

The Tabernacle in the Wilderness

GOD's Marvelous Revelations Concerning Sin and Death
and
The Divinely Provided Way of Salvation

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CHAPTER FIVE -

THE LAVER FOR CLEANSING

"And he made the laver of brass, and the foot of it of brass, of the lookingglasses of the women assembling, which assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation"
(Exodus 38:8)

We have come to one of the most significant chapters in this book. Please give alert and prayerful attention to what is about to be unfolded. We do not find any mention of the next furnishing of the court of the Tabernacle, essential in the worship of Israel, and in the approach into the presence of GOD, in the orderly procedure of its unfolding, either from the Holy of Holies out to the gate of the court, or from the gate into the Holy of Holies. There is an exact reason for this. It affords a very convincing demonstration of the Divine inspiration of the Scriptures.

Had men recorded their discoveries of the way of redemption, from the altar of burnt-offering, into the presence of the glory of GOD, they would have done what we are doing, by speaking of the laver of cleansing next in order. But in every case, the revelation is made from within the Holy of Holies out to the gate of the court, where the approach toward GOD, by men, has its beginning.

The second element of inspiration is found in the fact that the laver of cleansing is not mentioned at all, in the description of anything related to the Tabernacle, nor in its meaning related to the redemptive work of CHRIST. After these revelations have been completed and their meanings symbolized then, and not until then, is the laver mentioned, and its construction commanded, and its location, between the door of the Tabernacle and the altar of burnt offering indicated.

THE BIBLE IS DIVINELY INSPIRED

Why is this? Because the Bible, being Divine in origin and inspiration, must, of necessity, be in exact harmony with itself, and also in harmony with the Revelation which it presents and unfolds. In the New Testament the blessed HOLY SPIRIT is not mentioned by our Lord, except

on the last night of His life and ministry as He was about to take leave of His disciples to go forth to His rejection by His nation, and to give Himself to suffering and death on the Cross. The HOLY SPIRIT did not come on the Day of Pentecost, until His work of redemption was completed, and He had ascended into Heaven and had begun His ministry of intercession, before the throne of GOD. Prayerfully study Acts 2:32-36, until this great truth is fully grasped.

"This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the Promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:32-36).

So the specific ministry of the HOLY SPIRIT is not mentioned, nor symbolized, in anything pertaining to the Tabernacle, until everything related to the redemptive work of CHRIST is fully presented in the **symbolism** of the tabernacle. Later we shall discover that this is also true of the Altar of Intercession.

INSPIRATION IS PROVED

A third proof of the inspiration of the Scriptures is disclosed by the fact that we can find no slightest hint as to the size or form of the Laver of Cleansing. Such directions as are given, have to do with its position, and with its use. How could such descriptions and specifications be given? Who would attempt to represent the Eternal SPIRIT of GOD, by anything material? The only way we can describe electricity is by describing its manifestations and applications, through light, heat, power, etc. So also with the HOLY SPIRIT. Believers experience through His presence in their hearts and lives, Divinely-given, Eternal Life, Light and Love, and Power. No, Friends, the Laver could not be mentioned, until all that symbolized the redemptive work of CHRIST was completely revealed and symbolized in everything pertaining to the Tabernacle, in all its beauty and power.

We know that the Laver was to be a fount of flowing water. Both the hands and the feet of Aaron and of his sons, and those of a long line of priests, who followed them, were to be washed and kept clean at this laver. Hence, it must have been a large fount, with some means of letting the cleansing water flow from the upper, large bowl, into a somewhat smaller and shallower bowl, below, which doubtless, formed its base.

We assume this, since the priests, who ministered at the brazen altar, on pain of death for disobedience, were warned that the moment that their hands or feet became soiled, they were instantly to go to the Laver and cleanse away every spot or stain. **"Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? Or who shall stand in His holy place. He that hath clean hands and a pure heart"** (Psalm 24:3, 4). How wonderfully fundamental truths in GOD's Word are presented and enforced in and by the symbolism of the Tabernacle!

A DIVINE USE FOR LOOKING GLASSES

What was the Laver made of? We are not left to guess. We are told that it was made of the very finest brass known in that day. The consecrated women, devoted to the service of those who came to the Tabernacle to offer sacrifices, brought their looking-glasses, which they had obtained in Egypt, knowing that beauty of soul always transcends the beauties of the flesh, they presented their mirrors to Moses and Aaron to be used for this very special service.

