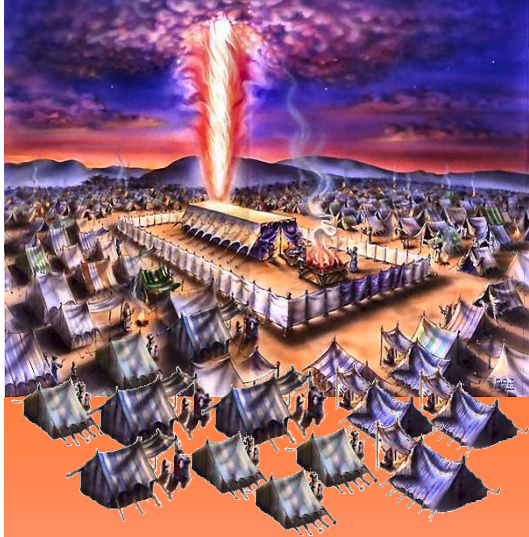
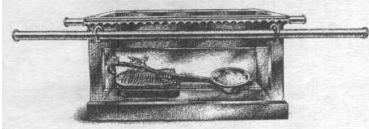


The Furniture of the Tabernacle Part 2

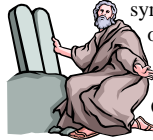


--Ark of the Covenant continued from Part 1 --



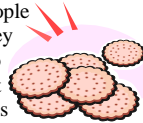
The Tablets of the Law

The ark contained the stone tablets written by the finger of God for Moses and the children of Israel. They contained the famed Ten Commandments. Their presence in the ark symbolized the fact that God is a god of order and law. The celestial kingdom is only obtained by adherence to the laws of God. Similarly, no blessing from God will be realized save by the adherence to the laws of heaven. Christ was a perfect example of adherence to the law.



Golden Pot of Manna

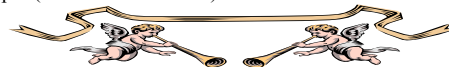
Manna was the daily food of the people throughout their wilderness journey (Exodus 16:14-21). The Israelites were to take no thought as to their substance, but rather they should concern themselves with following God's commands. Manna symbolizes our complete dependence on God. It teaches us that celestial glory is obtained by shedding all concern about our own well-being.



Aaron's Rod That Budded

Aaron's rod represents the priesthood, the power to act in God's name. One might recall an epoch in Israel's history, where the leaders of Israel rebelled against Moses and Aaron. Each rule of a tribe had a rod. A scepter of rule if you will. When the challenge to authority was made, God directed all the leaders to place their rod in the ground. They followed the direction; however, the tribal leader's rods were already shriveled and dead wood. Aaron's staff, however, blossomed before their eyes. What was dead now lived.

Another aspect of Aaron's rod is discovered in the fact that it was taken from the almond tree. Almond, in Hebrew, means "the hastener," being the first to bloom in the Spring: just as Christ is the "...first-fruits of them that slept" (1 Corinthians 15:20).



The Ark of the Covenant contained a lid often referred to as the "Mercy-seat". It was the lid or covering for the ark. On the lid were two cherubim. The word cherub is the Greek word for the word Seraph. A seraph is a special guardian type angel. It stems from the same root word



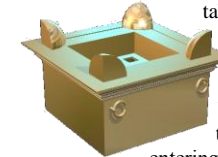
as serpent, which might help us understand that Satan came to eve as an angel rather than a snake. The Hebrews often used the snake as a symbol for angels. Moses put a serpent on a staff in the desert for the children of Israel to look upon in order to receive healing from the asp bites they had received. Interestingly, angels were placed to guard the tree of life



after Adam's fall. Here on the ark we find the famed cherubim. They stand on the mercy seat, which represents the great and merciful atonement. Man's idea of a covering is concealment; God's is atonement. Adam's covering of fig leaves did not adequately cover his sins, however, the skins made by God did. The only way past the angels of heaven, and back into God's presence is through the atonement of the Savior.

