

THE TABERNACLE IN THE WILDERNESS

Part 3: 'The Gospel At The Brazen Altar'

Reading: *Exodus 27: 1 - 8*

Introduction

- The solitary entrance on the east side of the tabernacle grants entrance into the sacred space of **'the outer court.'**

1 Things To See, To Hear And To Smell

- Directly in front of the penitent is the brazen altar.
- The largest of the 6 pieces of scared tabernacle furniture.
- Made of acacia wood and overlaid with bronze.
- Measured 5 cubits square and 3 cubits in height.
- A horn of bronze on each corner.
- A grid/network of bronze halfway up on the inside of the structure.
- 2 rings on opposite sides for transportation.
- 5 bronze utensils (fire pans, forks, shovels, basins and pans.)
- Flames rose from the altar
- You can smell the signature smell of burning animal flesh.

2 The Drama At The Altar

- A lamb is tethered to one of the 4 horns on the altar.
- Priest examines it for disease or blemish.
- The penitent lays their hand on the lamb.
- The priest kills it with a knife and collects its blood in a basin.

- The priest puts some of the blood on the 4 horns and pours out the remaining at the base of the altar.
- The lamb is **'lifted up'** unto the altar; its flesh to be consumed in the flames.
- Later the priest will retrieve the ashes and carry them outside the camp to be carefully disposed of.
- Primitive? Shocking? Obscene? Scandalous?

3 The Altar Is A Picture Of God's Justice For Sin And Mercy To The Penitent

- The altar deals with the dilemma of God's holiness and righteousness and our sinfulness and unrighteousness.
- God did not compromise His standard to accommodate the sinner.
- The bronze of the altar speaks of God's judgement for sin. [Deuteronomy 28:23], [Judges 16:21], [2Kings 25:7].
- The fire speaks of judgement too: [Hebrews 12:29], [Mark 9:44, 46, 48].
- NB. There can be no approach to God until the demands of the altar have been met.
- Notice the prominence of the number 5 with the altar.
- Five is the number of grace. [Ephesians 2:8].

4 Behold The Lamb

- The concept of an innocent sacrifice was already well known. [Genesis 3:21/ 22:1 - 13].
- The lamb takes the place of the guilty and its blood is shed. [Hebrews 9:22]
- The lamb is such an obvious type of Christ. [John 1:29].
- Christ was without **'spot or blemish'** [1 Peter 1:19].
- The lamb was lifted up unto the altar. [John 12:32].
- Our sins are imputed to Christ who endures the judgement of God we deserved.
- He takes our sins and we receive His righteousness.
- NB. As the ashes were taken outside the camp so too was Christ buried outside Jerusalem.
- NB. The horns of the altar was also a place of safety for the guilty. [1 Kings 1: 50 - 51].

Teaching Biblically • Thinking Biblically • Living Biblically