



METRO NEW YORK WORLD MINISTRY
LESSON on THE SANCTUARY
Lesson Two by Pastor Jeff Wehr

Moses and the Sanctuary

What two great things did Moses receive on Mount Sinai?

“And the LORD said unto Moses, Come up to me into the mount, and be there: and I will give thee tables of stone, and a law, and commandments which I have written; that thou mayest teach them.... And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them. According to all that I show thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it.” Exodus 24:12; 25:8, 9

Moses was given the Ten Commandments which reveal the perfect moral character of God, and he received a vision of the heavenly sanctuary. Moses would be instructed of God to make a miniature copy of the heavenly sanctuary on earth. In that earthly sanctuary would be placed God’s perfect Ten Commandments. So we can see that the Ten Commandments and the sanctuary go together.

What is the relationship between the sanctuary and the Ten Commandments?

The sanctuary and its service would teach us how to be (1) forgiven of our sins, and (2) cleansed from sin.

The earthly sanctuary and its services taught ancient Israel God’s plan to save man from (1) the penalty of sin, and (2) freedom from the power of sin. And what is sin? It is the transgression of God’s law. See 1 John 3:4.

So the earthly sanctuary and its services will teach us how to be forgiven for breaking God’s Ten Commandments, and how we can keep those Ten Commandments.

Many error by teaching that the Ten Commandments have nothing to do with the gospel. But on Mount Sinai, God gave to Moses both the Ten Commandments and the sanctuary truth, and those Ten Commandments were placed in the Most Holy Place in the sanctuary.

The following are references of the sanctuary Moses was shown on the Mount. Exodus 25:8, 9, 40; 26:30; 27:8; Numbers 8:4

How long was Moses on the Mount receiving this precious instruction?

“And Moses went into the midst of the cloud, and gat him up into the mount: and Moses was in the mount forty days and forty nights” Exodus 24:18



How important is the number 40 in the Bible?

It rained for 40 days and 40 nights when God would destroy the wicked antediluvian world with the Flood.

Genesis 7

Noah waited another 40 days before he opened the window of the Ark. Genesis 8

Moses' face shone after his 40 days on the Mount. Exodus 34:29

The spies searched out the land for 40 days. Numbers 13:25

Jonah warned the city of Ninevah for 40 days and the people repented. Jonah 3:4

Jesus fasted for 40 days in the wilderness. Matthew 4:1, 2

Jesus was on the earth for 40 days after His crucifixion. Acts 1:3

As we consider the above examples, we can see that the number 40 is often associated with tests, probation, and trials.

The human family is on probation. We all go through tests and trials. The Ten Commandments are the standard of God's government and they always will be. God is not going to lower His standard of righteousness so that men might live forever in sin. God is too loving to allow us to sin for eternity. Rather, His love has established a plan to rescue man from the penalty of sin and the power of sin.

What two men did God appoint to carry out the building of the sanctuary?

“And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, See, I have called by name **Bezaleel** the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah: And I have filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship, to devise cunning works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, and in cutting of stones, to set them, and in carving of timber, to work in all manner of workmanship. And I, behold, I have given with him **Aholiab**, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan: and in the hearts of all that are wise hearted I have put wisdom, that they may make all that I have commanded thee; the tabernacle of the congregation, and the ark of the testimony, and the mercy seat that is thereupon, and all the furniture of the tabernacle, and the table and his furniture, and the pure candlestick with all his furniture, and the altar of incense, and the altar of burnt offering with all his furniture, and the laver and his foot, and the cloths of service, and the holy garments for Aaron the priest, and the garments of his sons, to minister in the priest's office, and the anointing oil, and sweet incense for the holy place: according to all that I have commanded thee shall they do.” Exodus 31:1-11

There was no human devising in the construction of the sanctuary. It was all a revelation from God. In the same way, we can add nothing to the gospel of Jesus Christ. There is nothing on man's part whereby he can earn salvation.



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Everything that was built was but a revelation from God. As Paul wrote, “Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou **make all things** according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount.” Hebrews 8:5

As we study the sanctuary, we are to consider only those things that God has revealed. In addition, we are to interpret the meaning of the sanctuary and its services only as explained by the Word. As Peter wrote, “Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” 2 Peter 1:21

As Bezaleel and Aholiab were filled with the Spirit to build the sanctuary, we must be filled with the Spirit to understand its meaning.

The Structure of the Sanctuary

How was the sanctuary constructed? See Exodus 26:1-29

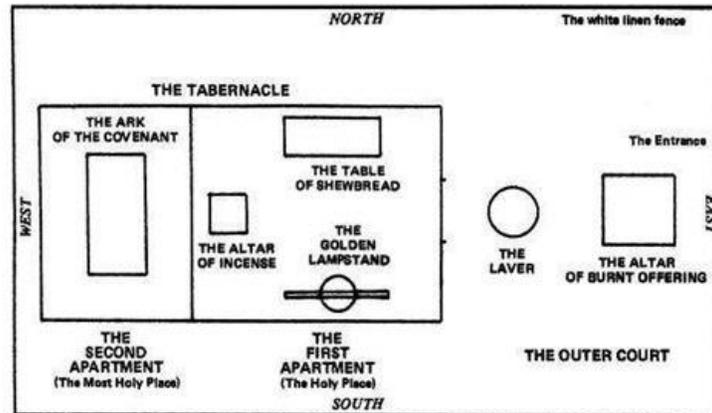
“The tabernacle was so constructed that it could be taken apart and borne with the Israelites in all their journeyings. It was therefore small, being not more than fifty-five feet in length, and eighteen in breadth and height. Yet it was a magnificent structure. The wood employed for the building and its furniture was that of the acacia tree, which was less subject to decay than any other to be obtained at Sinai. The walls consisted of upright boards, set in silver sockets, and held firm by pillars and connecting bars; and all were overlaid with gold, giving to the building the appearance of solid gold. The roof was formed of four sets of curtains, the innermost of “fine twined linen, and blue, and purple, and scarlet: with cherubim of cunning work;” the other three respectively were of goats' hair, rams' skins dyed red, and sealskins, so arranged as to afford complete protection.” PP 347

How accurate was the building of the sanctuary? Exodus 26:30

“Chosen men were especially endowed by God with skill and wisdom for the construction of the sacred building. God Himself gave to Moses the plan of that structure, with particular directions as to its size and form, the materials to be employed, and every article of furniture which it was to contain. The holy places made with hands were to be ‘figures of the true,’ ‘patterns of things in the heavens’ (Hebrews 9:24, 23)--a miniature representation of the heavenly temple where Christ, our great High Priest, after offering His life as a sacrifice, was to minister in the sinner's behalf. God presented before Moses in the mount a view of the heavenly sanctuary, and commanded him to make all things according to the pattern shown him. All these directions were carefully recorded by Moses, who communicated them to the leaders of the people.” PP 343

How many different sections comprised the sanctuary?

