was a remnant of Israel saved, so shall a remnant of all these groups named here be saved. This is in no way an indication that there will only be a few people saved, for we are told of an innumerable host in heaven, seen in: **Re 7:9 "After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; 10 And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. 11 And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, 12 Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen."** We include verses 11-12; to show that the multitude, that no man could number, is people, not angels or the other created beings that are also in the eternal heaven.

Why have this curtain wall courtyard for the tabernacle? This curtain wall is like the parables that Jesus used in scripture. How? Why did Jesus speak in parables? Jesus tells us plainly in: **Mt 13:10-15; 10 "And the disciples**

came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? 11 He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. 12 For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath. 13 Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. 14 And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: 15 For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them." The same is true today. Christ is seen only by those to whom he reveals himself.

19 "All the vessels of the tabernacle in all the service thereof, and all the pins thereof, and all the pins of the court, shall be of brass. 20 ¶ And thou shalt command the children of Israel, that they bring thee pure oil olive beaten for the light, to cause the lamp to burn always. 21 In the tabernacle of the congregation without the veil, which is before the testimony, Aaron and his sons shall order it from evening to morning before the LORD: it shall be a statute forever unto their generations on the behalf of the children of Israel."

All the vessels needed for the court of the tabernacle service were made of brass.

Israel was required to bring pure olive oil to keep the lamp in the holy place always burning. This was necessary so the priests could see, when they entered the holy place to burn incense, after they made the sacrificial offerings on the brazen altar.

Notice, the commandment to bring oil for the lamp was to all Israel. This indicates that every child of God, once born again, is to come to the church in profession of faith in Christ and let the light of Christ shine forth through them.

"that they bring thee pure oil olive beaten for the light" They would take the olive berries and beat them to get the oil from them. This oil was used as fuel for the lamps of the golden candlestick. We comparatively see that Christ was beaten for us. Jesus's blood is the oil for our lamps. Jesus is the light of the world, seen in: **Joh 8:12 ¶ "Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."** This tells us that after the new birth, the light of Christ is to be always shining in our lives, bringing glory and honor to the name of God, as seen in: **Mt 5:16 "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."** Help us Lord, to be bright lights in a world filled with the darkness of sin. Amen!

Summation Of The Completed Tabernacle:

For man to get to the place of communion with God, he must enter through the gate of the court of the tabernacle. Remember that the priests who entered were already wearing the proper attire. This tells us that the new birth must occur first for one to enter the court of the tabernacle. We are already robed in the righteousness of Christ when we come and offer to the church. We see this in: **Joh 14:6 "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."**

Once in the court of the tabernacle, we must come to the brazen altar and offer sacrifice. Our sacrifice today is the shed blood of Jesus, offered in prayer to God the Father. If you have not seen Christ, revealed on the cross, sacrificing himself for your sin, or if you do not believe that Jesus died on the cross for your sins, then you don't have rightful access to enter the door into the holy place. You are not dressed in the proper attire.

Next, you must pass by the laver where the washing took place in preparation of entering the holy place. This is the picture of being washed in the waters of regeneration, seen in: **Joh 3:5 "Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."** This is why, after the water baptism, the church gives the new member the right hand of fellowship.

Now, the new creature in Christ is ready to enter the holy place. Entrance is through the veil, the door, which is Jesus Christ. Having been given entrance to the holy place, we see the lampstand which gives us light. This is Christ who is the light of the world, seen in: **Joh 8:12 ¶ "Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."** It is also a picture of the church today, as seen in: **Mt 5:14 "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid."**

You now have access to the table of shewbread, which is a picture of receiving the right to partake of the Lord's Supper. The Christian needs the bread of life every day, as seen in: ***Joh 6:51 "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."***

Before we get to the vail to enter the most holy place, we find the altar of incense, where the sweet savor offerings were made. We get a picture of this altar of incense, seen in: ***Re 8:3-4; 3 "And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. 4 And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand."*** When we pray in accordance with God's will, our prayers are sweet incense to God.

Since only the High Priest could enter the most holy place, where the ark and mercy seat were, it was necessary that Jesus come and die on the cross. Why? When Jesus died on the cross, the vail of the temple, to enter the most holy place, was rent, and exposed to our view the mercy seat, which is Christ crucified. Since the mercy seat was the place where God spoke to and communed with Israel, we see the revelation of the glory of the gospel of Jesus Christ exposed to our view. Since the voice of God sounded from above the mercy seat, we hear the voice of God speaking to us today through the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ. This reminds us of the scene in Genesis where the voice of God communed with Adam in the Garden of Eden. It is because of the mercy seat, Jesus Christ, that we are given eternal remission of sins, and eternal life in Christ.

Moses was told to make everything according to the pattern he was shown by God in the mount. Wherefore, we see that the ultimate picture is that through Jesus Christ we shall be in the eternal heaven, no longer looking at the pattern shown in the mount, but beholding Jesus in the fullness of his glory on the throne of God. Hallelujah! What a day that will be!