THE ALTAR OF BURNT-OFFERING

Though not in the Tabernacle, the Altar of Burnt-Offering, or the Brazen Altar, was definitely an important part of the tabernacle. It was the most prominent article in the court, and the first thing encountered by those who entered the court to draw near to God. The altar of burnt-offering was the first step in the tabernacle service preparatory to entering God's presence. The materials used to build the altar were acacia wood overlaid with copper or brass. Copper was the characteristic metal outside the Tabernacle, as gold was within. It symbolized the difference between Telesstial and Celestial worlds. All the vessels of the altar were made of copper as well. Copper is an excellent conductor of both heat and electricity.



The dimensions of the altar re substantially larger when compared with the altar of incense. At 5 cubits square (7 feet 4 inches square) its area is 25 square cubits (over 53 square feet) while that of the altar of incense is only 1 square cubit (1 foot 5 1/2 inches square). The altar of burnt-offering is symbolic of perfect grace. 5 is the symbol of grace and anything squared symbolized perfection. The height of the altar of Burnt-Offering was 3 cubits (4 feet 4 inches). The volume of the altar of burnt-offering is 75 cubic cubits (5x5x3) or 232 cubic feet. Note that three is also a number of heavenly perfection.



There were various tools associated with the Altar. There were pots for the ashes, literally, "the fat" [ashes], shovels for removing ashes of fire, bowels for catching the blood to be sprinkled in the purification of various items, fire pans for holding the fire, and flesh hooks or forks for handling the meat. All instruments were made of brass.

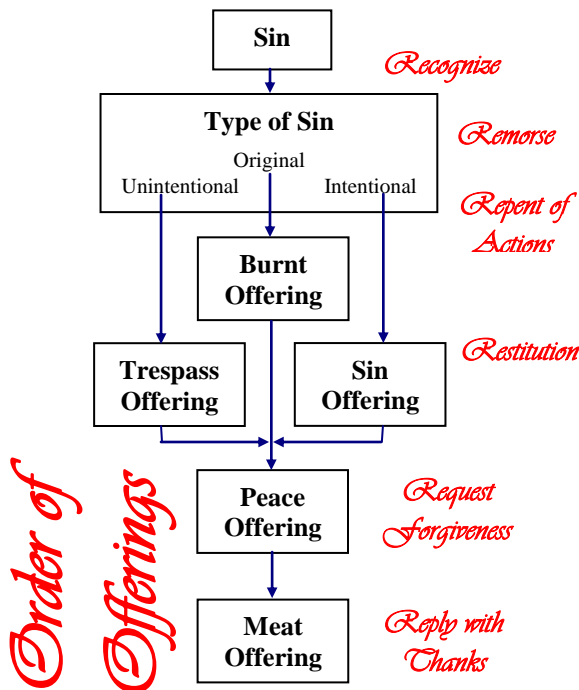


There was a large grate on the top of the altar. The grate kept the sacrifice from simply falling into the fire. The grate was on the inside of the altar. It was fastened to 4 copper rings, which passed through the side of the altar. The portion of the rings on the outside of the altar, were for the staves to be placed though to carry the altar.

Fire was always upon the brazen altar (Leviticus 6:12, 13) This fire upon the brazen altar came out from before the Lord and consumed the sacrifice (Leviticus 9:24). The altar of burnt-offering was the one place where the fire of God's judgement could burn; and this was focused on the grating of copper. The only thing that was consumed by the fire of the altar was the sins, which our Lord had graciously taken upon himself.

The altar was used for various Sacrifices; Burnt Offerings, Sin Offerings, Trespass Offerings, Peace Offerings, and Meat Offerings. All these offerings seem rather confusing; however, upon further investigation one finds that the Lord was teaching the Israelites the repentance process. Repentance is one of the principles of the Gospel, following Faith. No man can return without it.