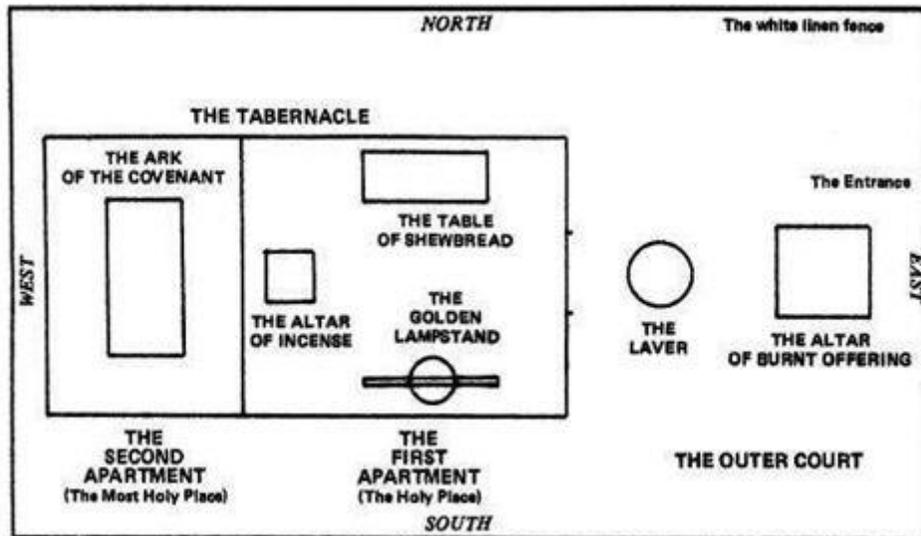
Courtyard, Holy Place, and Most Holy Place



Exodus 40:1-8 describes the setting up of the sanctuary, often referred to as the tabernacle. In verse 3, we find described the **Most Holy Place** where we find the ark of the testimony and the Ten Commandments. In verses 4 and 5, we have described the **Holy Place** where we find the table of showbread, the seven-branched candle stick, and the altar of incense. In verses 6-8, we have described the **Courtyard** where we find the altar of burnt offerings and the laver.

“And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 40:2 On the first day of the first month shalt thou set up the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation. 40:3 And thou shalt put therein **the ark of the testimony** [found in the Most Holy Place], and cover the ark with the veil. 40:4 And thou shalt bring in the **table** [of showbread, found in the Holy Place], and set in order the things that are to be set in order upon it; and thou shalt bring in the [seven-branched] **candlestick** [found in the Holy Place], and light the lamps thereof. 40:5 And thou shalt set the **altar of gold for the incense** [the altar of incense found in the Holy Place] before the ark of the testimony, and put the hanging of the door to the tabernacle. 40:6 And thou shalt set the **altar of the burnt offering** [found in the Courtyard] before the door of the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation. 40:7 And thou shalt set the **laver** [found in the Courtyard] between the tent of the congregation and the altar, and shalt put water therein. 40:8 And thou shalt set up the court round about, and hang up the hanging at the court gate.”

These are the main sections and pieces of furniture associated with the Sanctuary.



The Courtyard has the Altar of Burnt Offerings and the Laver.

There is the Courtyard where we find the altar of burnt offerings and the laver. The following are other verses in reference to the Courtyard. Exodus 27:9-17; 38:9-20; 40:8

“The sacred tent was enclosed in an open space called the court, which was surrounded by hangings, or screens, of fine linen, suspended from pillars of brass. The entrance to this enclosure was at the eastern end. It was closed by curtains of costly material and beautiful workmanship, though inferior to those of the sanctuary. The hangings of the court being only about half as high as the walls of the tabernacle, the building could be plainly seen by the people without. In the court, and nearest the entrance, stood the brazen altar of burnt offering. Upon this altar were consumed all the sacrifices made by fire unto the Lord, and its horns were sprinkled with the atoning blood. Between the altar and the door of the tabernacle was the laver, which was also of brass, made from the mirrors that had been the freewill offering of the women of Israel. At the laver the priests were to wash their hands and their feet whenever they went into the sacred apartments, or approached the altar to offer a burnt offering unto the Lord.” PP 347, 348

The Holy Place has the Seven-branch Candlestick, the Table of Shewbread, and the Altar of Incense.

There is the Holy Place where we find the seven-branched candlestick [also known as the Menorah], the table of showbread, and the altar of incense.

“In the first apartment, or holy place, were the table of showbread, the candlestick, or lampstand, and the altar of incense. The table of showbread stood on the north. With its ornamental crown, it was overlaid with pure gold. On this table the priests were each Sabbath to place twelve cakes, arranged in two piles, and sprinkled with frankincense. The loaves that were removed, being accounted holy, were to be eaten by the priests. On the south



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was the seven-branched candlestick, with its seven lamps. Its branches were ornamented with exquisitely wrought flowers, resembling lilies, and the whole was made from one solid piece of gold. There being no windows in the tabernacle, the lamps were never all extinguished at one time, but shed their light by day and by night. Just before the veil separating the holy place from the most holy and the immediate presence of God, stood the golden altar of incense. Upon this altar the priest was to burn incense every morning and evening; its horns were touched with the blood of the sin offering, and it was sprinkled with blood upon the great Day of Atonement. The fire upon this altar was kindled by God Himself and was sacredly cherished. Day and night the holy incense diffused its fragrance throughout the sacred apartments, and without, far around the tabernacle.” PP 348

There is the Most Holy Place where we find the ark of the covenant.

