

Chapter 14

The Place Of Prayer

And thou shalt make an altar to burn incense upon of shittim wood shalt thou make it.

And thou shalt put it before the veil that is by the ark of the testimony, before the mercy seat that is over the testimony, where I will meet with thee.

And Aaron shall burn thereon sweet incense every morning: when he dresseth the lamps, he shall burn incense upon it.

And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before the Lord through-out generations.

Ye shall offer no strange incense thereon, nor burnt sacrifice, nor meat offering; neither shall ye pour drink offering thereon.” (Exod.30: 1, 6-9).

THESE are God’s divine, heaven-sent orders for the placing of the fifth article of furniture in the tabernacle of congregation, (type of the Lord Jesus Christ).

It was an altar made of wood, overlaid with pure gold. - the wood pointing to His humanity, and the gold speaking of His unchangeable deity. It was the tallest piece of furniture in the holy place, and speaks of the highest act of worship possible, that prayer and priestly intercession. {3 feet high and one and one-half feet square}

Its Position

It occupied the central position in the holy place, between the table of the shewbread and the golden candlestick.

It stood in front of the veil and the ark of the covenant in the holy of holies, with its covering of the bloody mercy seat. Upon it was to be offered a continual offering of incense upon coals taken from the brazen altar at the door of the tabernacle.

It is the most complete type of our Savior now in heaven as interceding High Priest.

The writer of Hebrews informs us:

“ For Christ in not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us” (Heb. 9:24).

The tabernacle was in every detail a shadow and type of the coming Redeemer.

He says that the holy place was a “figure of the true”; the priest was a figure of the Lord Jesus Christ; His ministry at the altar of incense of His prayers in our behalf, so that the smoke of His incense rises constantly before the ark and the mercy seat, representing the throne of God.

At the brazen altar Christ died for us, shed His blood, reconciled us to God, and made us forever secure in Him.

But at the golden altar He Lives in heaven to intercede for those for whom He has already died, and who are already saved.

The brazen altar speaks of the living, resurrected, ascended Lord Jesus Christ.

The two altars, therefore, speaks of the death and resurrection, and constitute the full message of the Gospel, that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that He was buried, and that he arose again the third day according to the scriptures

(1 Cor. 15: 3-4).

The Constant Need

The Lord Jesus, therefore, today is heaven offering the incense of His own intercessory work on the basis of the the blood of the Cross of Calvary.

Incense is a common Biblical figure for prayer and for intercession on the part of God's people. David says in (Psalm 141:2),

“Let my prayer be set forth before Thee as incense.”

The need for the priestly intercession was constant, for the priests were daily deviled by contact with the earth upon which they walked. - needed constantly to be washed in the brazen laver.

They needed confession and intercession at the golden altar.

The golden altar is a flat denunciation of any claim to perfection in walk which the priest might make.

The incense, rising before the veil was a constant reminder to the priest that he still had the old nature, that he still came short, that he still needed the intercession and the work at the altar of incense. The claim of sinless perfection, the assertion that the old nature is completely eradicated, root and branch, is a blunt denial of the priestly office and the intercessor work of the Lord Jesus Christ today at the right hand of God.

Only The Blood

The basis of the efficacy of the golden altar lay in the blood, taken from the altar at the door of the tabernacle Concerning the golden altar we read:

“And Aaron shall make an atonement upon the horns of it once a year with the blood of the sin offering of atonement. “ (Exod. 30:10)

The intercession and the incense received their value completely and exclusively from the blood shed at the brazen altar at the entrance of the tabernacle proper. Everything

rests upon the blood of the Cross, the death and resurrection, and the shedding of the blood of Christ. Had Christ not died for us, He could not today intercede for for us. The priest could not enter the holy place without blood, without first stopping at the altar of burnt offering, and making the proper sacrifice.

For Us Also

The same is true of our prayers and our intercession as well. The tabernacle not only speaks of Christ, as a Person, but also of those who are in Him, and have entered in by the door.

And we too have a ministry of intercessory prayer. Prayer is the sweetest thing we can offer to God, more acceptable even than testimony or active service. God is more pleased with our worship than with or service, for there can be no acceptable service until we have stopped to worship first of all at the golden altar.

Martha, in the home of Martha, Mary and Lazarus, served, but Mary was commended for sitting first at Jesus' feet before she served.

Martha was not reproved because she served, but because she had served without first stopping to worship. {Enter to Worship -Depart to Serve}

The greatest privilege, therefore, which God has given to us, and the one most neglected, is the privilege of prayer and intercession, in preparation for service for Him.

