

## **Christ: The Fulfillment of the Tabernacle**

### **A Fourfold Tabernacle Experience: the Laver; the Lampstand; the Altar of Incense; and the Table of Show Bread**

**The Purpose of the Tabernacle:** God really wanted His people, the Israelites, to understand His holiness *and* His desire to be with them. God told them to build a special place called a Tabernacle as a way for them to see these two things. Although the Israelites didn't know it at the time, every part of the Tabernacle was actually a symbol for Jesus

### **The New Covenant Improved on the Old Tabernacle**

"They serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things. For when Moses was about to erect the tent, he was instructed by God, saying, "See that you make everything according to the pattern that was shown you on the mountain." **6** But as it is, Christ has obtained a ministry that is as much more excellent than the old as the covenant he mediates is better, since it is enacted on better promises. **7** For if that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no occasion to look for a second."

Hebrews 8:5-7 (ESV)

### **Redemption through Christ's Blood**

"Now even the first covenant had regulations for worship and an earthly place of holiness. **2** For a tent was prepared..." Hebrews 9:1-2 (ESV)

**11** But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) **12** he entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption. **13** For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of a heifer, sanctify for the purification of the flesh, **14** how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God. Hebrews 9:11-14 (ESV)

### **The Laver:**

#### **Old Testament Instructions for the Tabernacle: Exodus 30:17-21**

The laver, or basin, was a large bowl filled with water located halfway between the brazen altar and the Holy Place. Although God did not give specific measurements for the laver, it was to be made entirely of bronze. The priests were to wash their hands and their feet in it before entering the Holy Place.

#### **New Testament Application:**

"Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, **20** by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, **21** and since we have a great priest over the house of God, **22** let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. **23** Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. **24** And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, **25** not neglecting to meet together, as is the

habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.” Hebrews 10:19-25 (ESV)

“Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, **26** that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, **27** so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.” Ephesians 5:25-27 (ESV)

## **The Alter of Incense:**

### **Old Testament Instructions for the Tabernacle: Exodus 30:1-10, 34-38; Isaiah 56:7**

The golden altar of incense, which is not to be confused with the brazen altar, sat in front of the curtain that separated the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies. This altar was smaller than the brazen altar. It was a square with each side measuring 1.5 feet and was 3 feet high. It was made of acacia wood and overlaid with pure gold. Four horns protruded from the four corners of the altar.

these I will bring to my holy mountain,  
and make them joyful in my house of prayer;  
their burnt offerings and their sacrifices  
will be accepted on my altar;  
for my house shall be called a house of prayer  
for all peoples.” Isaiah 56:7 (ESV)

### **New Testament application:**

“And another angel came and stood at the altar with a golden censer, and he was given much incense to offer with the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar before the throne, **4** and the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, rose before God from the hand of the angel.” Revelation 8:3-4 (ESV)

“Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.” Romans 8:34 (ESV)

Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. **14** If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it. John 14:13-14 (ESV)

## **The Table of Show Bread**

### **Old Testament Instructions for the Tabernacle: Exodus 25:23-30; Leviticus 25:5-9**

The table of showbread was a small table made of acacia wood and overlaid with pure gold. It measured 3 feet by 1.5 feet and was 2 feet, 3 inches high. It stood on the right side of the Holy Place across from the lampstand and held the showbread, or bread of the presence.

“You shall take fine flour and bake twelve loaves from it; two tenths of an ephah shall be in each loaf. **6** And you shall set them in two piles, six in a pile, on the table of pure gold before the Lord. **7** And you shall put pure frankincense on each pile, that it may go with the bread as a memorial portion as a food offering to the Lord. **8** Every Sabbath day Aaron shall arrange it before the Lord regularly; it is from the people of Israel as a covenant forever. **9** And it shall be for Aaron and his sons, and they shall eat it in a

holy place, since it is for him a most holy portion out of the Lord's food offerings, a perpetual due." Leviticus 25:5-9 (ESV)

### **New Testament Application:**

Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst. John 6:35 (ESV)

I am the bread of life. **49** Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. **50** This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. **51** I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh." John 6:48-51 (ESV)

Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." Matthew 26:26 (ESV)

## **The Golden Lamp Stand**

**Old Testament Instructions for the Tabernacle:** Exodus 25:31-40

After washing their hands and feet at the laver, the priests could enter the Holy Place, which was the first room in the tent of the tabernacle. There were three pieces of furniture in the Holy Place: the menorah, the table of showbread and the golden altar of incense.

The menorah, also called the "golden lampstand" or "candlestick," stood at the left side of the Holy Place. It was hammered out of one piece of pure gold. Like for the laver, there were no specific instructions about the size of the menorah, but the fact that it was fashioned out of one piece of pure gold would have limited its size.

The lampstand had a central branch from which three branches extended from each side, forming a total of seven branches. Seven lamps holding olive oil and wicks stood on top of the branches. Each branch looked like that of an almond tree, containing buds, blossoms and flowers.

### **New Testament application:**

"The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world". John 1:9 (ESV)

"I have come into the world as light, so that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness." John 12:46 (ESV)

"I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing." John 15:5: (ESV)

"for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light **9** (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true)" Ephesians 5:8-9 (ESV)