“Beyond the inner veil was the holy of holies, where centered the symbolic service of atonement and intercession, and which formed the connecting link between heaven and earth. In this apartment was the ark, a chest of acacia wood, overlaid within and without with gold, and having a crown of gold about the top. It was made as a depository for the tables of stone, upon which God Himself had inscribed the Ten Commandments. Hence it was called the ark of God's testament, or the ark of the covenant, since the Ten Commandments were the basis of the covenant made between God and Israel.

“The cover of the sacred chest was called the mercy seat. This was wrought of one solid piece of gold, and was surmounted by golden cherubim, one standing on each end. One wing of each angel was stretched forth on high, while the other was folded over the body (see Ezekiel 1:11) in token of reverence and humility. The position of the cherubim, with their faces turned toward each other, and looking reverently downward toward the ark, represented the reverence with which the heavenly host regard the law of God and their interest in the plan of redemption.

“Above the mercy seat was the Shekinah, the manifestation of the divine Presence; and from between the cherubim, God made known His will. Divine messages were sometimes communicated to the high priest by a voice from the cloud. Sometimes a light fell upon the angel at the right, to signify approval or acceptance, or a shadow or cloud rested upon the one at the left to reveal disapproval or rejection.

“The law of God, enshrined within the ark, was the great rule of righteousness and judgment. That law pronounced death upon the transgressor; but above the law was the mercy seat, upon which the presence of God was revealed, and from which, by virtue of the atonement, pardon was granted to the repentant sinner. Thus in the work of Christ for our redemption, symbolized by the sanctuary service, ‘mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.’” Psalm 85:10. PP 348, 349

The Holy Place and the Most Holy Place

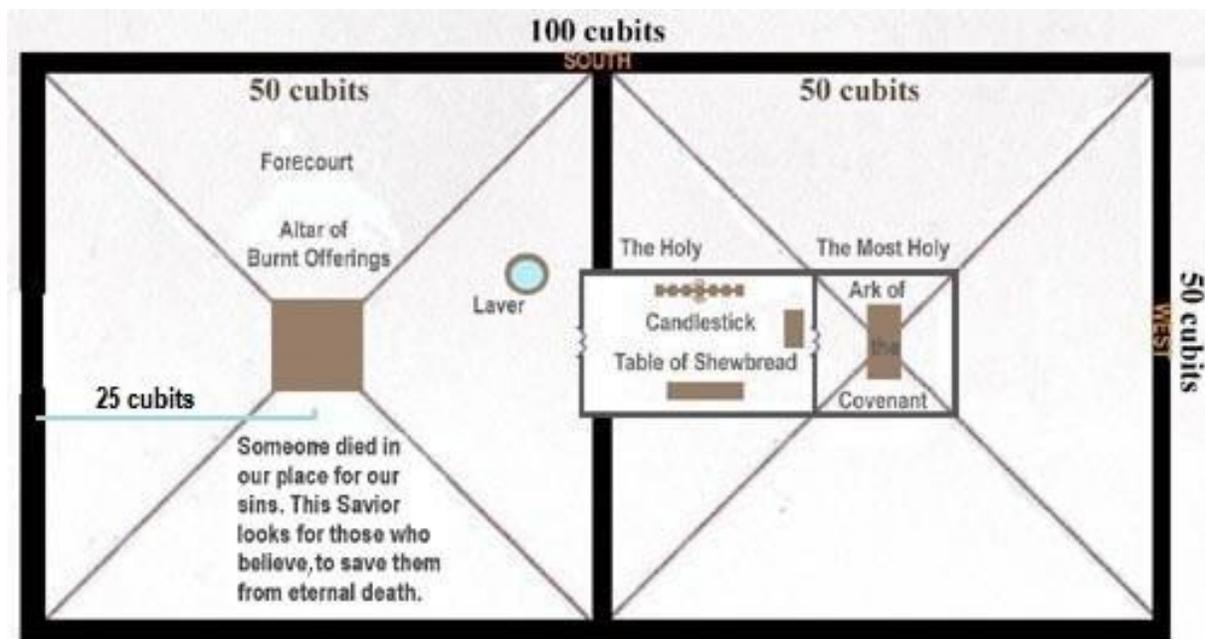
The Holy Place and the Most Holy Place formed one building which was divided into two different compartments, and it was often called the Tabernacle.

The Tabernacle was thirty cubits long, ten cubits wide, and ten cubits high. See Exodus 26:15-29; 36:20-34

What is a cubit? A biblical cubit is considered the length from the elbow to the longest finger or about six handbreadths, which is about 18 inches. Therefore, ten cubits would be fifteen feet and thirty cubits would be 45 feet.

“The tabernacle was so constructed that it could be taken apart and borne with the Israelites in all their journeyings. It was therefore small, being not more than fifty-five feet in length, and eighteen in breadth and height. Yet it was a magnificent structure.” PP 347

The Most Holy Place was a perfect cube that was ten cubits long, ten cubits wide, and ten cubits high. This would make the Holy Place ten cubits wide and ten cubits high, but twenty cubits long.



The dimensions of the Courtyard are found in Exodus 27:18, which reads, “The length of the court shall be an hundred cubits, and the breadth fifty every where, and the height five cubits of fine twined linen, and their sockets of brass.” The Courtyard was 100 cubits in length [or about 150 feet], 50 cubits wide [or about 75 feet wide], and 5 cubits high [or 7 ½ feet].

What did these three different sections represent?

We have made of number of references to the sanctuary, both the earthly and the heavenly. We have spoken about the courtyard, the holy place, and the most holy place. We have referred to Jesus as our high priest in the heavenly sanctuary. He is currently in the most holy place performing the work of judgment; preparatory for His second coming. If you have never study the subject of the sanctuary and its services, we felt that it would be a great benefit to add this as supplemental reading for our study in the book of Hebrews.



Freedom from Guilt; Freedom from Known Sins; Freedom from Hidden Sins

I would first like to begin by saying that the sanctuary is all about being free in Jesus. Doesn't that sound nice! We are to be free from guilt (courtyard), free from known sins (holy place), and free from hidden sins (most holy place). Simply said, the sanctuary will teach us how Jesus will make us free from the slavery of sin.

There are several parts of the sanctuary and its services that we will cover. First, there is the structure of the sanctuary. Second, there is the work of the priests. Third, there are the sacrificial offerings. And lastly, there are the special services like the Passover, Pentecost, Feast of Trumpets, and the Day of Atonement. We will take a quick look at each one of these.