Our prayers, are on the basis of the shed blood of Calvary. They are heard and accepted only because of the blood,

What a privilege, that we can be priests of God to pray and intercede for others.

Think of Abraham - Moses.

The work of intercession, is the greatest privilege of the believer.

The testimony of Author - of unseen prayers and unnoticed Prayers - (Page 108)

The POWER OF PRAYERS

Only For Believers

As the priest in the tabernacle offered incense for Israel, so in heaven we have a great high priest who is there to intercede for us. By the offering of the sacrifice on the brazen altar we are saved, but by incense on the golden altar we are kept.

The incense is a continual offering, by which He is able to save all those to the uttermost who come by faith to Him, seeing that He ever liveth to make intercession for us.

Here is our security - "He ever liveth to make intercession for us" this intercession in heaven is only for believers.

The priest offered incense only for those who had first of all brought their sacrifice to the brazen altar at the door of the tabernacle, and approached on the basis of shed blood. So too Christ in heaven - prays and intercedes only for those who have already been born again. He does not pray for sinners. The priest at the golden altar is powerless to do a single thing for the sinner, until the sinner comes first of all to the Savior at the Cross, represented by the altar of the burnt offering.

The Bible leaves no doubt upon this matter, In Christ prophetic high priestly prayer in (John 17:9) 'I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given

Me; for they are Thine."

Jesus Christ at the right hand of God, therefore, can do absolutely nothing for the sinner, until he or she come by way of the blood and the altar and the Cross.

He exhausted Himself, in doing all that was necessary, until He was able to say,

"It Is Finished." this refers to the work of redemption.

The work of redemption was truly finished on the Cross of Calvary.

But it did not apply to His work of intercession, for that work is still going on, at the right hand of God.

Until the sinner receives Christ as his Savior by faith, he or she cannot be saved and he or she cannot have Christ as his or her interceding High Priest.

God never hears the prayers of sinners, Only the prayers of those who are saved are heard by the Lord Jesus Christ.

Prayer without faith is absolutely worthless, and the sinner who comes to God praying without faith accomplishes nothing.

le, the thief on the Cross prayed - “ If thou be the Christ save thyself and us.”

He did pray for Christ to save him, but not by the way of His death, but by coming down from the Cross. He wanted Christ to avoid the death of the Cross, “to save Himself,” . And then he added “and us.”

Oh, sinner, do you not realize that Chris cannot stand between you and God - until you come first as a poor, lost, helpless, undone sinner to the Cross of Calvary, and lay your hand on the head of the sacrifice, In faith as your substitute, and receive Him in your place.

Then you can enter in and feed upon the Word, and walk in the light of the golden candlestick, and be kept by the presence of our interceding Savior on the right hand of God.

The whole point of this of the position of the altar of incense is that prayer is absolutely unacceptable until we have come by way of the bloody altar of the burnt offering , which represents the Cross of Christ.

Chapter 15

T H E R E N T V E I L

We come now to the most holy place, also called the holy of holies in Scripture.

It was the most innermost of the three compartments of the tabernacle.

We began our journey by taking our place outside the tabernacle in the wilderness as sinners, outside of the Lord Jesus Christ.

All that we were able to see from the outside was a white linen fence, speaking of the perfection of the humanity of of the Lord Jesus Christ, and then the sight of the unappealing rectangular hut covered with the drab, somber, blue-gray covering of leather made from porpoise skins.

He beholds Him as the White Linen, as a good moral, perfect man possibly, but no more. He sees Him as a despised and rejected zealot, born before time, dying for a noble cause, a poor helpless martyr. He may even admire Christ, but he does not know Him.

But then we enter the door by faith, and came face to face with the altar, and on it a bleeding, slain animal of sacrifice. It was the Cross, and there salvation became ours.

Read the the next steps through the tabernacle - (Pg.113).

Before entering the holy of holies, we are confronted by a serious problem, for the way is barred completely by a heavy veil, or curtain, which forbids anyone to enter except the high priest once a year on the day of atonement.

So before we enter into the place of the ark, the veil must be taken care of, for behind this veil is the ark, the great symbol of the throne of Almighty God. But it is a throne of judgement, for a Holy God shines above the throne, and the ark itself is that which condemns the sinner before God. In this ark reposed a copy of the broken Law, which God had given to Moses in the mountain, and the law speaks of judgement, condemnation and death for the sinner.

Once A Year

Only once a year, on the day of atonement, the high priest was permitted to enter, but it had to be repeated and repeated and repeated, for it was never accomplished and finished and done. The veil still remained, for there could be no putting away of sin, except by the sacrifice of Christ.