Though the Laver is not described in the Word, it must have been very simple in design, so that its polished surfaces would reflect, like a fine mirror, anything coming near it. Being of brass, judgment is included in its purpose, also the disclosure of impurity. As at the altar brass spoke of judgment for sin, and the blood of the sacrifice always sufficient to cleanse and take it away; so the Laver revealed uncleanness and immediately supplied the water for its cleansing. There was this difference. While sins of sinners were dealt with at the altar of burnt-offering; at the Laver, sin and uncleanness in BELIEVERS was revealed and removed.

SAINTS AND THEIR SINS

This is made unmistakably plain by 1 John 2:1, 2. Please notice that John is writing to those who have become "children" in the Lord, and not to unsaved sinners. John, therefore, is speaking to believers, who are conscious of sins and transgressions which they have committed, and which they know have grieved the HOLY SPIRIT. **"My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin NOT. And, if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous, and He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for our's only, but for the sins of the whole world."** But the sins of the world and of the worldly are dealt with at the Altar and the Cross; while sins in believers are revealed and dealt with through the ministry of the HOLY SPIRIT, on the basis of the propitiation wrought by CHRIST, and made effective through His advocacy and intercessions before the throne of GOD.

The Altar symbolized the ministry of CHRIST FOR sinners. The Laver symbolized the work of the HOLY SPIRIT for and in believers. Here is where deep spiritual experience begins, where great transformations are wrought, where what CHRIST made possible on the Cross becomes **actual** in the LIFE of those who accept CHRIST as their Saviour and Lord. Let us turn to the Scriptures to confirm this. We are saved, not by works, which we may think we have wrought: **"but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost"** (Titus 3:5).

A NEW CREATION

Thus we find that the new birth is a creative work of the HOLY SPIRIT, cleansing away the sins and impurities of the old man, when we believe, and by re-generation, or being born-again, we receive a new life from GOD; through the incoming of the HOLY SPIRIT, which is the Spirit of GOD Himself. Speaking of the Church, as the Body of CHRIST, Paul tells us in Ephesians 5:26: **"That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the WORD."** Through regeneration we receive new life from GOD, are born of GOD; and thus become **the children of GOD**. **"As many as received him (CHRIST) to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God"** (John 1:12, 13).

BLOOD FIRST, THEN WATER

There was no water at the altar. There was required the shedding of blood for the redemption of sinners. The laver was for water - the water of life - for the giving of life, for regeneration, and for cleansing; and to **keep** cleansing, and pure and holy, GOD's believing Children: - His priesthood of Believers.

"Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me. Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all" (John 13:8-10).

Cleansing and setting apart unto GOD begins with regeneration, and continues throughout the Christian life. Because of our contacts with an unclean world, we need cleansing daily. Because our lives and possessions and attainments and capabilities increase, or are added to, we must continually be sanctified, or set apart unto GOD ALL that we have and are. Many a Believer has failed to do this, and has suddenly awakened to the fact that many things in his life, such as increased opportunities, influence, and possessions, have never been brought to GOD's altar, nor to the laver for cleansing and separation unto the service of CHRIST.

Millions of church members confess and repent of past sins; but never dream of going daily to the fountain of cleansing. They may go faithfully to the church, but from the time when they first sought the Lord, they never thought of going to GOD's altar to yield their lives to Him who died for them. So often it happens that whole areas of their lives are untouched with the cleansing flood; and selfishness, worldliness, carelessness, and prayerlessness characterize their lives, and they wonder why their religious lives are so empty and powerless.

"LET US GO ON"

Back in the Book of Genesis, we find that the Hebrew word for "sin" and for "sin-bearer" are practically identical. CHRIST was made sin for us, and He is our sin-bearer and Saviour. Here at the Laver, sin is uncovered and the fount of flowing water, instantly, is provided to wash it all away. Before the priests entered the court of the Tabernacle, they must wash thorough and put on clean garments. They must come clean to the service of GOD. **Death** was the penalty for disobedience or carelessness at this point. If in their service, their garments, or feet and hands, became soiled, the burnished Laver showed it, and before they continued their ministries, they **MUST** come to the fount of cleansing.

Please ponder these truths and pray over them. Remember always that it is here at the Laver, which symbolizes the ministry of the HOLY SPIRIT, that we experience the washing of regeneration, the NEW BIRTH, and renewing of faith and life through our Lord JESUS CHRIST, So, "LET US GO ON."

~ end of chapter 5 ~

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