Before there was a sanctuary, there must have been a people to build it. The descendents of Abraham were given the honor of making a sanctuary unto the Lord. Abraham's descendents, later known as Israel, eventually became slaves in Egypt for four hundred years. Through the leadership of Moses and others, the children of Israel were miraculously **freed** by the hand of God.

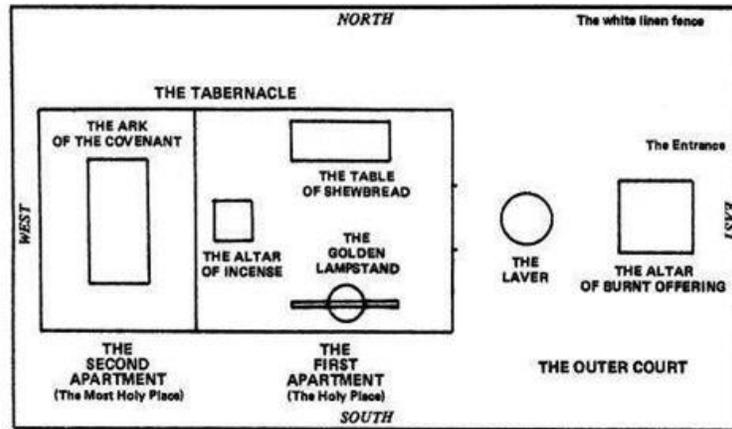
In their wilderness journey towards the Promised Land of Palestine, God would have His people build Him a sanctuary. In vision, Moses was shown the sanctuary in heaven and was given instructions to make a copy of it on earth. See Hebrews 8:1-5. God especially gifted the people to make the sanctuary. Much of the wealth that the Hebrews took with them out of Egypt, in the form of precious metals, linens, and skins, were used to make the sanctuary.

As we have seen, there were three main sections to the structure of the sanctuary. First there was the courtyard which contained the altar of burnt offerings, and the brazen laver. This was where the sacrificial animal was slain. This part of the sanctuary represents being free from the guilt of sin.

The next part was the holy place compartment that contained three pieces of furniture. There was the seven-branched menorah, the table of showbread, and the altar of incense. This section of the sanctuary will teach us how to be free from known sins in our life.

From the holy place one could enter by faith into the most holy place. Inside this most sacred compartment was found the ark of the covenant. Inside the ark were the Ten Commandments, a jar of manna, and Aaron's rod. Here we will discover how to be free from even our hidden sins.

Freedom from Guilt



The Courtyard: The entire sanctuary was surrounded by a wall of fine linen suspended by pillars of brass. See Exodus 27:9; 38:9. The walls were white. This was to symbolize that we can be covered with the righteousness or purity of Christ. And since walls were necessary in ancient times against invasions, this white wall teaches us that we need the righteousness of Christ to protect us from evil.

The singular entrance into the courtyard was through a veil on the east side. The veil was made of fine linen. The colors of the veil were blue, purple, and scarlet, spun with fine gold wires. See Exodus 38:18; 39:3. The veil represents the humanity of Christ. See Hebrews 10:20. In other words, the way to being free from sin is through Jesus. He is the way. See John 14:6. He is the door. See John 10:7. He is the entrance into eternal life.

The veil into the courtyard was wide and low. It was thirty feet wide. See Exodus 38:18. This wide entrance was to encourage all to come to the sanctuary for repentance. It doesn't matter what you have done nor how many times you have done it, the Lord says, "Come just as you are."

The colors of the veil teach us much about the humanity of Jesus. First, there was the white linen. White represents the spotless or sinless life of Christ. Though our sins be as scarlet, He can make us white as wool. See Isaiah 1:18; Daniel 12:9; Matthew 22:11-14; Revelation 3:5, 18; 4:4; 6:11; 7:9, 13; 15:6.

As saints, we are "made white" by the righteousness of Christ. See Revelation 7:14; Malachi 3:2. We are able to be saved from our sins because Jesus lived a sinless life in our fallen human flesh. He became one of us. He shared in all our sufferings, tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin. See Hebrews 4:14-16. We should thank Jesus every day that His perfect and sinless life has made eternal salvation available to us.

The color blue represents the unchanging law of God. The people of God wore fringes of blue around the borders of their garments. See Numbers 15:37-41. This was to remind them to do all things in accordance with God's law. The law of God is an expression or transcript of God's own moral character. If we would be re-created in His image, then we must do that which is according to His perfect will.



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The sinless life of Christ and His shed blood did not do away with the law of God. In fact, the death of Christ proves that God's law stands unchanged forever. So we are to be surrounded by the righteousness of Christ (white), and have His law written on our hearts and minds (blue). See Hebrews 8:10; 10:16.

The color scarlet has often been used to represent life, for life is in the blood. See Isaiah 1:16, 17. Hence, scarlet can represent the sacrifice of Christ precious life for us. In addition, scarlet is used to symbolize sin. For example, there is the "great red dragon," and the harlot church "arrayed in purple and scarlet." See Revelation 12:3; 17:4. As we ponder upon the veil, we understand that our sins (scarlet) caused the death or sacrifice (scarlet) of God's dear Son.

It is through Jesus the righteous One (white), who died for our sins (scarlet) that has made salvation possible. In respond to His great love, I chose to obey His will by keeping the Ten Commandments (blue) by His grace.

The color purple is the color of royalty. See Daniel 5:7; Judges 8:26; Luke 16:19; John 19:2. By virtue of His perfect and sinless life (white), and His self-sacrificing love (scarlet), Jesus is worthy to be our King (purple). As our King, we are to keep His law (blue). Scarlet and blue combined make up purple. We show that Jesus is our King (purple) by accepting both His sacrifice for sin (scarlet) and His perfect law (blue) as the guiding principles of our life.

The color gold represents a godly character. Character is formed by exercising our faith in God. We are motivated to exercise our faith because of His great love for us. See Galatians 5:6. So we might say, gold represents faith that works by love and purifies the character.

We are to have faith in the sinless life of Christ (white), in His perfect law of righteousness (blue), in His shed blood for our sins (scarlet), and to recognize His authority over our lives (purple).

When the penitent sinner came to the courtyard, there was a priest to meet him at the entrance. When the sinner entered the courtyard, he would see the altar of burnt offerings, the laver, and the place where he would need to take the life of the innocent lamb.