Hebrews tells us that we can now come, by a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh (Hebrews 10:20).

Here we have a tremendous statement, and one which sheds a great deal of light upon the purpose of the tabernacle service.

We have the N.T. interpretation of the meaning of the veil whatcha hung between the holy place and the holy of holies. It speaks of the perfect, the sinless, holy humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ.

He was perfect in all things, kept God's law in every detail. God will not and God cannot admit anyone into His presence who is not absolutely perfect, for He is Holy — so holy that none but perfectly sinless ones can ever approach Him.

Until we, therefore are as holy as the Lord Jesus Christ Himself was, we cannot enter into the presence of God of God.

The body, the sinless humanity of Christ, reminds us of what we must be if we are to be received into His presence.

The veil, representing the body of Christ in His perfect Humanity according to Hebrews, therefore hung between us and God as a sign,

“Keep Out,” and “No Admittance.”

And then, “in the fulness of time Christ came, born of a woman, born under the law.”

He veiled Himself in human flesh, and in that human body He took our sins to the Cross of Calvary, He paid the penalty, and His perfect, sinless body was broken and rent as He finished the work, and cried, “It is finished.”

See what happened to the veil (Matt.27:50-51) “Jesus, when He had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. And behold, the veil in the temple was rent in twain from top to bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent.”

The writers of the second Gospel Mark as well as Luke bear this testimony to the same thing.

Yes the veil was rent from top to bottom - not from the bottom to the top - not the work of man, the work, of the Almighty God.

God rent the veil of separation from top to bottom and opened up the way of the holy of holies for all who by faith are clothed in the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ

It was a miracle. It was a heaven-sent miracle. No human hand could have done the work of rending the veil. Tradition also tells us that the priest tried to mend and sew the veil together again, but were

unable to, for no thread, no cord, should hold in the repaired part. It was rent once and for all, and fair ever.

A perfect picture of reconciliation of the Lord Jesus Christ.

This is the lesson of the rent veil, the way of access to God.

“For there was a tabernacle made, the first, wherein was the candlestick, and the table and the shewbread, which is called the sanctuary. And after [behind] the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all; which had the golden cancer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold... Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God.

But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people:

The Holy Ghost this signifies, that the way into the holiest of. All was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing;

Which was a figure [type] for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make Him that did the service perfect ...

(Heb.9:2-4, 6-9).

All this, of course, was before the advent of Calvary. But notice now as the writer of Hebrews continues: “But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands ... but by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

(Heb. 9:11-12).

In (Heb.9: 23-26) He added: “It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.

“For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: Not yet that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest entered into the holy place every year with blood of others...

But now once in the end of the world [age] hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.”

The veil is rent, the way is open, and we now have full and free access into the very presence of God, through the rent veil of the sacrifice of the body of Christ.

God now looks upon every believer in Christ as being as perfect as Christ Himself was.

The sin question is now settled, we are clothed in His righteousness, and we may come freely we care, as often as we please, and say as long as we please, and stay as long as we wish.

We are sanctified through the offering of the blood of Jesus Christ once and for all.

The body of the Lord Jesus Christ was represented by the veil which hung in the tabernacle between the holy place and the holy of holies, as long as Jesus had not made the sacrifice in bearing in His own body our sins upon the tree, the way was completely barred for us to come. But through the death of Christ and the rending and the breaking of His body, and the atonement for our sin, the way is now opened, and so of its graphically typified in the rending of the veil at the hour of Christ's death.

Once And For All

And this rending of the veil is never to be repeated; It is once and for all.

What security ! - What assurance ! - What comfort !

Once and for all, oh, sinner receive it,

Once and for all, oh, doubter believe it,

Come to the Cross, your burdens will fall,

Christ hath redeemed us, once and for all.

Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,

By a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh; And having a high priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith ...

Let us holdfast the profession of our faith without wavering;

(for He is faithful that promised.) {Heb.10: 19-23}

Let us rejoice in this, glory in this, rest in this, that He has made full provision for all your need, and nothing as been overlooked. The new and living way to the heart of God is wide open now, come once and for all.

All the grief and sorrow we bear, the doubts and fears which trouble us, are because we do not realize that the veil has been rent, the way has been opened, and the Lord is waiting, for we His children to rest in full complete trust in Him.

“Seeing then that we have a high priest, passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.

For we have a high priest which cannot be touched with the feelings of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we might obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.” (Heb. 4:14-16).