Burnt offerings were given based on Adam's transgression. Burnt-Offerings were needed by every person continually. Unintentional Sins and Intentional Sins required Trespass and Sin offerings respectfully. After making atonement via sacrifice, one needed to make peace with God and receive forgiveness. This was done with a Peace Offering. Following a Peace offering, one would give thanks to the Lord for his mercy via a Meat offering.



Sacrifices as contained in The Book of Leviticus (Book of the Law of the Priests)



Burnt Offering or "olah"

Leviticus 1; 6:8-13; 8:18-21; 16:24

Purpose: To atone for sin, i.e. original sin; means which unholy people approach a Holy God

Victim: Male, unblemished: ox, sheep, goat, or dove (according to wealth)

God's Portion: Entire Animal (hence called "kalil", whole burnt offering)

Priest's Portion: Nothing

Offerer's Portion: Nothing

Meat Offering or "minchah"

Leviticus 2:1-16; 6:14-23

Purpose: Voluntary act of worship; recognition of God's goodness and provision; devotion

Victim: No victim, bloodless sacrifice

God's Portion: small portion

Priest's Portion: remainder

Offerer's Portion: none

Peace Offering of "shalem"

Leviticus 3:1-17; 7:11-34

Purpose: Voluntary act of worship; thanksgiving; fellowship (included a communal meal)

Victim: from cattle, sheep, or goat; male or female

God's Portion: fat, kidneys, caul of the liver

Priest's Portion: breast and right thigh

Offerer's Portion: remainder of the sacrifice

Trespass Offering or Guilt Offering or "asham"

Leviticus 5:14-6; 7:1-6

Purpose: Mandatory atonement for unintentional sin requiring restitution; pay 20% fine.

Victim: Ram (only)

God's Portion: Fatty portions (fat covering inwards; kidneys, liver, caul)

Priest's Portion: All the remainder (had to be eaten within court of tabernacle)

Offerer's Portion: Nothing

Sin Offering or "hattat"

Leviticus 4:1-5:13; 6:24-30; 8:14-17; 16:3-22

Purpose: To atone for specific transgressions where no restitution was possible

Victim: Priest or congregation; bullock, Ruler: he-goat, Commoner: she-goat

God's Portion: Fatty portions (fat covering inwards; kidneys, liver, caul)

Priest's Portion: All the remainder (had to be eaten within court of tabernacle)

Offerer's Portion: Nothing

THE LAVER

The last item of discussion is the Laver. Like the Brazen Altar, the Laver is not part of the Tabernacle itself, but is closely associated with it. The Laver lies in the courtyard of the Tabernacle. Laver was made of copper. It was basically a basin, made from mirrors of



the women (ancient mirrors were made from polished brass). A mirror or looking glass represents vanity, and it was an act of great sacrifice to self for the women to surrender their highly polished brass mirrors for the construction of the Laver. The size of it is not

known, but as all sacrifices were washed there before being offered at the altar, it must have been quite large. The one made by Solomon was called "the molten sea," and was about 16 feet at the laver in diameter. Priests passing to and from the holy place and the altar were required to bathe their hands and feet at the laver under penalty of death, and the high priest on the day of atonement had to bathe his entire person there before entering the Holy of holies. The laver typified baptism. As the laver stood at the door of the tabernacle, so baptism stands at the door of the kingdom of God. As the sinner had to lay his own hand on the sacrifice before it could be borne in before God for him, so must the sinner accept Christ for himself before baptism.



At the foot of the Laver were 21 receptacles, not basins (Exodus 30:18,19). It is, therefore, highly unlikely that the



"foot" would have been used to wash the feet. The foot was most likely used to remove water from the laver for the purpose of washing. Incidentally, the law of the tabernacle forbade the woman to go any further than the laver of the Tabernacle. The symbolic meaning of this is that Soul in the Bible is always described as feminine and Spirit as masculine. In the Holy Place, all the activities represent the works of the Spirit. The courtyard represented the lower law, the law of Moses, while the Tabernacle represented the Higher Law, that being the fullness of the Gospel. Even so, like baptism it was a very crucial step towards the final goal of entering God's presence.