The altar of burnt offerings was made of chittim wood covered with copper. It stood three cubits high and five cubits square. See Exodus 27:1. There were four horns, one on each corner of the altar. Horns represent power in the Bible. See Psalm 89:24; 92:10; 132:17; Daniel 7:7, 8, 11, 24. Blood from the sacrifice was sprinkled on the horns of the altar. This was to represent that there is power in the shed blood of Christ. Christ shed His blood that our lives might be empowered by His self-sacrificing life. The greatest power in the world is not positions, possessions, or prestige. It is the power of a humble life that no evil forces can overcome.

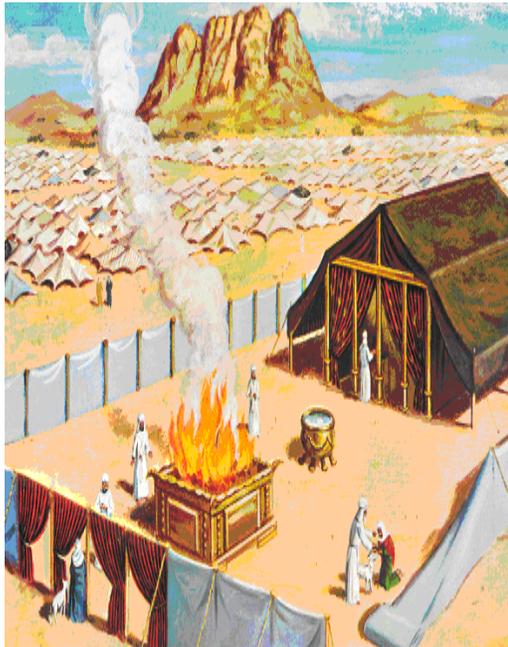


The Hebrew word for altar means “place of slaughter.” See Exodus 28:43. The sacrifice was burned until it became ashes. This represents how Christ was slaughtered and became ashes for us. He was willing to give up all for our salvation.

For awhile, these ashes were carefully placed before the altar. After a time, the ashes were removed outside the camp of Israel to signify that Christ died for all, both Jew and Gentile. See Hebrews 13:11, 12.

When the penitent came to the entrance the priest would lead him to the place of slaughter. The sinner would place his hands upon the forehead of the lamb and confess his sins leaning upon the lamb. This was to signify that we are to give the entire burden of our sins to Christ. We are not to confess and then bare the burden of our sins. Christ is the burden bearer. He wants us to confess our sins and completely give them to Him. So do not continue to punish yourself after you have confessed. Believe that God has forgiven you.

The penitent would then take a knife and cut the throat of the substitute. See Leviticus 1:5. The priest would catch the blood in a bowl. From there the blood would be sprinkled upon the four horns of the altar of burnt offerings (also known as the altar of sacrifice).



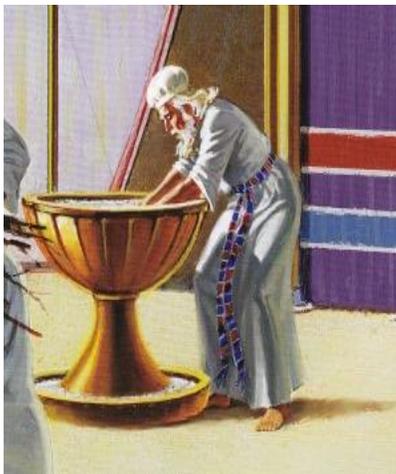
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THE PASSOVER : SLAYING THE PASCHAL LAMB.—*Num. ix.*

This altar of sacrifice represented the cross of Calvary, where Jesus was slain as the Lamb of God. It was here that Jesus bore the penalty for our sins, which is death. He became the Sin-bearer as if He were the guilty one, that we might be treated as the innocent one.

Then there was the laver made of brass/copper. Before the priest could minister in the sanctuary he was required to purify himself at the laver. See Exodus 30:17-21. He would not wash himself in the laver, but would be able to draw water from the laver.



The laver basically had a two-fold ministry. First, it represented the need to be cleansed. And second, it teaches us to be transparent with God.



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In order to gain a true conception of our spirituality, we need to see ourselves as we really are. As we look into the reflective nature of the laver we see ourselves. We need to see the dirt in our lives that we may ask God to cleanse us with His Word and the Holy Spirit. See Ephesians 5:26; Titus 3:3-5. With this desire to be cleansed of all sin, we now have confidence to overcome our known sins.

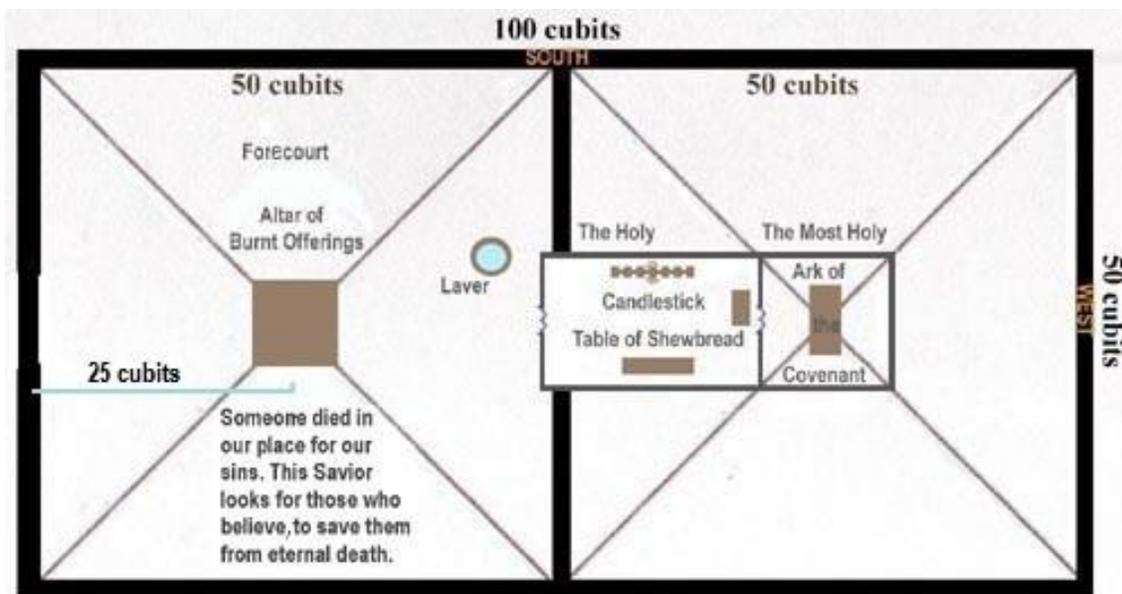
In summary, the gospel begins with the Holy Spirit moving upon our hearts and convincing us of sin. The penitent sinner then responds by bringing a sacrifice to the sanctuary that he may confess his sins and receive forgiveness.

When the penitent confesses his sins upon the sacrifice, his sins have now been transferred from himself to the innocent lamb. Now the lamb, representing Jesus, stands as a sin bearer. It now will pay the penalty for sin, which is death. The life of the lamb is now taken by the penitent, and the blood is caught in a bowl by the priest. From there the blood is sprinkled upon the horns of the altar. The lamb is consumed by the flame upon the altar of burnt offerings. It is a complete sacrifice.

The penitent is now free from guilt. But this is not the end of the gospel. It is the glorious beginning of how God will save us from our sins. Having been forgiven, the sinner now by faith enters into the holy place that he may overcome his known sins.

The Holy Place: Freedom from known sins.

Being free from guilt we now desire to be free from our known sins. We are now ready to enter the holy place by faith. We first notice that the entrance into the holy place is narrower and higher than the entrance into the courtyard. This is to teach us that we must now walk the narrow way. But as we do our spiritual experience will be higher. God does not desire to leave His people simply freed from guilt, but to become overcomers by His grace.





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There are three pieces of furniture in the holy place that teach us how to lay hold upon the power of God to overcome all known sins. There is the seven branched candlestick or menorah that teaches us to shine for Jesus. There is the table of showbread that teaches us to partake of Jesus life every day. And there is the altar of incense that teaches us to communion with God in prayer. Take away any one of these three spiritual exercises and you proportional lose power to overcome daily temptations to sin. However, if these three entities are a vital part of your daily experience, then you will be an overcomer. It reminds me that a three stranded cord is not easily broken. See Ecclesiastes 4:12.

Menorah: The menorah was made of gold. It had a central pillar and six branches. See Exodus 25:31, 32. We are the branches and He is the pillar. See John 15. All of us are to have Christ as our Source of life. With Him as the center we are in unity together. It is God's design that we shine together for Christ.



The purpose of the menorah was to provide light in the holy place. This would primarily represent Christ as the light of the world. But secondarily, it symbolizes how we are to shine for Jesus. In fact, sharing Jesus with others is a key factor in overcoming our own sins.

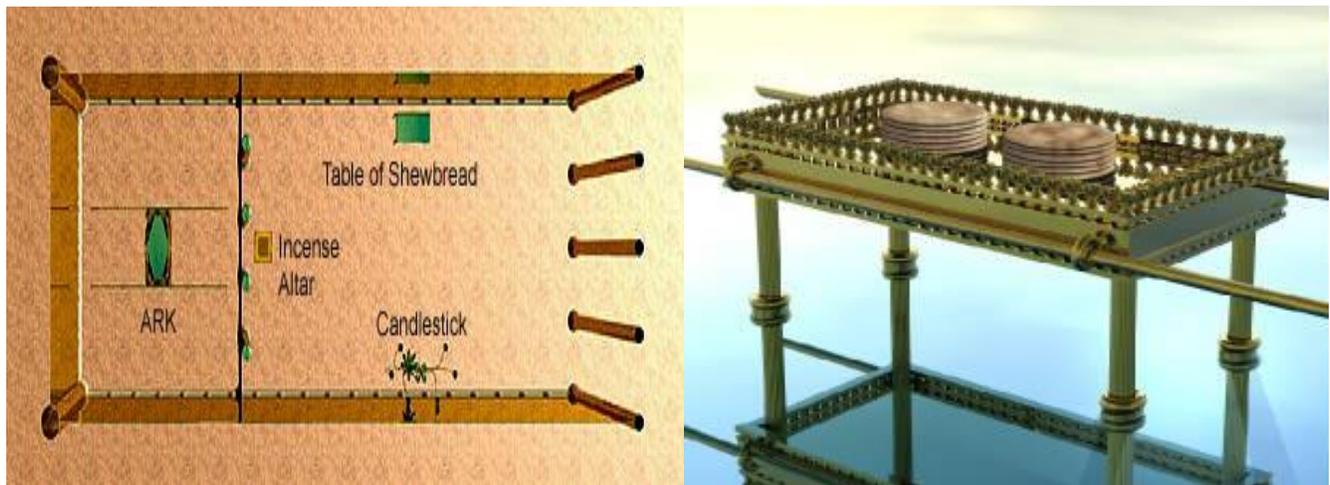
Olive oil was used as fuel for the menorah. See Exodus 27:20, 21; Leviticus 24:2, 3. The menorah being filled with oil represents us being filled with the Holy Spirit. See Ephesians 5:18. As we receive fresh supplies of the Holy Spirit we are to constantly shine for Jesus. But when we choose not to share Christ and to shine for Him in good works and loving words and deeds, then we cut off the supply of oil. We begin to die spiritually. We lose strength and power. We begin to lose the battles against our own sinful natures.

The menorah was made of one talent of gold. This teaches us that we do not need ten talents to shine for Jesus. We need just one. But if we hide that one talent under a bushel we will lose it. See Matthew 5:13-16; 25:14-30.

There are many talents that make up the body of Christ. See 1 Corinthians 12; Ephesians 4:1-16. And if we all exercise that talent to further Christ's kingdom, what a glorious experience we can share in shining for Jesus.

Table of Shewbread: Partaking of Christ's life.

The table of showbread was made of shittim wood and overlaid with gold. See Exodus 25:23, 24. It was located on the north side of the holy place, just opposite that of the menorah. See Exodus 40:22-25.



God required that there be twelve loaves of bread upon the table. See Leviticus 24:5. The number twelve is the number of God's kingdom. There were twelve patriarchs and twelve apostles. There are twelve gates to the New Jerusalem. And the city itself has twelve foundations. Each loaf was to be of equal weight and size, signifying that God loves each of us equally.

Jesus is the bread of life. See John 5:32-35, 48-51. And all of us who desire to be in His everlasting kingdom must partake of His life. As we do, we become more like Him. If we do not choose to spend time each day studying the life of Christ with the attitude to follow in His steps, then we will proportionally lose strength to overcome sin in our own life.

What do we receive when we eat the bread of life? This showbread was made of the finest wheat, representing Christ's pure and sinless life. When we partake of Christ's life we are partaking of something that is absolutely perfect. The more we have of Jesus the more we become like Him, perfect in beauty.

Olive oil was added to the dough. See Leviticus 2:4. Oil is the symbol of the Holy Spirit. When we desire Jesus, and we exercise our faith to be like Him, then we will be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Salt was added. See Leviticus 2:13. Salt has a preserving quality. It is only as we partake of His life that we can remain undefiled by the world. Otherwise, we will become more and more corrupted.

We should spend a thoughtful hour each day contemplating the life of Christ, especially the closing scenes of His life. As we do, we shall become like Him, and our love for Him will grow.

Altar of Incense: Communion with God.

The altar of incense was known as the golden altar. It was made of shittim wood and covered with gold. See Exodus 30:1, 3. It stood foursquare, and was two cubits high. See Exodus 30:2. There were four horns on the golden altar, signifying that there is power in prayer.



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The incense that burned on the golden altar spread a wonderful fragrance throughout the whole camp of Israel. In fact, the fragrance spread beyond their encampment. This signifies that prayer has a way of influences beyond the specific prayer. The prayers we have for one person can impact the lives of many.

Prayer is somewhat of a gage of how much we desire God's presence. We may say that we believe in Him, but if we hardly pray what does that say about our relationship with Him?

If we neglect prayer we will become spiritually weak. We tend to depend upon our own wisdom and strength, which is insufficient. Each one of us should find a time and place to communion with God each day. Keep that appointment with God, and you will grow in grace.

These three pieces of furniture, representing our shining for Jesus, partaking of His life, and communing with God in prayer are what constitutes spiritual strength to overcome known sins in our life. And it is as we overcome our known sins that we desire that God reveal to us our hidden sins. And by faith, we desire to enter into the most holy place, that God may make us thoroughly cleansed from all sin.

The most holy place: Freedom from hidden sins

In the most holy place there was one piece of furniture, namely, the ark of the covenant. It was made of wood covered with gold. Inside was contained the ten commandments on two tables of stone, a jar of manna, and Aaron's rod. These three items will teach us how to overcome even our hidden sins.

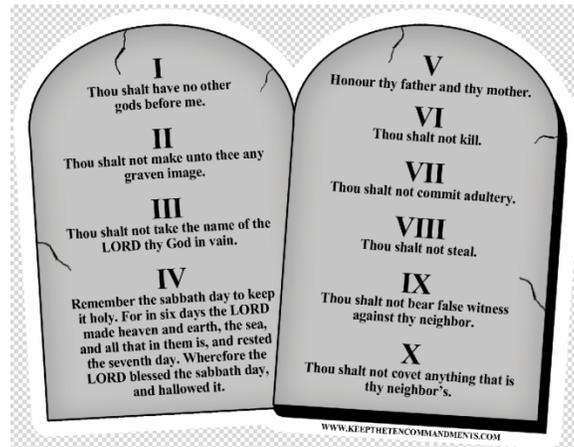


What are hidden sins? These are shortcomings or defects in our character that we are not aware of. Yet they are affecting the way we think and feel. The Bible says, “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?” Jeremiah 17:9. If we cannot know our own heart, then there must be things that God must reveal to us. The prayer of David was, “Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way of everlasting.” Psalm 139:24. Every day we should ask God to reveal what is truly in our heart. When God does reveal these defects of character, we should seek forgiveness and replace those sinful characteristics with the loveliness of Jesus.

Before we look at each of the items found in the ark, we should point out that the shekinah glory of God, His very presence, was in this most holy compartment of the sanctuary. The closer we draw to God the more we will see the defects in our character. As we understand more of His perfection, we will see our imperfection. The good news is that I can forsake my imperfections and give them to Jesus. In return, He gives me His perfection. So it is advantageous to see our imperfections that we may give them up and receive the altogether beautiful life of Christ.



The Ten Commandments: The Ten Commandments are a revelation of the will of God. It is a transcript of His moral character. The basis of God’s law is love, for God is love.



The unchangeable and perfect law of God is a revealer of sin and righteousness. It tells us what is wrong and what is right. It defines what is evil and what is good. Let us spend a moment explaining each commandment.

First Commandment: “Thou shalt have no other gods before me” Exodus 20:3.

The eternal God, who is the Creator and Sustainer of all life, is alone worthy of worship. Anything that would lessen our love for God or lessen our service to Him is forbidden. God should have the best of our time and affections. Anything that would lessen our affections for God we do make into a god.

Second Commandment: “Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the father’s upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments” Exodus 20:4-6.

This commandment forbids the worship of images, relics, and figurines. Millions worship images of Mary, saints, and angels. This is all forbidden of God. God alone is worthy of worship. We should not even try to represent God through some material object. It simply lowers man’s conception of God, and therefore, lowers his conception of man. How can we represent the eternal, all-powerful, all-knowing, and all-loving God some material object? We can’t! And God forbids that we should try.

In this commandment we learn that God will not punish the children because their parents’ worshiped idols. However, if the children follow in the footsteps of their parents’ wrongdoing, then they will be held accountable.

It is a solemn thought that we can pass defective traits of character unto our children. Evil and immoral tendencies, and intemperate habits can be passed onto our children genetically. By our own misbehavior we may make our children more susceptible to certain sins. We should be ever so careful about the decisions we make in life. We are not an island unto ourself.



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There is also a blessing to them that do worship God with their whole heart. The blessing comes not only to the worshiper, but also to their descendants. We pass on more godly traits to our children and provide better examples for them to follow.

Third Commandment: “Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain” Exodus 20:7.

This commandment not only forbids swearing with God’s name, but even to use God’s name in a careless way. God’s name should always be uttered with reverence. We can even take God’s name in vain by claiming to be a Christian but not acting like one.

Fourth Commandment: “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it” Exodus 20:8-11.

The Sabbath commandment did not begin at Mount Sinai, but at creation. See Genesis 2:1-3. As a memorial of His created works the Lord established the Sabbath. No other day could rightly represent the works of His hands. The Sabbath begins sunset Friday and continues until sunset Saturday. God has given us six days to labor, but the seventh is for the worship of God. On this day, works of mercy and the care for the sick are permitted. But we are not to be engaged in business affairs. See Isaiah 58:13. If everyone kept the seventh-day Sabbath there would be no atheists.

Fifth Commandment: Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee” Exodus 20:12.

God has entrusted children to the care of their parents, as such, parents are entitled to love and respect. Children ought to obey their parents as they are growing up. When parents are older and in need of care, children should do what they can to comfort them.

Sixth Commandment: “Thou shalt not kill” Exodus 20:13.

Any act of murder or the intent to kill is forbidden. All acts of revenge and hate are forbidden. All indulgences and injurious acts that shorten life are forbidden. All unnecessary health hazards due to deprivation and excessive labor are forbidden. Even the neglect to care for the needy and suffering are violations of the sixth commandment.

Seventh Commandment: “Thou shalt not commit adultery” Exodus 20:14.

This would include all acts of sexual activity outside the bounds of marriage between a husband and his wife. Even impure and immoral thoughts are violations of this commandment.

Eighth Commandment: “Thou shalt not steal” Exodus 20:15.

This commandment obviously includes theft and stealing. It also includes slavery and wars of conquest. It requires that you pay fair wages and never take advantage of someone else’s ignorance, weakness, or misfortune. There is no overreaching in trade; it demands integrity in all things.

Ninth Commandment: “Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor” Exodus 20:16.

Any attempt to deceive is included. Any efforts to convey an erroneous impression through false statements, exaggerated details, or even by the suppression of truth is forbidden. Any effort to ruin another person’s reputation by misrepresentations is a violation of the ninth commandment. We can be guilty even by our nonverbal expressions; by the looks we give or the intonation of our voice.

Tenth Commandment: “Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor’s house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor’s wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbor’s” Exodus 20:17.

Covetousness is selfishness, which is the root of sin. We are not to covet what another person possesses. Instead, we are to be content with what we have. However, we are not to be content with our spiritual condition. We should always desire to be better people who follow the Lord more closely. And if we have Christ, we have that which is most important in life.

It is as we contemplate the deeper meaning of these commandments that God is able to show us defects in our own character. It is when we do not think upon the deeper things of God that we are not able to see ourselves as we really are.

Aaron’s rod

Aaron’s rod or staff was but a dead stick, but it budded, blossomed, and bore fruit. This is to teach us that we may not only become fruitful in life, but that we must. It is as we are fruitful in the Lord, by our spiritual growth and witnessing, that we are better able to see our defects of character. It is by being involved in life fully that we have greater spiritual eyesight. Take away all fruitfulness and we are blind.





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It is interesting to note that Aaron's rod did not have leaves. When we first think of leaves in the Bible, we are taken back to that ancient story of Adam and Eve. When they had sinned, they found themselves naked. To cover their nakedness they tried to cover their shame with a fig leaf garment. In other words, leaves represent our attempt to hide our true condition.

When Jesus saw the fig tree with leaves but no fruit, He cursed it, and the tree withered away. See Matthew 21:18, 19. Those who pretend to be fruitful or who pretend to be good will never see their true condition. To overcome our hidden sins we must be transparent with God. We must open our heart to Him and ask Him to reveal to us our needs. It is impossible to hide anything from God anyway, so why try? We should take advantage of His ability to know all things. If we ask, He will reveal to us our hidden sins that we may overcome them as well.

Jar of Manna

God provided manna for the Hebrews in their wilderness journey so that they would learn to trust Him. In the same way, we must fully trust God. The more we trust Him the more we can see.



Manna was provided to give the Hebrews a healthful diet. With a better diet they would have purer blood and better circulation, which would aid in clearer thinking. With clearer thoughts and a healthier body we increase our abilities to discern between right and wrong. And we are more likely to make better decisions in life.

The manna fell on every day of the week except on the Sabbath. Hence, a double portion fell on Friday. This was to aid the Hebrews in keeping the Sabbath holy. It reminds us that we are not our own, but that we belong to God. As such, He will provide all that we need. He who created us is more than able to deliver us from our hidden sins. He is able to re-created us into His image.

In summary, we are able to be free from guilt, known sins, and even our hidden sins. I encourage you to study more on the subject of the sanctuary and learn more about God's plan to saved man from both the penalty of sin and from the power of sin.

The Feast Days.

The feasts days, like Passover and the Day of Atonement, happened every year, but they would have a future fulfillment in the ministry of Christ. For example, the sacrifice of the lamb from year to year on the feast of



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Passover, pointed to Jesus as the Lamb of God. So what day was Jesus crucified? Jesus was slain as the Lamb of God on the day of Passover. After His death, there was no more need to hold the Passover service. Those yearly Passover services meet their intended fulfillment in the death of Christ.



This would be true of all the other feast days as well. For example, the feast of Pentecost was celebrated every year. It was held fifty days after the feast of Passover. After Jesus died on Passover, what happened fifty days later on the day of Pentecost? This was when the disciples received the pentecostal power of the Holy Spirit. See Acts 1, 2. The feast of Pentecost had now met its intended fulfillment.

But then there was the Day of Atonement. It happened every year. It represented the day when Israel was judged. On this day the sanctuary was cleansed from all the sacrifices that had been brought throughout the year. It was the one day of the year when the high priest would enter into the most holy place compartment. When his work was finished and he left the most holy place the Day of Judgment was over. At this point every case would have been decided. While the high priest was in the most holy place, every Hebrew needed to make themselves right with God and man. If they failed, they were cast out of Israel.



So when would this feast day meet its intended fulfillment? It would be when Jesus would enter into the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary. As His last work in redeeming man, He opens the books for judgment. When the last case is decided, Jesus will leave the most holy place and prepare to return the second time to receive those who are saved. As we studied in chapters seven and eight of Daniel, Christ began His work in the most holy place in 1844, with the fulfillment of the 2300 year prophecy. See Daniel 8:14.

Christ came and died as the Lamb of God. He ascended into heavenly as our high priest. He began His work in the holy place of the heavenly sanctuary. And since 1844, He has been ministering in the most holy place. Soon Jesus will complete His work and the time of our probation will be over. Every case will be decided for eternal life or the second death. If we follow Jesus through the sanctuary by faith and experience freedom from guilt and freedom from sin, we shall be with Him forever. Amen.